

No. 80



N° 80

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly
of Ontario

First Session, 41st Parliament

Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 6 May 2015

Mercredi 6 mai 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

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L'honorable Dave Levac

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



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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Wednesday 6 May 2015

Mercredi 6 mai 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

2015 ONTARIO BUDGET

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 5, 2015, on the motion that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Niagara Falls had the floor when we last dealt with this issue, so I will now recognize the member from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I think I'll start by saying, what a wonderful election result in Alberta last night. I'd like to congratulate them. Equally important was the number of women who were elected. So, congratulations; I'm certainly pleased about that. I think we're finding out that orange is the new black—just throwing it out there for everybody to discuss this morning.

There are a ton of other examples where these P3 projects have cost the province far more than they have given us. Look at the local CCAC in the Niagara region. Instead of providing top-line health care themselves, they're contracting in-home care to a private company called CarePartners. CarePartners' CEO, Linda Knight, is okay to sit back and collect hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money while she refuses to pay nurses for their working hours or give them sick days. So, of course, the nurses, who are concerned about the level of care that their patients can receive under those conditions—which is really important on that issue—have unfortunately gone on strike.

This government has a mandate to provide top-of-the-line medical care to its taxpaying citizens. Instead of trying to intervene and help, they're unfortunately sitting on the sidelines while another privatization plan fails. Those nurses want to see their patients. I spoke with the patients, who are determined to get their nurses back. Yet still nothing is being done. I don't think this would qualify as good public service.

I want to say that I have talked to the health minister about this issue. I have raised it with him. That's the way we should be doing it in here. I raised it: "Here's what happens. Here's what has happened in my home community." I've talked to the member from St. Catharines

as well. But I think it's important to communicate that. It's one thing to stand up here and throw darts; it's another where you stand and say, "Listen, I've talked to you guys. This is what happened."

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It would be interesting if the Liberal Party would at least listen to me this early in the morning. I think it's important.

These are nurses. These are people who are qualified. These are people who care about their community. They're people who care deeply about their patients. Yet what we're doing here is putting them on strike.

What they decided to do with this company, very clearly, is that they decided to join a union; they're trying to get their first collective agreement. I've been involved in the trade union movement for a long time. The decision for joining a union is usually because the employer is not treating their people with respect. It's been 18 months.

What happens, as everybody knows—we've been talking about this with the budget—is that you get this pot of money; you have so much money to go around. So, money goes to the LHINs, the LHINs take their money and give it to the CCAC, and they have that pot—the pie is getting divided up all the way along. What happens is that the CCAC gets their money, the CCAC then contracts it out to Linda Knight and here's what happens: That pie is smaller. She's taking her money off the top—she's making her profit—but unfortunately none of that is going to the nurses.

These nurses, if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker—I know you're interested in this—are working as pieceworkers, getting paid so much for each house they go to; quite frankly, qualified nurses taking care of my parents, your parents, your grandparents. And at some point in time—I look around, and there are a lot of people in here with white hair—they're going to be taking care of us. We shouldn't be treating nurses like this. We certainly shouldn't be treating patients like this.

So if the other side can do anything—if my good friend Mr. Bradley can do something and say to the health minister, "Take a look at this. What's going on in St. Catharines is wrong. It's wrong how the nurses are being treated. It's wrong how the patients are being treated. It's wrong how the St. Catharines community is being treated." And CarePartners goes right across the province of Ontario. We have to fix this situation. We have to treat our nurses better, and we certainly have to treat health care better.

We were promised a new hospital in Niagara. It's now looking like it will be about 10 years away. I've met with the NHS; I've met with the health providers. You can see, at the site where the planning grant was announced over a year ago—almost a year and three months—that the sign is starting to fade. It doesn't look good at all.

This hospital needs to be built to service the people in my riding, and it can be a lot cheaper than the one that was done in St. Catharines. We can have a debate on whether that's where it should go, but there is no reason that we should be waiting. We have local workers who can get this project done now.

The point I'm getting at here is that it's a responsible approach that can help balance the budget by not wasting tax dollars. It seems too simple that it shouldn't need to be said, but these P3 projects prove that it does need to be said. These are happening. Where, exactly, are our savings coming from in this budget?

Let me tell you a few things that this so-called progressive budget has done in the province. While this government was using costly P3 projects, this budget was also being drafted to find other ways to bring in revenue. It began by using what they are calling asset optimization, which is essentially selling off the future of the province for the debts of tomorrow.

One of the ways this so-called progressive budget brought in extra cash—I spoke a little bit about this yesterday—was by selling the province's share in General Motors. Think about that. The federal government did the same thing—the federal government to balance their budget; the provincial government because they needed the money.

As many of you know, the province and the federal government negotiated a manufacturing footprint in 2009. As the car companies were being shocked by failures in the industry, the government came to the plate to make sure they didn't collapse. It wasn't a direct giveaway. Stipulations were in place to ensure that thousands of jobs were saved, that jobs were saved right here in Ontario that benefited the people, and collective bargaining was protected.

0910

It also gave the government—this is important; I think both parties should listen to this—a seat at the table, a big seat at that table. I know this because I was there in 2009 when the negotiations were happening. I can remember who supported those auto jobs here in Ontario and who wanted to see those companies fold and leave this country. I can tell you, it gave this province a big say over the future of the automotive industry here in Ontario.

With the footprint agreement coming to an end in 2016, auto manufacturers are looking to see what we can do to remain competitive and keep the jobs here. Well, that makes sense. When you have shares in a company and you have a seat at the table—and that's important, particularly at the bargaining table. With a seat at the GM table, we could, and we should, be a strong voice for the thousands of auto jobs in the province and the tens of thousands of spinoff jobs that rely on the auto industry in the province of Ontario.

Someone looking into this budget must be looking for the government to play a strong role in protecting the auto jobs here in Ontario—well, unfortunately, they won't find anything like that in the budget, and I think it's a mistake—instead of this government selling off their shares of GM in a one-time deal that removes a large part of their influence in the industry. We made some money off the deal, but the long-term effects are devastating.

Look at Oshawa, where they announced just last week that they're going to lose 1,000 auto jobs. A thousand jobs doesn't sound like much, until you talk to everybody who understands how the auto industry works. In particular, in Oshawa, we have all the spinoff jobs. You can argue whether it's 7,000 spinoff jobs; you can argue whether it's 10,000. But you're not talking 1,000 jobs now; you're talking somewhere between 7,000 and 10,000 jobs.

I know my good friend over there, the economic development minister, is keenly listening to this conversation, because it's important for his job as well.

Does anyone believe—and I'm asking my colleagues this—it was coincidental that these job losses follow the sell-off of the GM shares from the federal and provincial government? Was the one-time payout worth losing what those 1,000 workers—and with the 7,000 to 10,000 spinoff jobs. So we're looking at between 7,000 and 11,000 jobs that you're going to lose in taxes. Is it worth it for a one-time hit when you could have a say at the table? One thousand people with decent jobs and fair wages now have to worry about their work.

This was an incredibly short-sighted opinion, and one this government should not be proud of. Perhaps it helps to manage the deficit for one year, this year, but what does it do for the future of the province? Because we're talking about a sector that is extremely important to the province of Ontario, and there are other sectors in the province of Ontario that are equally important, whether it be tourism—it doesn't matter what it is; there are other sectors. But this auto is what we've really been based on in manufacturing.

I know my good friend the Speaker is listening to this, because he comes from steel. They've been going through the same type of stuff that's been going on in the province.

I believe many people will remember this budget as one that sold off the public hydro assets, if something isn't done right now to reverse that decision. Just look at the sale of the GM shares, the sell-off of our hydro assets in Ontario—a short-term solution that hurts us in the long term, that selling 60% of Hydro One will amount to 3%. Now think about that: 3% of this government's planned infrastructure projects—3%. We'll be losing a payout of hundreds of millions of dollars every year because of this.

It may have helped to remove part of the deficit this year, but in years to come, the province and its residents will not have that continuing revenue stream to spend on their communities. Simply put, it's a sale of the future of this province.

Where did that hydro money go? I know everybody's listening. Where did it go? I think we all should be proud of that. Where did it go? We've owned it for my entire life. People who are older than me have owned it longer. Where did it go? It went for health care, our publicly funded health care, which is admired around the world, by the way, and gives us a competitive advantage right here in the province of Ontario.

One of the reasons why we had a successful auto industry and steel industry was because of our health care costs, because it was publicly funded and publicly delivered. We're making a mistake on moving into the privatization of it, and that's a big concern. But at the end of the day, it was publicly funded, publicly delivered, and it came from the revenues from Hydro One.

What else did it fund, Hydro One? Our education sector, one of the best in the world. We're going through some tough times right now with strikes, but at the end—

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm done already?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You're done.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Oh, sorry.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: I was here this morning to listen to the remarks from my friend from Niagara Falls.

I want to just talk about General Motors for a moment, because in my community in Peterborough we have a large number of people who have been employed over the years at General Motors in Oshawa. I have a large group of retirees. I met with the retired management group and the retired folks from Unifor. One of the things they told me—it's interesting enough: The competition between Canada and the United States has really pitted the United Auto Workers in the States against Unifor workers and General Motors here in Canada. I'll spend a moment to talk about this because both sides have told me about this.

After the bailout in the United States and Canada, the UAW decided to renegotiate a whole series of collective agreements for their folks at work in Michigan and other states where General Motors operates. The UAW put into place a set of collective agreements and a framework which is radically different than what Unifor has here in Canada. The minister who has been working with General Motors said that General Motors in Oshawa have said that in terms of a new product coming there—we all hope it happens—in effect, it's going to be predicated on the next round of negotiations with Unifor. That's what they've said publicly. We want to make sure that they happen in a positive way.

There's no question that the North American Free Trade Agreement has changed the whole footprint of the auto sector here in Ontario. We're all concerned about it. We all want to work together. We want to bring those good ideas to the table to make sure that we retain the auto sector right here in the province of Ontario, and I want to make sure that we work together on this important file.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: It was nice to hear the member talk about some of the issues of the bill.

It's interesting. When I hear the minister across talk about the issues with Unifor—and I suppose Unifor is a big part of what's happening here at GM in Oshawa—but so often, they're always looking elsewhere and blaming somebody else. They have to; I guess that's part of the role. The economic plan for this province has been altered, negatively, so badly. We look at the payroll taxes. The car companies are telling—everyone who leaves is saying, “Get your energy under control.” It's hard when you still hear this government talking about us being actually very favourable on the cost of energy.

To me, you have to stand up and tell the people what's actually happening. We see a province that's no longer competitive. Instead of looking at ourselves and looking at our payroll taxes or energy costs and the property taxes that are really a result of this government's policies—I would hope, listening to the member here talk about the labour negotiations, that they would actually take that as part of their strategy: to talk about what it would take to make our companies competitive. They have as big a stake in it as anybody.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): It's bad enough I've got the other side with four conversations with two opposition members over there. And I've got opposition members talking loud right in front of the guy who's speaking in their caucus. You've got four or five conversations going on—loud conversations. I don't know why you can't sit beside each other and whisper. I can hear your voices right here. So if you could just keep it down, I'd appreciate it. Thanks.

Continue.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thanks, Speaker. As I say, the point being, it's everybody's issue here. We have to work collectively to put a system in place that promotes business to stay in this country and hire good jobs.

0920

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The member from Niagara Falls spoke well and effectively about the impact on health care and the cuts in this budget.

But I want to address further the substantial cuts to tax credits and supports for the film, video and digital effects industry. Apparently what's in the budget now is expected to result in a 10% reduction in film, television and video production. That's a lot of jobs. That's thousands of jobs. It's bad enough, but the cuts apply to productions that are already in midstream. So the people who signed contracts and who are part of international productions suddenly find that they have a big hole in their budget. That presents profound problems for this industry, going forward.

I talked to an actor yesterday at a reception about the bill to protect child performers, an actor who told me that

the cuts have meant that the series she is working on is going to be shortened so they can fill in the hole. This means a loss of jobs.

But more than that, I've talked to people in the film and video industry who say that the refusal to grandfather existing productions says to the world that you can't depend on Ontario, that they're not credible, that we don't have a stable environment to invest in.

As bad as the immediate effects will be from the reduction of finances, the bigger problem is that we could be seen as an industry where it's not safe to put your film money. For 10 years, we suffered from the impact of SARS. We don't want another lost decade. The government has to address this grandfathering issue to protect our industry.

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's a pleasure to be here. I appreciate the comments and the debate that has been ongoing in regard to our 2015 budget.

I appreciate the comments made by the member from Niagara Falls. Again, he reinforces something that I think we all have to be mindful of, and that's providing incentives and support for our industry so that we can create those jobs, jobs that are created by industry.

Part of that is embedded in this plan, in terms of investing in skills and talents, and also investing heavily in infrastructure, to the tune of \$130 billion over the next 10 years. Part of that is our Jobs and Prosperity Fund, which enables us to attract and provide incentives.

Another one is maintaining a very dynamic and competitive business climate. We have one of the lowest corporate income taxes and small business taxes anywhere in the world, for that matter, on average. Certainly, we're ahead in North America.

But I find it passing strange that the NDP suddenly are talking about providing loopholes and incentives for business, like the film industry—which, by the way, Ontario continues to be one of the most generous in the world. So you either want us to provide stimulus for those investments and for those businesses or you do not. On the one hand you're saying, "Cut away with loopholes. Stop providing any supports for businesses." But when it comes to supporting the auto industry, suddenly, "Yes, that was a good thing to do," or when we're supporting the film industry, "Yes, that's a good thing today."

But you can't have it both ways. Either you are onside, and you recognize the importance of maintaining a very competitive and dynamic business climate to attract investment or you don't. Oftentimes, the questions are about not supporting business, not supporting those that actually do create those jobs. That is the essence of what is in this budget—and we will continue to do so. The results have proven themselves.

I know that the other side of the House seems to suggest that Ontario and Ontarians themselves aren't doing their job. In fact, they're doing a tremendous job. We are exceeding targets all around the world, recognizing that Ontario leads now, most of Canada, with GDP growth.

That's not by accident. That's because of the hard work and the investments that we're making, and we'll continue to do so.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Niagara Falls has two minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That's an interesting statement coming from the finance minister. I want to tell you, sir, very clearly—as clear as I can—you shouldn't sell the shares in General Motors. We need an auto strategy in this country. We need one protecting steel. We need one protecting our shipbuilding. It's not just one sector. I have not talked about just one sector. I don't know where you're getting that from.

Our hydro costs are out of line.

But I want to address the comment made by one of the ministers around "The UAW contract is radically different." It absolutely is not true. If you take a look at the costs between the UAW and the Canadian Auto Workers when it comes to productivity, when it comes to quality, when it comes to a highly skilled workforce, when it talks now, when we have an 82-cent dollar—which probably should be about 78 cents—when you talk about those things and our health care advantages, it's actually as cheap or cheaper to build that auto part right here in Canada. So you're mistaken on that part, that's for sure.

The other thing we have to do is you need a seat at the table. That's why I talked about the shares. You had a lot of shares; a lot of money. You had a lot of say. You had a lot in the game. When you gave that away to balance or to get some money for something else, it made no sense.

I know that you guys have worked with the auto sector. I know you've talked to Unifor. Unifor has been in your office; I think they were in your office this week. They came and they were begging you not to sell the shares. It made absolutely no sense.

I've been at the bargaining table a lot over my career, and I know how important it is to have a say at the table. You also need a dance partner when you're at the table, but at the end of the day, the government would have had a lot more influence in what's going on in Oshawa today. We're losing 1,000 jobs.

I'd like the finance minister to look at me, because I want to tell him that we had the opportunity to get 1,000 jobs in Windsor; we came to the table late. I'm not blaming anybody here; I'm saying we have to be smarter.

We have to make sure that our kids and our grandkids are going to have a future in the province of Ontario. We have to get in the game. We have to get an auto strategy, we need a steel strategy and we need a shipbuilding strategy. Let's put Canadians and Ontarians back to work.

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

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I will be sharing my time, with your indulgence, with the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the MPP for Barrie.

I'm really pleased to have an opportunity to make some remarks related to, obviously, what I believe is an

incredibly strong budget for all people of Ontario, but it's nice to be able to bring a northern Ontario perspective to it, particularly with a number of my colleagues from northern Ontario here, because this truly is a budget that is very much about creating jobs and about increasing economic growth. And I think there's almost no better example of where we can show that than in how much the budget recognizes the needs and the economic opportunities in northern Ontario, and that's reflected in a number of important ways.

It's hard not to start with the very, very important commitment we made related to the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, a program that has been incredibly significant in terms of reducing energy costs for major resource development companies—mining, forestry, the seal sector—by up to 25%. To have a commitment to make that a permanent, ongoing fund of up to \$120 million a year is absolutely huge.

We know that industry obviously responded very strongly to it because industry, more than anything else, in terms of making decisions related to investment, certainly seeks certainty. This, I know, from my discussions with them since we were able to make that announcement and since it was formalized in the budget. So thanks so much to the Minister of Finance; it has meant a great deal in terms of future opportunities in northern Ontario. That's absolutely huge.

Really good news related to our Moving Ontario Forward \$31.5-billion budget figure, \$15 billion of which will be going to build up our infrastructure outside the greater Toronto and Hamilton area—certainly we hear about the incredible needs in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. And we also know that the buildup of public transit is going to be of benefit, may I say, to the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay, already a plant that has a manufacturing facility that employs about 1,400 people, and it may be continuing to grow that employment as public transit needs go on.

In terms of the infrastructure needs in northern Ontario—I speak as the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North. My colleague from Sault Ste. Marie is sitting beside me; my colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin is across the floor, let alone Nipissing and certainly my colleague from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. When we're speaking to our municipal leaders in particular and talking to business and industry about creating jobs, it really is about infrastructure needs. It's about roads and bridges, and it's about highways.

I'm very excited about the fact that, for one thing, our northern highways budget—

Interjection.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I'm sorry; the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. I don't know how I could miss you, sir—a good friend, indeed.

0930

I think we all agree that the increase in the northern highways program—\$580 million, up from \$527 million last year—is really, really important. Over the last 10 years, over \$5 billion has been spent on the northern

highways program. To see that increase is incredibly important. To see priorities put on four-laning projects, certainly in terms of Highway 69, Parry Sound to Sudbury, Thunder Bay to Nipigon, is incredibly important to me as well. We also view as a priority the four-laning between Kenora and the Manitoba border, and we're hoping to continue to move forward on that. These are important. I know also that we ultimately want to see four-laning all across northern Ontario, something that we would love to see some more from the federal government on.

There are so many other things, and I can see already that I'm running out of time.

May I say, particularly with the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure here in the House with me as well, that the Jobs and Prosperity Fund is an incredibly important fund. It has been raised from \$2.5 billion, I believe, to \$2.7 billion. Now it actually includes the forestry sector. That's huge, in all Ontario contexts. Obviously, many of the forest products companies are truly moving into an innovative new phase of production, and that's the key, I believe, to them being able to access the Jobs and Prosperity Fund. That is huge.

Speaking of the forestry sector, congratulations and thank you to the Minister of Finance. Thank you to the Premier. Thank you to the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. The forest access roads program funding has gone up to \$60 million from \$38 million. Again, I think any of our northern members will tell you how important that is to the forestry sector in northern Ontario. This is something that means a great deal to all of us.

I will continue on for a few more minutes, if I may, because this also is an overall reflection of something that I've been proud to be able to say from the moment Kathleen Wynne became Premier on, I believe, February 11, 2013.

Interjection: Good memory.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I remember the day well.

Premier Wynne made it very clear to all of us in our caucus, all of us in government, that indeed northern Ontario was going to be a real priority in a Kathleen Wynne government. That has been reflected, obviously, in this particular budget, but it has been something that has been very, very important.

I know that the Premier—I think it's okay to say this—will be heading up to the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities annual general meeting to speak with them, as will many of our colleagues. We understand how important it is to be able to meet with them and be able to tell our story, and actually have an opportunity to listen to the concerns that are there. I suspect that some of my colleagues will be there as well.

Premier Wynne has made it clear to all of us how northern Ontario really may indeed be the economic future. In that regard, it's hard not to reference the Ring of Fire. In the mining sector in general, we're darned excited about the fact that we've got new mines opening up every year in northern Ontario.

We've got two of them opening up this year: Goldcorp's Cochenour expansion—their mine is opening up

and being commissioned this year, very soon—and Rubicon, the Phoenix Gold project up in Red Lake, as well. There are other projects that are coming close. We're pretty excited about the Premier Gold/Centerra partnership in the Geraldton-Greenstone area.

The commitment and recommitment, may I say, of \$1 billion for infrastructure for the Ring of Fire is absolutely crucial. Again, it's something we would love very much to see matched by the federal government. That's a huge part of the long-term vision our government has for economic development.

Before I sit down—and I suspect they're going to be asking me to give my time up soon to my colleagues—I think it's also important to point out that getting the Connecting Link Program back up and running has been crucial for municipal leaders in northern Ontario, as a reaction to the downloading that was done many years ago. There are a number—this is important—in Sault Ste. Marie. In fact, we were able to make the announcement. My colleague the Minister of Government and Consumer Services—the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie—and I were there with the Minister of Transportation to announce a \$15-million program.

I'm getting the sign to get off the stage. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. This is truly a good budget for northern Ontario and for all of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, as important as it is to listen to what members of this chamber have to say about the budget, be they Liberal, Conservative or NDP, I think it's also important to hear what the general public is saying about our budget away from this place, so let me just run through a few comments from the citizens of Ontario.

The mayor of Sault Ste. Marie: "Our roads need work, our aqueducts need work. We're all aware that our water infrastructure needs some work. The budget was good news in that sense."

The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce: "From a Thunder Bay perspective, of course, wherever there is transit investment, there is an opportunity for Bombardier to increase their timelines and their productions, which is a good thing for creating jobs here."

I rather like this one from the president of Unifor, Dominic Pasqualino: "I think it's excellent news. It's going to solve Toronto's congestion problems and, if Bombardier gets some of the new contracts, it's going to be a real boost for Thunder Bay's economy."

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce caught my interest: "The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce applauds the Ontario government for formalizing its commitment to a fully funded rapid transit project in Hamilton in the 2015 budget tabled today."

Let us hear what the mayor of Barrie says: "The government is doing better than forecast on containing costs, so the deficit is smaller than forecast, which is good."

The Kitchener-Waterloo chamber of commerce: "There are no increases in (business) taxes. That's always a good thing."

The Canadian Environmental Law Association: "The Canadian Environmental Law Association welcomed confirmation of the recently announced Ontario Electricity Support Program in today's provincial budget. This program will provide much needed relief to low-income families ... where too much of their family income is eaten up by energy costs."

Let's have another look here at one from Sault College, an important post-secondary education centre: "There's money in there for aboriginal learners, and 21% of my students at Sault College are aboriginal. That's something I would applaud the government for doing. They also put in \$13 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship programs, and Sault College is heavily involved in" this program for First Nations.

What does industry say? Here's a quote from Robert Hardt, president and CEO of Siemens Canada: "By bringing faculty, students and partner industries together under one roof, the Mechatronics Simulation and Demonstration Centre will capture the enormous synergies of applied learning, research and demonstrations.... A defining feature of this initiative is showcasing Ontario's most promising examples ... in an exhibition-style space that both informs and inspires innovation...."

What does the director of the Child Development Institute say? "I am delighted to learn about the \$20-million expansion" of the Ontario youth action plan for at-risk youth.

We've heard a lot from the practical nurses' association and the important work that they do in our health care system. The association "supports a number of the health care initiatives put forward by the provincial government, including its continued funding for mental health and addiction services and additional support to improve the quality of palliative care...."

What does the executive director of Drinks Ontario say? "We are pleased to see that there are changes ahead for the sale of beverage alcohol in Ontario, and that the government is interested in more meaningful discussion on how best to go about making that a reality."

For the members sitting opposite, what about Rob Keffer, the mayor of Bradford West Gwillimbury? "I shared previously the good news about provincial funding for refurbishing Back St. and Line 9, as well as the doubling of GO train service. Today's budget had more good news: an additional \$80 million for affordable housing, which I hope we can tap into to deliver on our critical need for seniors' housing. The federal government also announced measures related to affordable housing...." I hope that this, together with the province, gets things rolling.

I have another quote from Unifor for members of the third party. Katha Fortier: "Some of the measures in this budget will help secure a stronger future for Ontarians ... 60% of Ontario workers do not have a workplace pension plan. Given the failure of the Harper Conservatives to reform the CPP, the importance of the ORPP—the Ontario pension plan—"cannot be understated...."

"Today's budget included much-needed funding for transportation."

0940

I could go on and on, but let me pick out one that I find particularly informative. Jamie Lim, the president and CEO of the Ontario Forest Industries Association: “We thank Premier Wynne and Minister Mauro for fulfilling their 2014 commitment to ... provide \$60 million in funding for critical resource access road infrastructure in northern and rural Ontario. This is great news because these resource access roads are the foundation of economic development in these regions.”

Speaker, I could go on and on with endorsements about the strength and the quality and the high regard with which this budget has been received, but I think I've captured the point.

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

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'm pleased to stand in support of this budget. I know that the people in my riding are thrilled with the announcements, particularly the building of infrastructure. The municipalities are looking forward to this infusion of funds. They have been waiting for this for some time. Both urban and rural communities will benefit from this budget.

My riding of Barrie is extremely thrilled that they will have more frequent and consistent service for those constituents who must leave our area to go to their jobs. The additions to the GO train schedule will be a wonderful asset to those many, many people who travel back and forth from Barrie to Toronto or points south for their jobs.

It will also be a wonderful way to bring people to Barrie. Barrie has a lot to offer, and this will make it a great place for young families to come and spend a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday afternoon. I can honestly tell you that my family and people I know are looking forward to being able to take the GO train down to Toronto, not have to worry about parking your car on the weekends, and going to a show or to a baseball game or to a Raptors game, and perhaps having a slight libation before you get back on the train to go back to Barrie. Those are things that are very exciting for our riding.

Rural municipalities are also looking forward to this budget. They are eagerly waiting to apply for funds for badly needed roads and bridges. It's very important to rural communities.

Ontario is making the largest investment in infrastructure in the province's history: more than \$130 billion over 10 years, including dedicated funds for Moving Ontario Forward. Every dollar that we receive from broadening the ownership in Hydro One will be placed in the Trillium Trust, to be dedicated for roads, transit and bridges under the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

As outlined in the 2014 budget that was passed last July—my first budget, and a wonderful experience, I might add—Moving Ontario Forward is investing in public transit, transportation and other priority infrastructure across Ontario.

A wonderful side effect of all this infusion of money into transit and infrastructure is the creation of jobs.

Good jobs mean people will be putting money into the economy. When you put money into the economy, the economy grows and Ontario prospers. When we're investing, we're building, and when we're building, we're growing.

The government is committing to balancing the budget by 2017-18, and we're on track to do that. The budget deficit for this year, 2015-16, is forecasted to be \$8.5 billion, the lowest deficit forecast since the onset of the global recession. A balanced budget will sustain the programs and services Ontarians rely on over the long term.

What I like about this budget, and why I ran for this party, is because there is a balanced approach. We're not cutting a whole bunch of jobs. We are infusing money into the province, into the economy, as well as trying to reduce the budget. We've consistently delivered on our commitment to follow the path to balance and to do so in a way that is fiscally responsible and fair. Where there is opportunity and security for every Ontarian, the province will be the best place to live from childhood to retirement.

I do know that I have lived in Barrie all my life—

Interjection.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Pardon me?

Mr. John Yakabuski: What about in retirement, not so good?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Anyway—

Interjection.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: We have now also started the retirement plan—thank you, Mr. Yakabuchi, for—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yakabuski.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Oh. Did I get that wrong?

We—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Sit down, please. I'm glad you two are having a great conversation between each other, but remember me? You've got to go through me. Thanks so much.

Continue.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will go through you.

Last week, I was visiting Roberta Place, which is a long-term-care facility, and they were thrilled that the government has committed money to raise the wages of their personal support workers. This is very important with the seniors because they like continuity. These workers are like family to them and they're pleased that we're looking after them. Thank you, Speaker.

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

Mr. Jack MacLaren: This budget is a roaring success if we want to increase the deficit. This budget is a roaring success if we want to increase the debt. I'll explain what I mean by all of that.

We have increased costs coming in. We have a payroll tax—they call it the Ontario pension plan—which is going to be 1.9% off the employee's paycheque and 1.9% out of the employer's payroll, for 3.8%. That's a tax.

We're going to have a new carbon tax, which will raise the cost of energy to the average consumer or anybody who is buying energy, which is everybody.

We don't have enough money to look after CCACs and to provide care for our seniors, who need help badly. This budget does not provide that. In fact, we're getting cuts. There are hospitals in my riding that are laying people off because this government does not have the money to give to them because they squandered it away on things like gas plant scandals etc. That list is very lengthy.

Not to mention our hydro bills, which are going through the roof with the green energy plan—and of course they keep building more wind turbines. We're going to have something like 1,900 of them along the north shore of Lake Superior—which is wonderful. Just imagine what the cost of that power line will be to get the power back to where the people are, in Toronto and southern Ontario. But we're going to do it, and there are going to be subsidies, and they'll go to offshore companies. I don't know where Samsung is from, but somebody tells me they're in Korea. That's a good way to get rid of money.

You might ask the question, "Why did we not go to our friends in Quebec, who have all kinds of green energy in James Bay, and the money would have stayed in Ontario and it would have been a third of the cost to Ontarians, without subsidies?" But no, we didn't do that.

That's why we have deficits increasing and debt increasing. This budget continues on the mission to impoverish Ontarians.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: I'm so happy I was here this morning to hear some of my colleagues from across the way, particularly the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Yes, my friend, investment in northern Ontario is important. Maintenance of our roads is also important. Making sure that individuals who take our roads in northern Ontario are not putting their lives in danger—which you have absolutely known for the last five years, which you have chosen to turn a blind eye to and not do anything about. That is not what Ontarians want in northern Ontario.

The Ring of Fire, my friend, absolutely is an important development that we need in Ontario. What we do need is for Ontario—these are resources in our backyard. If we have the billion dollars, it's time to start moving with that billion dollars. If you don't know what to do with it, I suggest that you go talk to Noront, KWG and the First Nations who are there who have an idea to share with you. If it's too complex, sit down with them and have a chat so you can get the understanding about how we need to develop the Ring of Fire. Stop blaming Big Brother. Start spending money to get to those First Nations so that they can build their capacity and benefit from the social programs we can bring to those communities by having the roads and rail and electrifying those communities.

0950

With regard to my friend from aboriginal affairs, I absolutely hear you, my friend. What northern and Ontario people are saying—you're absolutely right. They do

want good health care. They do want good education. They do want good infrastructure. They do want good investment. What they don't want is teachers on strike, educational individuals who are struggling to teach their kids. What they don't want is health care sector providers who are not in the hospitals, providing the care we need. What they don't want are scandals with regard to Ornge, eHealth and privatization—and what they don't want is to sell Hydro One.

That's what northern Ontario is telling us. That's what northerners are saying. That's what Ontario is saying. Listen to what they're saying.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Scarborough–Rouge River.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: I am delighted to join in on this little discussion. I just want to thank my two colleagues, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, for their speeches and comments on the budget.

To be honest with you, Mr. Speaker, I think it's a great budget for the province of Ontario. You have to continue to invest in the province if you want to stabilize our economy and if you want to grow the economy.

I sit here on this side, and my friend from the official opposition criticizes the government for its debt. I think he failed to realize that the majority of the debt that we incurred was to build that infrastructure that the previous government had not invested in, especially in the energy field. This government is the one that built 19 new natural gas plants because we had an electricity system that was falling apart. To do that, you have to incur debt.

Interjection.

Mr. Bas Balkissoon: My good friend from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is commenting, too.

On the other hand, my friend from the NDP is complaining that we're not doing enough. It's kind of difficult to understand this whole Legislature. On this side they're saying don't spend money, and on the other side they're saying spend money. I think we found a natural balance.

This government is doing what the public wants. We're responding to Ontarians. We're building infrastructure. We're investing in the talent of our people. We're investing in skilled trades—and I think we'll make a huge difference to this province in the years to come.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm going to have a chance to speak myself in a couple of minutes, but I did want to comment on the rosy picture that gets painted on the other side of the House about the condition that Ontario is in. It is just not in step with reality. We'll hear a little bit about reality when I have my opportunity to speak in a few minutes.

That is the kind of fantasy they've tried to thrust upon the people of Ontario: that somehow, they actually have an idea and control of the fiscal policy in the province of Ontario. Speaker, they are absolutely out of control over there. They're dreaming themselves, and they've deluded themselves for the past 12 years.

We've got an almost \$300-billion debt now in this province—\$299 billion. They have no idea whatsoever how they're going to deal with that. You put that into perspective. They love to chide the federal government. They've been making jokes about Joe Oliver's off-the-cuff remark about Stephen Harper's granddaughter, who doesn't exist yet. But they've been chiding Joe Oliver. Then Kathleen Wynne talks about, "Oh, I won't leave these decisions to our grandchildren."

What is she leaving to her grandchildren, my grandchildren and any other grandchildren or children who are yet to be born? What is she leaving? A legacy of disaster and debt. It's \$300 billion today. What will it be by the time these people are thrown out of office in 2018? We can only imagine. We can only imagine where it will be then because—the finance minister talks about a "path to balance." Quite frankly, he is dreaming. Their point is to get it down to \$8.5 billion this year. That's the easiest \$2.5 billion they're going to knock off of that because they're selling our assets to do it. Once those assets are gone, and they have no other revenue sources to draw from, how are they going to get to the rest of it? Good question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The finance minister has two minutes.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Who's going? Go ahead.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I'm grateful to all of those who have responded: the members from Carleton–Mississippi Mills, Algoma–Manitoulin, Scarborough–Rouge River and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. This is a really important discussion, and I'm grateful for all the comments that were made.

I'm perhaps particularly most sensitive to those made by my colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin because I know that the member for Algoma–Manitoulin, as well as our northern colleagues, understands just how important it is that we do have the right vision for northern Ontario in particular, and how it speaks to the vision for the entire province. I think that really is what our budget expresses: a real vision for the future of the province. There's no question that we've made some bold and some very, very tough decisions, but I believe that ultimately we've made the decisions that strike the right balance, and that is the debate that's taking place.

All I can say, and I'm wishing I had much more time, is when one looks at the future for a part of the province which makes up 87% of the land mass, and only 6% of the population, but where the real economic future of the province may indeed be—I am proud to be part of a government that is showing such strong support for that economic growth in the province. Whether it's the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program, whether it's the northern highways program or whether it's the increase in the forestry access roads funding, all of them are reflections of things that I don't think any of my colleagues on whatever side of the House would be disagreeing are needed to move our economy forward. I certainly stand here proudly.

In terms of the Ring of Fire, we're working very closely—as I think the member from Algoma–Manitou-

lin in particular knows—with all the companies and, right now, perhaps with Noront Resources the most. I invite you to speak to them about the work that we're doing with them. Yes, it is complex, but we want to make sure we get it right. Nothing has changed in that regard, and I can't imagine that you would feel any differently about it.

Regardless, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of this budget. I'm proud of being part of the Kathleen Wynne government and grateful to have had a chance to speak today.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: I promised, Mr. Speaker, I'd have a chance to speak to the budget motion shortly as I was commenting on the Liberals' Kool-Aid-driven dissertation a little bit earlier.

Let's just talk about that debt. I will pick up where he left off. The debt in this province, basically with this budget, will be \$300 billion. In order to pay off debt you have to eliminate the deficit first. According to the finance minister's own path to balance, we're not going to do that before 2017-18. I, myself, on this side of the House—and my colleagues share this view—say that there's no way they're going to get there because they don't have the willingness, the intestinal fortitude to do what is necessary to be done.

Even the little bit they're doing—they're already meeting with tremendous resistance from their former friends, those people who, during the last campaign in 2014, went around saying, "Everything is going to be fine; just support us. Don't let that Hudak guy win because he's going to be your enemy. Keep the alliance with the Liberal Party going, and everything's going to be fine." As we see on a daily basis when we look across the province and we see the numerous and mounting and growing number of students who are not in school, that alliance is crumbling.

The CUPE people who are protesting with contract negotiations that are not going anywhere there—that alliance is crumbling. Yet the government says they're holding the line on all those settlements. Let's talk about the tentative settlement with the Power Workers' Union that they claim was a net zero, yet they're giving 2.75% of the base salary of each one of those workers—a 2.75% value of shares in Hydro One, a company that they're claiming that they're selling 60% of.

1000

If you've got a house and you're going to sell the house, but before the buyer gets there, "We took out the windows. We sold the windows," the value of that house drops. "Oh, did we tell you we took out all the hardwood flooring? You're down to the plywood subfloor throughout the living room." Oops; down goes the value of the house some more.

So the Minister of Energy and the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board president are saying it's a net-zero contract with the Power Workers' Union, but they're giving 2.75% in shares in Hydro One. They're telling the

people, “We’re going to net this amount of money out of the 60% sale of Hydro One,” but in the meantime they’re parsing it off piece by piece so that the asset will be worth far less to any buyer. It’s only common sense. But they try to spin this stuff. I think they do it intentionally. They either deliberately insult the intelligence of the people of Ontario or they’re playing a shady game. If I have to withdraw that, you just tell me, sir, but it sounds to me like they’re playing a shady game and fudging the numbers when they’re doing that kind of stuff.

That’s just one issue, and that’s how it’s hard to get a handle on what is the truth when the Liberals start talking about budget, debt, deficit. It’s hard to get a handle on what is the truth because there’s such a myriad of conflicting pieces of information that come from that side of the House, and I am convinced that it is not by accident. Everything they do over there is by design. It is carefully calculated in the corner office over there on the second floor. Everything is carefully calculated. There is nothing that happens by chance; there is nothing that happens by accident. Everything is clinically determined as to how we might be able to fool the people on this one, confuse the people on that one, hornswoggle them on another couple of things, and the next thing you know, the people are walking around in some kind of a daze, wondering just what the fiscal condition of the province of Ontario is.

You know why they do some of this stuff, Speaker? They try to deflect it—and I know that you’re sitting in the most non-partisan seat in this House at the time being, so I understand the dilemma that it puts you in sometimes. But you know as well as I do that one of the reasons they kind of throw out this conflicting information from time to time is to deflect the people away from the multitude of scandals that they’re hoping they forget or stop talking about.

This government is setting all kinds of records. While it’s record deficits that they set in office—no government has ever had a deficit as high as this government, no government has ever added as much to the debt as this government and no government in the history of Ontario has been the subject of more police investigations. So they are record-breaking. They could probably have a section in the Guinness Book of World Records all by themselves. It could just be called Liberal Legacy of—I have to be careful what I say here—Liberal Legacy of Lies.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You know what to do, don’t you?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, I withdraw that. Shame on me, because I couldn’t think of anything else that fit the alliterative way that I wanted to get that point across.

So here we are with this \$8.5-billion deficit in this budget, yet the government is failing in delivering on its promises of the election. They’re failing Ontarians. They’ve had to resort to a fire sale of one of our biggest assets, in Hydro One.

My predecessor Sean Conway, back when he was the energy critic in 2002, was chiding the then Progressive

Conservative government on their musings about how they might capitalize on the value of Hydro One and privatize it. It never came about. But Sean Conway said—and I’ll paraphrase because I can’t quote him, because I don’t have it in front of me—something to the effect of, “You can’t sell Hydro One. It is the central nervous system of Ontario.” You know how the juice, the electricity, the power runs through all those wires all across this province, whether it’s transmission or distribution or whatever? He called that the central nervous system of Ontario. How could you sell it? He said that it’s wrong. Dalton McGuinty said, “You can’t do it, and you haven’t campaigned on it.”

But what have we got here with the Liberals? They have a vague reference to “maximizing assets” and whatever, that was in that 2014 budget. It is as clear as mud. Then they take that, and all of a sudden, they say, “That was the mandate from the people to sell Hydro One.” Wow.

I’ll tell you, if I was that unclear to my children when they were teenagers, or if my parents were as unclear to me when I was a teenager and getting the car, well, I’ll tell you, some things really would have been wrong. No, they left me with some clear directions, as we left our kids with some clear directions, when they were going out with the car, when they were teenagers.

But according to this Liberal government, they can take any vague reference and call that an absolute mandate to do whatever they sought.

You see, that is part of that design program I’m talking about, where nothing is by accident. Nothing in the corner office happens by chance. They probably hired somebody like Ed Clark and paid \$7 million under the table somewhere to come up with the wording.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You’ll withdraw the one comment.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I withdraw.

What I was doing, Speaker, was referring to the fact that they paid \$7 million to come up with this Ed Clark report. I’ll talk about the Beer Store if I get a chance, too.

But it’s amazing. I think what happens is sometimes, when I’m speaking in this House, the clock accelerates. That could be something that is determined by people in the corner office too. All of a sudden, I’m just getting to the juicy parts, and the clock is running out.

Somewhere in that corner office, they came up with a scheme that said, “Okay, let’s pay somebody—these wordsmith guys—the guy who can come up with these fancy phrases that will really say nothing but we’ll be able to interpret and claim that it gives us the right to do anything.” That’s how the Liberal government works over there.

What do we want to talk about next? It’s just a cornucopia of things that we could talk about. Oh, let’s talk about the winter maintenance program. That is the next real scandal. The next real scandal is the winter maintenance program.

You know, Speaker, I am reluctant to go down this path, but I’m almost forced to, because during the last

election, the Premier got up on more than one occasion and, during the campaign, raised the spectre of Walkerton and put that squarely on the shoulders of Tim Hudak, who was a member of the Harris government at the time.

If we examine the O'Connor report and all of the recommendations that were in it, we're clear that—and this is standard procedure for any kind of report. They're going to make sure that the government—because the government is the largest entity involved—takes a lot of the responsibility in trying to ensure that something like this doesn't repeat itself.

We all are aware of what was in the O'Connor report. But what the Liberals don't want to talk about, that was also clear in there, was the fact of the failure of public servants—two people in particular, the Koebel brothers—who deliberately falsified information when they knew there was *E. coli* in the water system of Walkerton, and denied that information and failed to report it. That was the single biggest component that led to seven deaths in Walkerton.

But Kathleen Wynne, while she was campaigning, blamed—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order: the member from Northumberland—Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Speaker, I would just ask that the member get back to Bill 91.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I believe it is a budget motion—

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Budget motion—I apologize—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The speakers having a little altercation there without me being involved: That will end.

Secondly, when I feel that he's gone too far, I'll let him know. Thank you, to the member from Northumberland.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Very good, Speaker.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The fact of the matter is, Speaker—and I thank you for your indulgence—during a budget motion, the tradition in this House is that we can speak about whatever we feel is pertinent that is wrong with the government. I could speak for 27 days non-stop. Just hook me up to a catheter and I'll get going, because there's no limit of stuff that we could talk about in this government.

Anyway, during that campaign, the spectre of that was raised on a repeated basis. That was the failure of the Koebel brothers—the illegal acts. They were convicted of their illegal acts.

1010

But now let's talk about the winter maintenance program of this government. This was not the failure of an individual. This was not an illegal act. This was a deliberate policy decision. In 2009, long after the privatization of highway maintenance contracts, this government made a conscious decision to reduce the amount of winter maintenance on our highways, a conscious decision to lower the number of pieces of equipment in key areas. Why? To save \$30 million or \$35 million.

Let's put this into perspective. This is the same government that wasted \$1.1 billion on the gas plant scandal, \$2 billion on the eHealth scandal—

Interjection: Smart meters.

Mr. John Yakabuski:—smart meters that they said would cost \$1 billion and it came in at \$1.9 billion.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: The MaRS bailout.

Mr. John Yakabuski: The MaRS bailout. I can't list them all because I'll be out of time, and that's just the list. The list would use up all the time.

They made a conscious decision to reduce highway maintenance in this province, a \$30-million saving. Seven people in Walkerton—as a result of an illegal act that could have been prevented if people were doing their job. How many people? There are up to 200, I believe, legal actions against the government as a result of accidents on your highways, as a result of your decision to reduce maintenance on our highways.

The prime responsibility of the government is to ensure that our highways are safe. It is not the responsibility of the contractor. The contractor is responsible for the contract that they have signed. It is the government's ultimate responsibility to ensure that our highways are safe.

So a decision was made in 2009 to reduce the winter maintenance on our highways. First of all, for years they denied that it was being reduced. They said that's not the case. But do you know what happened? It might have been my colleague. Was it you that brought the motion?

Mr. Steve Clark: Yes, it was.

Mr. John Yakabuski: My colleague from Leeds—Grenville brought the motion because he lives along the 401 there, one of the worst stretches, where they reduced from 59 or 55 pieces of equipment to 36. I don't know the exact numbers, but it was a significant drop in the number of pieces of equipment, and there were a number of accidents as a result of that. So he brought that to the Auditor General. The Auditor General did an investigation. The report was clear: The government has failed. The government has failed the people of Ontario. The government made a \$30-million decision to put lives at risk.

Now, as a result, you have 200 court cases on your table. How much is it going to cost to fight those court cases? How much is it going to cost to fight those court cases here in the province of Ontario? How much more will you put the families through? How much more will you put the families through who are on the other side of that court case? How much more will you put those families through? I know you people want to bury this. You want to bury this issue as fast as you can, but this is your issue. You can't blame this on any other government. This government is famous for wanting to go back to George Drew and Leslie Frost, but their favourite target is, of course, Mike Harris.

Interjection.

Mr. John Yakabuski: This government. I'm not speaking about you specifically, Minister. I'm talking about your government in general. In general, when things are going wrong, they blame somebody else.

But this is entirely—entirely—the Liberals' problem, and they will have to face it, they will have to deal with it

and they will have to accept the consequences. But I don't think this one is going away any time soon.

So let's talk about hydro for a moment, because, believe it or not, I've got less than three minutes. Hydro went up 15% on May 1. On May 13, which is just two weeks from today—

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No, next week. A week from today, we're going to have protesters here at Queen's Park. They are not coming for any other reason but that they are so frustrated with the hydro policies, the energy policies, of your government which are driving them personally, and businesses in their localities into bankruptcy.

People don't come here because they're not happy with the weather; they're coming here because they're so frustrated that you people decided your Green Energy Act in 2009—George Smitherman's great revelation; again, probably conjured up in the corner office—was going to change the world here in Ontario. It was going to cost people about 1% a year—1% a year. Well, all we've seen is hydro prices more than triple what they were in 2003.

You guys will go on about how you've rebuilt the system, and this and that. You've built all kinds of wind turbines that we don't need. You're taking that power, and you're giving it away. You're actually paying Quebec, which has a surplus of hydraulic capacity, to take that during the nighttime when we're not using it because you can't shut down those turbines; they just keep going.

It's just the worst possible solution to an energy problem you could ever conceive of. You couldn't come up with a worse plan if the decision was, "Find out what is the worst thing we can do for energy in this province and then adapt it." You wouldn't have come up with something as bad as the one you actually came up with.

It is a disaster. It is hurting our economy. It will continue to hurt our economy for decades because of the contracts that you have signed. That's why those people are coming down here next week: because they can't take it any longer. The name of their protest is "Enough Is Enough."

When it comes down to this government and your failures and your lack of compassion for the people and the damage that you've laid upon them, I guess the question for myself, my colleagues and, I think, every reasonable person in the province of Ontario is, "When is enough just too much?"

Debate deemed adjourned.

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

The House recessed from 1017 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just before we commence with introductions of visitors, I understand that we've got quite a few. If you keep them short and

brief, without explanations or anything else, I would like to get through all of the introductions. Please be cognizant of that request.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I'd like to welcome the eye physicians and surgeons who are here today for their lobby day. In the gallery shortly will be Dr. Tim Hillson, Dr. Kylene McReelis and Amanda Meek. I hope the members will take time to attend their reception this evening and learn more about their work. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Today we have many friends here affected by Lyme disease. I want to introduce Linda and David Kelso, Jeanne Pacey, Dr. Bev Bateman, Debra Fraleigh, Kim Kerr, Jessica Bell, the Ontario Lyme Alliance, CanLyme, the G. Magnotta Foundation for Vector-Borne Diseases, along with the Sun County Lyme disease support group, Hamilton Lyme Disease Support Group, Toronto Lyme disease support group and the York North Lyme Support Group.

I challenge everybody to come outside at the end of question period for the Take a Bite Out of Lyme Disease campaign.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Please join me in welcoming Nicole Cooper and Scott Bryan, who are constituents of mine and the proud parents of page captain Colin Bryan. Welcome.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I wish to introduce Stephanie Anne Carty, a former constituent, and her co-worker on secondment from India, Sachin Vadgama.

Also, Susan Wells is here from Haldimand-Norfolk Reach for family services day.

Thirdly, it goes without saying that so many people are here with respect to awareness of Lyme disease. In particular, I wish to introduce constituent Will Yelland and his family up in the top corner.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I hope everyone will join me in welcoming Aaron Shull from the Centre for International Governance Innovation in Waterloo, as well as Sue Gillespie, the CEO of Carizon Family and Community Services in Kitchener. Like many others, Sue is here today for family service day at the Legislature. Welcome.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: It is family service day. There's a luncheon today in room 228-230. I hope everybody can attend.

We have some guests from Thunder Bay: from the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre, up in the public gallery, Nancy Chamberlain, the executive director; and my dear friend, board member Lori Golab. Welcome to both of you.

From the Catholic Family Development Centre is Carol Cline, executive director, and Ms. Bert Kreps, who is the board chair.

Welcome to them all.

Please come to the luncheon.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's a proud day for the riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex. I'd like to introduce in the gallery Cheryl and Nathaniel Abbate, and Patrick McNorton, here on behalf of the Sun County Lyme awareness group, and also, from Family Service Kent, executive director Brad Davis and board chair Leo Heuvelmans. Welcome.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm delighted to welcome, from Family Service Thames Valley, Louise Pitre, who is executive director, and Shelley Yeo, who is a board member. Thank you for coming.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I would also like to recognize a number of individuals from Family Service Ontario's 2015 board of directors: president Alan McQuarrie from North Bay; vice-president Robert Campbell from Peterborough; secretary Lori Golab from Thunder Bay; and Connie McLeod from Thunder Bay.

Also, we have Elisha Laker, executive director, Family Services York Region.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: It gives me great honour to introduce Wayne Tompkins from Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Wayne is the grandfather of page Colton Tompkins.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Twice this week I've had people from Sudbury, and this time it's Lynne Lamontagne. She's the executive director of Sudbury Counselling Centre—le Centre de counselling de Sudbury. Bienvenue, Lynne.

Hon. Jeff Leal: The members in the west public gallery today: I have Casey Ready, executive director of the Community Counselling and Resource Centre for Peterborough, and other folks from Peterborough who are here for family service day.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today Mark Creedon, interim executive director of Catholic Family Services Simcoe County, and Michelle Bergin, client services manager for the same organization. Welcome.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am pleased to welcome the following staff who work for Family Services of Durham, serving the people of Durham in nine locations, especially Oshawa: acting director Dennis Holmes and family counsellors Terri Van Exan, Herb Wiseman, Jody McKenna and Marusia Laschuk.

Mr. Joe Dickson: As a follow-up to Family Services of Durham, which my good colleague from Oshawa has just introduced, there is also the pleasure to introduce the executive director of Catholic Family Services of Durham, Elizabeth Pierce, and her board vice-chair, Stan MacLellan, to the Legislature today.

Also, Mr. Speaker, if I may, on Lyme disease, there is a victim attempting to get here this morning from my area, Wendy Lee Gonzales, and if she doesn't make it, her husband, Alex, will.

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome Eleanor Cox of Bancroft, drawing attention to Lyme disease today.

Also, my good friend in the west members' gallery—I know you'll do a more formal introduction—Phil Gillies is here today. It's good to see Phil.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Algoma-Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: On a point of order—*Interjections.*

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Scarborough-Agincourt.

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to introduce five other members of the Family Service Ontario 2015 board of

directors: Shelley McCarthy from Brantford, Lynne Dupuis from Sudbury, Sharon Mayne Devine from Brampton, Lynne Lamontagne from Sudbury, and Brad Davis from Chatham. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to welcome Margo and Michael Timmins, members of the Cowboy Junkies. They will be inducted into the Canadian hall of fame, and are residents of the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Hon. Brad Duguid: I need to introduce Lianne Spencer and her inspiring daughter Page, who are up in the galleries here today for Lyme disease awareness day.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'd like to introduce Ray Houde, director of Counselling and Support Services of SD&G. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I'd like to introduce some interns today. Erich Schmidt, Aashish Oberoi, and Mark Poopalapillai are here today.

A young constituent from my hometown, Natasha Crombie, is here as well.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'd like to introduce Alan McQuarrie, executive director of the Community Counselling Centre of Nipissing, and Tammi McKenzie, a volunteer board member at the community counselling centre.

Mr. Arthur Potts: It's a great pleasure to welcome page captain Afiyah Islam, here with her mother, Ahama Munmun; her sister Samia Islam; and her brother Mahazib Ashraf Shownik, from Crescent Town in Beaches-East York.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to welcome Amy Terrill, who's a resident of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock and is also here with Music Canada as a vice-president. Welcome, Amy.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: It gives me unbridled joy to also welcome Michael and Margo Timmins of the Canadian band Cowboy Junkies; Steve Kane, the president of Warner Music Canada, who will also be inducted into the Canadian hall of fame for music; and all the other members here for Music Canada and the CARAS association.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would like to welcome Kim Kerr from the riding of Dufferin-Caledon. She's a great volunteer and advocate for Lyme disease, and you've got to see her green car.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I'm not sure if he's here yet, but somewhere in Queen's Park today we have Scott Maxwell, the executive director of Wounded Warriors Canada, a tireless advocate for veterans. And he's my former executive assistant. He was so helpful when I was first elected. Welcome, Scott.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: It gives me great pleasure to introduce a new, hard-working intern here at the Legislature: Claire Matlock, who is also my daughter.

I would also like to mention Sue Gillespie, who works just across the street from my constituency office in Kitchener. Welcome.

1040

Hon. David Zimmer: I'd like to welcome Natasha Crombie and Theo Poenaru to the Legislature today.

They are interns and will be interning at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I'm very excited to welcome a constituent of mine, Erin Benjamin, who is the executive director of Music Canada Live, but most importantly, she is Oliver's mom. Erin, welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Just in case there's anybody else here today who wasn't introduced, welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): If you check Hansard, I used to do that too.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It's the moustache caucus, come on.

With us in the members' gallery, from the riding of Brantford, from the 32nd and the 33rd Parliaments: Mr. Phil Gillies. Welcome.

WEARING OF RIBBONS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I told the member to hold it, so now I will ask him to make his point of order.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I believe we have unanimous consent that all members be permitted to wear ribbons in recognition of Lyme Disease Awareness Month.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Algoma-Manitoulin is seeking unanimous consent to wear the ribbons. I believe that all members have access to those ribbons. Do we agree? Agreed.

As a reminder, we tend not to wear them until we get the unanimous consent, because it's seen as a prop until such time. So, as a reminder, please.

We have a point of order from the member from Leeds-Grenville.

Mr. Steve Clark: Point of privilege: It's come to my attention—and this is my earliest opportunity to bring it to your attention and to the attention of the House—that on April 14, 2015, more than a week prior to the Liberal budget being presented in this House, the government signed tentative contracts with the Ontario Power Generation workers, allowing them access to shares from the sale of—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You need to have written notice of that, because that's not a point of order.

Mr. Steve Clark: No; but what I'm asking is—you made a decision yesterday that we submit to you, by 3 p.m. yesterday, information. I'm asking you to amend your decision so I can provide you this information about this tentative contract.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm going to rule on the point of order, and the reality is, I'm not going to accept that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I would hope no one is challenging the Chair.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Premier. Premier, it's been one week since the auditor pulled back the curtain on your negligent inaction with substandard winter road maintenance contracts, putting lives at risk to save a few bucks. For one week, you and your rookie minister have refused apologies, claiming that this time, you're really going to fix it—just wait a year.

Premier, we've heard your claims before, and they've been empty words. Arrogant claims of North American road safety completely ignore the grief of families who've lost loved ones—those close to Barrie residents Alyssa McKeown, 17; her cousin Jessica Chamberland, 18; and Sudbury residents Torry McIntyre-Courville, 18; and Cole Howard, 19, all killed along Highway 69 in January 2012, despite taking all precautions.

Premier, please, no more empty words. Take responsibility, apologize and provide immediate action to prevent tragic winter deaths mounting under your watch.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, before I answer the question, I want to acknowledge the election of two new Premiers this week. I want to congratulate Wade MacLauchlan of PEI on his election on Monday. I also want to take a moment to congratulate Rachel Notley for her election victory in Alberta last night. And I want to acknowledge Jim Prentice and thank him for his service. I enjoyed working with him for the time that he was Premier.

I look forward to working with both Premiers. As you know, Mr. Speaker, I believe that when Premiers work together, we can benefit the whole country. Congratulations to both new Premiers.

To the member opposite, I know that the Minister of Transportation is going to want to comment. We thank the Auditor General for her report. We thank her for the recommendations. As the member opposite knows, we had already begun an internal review. There had already been changes made. There had been more equipment bought. There had been more staff hired. I know that the Minister of Transportation will want to fill in the details in the—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As always, I'm starting early.

Supplementary?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Premier, the Auditor General is clear: Your government knowingly put the lives of motorists at increased risk. Over the 2011 Christmas break, crashes on northern highways left nine children dead. The Auditor General told us that you blatantly ignored warnings of staff and engineers.

For five years, you knew the contracts were faulty. You didn't act, and people died. Eight-year-old Kaitlyn McPherson, Andrew Beland, Cole Howard, Torry McIntyre-Courville, Jessica Chamberland, Alyssa

McKeown, Hillary Afelski, Zabrina Rekowski, Keegan Melville—all of these kids were killed over a one-week period.

Premier, can you muster even an ounce of integrity and apologize to their families?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to thank both members from the opposition caucus for their questions today. As the Premier has already said this morning and as I said last week and yesterday as well, we do thank the auditor for her report. There were eight recommendations contained in that report. The Ministry of Transportation accepts all of those recommendations.

I also accept the responsibility of making sure that, as we go forward, we continue to provide the resources and continue to make sure that our area maintenance contractors have a very clear understanding of their contractual obligations. We will keep building on the progress that was contained in and that flowed from the internal review that the ministry launched in 2013, which was before the public accounts committee asked the auditor to go and conduct a review.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: To the Premier. Premier, Melanie Watson was a 34-year-old mother of two young children and a loving wife. She tragically lost her life in January 2014 when her car lost control as a result of uncleared snowdrifts on Highway 7 outside of Carleton Place.

Your Minister of Transportation has stated in this Legislature that, despite cutbacks to road maintenance, you hired more inspectors—instead of more plows, salt, and sand. Premier, this section of Highway 7 had countless complaints against it to the MTO about drifting snow and uncleared banks. Yet not one of your inspectors did anything about that. Your government saved a few bucks and put the lives of Ontario drivers at risk with tragic consequences.

Premier, will you take responsibility and apologize to the family of Melanie Watson?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'll thank this member as well for his question and his interest in this very important file. I know that it might be difficult for the opposition to listen to the complete answer that we provide, but in addition to the 20 inspectors that were brought forward and were brought on by the ministry as a result of our internal review in 2013—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: In addition to those 20 inspectors, as I've said repeatedly, following our internal review, we have added 105 new pieces of equipment, 55 pieces of equipment, largely for truck climbing and passing lanes in northern Ontario; and 50 pieces of equipment to help deal with ramps and shoulders in southern Ontario, including—

Mr. Steve Clark: Five years. You've turned a blind eye for five years.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville—I don't think he heard me because he was talking to somebody. The member from Leeds–Grenville, second time.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I just want to stress so it is clearly understood that those 105 additional pieces of equipment were brought on and were put into use as a result of the Ministry of Transportation's internal review following the winter of 2013-14, not as a result—

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

New question.

1050

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: My question is for the Minister of Education. Minister, you've said that you were perplexed, mystified and had no idea why these boards were striking. Then you blamed the strikes on local issues time and time again. That's a story that no one is buying anymore. Now, you say kids aren't in the classroom because teachers have a "general desire to strike." The other side of the table is dumbfounded by your remarks.

Minister, it's your job to know why these boards are striking and it's your job to get these students the education that they deserve. Because of your inaction, will you resign before you cost these students the rest of their school year?

Hon. Liz Sandals: The answer to that is no.

I'm almost uncertain as to where to go with that question because there are so many muddled facts in it. I think what I'll just do is review what's going on. We have three boards where the secondary teachers are in a local strike position. I will continue to say that there really has been no clear articulation as to why those local unions have gone on a local strike.

What we know is that all three of the boards remain ready and willing to negotiate with their local unions. We know that the Peel board in particular was there until after midnight on Sunday trying to reach a local agreement. I actually want to commend the board—

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

Hon. Liz Sandals: —for the effort that they made.

What I can tell—

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. A reminder to this minister and everyone: When I stand, you sit, and when I say, "Thank you," that's your signal that your time is up, so stop.

Supplementary?

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Again to the Minister of Education: When you introduced Bill 122, you promised "a clear and consistent labour framework that works for all parties." Your two-tiered train wreck of a system isn't working for anyone and you aren't working for these students. Nearly 72,000 students aren't in the classroom

today. Over 800,000 more will be impacted by Monday, and it seems like you just simply shrug this off.

Minister, what are you saying to the students and their parents who are worried about the end of the school year?

Hon. Liz Sandals: What I will say to the students is that we know that the only way to resolve this is to get to the table and negotiate. We remain absolutely committed to negotiating a collective agreement because that's the way we can make sure that every student, regardless of whether they're an elementary or secondary student, is back in the classroom.

We remain committed to negotiating with the secondary teachers and with the elementary teachers, and I want that to be absolutely clear: That's the way to labour peace. It's the way that the Tories, when they were in control, never, ever figured out—how to negotiate. It's also absolutely contrary—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Nepean–Carleton will come to order.

One wrap-up sentence.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I just want to repeat: We are willing to negotiate. That's how we solve the problem.

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

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Next thing you know, she'll be naming Leslie Frost for the turmoil they're in today.

Minister, this is a quote from you: "This is going to make it a whole lot easier for everybody because we know the rules." That was after the vote on Bill 122.

Here's a quote from your Premier: "It is my responsibility to light whatever fires I need to light under our folks to get that deal and get it in a way that fits within our parameters."

Minister, clearly the two-tiered train wreck of a bargaining system is not working. I think the Premier should be lighting the fire under you, and if you're afraid of the heat, you should resign immediately.

You being mystified is not helping our parents and teachers. Are you intending on ignoring these strikes and the negative impacts right through to the end of the school year, Minister?

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I actually have a question for the member opposite. I'd like to know who it is he thinks shouldn't be at the central table. Is it the government that shouldn't be there? Because we supply the money. Is it the school board that shouldn't be there? They're the employers. Is it the teacher unions that shouldn't be there? That was the way you wanted it. You just wanted to take over and not have the teacher unions there. Just who is it that you wouldn't have at the central table? Tell me that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Start the clock. I will also remind all members of third-person discussion through the Chair. By going through the Speaker, we resist the temptation to elevate the temperature. I remind you all. New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'd like to begin by congratulating Premier-elect Rachel Notley on her victory in Alberta for the NDP yesterday, as the Premier did, as well as the Premier of PEI, Wade MacLauchlan.

My question is for the Premier. Selling off Hydro will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout northern Ontario. My question is—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. All members have a right to put a question that I can hear and an answer that I can hear. Please.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Selling off Hydro will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout northern Ontario. My question is: How many committee hearings will the Premier hold in northern Ontario on her privatization budget and her Hydro One sell-off?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party knows that there are six days of hearings, which is exponentially more than previous parties have had on budget hearings. She also knows that the changes that we are making as a result of the recommendations that Ed Clark and his panel brought forward are being made because we know that we need to invest in infrastructure.

The leader of the third party apparently doesn't believe that investing in the roads and the bridges that are needed in the north should be a priority. She doesn't believe that expanding Highway 11/17 is important. She doesn't believe that building bridges in northern Ontario is important. We know that it is. We know that if the economy is going to thrive, we must make those investments. That's why we're making the changes in assets that we are. We think that it would be a good thing if she supported us in those investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Never will the New Democrats support the sell-off of our public assets that are owned by the people of this province. Selling off Hydro One will have major impacts for families and businesses throughout southwestern Ontario.

My question to the Premier is: Will she have committee hearings in southwestern Ontario on her privatization budget and the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Let's just look at where the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs hearings were held in advance of the budget: Windsor, London, Toronto, Mississauga, Cambridge, Ottawa, Fort Frances, Sudbury, Cornwall, Fort Erie. So in fact there has been a conversation with people across this province in the leadup to the budget. There will be six days of hearings; hearings that anyone from around the province

can delegate to or can feed into. So in fact there has been a very clear and robust conversation with the people of Ontario, and we will continue to have that conversation, going forward.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Unfortunately, in the Premier's litany list of places that they visited, not once did anybody hear that they were planning to sell off Hydro One, in those pre-budget hearings. Selling off Hydro One will have major impacts on the businesses and people throughout eastern Ontario.

My question to the Premier is: How many committee hearings will the Premier hold in eastern Ontario on her privatization budget and the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What the leader of the third party never talks about is the impact if we do not make the investments that we are proposing, if we do not invest in the roads and the bridges and the transit that are so desperately needed.

The leader of the third party also doesn't talk about the fact that we ran on this.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

1100

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The text of our budget says this: "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario."

We ran on that. It was in our budget. It was in our platform. We've been very clear that we needed to use the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario—

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

New question.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier.

The Premier knows very well that she did not run on selling Hydro One. She just admitted it yet again, Speaker.

Yesterday, she said, "We ran on reviewing our assets." My question is, does the Premier think that reviewing assets and selling Hydro One are exactly the same thing?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: What I think are the same thing is what we said, which was we were going to look at the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario, and we were going to work to maximize those assets to make sure that we could have the money to invest in new assets. That's exactly what Ed Clark and his panel have done. That's what we ran on, so we're doing exactly what we said we were going to do.

But the leader of the third party has no plan to make the investments that we have said we're committed to. She has no plan for investing in transit. She puts forward

no options for investing in the roads and the bridges that are needed in this province.

We have the responsibility, as government, to grow this economy. Part of that must be the investment in infrastructure.

Interjections.

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

Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The cost of hydro has major impacts on the family budget. It has major impacts on job creation. The sell-off will impact both of those things. It will impact economic growth. It will impact productivity. It is a huge, big deal.

The Premier was not upfront with the people in May 2014, and she doesn't want to hear from the people in May 2015. Why is the Premier trying to shut out the people who will be paying the price for her wrong decision for generations to come?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: The leader of the third party knows full well that the regulatory protections that are in place today will be in place once we move in terms of the broadening of the ownership for Hydro One. She knows that full well.

She knows that the Ontario Energy Board sets prices today. She knows they will set prices—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek—second time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: She knows that those regulatory protections are in place. She also knows that retaining 40% ownership by the government is the protection that must stay in place for the people of the province.

I think she also knows that investment in infrastructure is critical, but she has no plan to do that, and she has no alternatives to bring forward. We have the responsibility to make those investments.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'd think that the Premier of the province would have a responsibility to be upfront with Ontarians about her plan to sell off Hydro One, but she will still not use that word. She will not use the word "sell." She didn't run on selling Hydro One, and everybody knows it.

I have some suggestions for the Premier. If the Premier doesn't want to consult with Ontarians, perhaps she could broaden public input, or perhaps she could unlock Ontarians' ideas, or maybe maximize public participation, or review what Ontarians have to say. Speaker, you don't have to call them "public hearings." She doesn't have to call them "public hearings."

Will the Premier actually listen to Ontarians, in whatever way she wants to call it, but just stop the sell-off of Hydro One before it is too late?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: First of all, the 2014 budget said specifically that we would study repurposing assets, including our energy agencies. It was clear, and it was strategic.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Essex.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: About selling off, selling off, selling off: The legislation states, “The minister on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario shall not sell, dispose of or otherwise divest any common shares of Hydro One Inc. if the sale, disposal or divestment would result in the minister on behalf of Her Majesty in right of Ontario owning a number of common shares that is less than 40 %....”

We also have provisions in governance that require two thirds’ permission to make significant decisions moving forward. So we still have control, and most importantly, we are investing in assets, which they will not.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question as well is to the Premier. The government and the third party can wax philosophical about whether or not we’re going to sell public assets—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That’s why I’m standing.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Essex, second time.

Carry on.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The government reached a deal with the Power Workers’ Union on April 14. That was two days before the release of the Clark report and nine days before the provincial budget, which by the way, did not include any increase in infrastructure funding. Secondly, you only decided that you were going to pay down the debt after the leader of the official opposition pointed out that it was the law.

That means these shares were bargained away before the public knew anything about the sale of Hydro One. Isn’t it true that the government is not concerned with funding infrastructure from this deal, nor is it prepared to pay down the debt? It’s actually to sell off shares to fund pension plans. The question is, who’s next?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We made it clear in the budget of 2014, in the economic statement of 2014 as well. We made it clear in our platform when we ran for re-election, and we made it clear in this budget as to what we are doing. Yes, we are dealing with all stakeholders that are involved. We are consulting with many Ontarians. We have done so for the past almost two years in regard to what we are going to do to invest in infrastructure, invest in transit, invest in the things that are going to make us competitive long term and reinvest those holdings that

we have to make even more money for the people of Ontario, including those who work in the very industries that we’re talking about. We want everybody to be at their best.

Negotiations are under way. Ratification has not occurred. But I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker: It is a net-zero deal. All of us are going to benefit from what we are doing going forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I’d like to go back to the Premier on this, Speaker, because I think it’s important that the Premier take responsibility for what her government is doing and how it’s communicating to the public in this province.

They never intended to sell Hydro One to fund infrastructure or to pay down the debt. In fact, we now know, with the secret deal that occurred on April 14, that the real profits that were going toward the Hydro One sale were intended to go to pay off a pension plan to buy labour peace. The question then becomes: Who’s next? Nurses? Is it teachers? Who’s going to benefit from the sale of Hydro One? Certainly not the taxpayers.

That’s why I think it’s important that, as the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has pointed out, the parliamentary budget officer and the Auditor General must review this deal to find out what exactly is in the fine print, because we simply do not trust what this Liberal government is doing. Will you commit to that review? Yes—

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

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: The same Financial Accountability Officer the members opposite voted against? They voted against the very issues that they ran on themselves.

We have put forward a Trillium Trust that makes it very specific: Dollar for dollar that’s generated from the maximization of our assets will be reinvested in infrastructure. It was very clear in a separate lock-up for the benefit of understanding what we are proposing to do, and that is, a component of it does go towards debt. So we are being very clear.

The member is talking about things that have yet to come to fruition because negotiations are still under way, and when they are done, it will be very transparent and very open, and we have been up until this point. We’ll continue to do so not only for the benefit of the workers and not only for the benefit of those in the broader public who ultimately will own a broader ownership of Hydro One, but the people of Ontario as well, because all of it will be reinvested for the benefit of them and their future.

1110

TEACHERS’ LABOUR DISPUTES

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday the Minister of Education said that class caps

are negotiated locally and not talked about at the central table, but for weeks she has not been sure why local boards in Durham, Rainbow and Peel are on strike.

Premier, maybe your government is so mystified because at one time the Liberals believed, to quote Mr. McGuinty, that “smaller class sizes allow students to get more of the attention they need to learn to read, write and do math at a high level.” The teachers have been very clear that this dispute is all about keeping class sizes manageable for the benefit of students. Liberal flip-flopping on this issue is quite perplexing.

Will the Premier finally admit that more than a decade of this government’s chronic underfunding of education and flip-flopping on class caps are forcing students and families to pay the price?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would just simply like to repeat what I said before, which is that we are absolutely committed to negotiations. I think it’s unfortunate that I’m now hearing about issues that might be at the central table one place, the local table another place, and the elementary and secondary negotiations actually are getting quite confused in the comments that I’m hearing from the opposition.

When we’re talking about early literacy and early numeracy, we’re talking about making sure that we pay a lot of attention to that at the primary and junior years. We’ve introduced the full-day kindergarten program to make sure that we have our children well prepared. I can assure the member that none of the work that we have done with FDK is—

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I think Bill 115 shows this government’s commitment to negotiating fairly.

Again to the Premier: The Premier and the Minister of Education seem to call local issues “central” and central issues “local” when it’s convenient, but at the end of the day it’s her government that sets the priorities for education.

The Premier’s priorities for education are clear: cutting \$250 million from education this year, cutting \$6 million from special education and closing 88 good neighbourhood schools.

In response to labour action forced by these overwhelming cuts, the Premier and her government have taken to the blame game, saying teachers wanted to go on strike. Will this government stop blaming everyone but themselves and finally take responsibility for creating chaos in our schools?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I just want to be absolutely clear. Education funding last year: \$22.5 billion. Education funding this year: \$22.5 billion. Special education funding has not been cut. So the accusations are just simply inaccurate.

What is interesting is that while we committed \$22.5 billion last year and continue to do that, the NDP platform was actually to take our numbers and cut \$600 mil-

lion extra. That was the very flimsy platform they were running on. It’s actually the NDP that promised to cut education funding, not the Liberals. Ours is the same.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member asked the question.

New question.

MUSIC INDUSTRY

Mr. Arthur Potts: My question is to the Minister of Finance. This week is Canadian Music Week, a great time to celebrate our Canadian and Ontario musicians—such as the members of the Cowboy Junkies who are here today—to celebrate their contributions to the vibrant and diverse cultural landscapes in the province of Ontario.

This year, homegrown talent such as Kiesza, Lights, past Juno award winner Dan Hill, who is a constituent, or upcoming stars like a band in the Beach called The Beaches may well be among the many performers who take the stage this week.

Canadian Music Week is a great example of how music performs as a key economic driver in Ontario as well as an important part of Ontario’s cultural landscape. In addition to great music, Canadian Music Week has an estimated economic impact of approximately \$15 million. It supports some 230 full-time and countless part-time jobs and is bringing tourism to Ontario.

Canadian Music Week estimates that over 40% of attendees come from the GTA—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the member from Beaches–East York for this very important—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The two-way dialogue that’s going on right in front of the chair is not helpful.

Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Once again, I would like to thank the member from Beaches–East York for a very important question.

Applause.

Hon. Charles Sousa: And you should be clapping, because Ontario is home to Canada’s largest and one of the world’s most diversified music sectors. Ontario’s music industry represents over 80% of Canada’s total music industry revenue and generates over \$429 million in revenue for the province every year.

Our government is committed to strengthening this critical industry. We took a strategic step forward to develop the live music industry in Ontario by launching the Live Music Strategy in 2012 and the Ontario Music Fund in 2013—which over \$19 million in funding has now been provided to support the live music industry through the music fund and Celebrate Ontario.

Now, more than 90 unique music festivals across the province have occurred. The Ontario Festival of Small

Halls in the east to the Kingsville Folk Music Festival in the southwest to the Budweiser music festival in the north are creating and generating tremendous support and highlighting the talent in our province.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you, Speaker. With all the brouhaha on the other side, I didn't hear you ask to put the question, and I appreciate that the minister was able to get the gist of it. I thank the minister for his answer.

This year, in my riding of Beaches–East York, six organizations were supported by the Ontario Music Fund, including Sing!, Canada's premier festival featuring a cappella music. Sing! will draw performing artists, participants, students and general audiences from across Ontario, Quebec and the United States to my riding to take part in this extremely unique event.

This summer, I look forward to attending so many of the festivals taking place in and around the GTA and supporting our music talent in Ontario, which is made possible by the support of the Ontario Music Fund, including the Beaches Jazz Festival.

Will the minister please share with the members of this House how our government has recently strengthened the Ontario Music Fund in the 2015 budget?

Hon. Charles Sousa: The Ontario Music Fund, originally announced in the 2013 budget—which was, by the way, opposed by the members opposite—is creating a business environment where Ontario's artists can thrive while helping the industry become even more competitive, nationally and internationally. As a result of the fund, Ontario's sales, exports and live music offerings are increasing.

To continue this growth through the 2015 budget—if approved—our government can announce that our plan will provide the Ontario Music Fund a permanent annual \$15-million investment. Together with our partners, our goal is to drive economic growth, create jobs and ensure Ontario's talent thrives here at home.

Here's a quote from CIMA president Stuart Johnston: "The Ontario government's commitment to make the Ontario Music Fund permanent ... will give our industry the confidence to invest in Canadian artists for years to come."

We are truly proud of Ontario's outstanding talent. Thank you all for your great work.

LYME DISEASE

Mr. Toby Barrett: A question to the Premier: Spring is here, and with the advent of spring, Lyme is again upon us. As you know, in the gallery are victims like Will Yelland, a young man from my riding who's in the prime of his life and is having it stripped away by this horrific disease. He travels to the United States for treatment, paying tens of thousands of dollars out of his own pocket. Others have been bankrupted or have lost farms.

The treatment of Lyme disease is fraught with conflicting and unresolved medical, scientific and political dimensions. Premier, what will you tell people, like Will

Yelland up in the gallery, and so many others that are here today and across the province of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question. The member opposite knows I was born and grew up in his riding as well, and I fully understand the risks of Lyme disease in the Long Point area and the prevalence across this province. It's a very serious problem. As a public health expert, as well as from a medical perspective, I'm more than familiar with the dangers associated with Lyme disease.

I believe, and this government believes, that we need a strong, evidence-based strategy for Lyme disease. It's very important to me. That's why, not that long ago, I and the government developed a provincial Lyme disease action plan. This action plan will ensure—very importantly—strengthened engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and advocates. It will promote close alignment with Lyme initiatives at the federal, provincial and local levels. This action plan—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

1120

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'll talk about it more in the supplementary, but it is very action-oriented. That will be clear in several moments.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Toby Barrett: Again, Premier, there are allegations of shortcomings in the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme disease, directed both at mainstream medicine and at your government. Social media as well has been accused of communicating inaccurate medical information and pitches for dubious treatment, some in the United States.

We have government for a reason: for province-wide surveillance and education. We need guidelines for prevention, identification and management of this disease. All members of this Legislature have agreed, voting for a private member's bill and voting for a motion.

Again, Premier, you have a majority; you have the power. What can your administration tell these people today?

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: What I can say today is that we are acting on the recommendations that we've been provided in terms of this action plan. I asked, a number of months ago, Public Health Ontario to establish a Lyme disease stakeholder group to review the existing educational outreach opportunities in the province.

This action plan is very specific. It includes a review and update of existing public awareness materials and guidance documents, including a review of testing, diagnosis and treatment protocols based on the latest evidence in science, prevention, and tick surveillance protocols—basically the entire spectrum of what we need to do to develop a renewed strategy in this province, a

comprehensive one which will effectively deal with this serious problem.

I should add as well that the member opposite responsible for the environment and climate change reminded me that, with climate change, this is—

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

New question.

ONTARIO FILM INDUSTRY

Mr. Paul Miller: My question is to the Premier. The film and TV industry in our province is growing and is a world leader. It now generates \$1.8 billion a year, creating 31,000 full-time jobs—31,000 jobs, Speaker. But in the budget, the government cut the tax credit that the industry banks on. Reliable and stable tax credits are what the global film industry looks for in a jurisdiction, but that's not even half of it, Speaker. The cuts will be immediate. If you're shooting on a production now, thinking you're getting the deal this government had promised, well, too bad: You're not getting that money. What's worse is, the producers weren't consulted. There was no warning.

Speaker, why didn't the government consult this major industry?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: We're very proud on this side of the House to support the film industry in Ontario, and we recognize how important it is to our economy as well. That is why Ontario will continue to be the most generous in all of Canada to support the industry. We do work closely with them, recognizing how effective it is not only in providing more jobs and in creating more economic activity; it also enables the province to showcase itself around the world to the extent that we are a good and dynamic place to do business.

But it's passing strange for the NDP to ask a question about providing support for business when all the time they're asking us to cut supports, to cut loopholes, not to provide for that. All of a sudden, they are onside.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario will continue to provide tax credits to the film industry, and we will continue to work with them all the way through.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Kitchener–Waterloo, second time.

Supplementary.

Mr. Paul Miller: I guess they don't think we're against business in Alberta.

Minister, Hollywood has noticed this. Big-time production companies employing thousands are now actively talking and contacting Toronto about taking their billion-dollar businesses elsewhere. They're calling this government's cut a bait and switch because they weren't consulted.

When the film industry leaves, they call it "burning a jurisdiction." Evidence suggests that it takes 10 years for a jurisdiction to bounce back. Speaker, it sounds like this was a one-size-fits-all Treasury Board decision, done without consideration or consultation.

So my question is, will the Premier at least grandfather the changes to the film industry's tax cuts so that productions already here are not threatened and will continue?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, we remain committed to growing our cultural industries and the film industry. A key to that success, by the way, is sustainable tax credits focused on keeping Ontario the best place to invest and do business. We'll be the most competitive.

Through the 2015 budget, we're continuing to support our creative industries through the Ontario Music Fund, which now receives a permanent annual \$15-million investment; the more than \$439 million in the 2015-16 budget for our cultural media tax credits; as well as \$6 million in 2015-16, and \$10 million a year, starting in 2016-17, in a renewed interactive digital media fund. Amending the Ontario film and television tax credits will save our domestic producers \$7 million annually as well.

We will foster economic growth, we will continue to be the lead support of film industry in Canada and we'll work closely with our industry partners throughout.

TRADE DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: My question is for the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. This government has made it a priority to increase trade and investment to grow the economy. My riding of Halton has a diverse and thriving economy that would benefit significantly from opening markets around the world for small and medium-sized companies.

Mexico is one of our NAFTA partners and is Ontario's fifth-largest source of exports and third-largest importer. Many businesses and academics see Mexico not only as an existing trade partner, but also as a growing market for Ontario's expertise in energy, life sciences and infrastructure, to name a few.

Minister, how is this government working to strengthen Ontario's relationship with Mexico in order to increase investment and economic opportunity throughout the province?

Hon. Michael Chan: I want to thank the member from Halton for asking a question about trade.

Just last week, I was in Mexico on a trade mission. I have some good news to bring forward. In 2008, Ontario opened an international marketing centre in Mexico City. This centre has just been recognized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Mexico with an outstanding business award for its efforts to improve trade and investment between Ontario and Mexico. I want to congratulate our SEO, Chantal Ramsay, for her outstanding work in Mexico City.

While in Mexico City and Guadalajara, the city that hosted the last Pan Am Games, I was able to promote Ontario as the number one destination for foreign direct investment in North America—a proud legacy of this government and our Premier.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you for the update, Minister. I'm pleased to hear that your trade mission to Mexico was so successful.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, every \$100-million increase in exports creates approximately 1,000 new jobs for Ontarians. This is great news for businesses in my riding that depend on exporting goods for their economic prosperity.

With the success in Mexico, I'm sure we can expect many new opportunities for the people of our province. Speaker, would the minister be able to tell us how he envisions Ontario's economic future with respect to trade and investment?

Hon. Michael Chan: Thank you again for the question. We need to take concrete steps to ensure increased economic growth in Ontario. Our Premier knows that the key to improving Ontario's economic future lies in trade and investment.

Using Ontario's diversity to leverage international markets presents us with a unique opportunity to increase our prosperity. This is why I, along with many of my cabinet colleagues, have led missions focused in the areas of agriculture, energy, research and technology, just to name a few, to Ontario's priority trade markets.

We will continue to open and diversify Ontario's trade portfolio and leverage opportunities, such as the Pan-American International Economic Forum, for further possibilities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Minister, earlier this week, it was announced that the wait-list for affordable housing in Ontario has reached a record high. It's now over 168,000 families.

1130

We've been ringing the alarm bells since last year about the money intended for social housing being wasted by the Housing Services Corp. You said you shared some of our concerns. According to the documents from your ministry, the draft report from the third-party review of the HSC was due on April 10 and the final report no later than April 24. Minister, will you be transparent and release the report to the Legislature today?

Hon. Ted McMeekin: Well, when we get the report, we'd be pleased to do that.

Let me just say, on the generic part of the question, the lack of affordable housing and social housing is a problem, and it's a serious concern. It's one we take seriously and it's one that's best solved by working in partnership with other levels of government.

Now, I know that the official opposition's idea of partnership was to download all the housing onto our municipal partners, and to a very great extent, they're doing a wonderful job.

We're going to continue to work with our municipal partners to move the social housing file forward with our expert panel on homelessness and some other initiatives. It would sure be nice to have another government player at the table, and I think you know who I'm talking about.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Minister, enough is enough. You've been using the review as an excuse to stall for months. But while you have been waiting for that report, the waiting list for social housing just keeps on growing.

Will you commit to make the report public when you finally receive it but start today to help those 168,000 families who are waiting for housing by allowing social housing providers to opt out of paying the inflated prices at the Housing Services Corp.? Quit stalling and quit giving the money away and build housing.

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: We're working every single day to move these issues forward. That's why, recognizing the serious challenge, we set up the expert panel on homelessness. They're doing some great work and they'll be reporting very soon.

That's also why we convinced the federal government to renew the investment in the affordable housing strategy, which will see \$810 million invested.

It's also why we've engaged right now—we kicked it off—the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. We want to make sure we get it right. That's what stakeholders in the field are telling us we need to do.

Of course, we've increased the CHPI funding, which is enabling our municipal partners to more faithfully and helpfully respond to the very real needs facing Ontarians across our province.

LYME DISEASE

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Minister, May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month and a time to remember the thousands of Canadians who are affected by or suffering with Lyme disease. The 2015 tick season has begun, and doctors and veterinarians have already begun removing ticks from people and animals across the province.

We are going on six months since my motion calling for a provincial strategy for Lyme disease passed unanimously in the House. Can the minister please provide me and all our guests with an update on your progress with this Lyme prevention strategy?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I should start by saying that we've launched an action plan which covers virtually every aspect of this important disease. I know the third party, despite what the opposition—their denials. I know the third party agrees that with climate change and increasing temperatures, it actually is becoming worse.

Interjection: It's more serious.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It's more serious. It's more pressing. That doesn't take away from the urgency to deal with this appropriately.

Public Health Ontario is reviewing and updating our 2012 technical report on Lyme disease prevention and control. I mentioned that our action plan already under

way includes a review of the testing, the diagnosis and the treatment protocols based on the best evidence available.

In the United States, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the American College of Rheumatology and the academy of neurology are currently working on new guidelines that will inform our work as well. But most importantly—and I appreciate the fact that the stakeholders, the advocates are here today—I will continue to be with them and benefit from their advice and their expertise to guide us on developing this new strategy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Again to the minister: A critical component in the development of Ontario's Lyme strategy is consultation with the stakeholders named in the motion, all of whom have joined us here today. If the stakeholders that will speak for patients are not consulted, we will get absolutely no changes made to Lyme education, testing and treatment, and patients will continue to suffer.

The clock is ticking, Minister. When will these stakeholders be called together and consulted in order to develop Ontario's Lyme disease strategy? You've had almost six months. Look around, Minister: Do you see all the people? Your so-called action plan has taken no action. These people have travelled great distances to have their voices heard. Minister, how much longer do these people have to suffer until we finally take action on Lyme disease?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: The member opposite knows very well that this—and he's not portraying it as this at all. This is a non-partisan issue. I want to speak to the individuals, the stakeholders and the advocates, those that suffer from Lyme disease who are here with us today. I appreciate the seriousness of this disease and I commit to working with you, now and going forward. It was specific to my request that I asked Public Health Ontario to develop a stand-alone Lyme disease stakeholder group to work with us on an ongoing basis as we develop this strategy. I intend to make sure that we constantly, and on an ongoing basis, are benefiting from your advice.

This is an extremely difficult issue, and I appreciate more than anything else the pain and suffering that many of these individuals have to endure. I know, as well, that they feel that the government and the primary care providers haven't necessarily been there to the degree that they should have been at that difficult moment in time. I commit to working with them to develop a strategy that—

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

FAMILY SERVICE ONTARIO

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Today,

we're very pleased to have Family Service Ontario with us here in the Legislature. Family Service Ontario and its member agencies play an integral role in this government's efforts to address violence against women and our transformation of Ontario's developmental services system.

Family Service Ontario represents approximately 45 not-for-profit member agencies across Ontario that provide community-based mental health services and programs to over 250,000 individuals and families annually, from every age group and socio-economic status.

One of these agencies is located in my riding of Cambridge. The Family Counselling Centre of Cambridge and North Dumfries offers counselling and outreach services for women and families in a safe, caring and respectful environment.

Minister, can you please elaborate on the important work that Family Service Ontario does to support Ontarians and how your ministry supports them in this?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Thank you to the member from Cambridge for the question. As the member has said, the work of Family Service Ontario, or FSO, and their agencies touches thousands of Ontarians and helps to make the lives of the people they serve better.

Through funding provided by my ministry, FSO agencies provide intensive counselling and therapy for survivors of sexual abuse and family violence. They have designed effective and timely early intervention and prevention counselling services for male perpetrators, to keep women and children safe from domestic violence. They also offer programs for children and adults with developmental disabilities and caregiver respite services and supports.

The services provided by FSO and their member agencies are vital. I value the work done by FSO and will continue to work closely with them in order to support Ontarians in need.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Minister. Clearly, this government and your ministry value the work that Family Service Ontario does to support some of our most vulnerable individuals.

With the recent investments in the developmental services sector and specifically towards the Passport Program, I'm hearing about the progress for individuals and families in my community, some of whom I provided care for in the past as a care coordinator for a CCAC. In fact, since last fall, 6,000 people have been approved for new Passport funding, almost half the budget target of 13,000, which was expected to take four years. The Passport program offers direct funding for individuals and their families to use for services that Family Service Ontario agencies offer.

1140

The work that FSO does to support families in a variety of ways is crucial. Today, FSO is here in the Legislature for an exciting announcement. Minister, can you share the details of this news with the House, please?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: As part of the government's ongoing efforts to reduce violence against women, and most recently, with the Premier's launch of It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment, it's clear we are committed to working with this sector.

Building on the work of the action plan, we will be funding a two-year pilot project with Family Service Ontario. This project will explore the effectiveness of joint counselling for couples in lower-risk situational couple violence, and whether early intervention might lead to a prevention of future domestic violence.

This pilot will serve 100 couples who do not have the means to pay. Three pilot sites will be established—one northern, one rural and one urban—and a focus will be placed on serving the aboriginal community as well as francophone clients.

I thank Family Service Ontario for their hard work and for being at Queen's Park today.

PRIORITY HIRING OF VETERANS IN ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Premier. The members of our Canadian Armed Forces make a commitment to our country that is virtually unparalleled. When they join up, they know that there is a very good chance they may be asked to fight on behalf of their country and to put their lives in danger. They do so willingly and unreservedly.

However, when they're ready to leave the forces, or have to leave due to a medical condition, they often don't have the easiest time finding new employment.

Premier, this afternoon I will be introducing a private member's bill, the Veterans Employment Act, that will allow current and past members of the Canadian Forces to be able to apply on a priority basis for Ontario government jobs, provided they are qualified.

Premier, will you stand with me and the Ontario PC caucus and support the principle of hiring veterans in the Ontario public service?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank the member opposite for the question and also thank him for his current and past advocacy for members of the Canadian Forces. I know that all members in this House value the hard work and the dedication of the Canadian Forces and the sacrifices that members of the forces make.

We're open to exploring any options that would demonstrate the value that we place on the forces. We know that the experiences and training and skills of the forces are valuable. They are valuable here in Ontario.

I haven't seen the bill. I haven't seen what the amendments to the public service act would look like, but certainly, we're open to looking at those.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thank you, Premier. Premier, the average age of Canadian Armed Forces regular and reserve force personnel at release is 37. On average, there are 7,600 Canadian Armed Forces regular and reserve force personnel who leave the military each year.

Both the government of Canada and the province of New Brunswick have recently passed legislation that provides for priority hiring of veterans in their public services. As we are about to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, I cannot think of a more fitting time to consider how we can help the veterans of today.

Rather than a question, Premier, I'm going to thank you for your earlier response and hope that we can work together on moving this legislation forward. I welcome you to even steal the legislation as a Liberal idea. That would be fine with me.

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I say, I look forward to looking at the amendments to the Public Service of Ontario Act.

I want to just take this opportunity to talk about some of the things that we have done that I think are in the same spirit that the member, in his advocacy, has brought forward.

We passed legislation that eliminates the 90-day OHIP waiting period for military families, to ensure that they have immediate access to quality health care. We amended the Employment Standards Act to create job protection provisions for military reservists who are called to serve either at home or abroad. We introduced veterans' licence plates to recognize the dedication and commitment made by past and current veterans—available free of charge—and in 2007, Ontario designated the portion of Highway 401 between Trenton and the Don Valley Parkway as the Highway of Heroes. All those things are consistent with the spirit of the private member's bill.

VISITOR

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I would like to take this time to introduce my intern, Alexandra Sherwin. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There being no deferred votes, this House is recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1145 to 1500.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville has provided me with a notice of his intention to raise a point of privilege. After carefully reviewing his notice, I have concluded that it deals with the same matter that was raised at the point of privilege yesterday by the member from Timmins–James Bay, which is under my active consideration.

I, therefore, will not be hearing from the member from Leeds–Grenville but your submission is noted and I thank you for that.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mr. Michael Harris: I stand today on behalf of Ontarians and Kitchener-Waterloo residents outraged by the shameful anti-BlackBerry petition presented by the Liberal member for Etobicoke North. While BlackBerry's trailblazing as the leader in secure mobile communications has meant all G7 governments have become BlackBerry customers, the member has suggested that BlackBerry use is "handicapping, retarding and penalizing MPPs." The member's choice of words is regrettable, offensive and, quite frankly, he should know better.

MPPs' smart phones are paid for by Ontario taxpayers and, given rampant privacy and security concerns, Ontarians expect their parliamentarians to utilize the most secure workspace available. As we know, with more security approvals than any other, the most secure workspace is provided by BlackBerry. Frankly, if the member wants the latest Apple apps or Snapchats with friends, he can do it on his own dime. Perhaps he should ask President Obama or the Department of National Defence if their use of BlackBerry is "handicapping and retarding" their work.

Shame on the member for his misguided attack. Is this the Wynne government's plan for building Ontario up? By tearing down a Canadian institution employing 4,700 Ontarians?

As the MPP for Waterloo region, I'm standing today to register my disgust. I encourage the Liberal member from Kitchener Centre to join me in standing up on behalf of her community to better inform her colleagues of BlackBerry's importance and prevent this type of offensive, reckless and insensitive attack.

CULTURAL FUNDING

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: Everybody probably knows already about the incredible Polish festival that takes place in my riding every year in September, on the same weekend we have the Ukrainian festival on Bloor Street. The Polish festival is the largest of its kind anywhere in North America and the Ukrainian one of the largest of its kind in North America. Literally millions of people go to both.

Up to 2013, it got stable funding from this government. As of 2013, the Wynne government cut the funding by 50% for our Roncesvalles Polish Festival, which, as you can imagine, really cripples their ability to organize. Not only did they cut the funding by 50% there and 20% for the Ukrainian festival, but there are no guarantees going forward after 2013 that they'll even get that.

There is no more stable funding for our festivals. This is shocking. I think it's shocking for our Polish and Ukrainian residents, and, by the way, they know and they're angry that they, going forward, cannot count on anything from the Wynne government.

I just have to say that it's a sad day. We still welcome you to the Polish and Ukrainian festivals, which, despite the Liberal government, will take place and will be successful. But I can tell you that they're doing it under duress.

Please restore the funding to our Polish festival on Roncesvalles and please restore the funding to our Ukrainian festival on Bloor.

TERESA VASILOPOULOS

Mr. Arthur Potts: On May 1, an inspiring community leader from my fantastic riding of Beaches–East York retired from Toronto East General Hospital after 25 years of dedicated service. Teresa Vasilopoulos both resides and works in my riding and started her career at Toronto East General as a member of the hospital's communications department; 18 years ago she then moved over to the hospital's fundraising arm and has served as the president of the foundation ever since.

Surrounded by a remarkable team of physicians, staff, volunteers and board members, Teresa has seen firsthand the evolution of the Toronto East General Hospital from a small residential community hospital to one of Canada's leading hospitals for innovation, quality and fiscal management.

Teresa was at the forefront of the fundraising campaign that has raised over \$60 million for Toronto East General's new 380,000-square-foot patient-care tower. To be called the Ken and Marilyn Thomson Patient Care Centre, it will enable the delivery of efficient, accessible, high-quality patient care.

Teresa has also been at the lead of several other very important advancements, including the fundraising for a urology robot, which has propelled the local hospital into a leadership role in robotic surgery for prostate operations.

Another significant achievement due to Teresa's fundraising efforts is the hospital's progression into becoming a regional centre for lung cancer surgeries.

I would also be remiss if I did not mention the outgoing hospital president, Rob Devitt, and I look forward this Friday to meeting the new CEO, Sarah Downey.

This afternoon I will be participating in McHappy Day at McDonald's in my riding, with the proceeds going, at Teresa's suggestion, to the Toronto East General Hospital.

DOCTOR SHORTAGE

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I rise today to discuss a very serious situation in my riding of Nipissing regarding the shortage of family doctors. In fact, the president of the North Bay Regional Health Centre is on record saying it

has reached a crisis level and that attracting family practitioners is a huge concern.

It's estimated the North Bay area is short at least 10 doctors, meaning 12,000 patients are without a family physician right now. That's more than 20% of the city's population. I would ask the health minister to envision what it would be like if a million patients in Toronto didn't have a family doctor, because that's the ratio we're talking about here. This crisis isn't manufactured or anecdotal. The North Bay and district health unit notes a 20% increase in the number of calls from people concerned about finding a family doctor in 2014, as compared with 2013.

Given this, it's disappointing to learn the province just recently barred new family physicians from joining team-based models of care, such as the family health teams, in the community of their choice.

The mayor of North Bay, among others, has proposed having all of northeastern Ontario, from Sudbury to Moosonee, declared an underserved region of the province. It's an idea I think needs consideration. I ask the minister to recognize the severity of the situation and commit to immediate action.

SUSTAINABLE WATERLOO REGION

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd like to take a moment to recognize an important announcement made by Sustainable Waterloo Region last Thursday at their sixth annual Evening of Recognition.

Sustainable Waterloo Region, a not-for-profit, is headquartered in Waterloo. It grew out of a business project at Wilfrid Laurier University in 2008. Their aim is to collaboratively advance the sustainability of organizations across Waterloo region by helping them to reduce their carbon footprints.

They also run the Regional Carbon Initiative. This is a project that is about helping organizations set and achieve their own carbon emission reduction targets. Sustainable Waterloo provides an online tool for measuring participating groups' carbon emissions and they organize educational forums and workshops for peer-to-peer learning about how to reduce emissions.

Finally, they work to provide as much public recognition as possible for those companies that are leaders and that are successful in reducing emissions. This collaborative model employed by Sustainable Waterloo Region is both innovative and successful because it utilizes organizations' and companies' own interests in becoming more sustainable.

Last week, Sustainable Waterloo Region made an important announcement that the newest member of the Regional Carbon Initiative is the Waterloo Region District School Board. We are all very excited about the announcement and I want to congratulate Sustainable Waterloo Region's executive director, Tova Davidson, for her continued leadership. Congratulations to the Waterloo Region District School Board and to Sustainable Waterloo Region.

EARTH DAY

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I have some positive news from my community that I'd like to share with you, from Waterloo region.

This past weekend, it was such a pleasure joining municipal and federal leaders in the region of Waterloo, the Grand River Conservation Authority and nearly 500 environmentally concerned residents for this year's Waterloo Earth Day.

Since 1970, Earth Day has catalyzed communities around the globe to take action on climate change and to get active in local climate change initiatives.

1510

In our neighbourhood, we celebrated the spirit of Earth Day by planting trees, meeting woodland animals, building birdhouses and hearing from local experts on nature exploration, water wisdom and living locally. This free community event focused on learning about our environment and the native flora and fauna in our region through hands-on educational activities.

We know the vital importance of life-giving trees for a sustainable environment and a healthy population. With the planting of every new tree, we are mitigating the damaging effects of carbon pollution. I got a chance to plant a few trees myself. That is why I was also proud to bring greetings this year on behalf of the province, especially on the heels of our new political strategy on dealing with climate change. It was gratifying to hear support from many people who were there on this very ambitious plan.

To those who took part in Waterloo Earth Day, kudos to you for securing the legacy that we leave for future Ontarians.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Jim McDonell: Over the course of last weekend, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual meeting at the NAV Centre in Cornwall. Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry proved once again to be a wonderful region to host a large event, impressing guests with excellent facilities, great attractions and a welcoming community.

Representatives of the Ontario business community brought important messages to all three party leaders. Our interim leader, the member from Simcoe-Grey, listened.

Ontario is built on our skilled workforce and entrepreneurial drive. Ontario Chamber of Commerce members know that in order to thrive, this province needs ambitious workers and successful employers. Current policies pursued by this government stifle both.

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce opposes initiatives that kill jobs and punish success, such as the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, the proposed cap-and-trade carbon pricing system, artificially inflated energy prices and other experiments carried out by this govern-

ment over the past decade that have resulted in hundreds of thousands of Ontarians unable to find work or retrain.

Entrepreneurs need a welcoming and competitive environment in order to thrive and have the confidence to invest in their people and their businesses. As legislators, we must foster a culture of success rather than the one of just scraping by that this current government is offering.

At the Cornwall AGM, we saw the builders of Ontario's prosperity come together, and we will remain committed—my PC caucus—to making that prosperity a reality.

AURORA FOOD PANTRY

Mr. Chris Ballard: I'm delighted to stand today in the House to recognize an outstanding organization in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora. For the past 25 years, the Aurora Food Pantry has provided food to those in need. The clients who seek help at the Aurora Food Pantry do so because they face a dire situation. For many, it's an unexpected illness, accident or loss of income because of a crisis, which forces them to choose between paying for groceries, rent or utilities.

For 25 years, the Aurora Food Pantry has provided food assistance to individuals and families during these times of need. In 2014, the pantry helped feed more than 6,000 people in need of support, not only in Aurora but in surrounding communities.

The Aurora Food Pantry is able to provide this crucial service to our community due to the dedication of its volunteers, who are the backbone of this organization. The organization was founded by Lorna Rummenie in the basement of Aurora's First Baptist Church. Sadly, Lorna died this past fall, but I was able to meet her family and thank them for her dedication at the group's 25th anniversary this past Monday.

It takes a lot of people—all of them volunteers—to make a food pantry a success. I'd like to thank each and every one of them. Through conversations I've had with this pantry and others across the province, it's clear that we strongly agree on one thing: that governments, community and business must continue to work closely together to put food pantries out of business. Ultimately, that would be the greatest tribute to Lorna and the volunteers at the pantry.

FATHER CYRIL WILLIAM SULLIVAN

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Today, I will have the pleasure of attending the 40th anniversary celebrations of Father C.W. Sullivan School in my riding of Brampton–Springdale. It is a momentous occasion and I'm honoured to have the opportunity to share in a tribute for a man whose legacy continues to inspire.

Father C.W. Sullivan was born on February 9, 1901, at St. Paul's parish in Toronto. Father Sullivan was a strong advocate for Catholic education. He spent his entire academic life being educated in the Catholic school

system, including a bachelor of arts and a master's in philosophy from St. Michael's College.

In 1940 he would join the army as a chaplain, only to eventually end up in the battle areas of World War II. In 1943 he was on a ship when it was torpedoed off the coast of North Africa. He was lucky to have been saved by an Olympic swimmer who happened to be in the water with him.

After a much-deserved holiday, he decided to once again take up service when he returned to Brampton in 1946, and was appointed pastor of St. Mary's. He would continue to serve the community from 1946 to 1972, a period of 48 years, before his retirement.

In 1975, Father C.W. Sullivan School was built to pay tribute to Father Sullivan. Sadly, he passed away a short while after, in 1977.

Over the past 40 years, Brampton has seen a lot of growth, and with that growth, Father C.W. Sullivan School has been there to support Catholic families with their educational needs. Today his legacy lives on through the school as it continues to inspire young minds to pursue their dreams and improve not only their lives but also the lives of others.

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

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

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

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

Bill Pr14, An Act to revive Ottawa School Day Nursery Inc.

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

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

Report adopted.

VISITOR

Mr. Gilles Bisson: A point of order, please.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A point of order: the member from Timmins–James Bay.

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I did say “please.” I just noticed that the member from—

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Simcoe North.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —Simcoe North is here with his wife. I just want to welcome her and say: my condolences for being with him all these years.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's not a point of order, but it's an interesting picture.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L'EMPLOI DES ANCIENS COMBATTANTS

Mr. Wilson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to amend the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006 / Projet de loi 97, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la fonction publique de l'Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Mr. Jim Wilson: The Veterans Employment Act adds a provision to the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006, to allow certain current and past members of the Canadian Armed Forces who have at least three years of service or who previously served for at least three years but have not been out of the forces for more than five to be able to apply for internally posted Ontario government positions, and give qualified veterans preference over other candidates in external hiring processes for jobs with the Ontario government.

The Veterans Employment Act, if passed, would help to put to work many, many deserving veterans who have served us overseas and here at home.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding House proceedings for Monday, May 11, 2015.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader seeks to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker. I move that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday, May 11, 2015; and

That, following introduction of visitors, the Speaker shall adjourn the House during pleasure for the purpose of permitting an address to the House of up to 30 minutes by the Honourable Philippe Couillard, Premier of Quebec, and for remarks in reply of up to 10 minutes in duration each by each of the leaders of the recognized parties in the House; and

1520

That all remarks be delivered from the lectern at the head of the Clerks' table, and that for the purpose of these proceedings only, a party leader who does not have

a seat in the Legislature may enter the floor of the chamber; and

That following these proceedings, the Speaker shall resume the chair and shall then recess the House until 10:30 a.m. for oral questions or, if it is then past 10:30 a.m., shall immediately call oral questions.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding standing order 8(a), the House shall meet at 9 a.m. on Monday—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed? Dispense.

Do we agree? The motion is carried.

Motion agreed to.

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 80

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the consideration of Bill 80 by the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader seeks to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that, notwithstanding the orders of the House dated April 22, 2015, and April 30, 2015, providing for allocation of time on 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 Clerk of the Committee add Dr. Lanny Cornell to the prioritized list in place of the fifth selection provided to the Clerk by the Progressive Conservative subcommittee member.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding orders of the House dated April 22, 2015, and April 30, 2015, providing for allocation of time on Bill 80—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed? Agreed.

Does the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

TAXATION

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

“Whereas the Liberal 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 almost

\$700 more per household 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 this uncompetitive tax will not impact businesses outside of Ontario and will only serve to accelerate the demise of our once strong manufacturing sector; 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 agree with this and will be handing off to page Afiyah.

LYME DISEASE

Mr. Michael Mantha: We were joined by 200 guests this morning for Lyme, and there are 1,800 signatures on the petition that I have on my website. Also, here's another 240 signatures.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

“Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

“Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

“Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Jae Min to bring it down to the Clerks' table.

STUDENT SAFETY

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

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

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

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

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

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

I agree with the petition, affix my signature and give it to page Colton.

HOSPICE FUNDING

Mr. Jim Wilson: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there is a discrepancy between how hospices are funded in Ontario; and

“Whereas Matthews House Hospice is the lowest-funded hospice in the Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) and among the lowest-funded in the province, even though it serves as many clients or more than other hospices that receive greater provincial support; and

“Whereas Matthews House has been told by the Central LHIN that LHINs do not fund residential hospice operational costs and yet hospices in other LHINs, including Barrie, Huntsville, Richmond Hill, Owen Sound and now Collingwood, all receive operational funding from the province; and

“Whereas in February 2010 Matthews House Hospice was promised a solution to its underfunding by the Central LHIN which has never materialized;

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

“That the Wynne government immediately develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with hospice funding to ensure that people in south Simcoe and all Ontarians receive equal access to end-of-life care.”

I certainly agree with this petition and I will sign it.

LYME DISEASE

Ms. Catherine Fife: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

“Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

“Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

“Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to

adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

“We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients’ groups within one year.”

It’s my pleasure to affix my signature and give this petition to Afiyah.

STUDENT SAFETY

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

I agree with this petition and I’m going to affix my name to it and pass it on to page Ashton.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: “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;

1530

“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 agree with this petition, sign my name and give it to page Madison.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

M^{me} France Gélina: I have this petition that comes from the patrons at the Legion in Capreol in my riding, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas the NDP MPP for Timiskaming–Cochrane, John Vanthof, has introduced Bill 46 in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario so that UTVs (utility task vehicles) would be treated like all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) by the Highway Traffic Act;...

“Whereas this bill will have positive economic impact on clubs, manufacturers, dealers and rental shops and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

“To vote in favour of MPP Vanthof’s Bill 46 to allow UTVs the same access as ATVs in the Highway Traffic Act.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Ashton to bring it to the Clerk.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I have a petition here that’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; 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 adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and 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.”

I agree with this petition. I’m going to sign it and send it down to the table with page Jae Min.

ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further petitions? The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

You took your leader's job too.

Mr. Jim McDonell: He wasn't going to get up.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Ontario Legislature expressed its unanimous wish to see regulation 316/03 amended to include several categories of all-terrain vehicles; and

"Whereas law-abiding ATV enthusiasts from across the province expect this change in order to be able to use their legitimately owned vehicles recreationally and for participating in significant charity events; and

"Whereas the Minister of Transportation should respect the unanimous will of the Legislature;

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

"To immediately amend regulation 316/03 to allow the operation of two-up all-terrain vehicles."

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

LYME DISEASE

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

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

I sign the petition and give it to page Ashton to deliver.

SHALE BEACH

Mr. Jim Wilson: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation closed public access to Shale Beach off Highway 26 in the town of Blue Mountains suddenly and with no consultation; and

"Whereas the closure will impact fishermen, swimmers and visitors who have been frequenting the beach for generations with no problem; and

"Whereas the closure will remove one of the only wheelchair-accessible fishing locations in the area; and

"Whereas the McGuinty-Wynne Liberal government won't let Ontarians enjoy anything for free anymore without implementing a new tax or a new fee;

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

"That Premier Kathleen Wynne and the Minister of Transportation immediately restore access to Shale Beach so that residents can continue to enjoy the beach and all that it has to offer for generations to come."

I certainly agree with this petition and will sign it.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

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

"Whereas Winchester District Memorial Hospital provides essential health services to the residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and was awarded 'accreditation with exemplary standing'—the highest award by Accreditation Canada earlier this year; and

"Whereas the projected increase in Ontario's senior population demands that facilities have the resources and capacity required to accommodate increasing demand; and

"Whereas Ontarians cherish access to high-quality local health care; and

"Whereas the recent closure of 14 beds at the WDMH and the loss of over nine full-time skilled staff positions at a time when Ontario has experienced unemployment above the national average for over seven consecutive years are the result of ongoing silent funding cuts that are threatening our cherished health care system;

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

"To immediately reinstate adequate funding levels for the Winchester District Memorial Hospital that would allow the reopening of local beds and the rehiring of local qualified front-line health staff."

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

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Victor Fedeli: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Auditor General of Ontario defines the global adjustment charge on hydro bills as 'an extra payment covered by ratepayers over and above the actual market price of electricity'; and

"Whereas wind power is simply unreliable, blows mostly at night when we don't need power, creating a surplus Ontario then has to get rid of by paying Quebec and the United States to take it, and the total cost of producing the exported power"—according to the

Auditor General—“was about \$2.6 billion more than the revenue Ontario received from exporting that power between 2006 and 2013; and

“Whereas the Auditor General says the global adjustment has risen from \$700 million prior to the Green Energy Act to \$7.7 billion by 2013, and over the past decade, the cumulated amount is about \$50 billion; and

“Whereas Ontario now has the highest industrial rates in North America, and residential hydro bills are forecast to increase 42% by 2018 after peak hydro rates have already more than tripled since 2003; and

“Whereas local First Nations, property owners and aviation and aerospace industry stakeholders have voiced concerns about wind farm installations proposed by Innergex in Merrick and Mattawan townships in the riding of Nipissing;

“We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the government of Ontario to reverse course on these proposed wind projects and the government’s expensive energy policy by cancelling feed-in-tariff (FIT) subsidies, implementing an immediate moratorium on wind power development, and giving municipalities veto authority over wind projects in their communities.”

I agree with this, sign my name and give it to page Colin.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. The time for petitions is over.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR JOBS AND PROSPERITY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR L’INFRASTRUCTURE AU SERVICE DE L’EMPLOI ET DE LA PROSPÉRITÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 22, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015 / Projet de loi 6, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur l’infrastructure au service de l’emploi et de la prospérité.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): When this matter was last before the House, the third party had finished their debate on it. I’ll now turn it over to the government.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister of Transportation, who is clapping because we share a lot of common files and he has a lot of interest in the bill we’re about to talk about today.

I want to begin by indicating, Mr. Speaker, that I’ll be sharing my time with the incredible member from York South–Weston, whom we all know and love; and, I would say, the incorrigible member from Scarborough–Agincourt, who we also know—she is here as well.

1540

Before I start, though, I want to acknowledge a couple of our brand new interns who are here working with us today—if they could just stand up as I say their names. The first is Zuhair Zaidi—I’ve got to tell you, when I look at Zuhair’s name, I see the “Z” and the “Z”; you must be at the end of every alphabetical line all the time, Zuhair—and Amanda Chapman-Solomon. Thank you two for being here, and I look forward to you having some time in my office.

Eddie: I have to acknowledge Eddie as well behind the Speaker’s chair, because—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I guess that was a point of order, was it, the introductions there?

Hon. Brad Duguid: No, Mr. Speaker. It’s part of my speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Oh, okay. All right.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It’s absolutely part of my speech, because often, when we get up and speak in this House, we’re supported by many in our offices who helped get the information that we bring forward.

I’m delighted today to get up to speak on second reading of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. It’s a bill that’s been before the House before, in the previous session, and it’s now back again. It’s a bill that I’m looking forward to talking about, a bill that I’m looking forward to seeing get to committee for further discussion.

I want to acknowledge the work of my parliamentary assistant on this bill, Peter Milczyn. He’ll be doing the work on committee and working with my colleagues opposite as we take it through committee, assuming that it moves through the Legislature here, and I certainly hope it does.

What this bill does is it enshrines principles for long-term infrastructure planning in legislation. In many ways, it holds our feet to the fire as a government to ensure that we’re thinking ahead when it comes to our infrastructure planning. It’s something we take a great deal of pride in as a government, that over the previous 10 years, we have invested significantly in infrastructure. We’ve invested thoughtfully as well to ensure that the investments we make in infrastructure are meeting our infrastructure needs and, at the same time, helping to build our economy and make us more competitive, meeting the needs of our municipalities, meeting the needs of our health care system, meeting the needs of our transportation system, meeting the needs of our education system—and core investments like water/wastewater.

We’ve invested \$100 billion over the last 10 years. That’s a record investment for any province and any government in this country. Every year, that creates about 100,000 jobs. Every single year it creates and supports.

Mr. Speaker, over the next 10 years, as you know, we’ll be investing \$130 billion in roads, bridges and transit, in important infrastructure across this province. I’ve got to tell you that sometimes, those investments are

challenging in terms of finding the revenues to be able to make those investments.

One of the experiences I've had, having had the privilege to serve in a number of different posts in this Legislature, is that when you have complex challenges, there's two things you need to do: You need to get the best possible advice and then you need to have the wisdom and courage to take that advice.

When it came to finding the revenues we need, the dollars we need to be able to make that \$130-billion commitment, we did seek the best possible advice by bringing in Ed Clark, a well-known, very well respected—one of the most respected business leaders not just in Canada, but across North America, somebody who served as a deputy minister in Ottawa, and who has a great deal of experience and whose views are very highly regarded. We got the advice of Ed Clark in terms of how to broaden our ownership of Hydro One and how to be able to get some additional revenues so that we can reinvest in public transit—an important bit of advice, good advice, with a good business case attached to that advice.

At the same time, we as a government have had to have the courage to take that advice. There is a certain element of courage when it comes to making those challenging, tough and complex decisions.

One thing people in Ontario are tired of is politicians who talk about investing in infrastructure, who talk about how important they think our roads and bridges or our transit systems are, but don't at all pony up any ideas on how they would pay for it.

I think what the people of this province need, demand and deserve are leaders who are willing to take the tough decisions, who are willing to not only talk about infrastructure but to make the investments, to find ways to find the dollars to make the investments and build those projects, because you can't build the projects if you don't have the dollars to invest.

It would be helpful to all of us in this Legislature—

Interjections.

Hon. Brad Duguid: And I know those heckling me right now would agree—I know they would agree—that if we had a strong federal partner when it comes to infrastructure, it would be much easier.

When you think about our \$130-billion investment over the next 10 years, the federal government, across the entire country, is only investing \$81 billion. In Ontario, Ontarians and our Ontario government have to invest three times the amount in our infrastructure. We're doing it because it's an important investment. We're doing it because it's really important to our future economy to ensure that we have modern infrastructure, that we can get people to and from their jobs and get people across our city, and so that our businesses can transport their goods across Ontario and transport their people across this province. We're going to make those important investments.

Another element of this bill that is really important, and something I'm really happy to see there, is the fact

that this bill is committing us to finding ways to utilize our infrastructure projects to grow the number of apprentices in this province, to take advantage of those young people and give them opportunities. Part of the job is committing ourselves, as a Legislature and as a government, to doing that, and we're going to do that.

The other challenge is figuring out exactly the "how." How exactly will we put this? That will come by way of regulations, but it won't come from us just navel-gazing here in the Legislature about these issues—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Member from Kitchener–Waterloo.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It will come from reaching out to our partners, Mr. Speaker—our partners in business and our partners in labour.

Just this past week, I had some really good meetings with James St. John, for instance, who is the head of the Central Ontario Building Trades and one of the directors of Hammer Heads, an organization that I think all members of this Legislature—including the one who is going to speak right after me—find very, very valuable.

We're looking forward to working with all of our partners to put into action this very good concept of utilizing our infrastructure projects to grow the number of apprentices, by working with those partners and developing the right way to do that.

One of the things I always look forward to when, as a minister, I bring forward a bill to the Legislature is the committee process, and I do look forward to constructive amendments from all sides of the House. I know that my parliamentary assistant, Peter Milczyn, is looking forward to working with my colleagues opposite to make this bill as effective as we possibly can.

When this went through the initial process, one of the good ideas that came forward was an idea from the engineers of this province, who indicated that they felt the value they bring to these projects ought to also be recognized in the legislation.

I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that we are very welcoming to amendments that would make that happen. I know that my parliamentary assistant will be working hard with committee to do his best to get the support at committee to bring those amendments forward. Certainly, I, as a minister, have said to the engineers across this province that this is something this government would wholeheartedly support.

I'm looking forward to the committee process. I'm looking forward to that amendment coming forward, and there may be others.

I'm also looking forward to our government moving forward with our agenda to continue to build transit, to continue to build roads and bridges across this province. It's so important that we continue to invest in building a modern infrastructure. As I said, it doesn't come without some degree of challenge. We need to find the money to make these investments.

I'll conclude by saying this: This government is investing more over the next 10 years than any government

has ever invested, including the federal government, in any period, any decade, in the history of Canada. It's something that we're proud of. It's something more than that. It's something that's crucial to us being able to maintain our competitiveness as an economy.

1550

I know that the members opposite like infrastructure investment. I encourage them to work with us and to support our efforts to make those tough decisions we have to make to actually fund and build those projects. Again, you can talk about it all you want, but if you're not putting the money forward, if you're not coming up with the revenue, if you're not finding ways to fund those projects, then those are hollow commitments, and that's all we've been hearing from the opposition, over the last number of years, when it comes to infrastructure. This is an opportunity for them to step up and join us in making those tough decisions and building modern infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

I'll now pass it over to my colleagues, who will continue this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from York South–Weston.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I am pleased to rise in support of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, building modern infrastructure is part of our government's plan to continue to grow the economy and create jobs. That's very important, and it's why we are investing over \$130 billion—with a B, as one of my colleagues said yesterday—in public infrastructure over the next 10 years. It is a lot of money, but these investments are going to build much-needed infrastructure and will also support over 110,000 jobs every year. People need jobs, Mr. Speaker, especially our youth. They need jobs—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You know, you're 10 seats away and you're yelling at each other. Give me a break and go outside if you want to yell at each other.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You're not talking; you're talking loud.

Go ahead.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the key components of this legislation, as the minister pointed out, is the skills training and apprenticeship component: the requirement that certain numbers of apprentices be involved in the construction of provincial infrastructure assets, as prescribed in this legislation.

This point is of particular interest to my community of York South–Weston, the community I have the privilege to represent. It was one of the first to advocate in favour of community benefits in public procurement; that's how they're known. What that means, Mr. Speaker, is that public sector contracts would include targeted training for local residents where these infrastructure projects are taking place; for example, setting a percentage of the total labour.

The minister also mentioned the Central Ontario Building Trades Hammer Heads Program, which is located in my riding of York South–Weston. I'm very proud of this skill- and employment-based program within construction that offers apprenticeship career opportunities in this under-resourced neighbourhood and many others in the city and beyond. This bill does increase the opportunity for apprenticeships and invests in people's talents, and it really helps build our province.

The proposed legislation not only has this key component, but others that are very important; for example, the requirement that the government and the broader public sector consider specified principles when making infrastructure decisions, and the fact that the Minister of Infrastructure tabled a long-term infrastructure plan in the Legislature covering at least 10 years, so that we can have a vision and not just build ad hoc, prioritizing the projects according to what is needed, according to the municipal plans. I'm sure that my colleagues who follow me will be speaking more in depth about all these principles.

Lastly, the promotion of design excellence in public works would mean that if a project is over a certain size, architects and persons with demonstrable expertise and experience in design would have to be involved in these projects, whether they're transportation projects or cultural projects.

That's why I am pleased to support this bill. I will now pass it over to my colleague from Scarborough–Agincourt.

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

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to rise this afternoon to speak in support of Bill 6, An Act to enact the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2014. I'm following the minister, as well as my colleague from York South–Weston, about the proposed bill, so I'm going to focus on the five components of the legislation.

The legislation clearly defines the principles of infrastructure. In section 3 of the proposed legislation, it clearly defines the principles of infrastructure. But there are five other components beside the principles part: long-term infrastructure, which my colleague talked about; project prioritization; promotion of designs; excellence in public work; and lastly—and I think my colleague from Timmins–James Bay talked about this—skills training and apprenticeship.

This proposed legislation, if passed, will also be supported by the budget that was presented by the Minister of Finance recently.

Very, very clearly, section 8 of the proposed legislation defines the word “apprentice” and the number of apprentices that will be hired under this proposed legislation. I'm not sure if the member from Timmins–James Bay actually read the budget book. But very, very clearly, page 30 of the budget says very specifically that since 2003, this government has put in—over \$164.5 million just last year alone. It talks about that.

The other piece here is that this bill that we are debating is being complemented by the budget bill. It is very,

very clear that what the member from Timmins–James Bay is arguing about is not clear about the apprenticeship stuff. But this bill, if passed, will be complemented by the budget.

In the budget book, it's spelled out very clearly. It says that we will be investing an additional \$13 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship programs; providing \$19 million over three years to increase the per diem for apprenticeship classroom training; and investing an additional \$23 million over two years in the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund.

I am pretty sure, if this legislation is passed, and, on top of it, if the budget is passed, I think we will have additional apprentices being hired across the province of Ontario.

The other piece of the proposed legislation that I know the members opposite will be very keen to hear about and, as well, read in the proposed legislation: In section 3, dealing with principles, it talks about the transparency of infrastructure planning and investment.

In section 3.7, it says, "Infrastructure planning and investment should be evidence based and transparent, and, subject to any restrictions or prohibitions under an act or otherwise by law on the collection, use or disclosure of information,"—very, very clearly, Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislation, if passed, will ensure further transparency but, more importantly, the evidence-based infrastructure planning.

The other piece of the proposed legislation also talks about the types of personnel that are required in terms of doing infrastructure designs. In section 7 of the legislation, on page 7, it talks about the requirement of architects' and other professionals' involvement in preparing the planning and construction of infrastructure projects. It defines who the architects are, under the Architects Act, and other professionals' groups.

I'm encouraging members of the House—I know they're going to be very interested in debating the proposed bill. But, more importantly, I think the minister spoke earlier about how this bill will go before the committee for further dialogue with the stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to speak on the proposed Bill 6.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Very shortly, I'll be giving my 20-minute speech on Bill 6, so let me use this two-minute opportunity to respond to the minister, who said, "Where do we get the revenue?"

Speaker, this government never thinks twice about where they're going to get the revenue. This time, it's a new pension tax. It's a new carbon tax. It's a new beer tax. It's a further extension of the aviation fuel tax. It's just tax, tax, tax. That's what they want to do, Speaker. That's where their immediate go-to is: into your pocket for some kind of new tax.

1600

The best income, when they ask, "Where do you get the revenue?" is from people who have a job. You put

people to work and you earn revenue. When people are working, that's the best revenue that a government can have. Why they won't go there, why they won't talk about people being put to work, is because we have the highest energy rates in North America. We have the highest payroll taxes in Canada. We have crippling red tape. This is the area that the government needs to fix. Instead of jumping in and looking at the solutions to fix our energy, to fix our payroll taxes and to work on red tape, they would just ignore all that, ignore putting people to work, snap their fingers and raise taxes. Speaker, that's where they think the revenue will come from, and now you know where we think the revenue will come from: from putting people back to work.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, on a point of order. First of all, I'd like to welcome some guests who have come this afternoon to Queen's Park: Kaitlin Cain, Heather Murphy, Kyle St. Aubin, Amanda Benton—not bad, eh? Not bad—and Steven Wright. Welcome to Queen's Park. I hope you're enjoying yourself, and I hope you're enjoying the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Niagara Falls will do the questions and comments?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Now I'll do the question and comments. I want to talk about the comments that were made by the Minister for Economic Development. He talked about P3s and about how we're going to pay for infrastructure. So I'm going to say the Auditor General's report criticizes the level of transparency and public reporting of P3 projects that have been assessed.

That said, there currently exist serious arguments that, far from decreasing the tax, the debt burden of future generations, P3s have done just the opposite. Until they are truly independent assessments, proving that these private partnerships offer viable and cost-effective models, the current evidence seems to suggest that they are a bad deal for Ontario.

Some \$8.2 billion were spent on P3s. The Auditor General said you should never have done it. And what comes out of that? Well, let's see. You sell off Hydro because you're trying to make that up. Higher costs for small businesses. Higher costs for medium businesses. Higher costs for companies like General Motors, who are looking to go elsewhere because of that.

In my last 20 seconds, if you ask me where you're going to get the money, let's add this up: \$8.2 billion on P3s that the Auditor General said you should never have done; \$1 billion on a gas plant; \$1 billion on eHealth; \$1 billion on Ornge. That adds up to \$12 billion. Thank you.

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

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon on Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. I want to thank the minister and the members from York South–Weston, Scarborough–Agincourt, Nipissing and Niagara Falls for their comments so far.

The member from Scarborough–Agincourt listed the series of principles that are lodged within this bill; most

importantly, that there shall be a long-term infrastructure plan. The government is committing this government, and hopefully future governments, to maintain a long-term infrastructure plan so we do not find ourselves again having lost decades of no infrastructure being built.

It talks about project prioritization, which is also about the depoliticization of the process: having a long-term infrastructure plan, setting priorities, making decision-making transparent.

It talks about design excellence, because when you spend billions of dollars on infrastructure, it's an opportunity to also enrich and make the various communities that benefit from this infrastructure more vibrant.

It also talks about skills training, Mr. Speaker, about ensuring that we train young people to have the skills required to build and maintain the infrastructure that this province needs to have a healthy and prosperous economy in the decades to come.

We know what happens when there's a government that chooses not to invest in infrastructure. The result is that Ontarians lose billions and billions of dollars each year in lost productivity. In the GTA, Ontarians are losing \$11 billion a year in productivity through gridlock. Previous governments tore Ontario down; we're building Ontario up, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: That's certainly a tough pill to swallow when we see the results of this government. This government is taking in over \$35 billion every year more than the previous government did. They talked about 10 years and no infrastructure. To \$35 billion you add on the \$10 billion—or actually \$12 billion—in deficits, you're up around \$45 billion in extra revenue every year. Where have you been putting it? I was mayor of South Glengarry. All you did was—the money we used to get, you took that away from us. If it wasn't for the federal gas tax, we'd have had no increase in the last years.

My replacement has applied for some of this money. They say, "You're in too good shape. You can borrow more money." The answer is, make sure you borrow at your limit. Make sure that everybody in this province has borrowed to the point that they can't borrow anymore, and then we may help you. This is where we've gone.

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: Act like a Liberal and you'll get money.

Mr. Jim McDonell: That seems to be the message.

You've had money for a decade here that you've squandered, and it hasn't gone to infrastructure. It's gone to pet projects—failed pet projects—like the Ornge air ambulance. Look at the power plants. Decisions that are made to benefit whom? I don't know. I guess I know who, but I shouldn't be saying here.

You look at the cost of the Green Energy Act—\$8 billion a year. Imagine if that money went to infrastructure. That's the cost that the Green Energy Act is costing every year. The ratepayers of Ontario are paying that.

Now, to pay for your program here, you're looking at selling off Hydro One—another project where you're

selling off the assets without paying down the debt. The people who own Hydro One, the ratepayers, are now going to have to go back and increase rates even higher than you've published, to pay for it. Money doesn't grow on trees. We're not piggybanks here. It's time to be responsible.

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

Hon. Brad Duguid: I may not agree with them, but I appreciate the fact that the members from Nipissing, Niagara Falls, Etobicoke–Lakeshore—of course, I agreed with everything he had to say—and Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry—I appreciate them for participating in the debate. Man, it must be tough to go through life being that negative; it really must be. I feel for you.

When I hear talk from one of the members opposite about creating jobs, and I think of all we've done over the last number of years to move Ontario from one of the highest effective corporate tax rates in North America to one of the lowest, that gives us a competitive advantage. To build up the most talented workforce anywhere, frankly, in the world by our investments in post-secondary, where we have the highest level of attainment to post-secondary in the OECD, they would say that—

Mr. Garfield Dunlop: It's not the highest.

Hon. Brad Duguid: He just said that it's not the highest. He's wrong; it is.

Interjection.

Hon. Brad Duguid: He doesn't even know what I'm talking about here because he's not listening, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about the record amount of infrastructure investments that we have made—investments they don't support, investments they kind of talk about, but never would have the courage to fund. When we talk about the investments we've made in innovation, creating—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Simcoe North.

Hon. Brad Duguid: Toronto's now number six in the world in start-ups; Waterloo is 16. This Toronto-Waterloo-Ottawa corridor is presenting some of the best entrepreneurs anywhere. That's why we're up 524,500 net new jobs—192% in jobs.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member for Nipissing.

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member is laughing. It's absolutely true.

Interjection.

Hon. Brad Duguid: That's Stats Canada true. I've got to tell you—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): I guess you weren't listening—

Interjection: That's a warning.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): First warning.

Hon. Brad Duguid: It's not by accident, Mr. Speaker, that we're number one in North America for the third

year in a row in attracting foreign direct investment. That is, others, outside of Ontario, voting with their dollars to invest in this province because of the important decisions we've made, decisions that those on the other side opposed.

1610

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Thank you. And I thank the member for doing my job, too. Thanks so much.

The member from Nipissing.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill 6. The bill is a crucial step toward implementing aspects of transparency in the government planning process; however, further steps must be taken to ensure the minister partakes in a thorough and transparent consultation process.

The purpose of the bill is to encourage long-term, evidence-based infrastructure planning that supports job creation and training opportunities, economic development and environmental protection. I'll speak a little bit about whether this legislation can actually achieve that goal.

On February 18, 2014, the then MPP for Newmarket–Aurora, Frank Klees, as our infrastructure critic, spoke at length on an identical government bill, Bill 141, for those of us who were here, which had been introduced in a previous Parliament. He spoke in favour of its principles.

I'll mention one issue with the bill, and that was section 7.1, as it contained a significant omission. While it detailed a specific role for architects, it was entirely silent on the specific role for professional engineers. I believe, like I would think many of us do, that most infrastructure jobs require the service of engineers. The Professional Engineers Act stipulates that any infrastructure project of 600 square metres or larger requires the services of a professional engineer. That was a startling omission, quite frankly, with regard to Bill 141.

Our staff attended a ministry briefing on this bill on July 16 of last year. I was disappointed that we were given no slide deck to support the ministry's presentation; only the bill and the compendium notes were provided. We asked for a copy of their presentation; they committed to sending it to us, and we are still waiting to receive it.

In summary of the bill, it requires the minister to develop a long-term infrastructure plan which must set out a description of government-owned infrastructure assets, a description of anticipated infrastructure needs for at least the next 10 years and a strategy to meet those needs. Each plan must be made public.

Once the bill comes into force, the government will have three years to table its first report. The plan must be 10 years in scope and must be tabled in the Legislature no later than five years after the day the previous report was tabled.

The government must consider a list of criteria when prioritizing proposed projects for construction of infrastructure assets. Some of the specifics are: Infrastructure planning and investment should take a long-term view and should take into account the needs of all Ontarians.

Infrastructure planning and investment should take into account any applicable budgets or fiscal plans.

Infrastructure priorities should be clearly identified.

Infrastructure planning and investment should ensure the continued provision of core public services.

Infrastructure decisions should promote economic productivity, competitiveness, job creation and training opportunities.

It's all sounding good so far, with some amendments that we'll provide, but the government must, as I mentioned earlier, require—the act actually says that the government must require that architects and persons with demonstrable skills in infrastructure design be involved in the construction design of infrastructure assets. Again, it leaves out the words “engineers” and “engineering”; it's specific about architecture.

Let me tell you why that's very specific in here. As we talk about infrastructure, they like to talk about “infrastructure, roads” and “infrastructure, transit.” In reality, why they say “architects” here is because historically 60% of all infrastructure is bricks and mortar. It's buildings: hospitals, schools. That's infrastructure as well. When they talk about infrastructure, they want you to think immediately that it's a subway or that it's transit—all good things. But let's be accurate here, Speaker. Why it says “architects” is because, despite all the rhetoric, “infrastructure” to this government means buildings—60% of it. Eleven per cent of infrastructure in Ontario is equipment, and 5% of infrastructure is IT. There's about 4% that's miscellaneous. That leaves 20% for roads, bridges and transit. That's the reality.

That's why they said “architects” and not “engineers,” who would build roads, bridges and subways; it's not all about transit, despite how they like to put that front and centre. Sadly it's not all about transit.

“The government must require that certain numbers of apprentices be employed or engaged in the construction or maintenance ... of infrastructure assets.” As you heard us responding earlier, Mr. Speaker, we just had a major cut in the budget of our apprentice program. Tax credits are being cut, not only for the film industry and the digital media industry, as you spoke of so well this morning in question period, Mr. Speaker, but also for the apprentice program. They rob from Peter to pay Paul. They do that all the time. It's all they know how to do.

The Lieutenant Governor in Council may add services covered under infrastructure or remove “physical structures or facilities from the definition.” Now we know what this whole thing is about. When it comes to the important issue of infrastructure in the province, Speaker, this is a policy that we can only pray, for a change, will be above politics. When committing to an infrastructure project, assuming that it has been planned and prioritized properly, once the decision has been made to invest in that infrastructure project, it should be beyond politics. You shouldn't sit there with a map of the ridings in Ontario, and the colouring in them, and pick your infrastructure projects based on that, as we have so sadly seen in the past.

Interjection.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: To anybody who balks at that, Speaker, all I have to say is three words: gas plant scandal. Gas plant: That's all about moving infrastructure to save five Liberal seats. That's what this government is about. When it comes to infrastructure, it's all about secretly bailing out the MaRS building across the street from here—\$300 million, \$400 million, \$500 million—and not telling us about it, leaving it to a whistle-blower to tell us about it four years later. That's their concept of infrastructure. That's what they think about infrastructure: pawns to move around, to be able to satisfy political requirements. That's what needs to end in Ontario.

I want to speak to the need for long-term planning for infrastructure—true long-term planning. The government has made reference to the importance of having an inventory of infrastructure assets in this province. I completely agree. In fact, they've made reference to the fact that infrastructure planning and investment should take into account, of course, applicable budgets or fiscal plans. Speaker, on paper, it sounds great. What does this mean?

I was at an OPG luncheon today, and our table had some regional mayors. We talked about this exact issue. Somebody else in the Legislature has talked about it as well in the last hour. If your municipality is in great fiscal shape, great financial shape because you worked so hard as a mayor and as a council to keep that budget aligned, then you are punished under this program, by the way.

1620

I live in Corbeil, down the street from where the Dionne quints lived—just across the street from there, as a matter of fact. Billy Vrebosch has been our mayor in Corbeil for more than 30 years. While I was mayor of North Bay, he was mayor of Corbeil, where I lived. I can tell you, he treated every nickel as if it was his own. He squeezed every penny. I admired that in Billy; I still do.

They have no debt. It's pay as you go. I drive down the streets. My garbage is picked up. The plowing is done. He scrimped every penny to make sure that we were in good fiscal shape. Because Corbeil is in such good shape, they're not entitled to this kind of money. He showed me the letter, and other mayors at lunch today talked about the letters that they received. The letter basically says, "Your finances are in great shape. You don't need our money. Because your finances are in such great shape, you have the capacity to borrow, so we're not giving you money. You can go and borrow it. The guy next to you—well, they're not in great shape. They've deteriorated their finances. They can't borrow, so we need to help them."

As we've said so often, Speaker, it picks winners and losers. In fact, it makes winners and losers, so I guess, in a sense, it mirrors this government. They like to borrow to pay for everything. It's not pay as you go; they use the credit card to buy things instead of their debit card. When a family is in trouble, when somebody loses a job, you cut back. Not these guys. They get the credit card oiled up, and out they go on a spending spree—\$2.4 billion more last year than the year before. That's what these guys want to do. That's their way.

They've said to all these municipalities, "Look, follow our bad habits. Your finances are so good, you don't need our money. You can afford to go and borrow. Do what we do. Go and borrow, and charge all the interest to your constituents." That's what they want to do. That's what this program does.

I want to also talk about the issue of inventory of assets. I think everybody would agree that it's hard to make an intelligent and responsible decision about which infrastructure project should be prioritized if we don't know the existing infrastructure inventory and the state of repair or disrepair.

There's no better example in this Legislature than the state of repair or disrepair of Ontario Northland. I remember when the passenger train was still running. As an MPP, I would enjoy taking the train to Toronto; 1 o'clock or 1:05, I think, was the time of the train. It was a beautiful train ride down here. You could use your laptop; there was a sandwich car; the whole thing. I remember taking the train from North Bay up to—I had to go to Cochrane, so I took the train. The engineer was a buddy of mine from school. He said, "Oh, Vic, come on up and take a ride in the locomotive."

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Did you get to blow the whistle?

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I got to blow the whistle.

But something more interesting than blowing the whistle occurred in that locomotive. I had several hours—because it was a few hours, as the member well knows, when the train was running. The train ride from North Bay to Timmins was a few hours. I looked ahead because we had slowed down quite a bit, and I said, "What's going on?" There were red marks painted on the rails and on the ties. "This is the seven-kilometre zone." The train can propel no faster than seven kilometres at that point.

Then we got to a point where there were some yellow lines painted—

Mr. John Yakabuski: You could get out and walk and let it pick you up when it caught up to you.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Well, pretty much.

Then there were yellow lines where we could go up to 10 kilometres. Then there were green lines, and we could resume.

The point is, the equipment, especially in the last dozen years, hadn't been upgraded. The state of repair—or, in this case, disrepair—was not known, and when it was known, nothing was done about it.

That's the problem that is occurring in Ontario today. It's a great example when you don't know what you're talking about, when you don't know the company that you're talking about.

A further example of Ontario Northland: This government not understanding the importance of rail maintenance is one thing; not understanding their own contracts that they had when they announced the fire sale of Ontario Northland—I remember the minister standing up and saying, "We're going to save \$265 million a year." I remember the analysis that we quickly did, and said, "That's not even possible. You don't know what

you're talking about. You don't know how to dig into the books." They did not know, the government here, according to the Auditor General, that the rail workers had 14-year severances and that would account for a considerable amount of money. The government did not know that the Ontera workers had six-year severances.

When you don't know anything about the asset that you own, a crown agency—in this case, Ontario Northland—how can you proceed with infrastructure? They made terrible mistakes. Of course, I called the Auditor General in when we found one of the secret documents—again, back to that treasure trove we got from the gas plant scandal inquiry—that said, “Oh, by the way, we made a mistake.” This is from minister to minister. “We made a mistake. We just realized we've got these severances,” after you've announced \$265 million in savings. “It's going to cost us \$790 million to let this company go.” We called the auditor in. It was a bombshell. It wasn't \$790 million; it was \$820 million. That's because they don't know the asset inventory. They didn't understand that. They didn't understand the infrastructure. The easiest thing for them to do, of course, was to just shut down the railway, which is why we can't take the train from North Bay to Timmins anymore or North Bay to Toronto.

But this isn't the only infrastructure bungle this government is guilty of. I'm not sure if Bill 6 will address it or not, but it's the colossal delays with respect to the Ring of Fire. As I've said many times here, I've been to the Ring of Fire four times, and I'm so discouraged. You want an infrastructure program in Ontario that will put people to work and identify to the minister where we are going to get the revenue? You're going to get the revenue from the jobs. There's no greater revenue in Ontario than revenue from somebody having a job. We don't need to have a carbon tax and we don't need to have the pension tax and a beer tax and the aviation fuel tax. All we need is people to have a job. Sometimes you've got to spend a buck to make a buck. As a lifelong entrepreneur, I can tell you that you do have to do that.

It's so saddening to go up to the Ring of Fire, where, in 2011, the first time I was there, there were 250 men and women working. They were drilling exploration holes. It was fascinating to see. There were all these camps and all the equipment that was there. It was so exciting. My last trip, in 2014, was the most disappointing, because it was the day Cliffs was physically packing the camp and moving away. Since then, they've sold the camp to Noront, and since then they've sold the entire stake to Noront. They've moved out of Ontario. They're gone, like Kellogg's and Heinz and Caterpillar and General Mills and Wrigley. Well, add Cliffs. They're gone because we didn't commit to the infrastructure.

They can talk about it all they want. I've been there four times. They have not spent one penny. That's the depressing news in all of this, those jobs—not just northern Ontario jobs, the engineering firms that are here in Toronto, Ottawa, London, all through Ontario. There are firms everywhere producing drill rods, drill bits, steel,

cable, food—you've got to feed all these people up there. All of those jobs—the 250, the exploration guys and gals, they're all gone. The camp is just running on life support, just enough to keep the water flowing. That's infrastructure. That's the kind of development that we need.

1630

They've had 12 years now to write a 10-year plan. They're still talking about a 10-year plan.

Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak again on this topic.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I want to take this opportunity to respond to some of the comments that were made by the honourable member. First of all, on the question of the Ontario Northland, I've always believed it was part of the government's strategy to underfund the Ontario Northland and to allow the infrastructure to weaken itself so that the riders wouldn't continue using the service, so that you could make the argument to get rid of it. That's essentially what they did.

If we were to take that approach with GO Transit—and I argue that we should never take that approach—the same types of things would happen to the GO services that we currently have. People would find what we found in northeastern Ontario: that there was a very needed service that was being neglected.

As a result, yes, there was less ridership, but if we would have made the investments that we had to on trackage, if we would have made the investments that we had to on new equipment, we could have actually sped up the train service from, I would argue, Cochrane down to Toronto—because the Polar Bear Express is north. We would have been able to speed up the time of that train, where more people would have taken it. We could have looked at options, such as having a night train versus a day train. There are a number of things that we could have done that would have increased the ridership on that line.

The government did everything they could to basically frustrate people's usage of that train. This from a government that says, “We believe in transit. We need to make investments in transit.” Where were you for northerners when you had a chance to stand up and invest in inter-city rail between our communities? You disappointed everybody by doing what you did for a number of years in order to not support that particular service, and then your argument was to privatize it.

As the member points out, it turned out to be a real bad deal. Well, that doesn't bode well for your Hydro deal, which you're now trying to make, which essentially is going to be a fiasco when it comes to who makes money and who has to pay the bill at the end. It's going to be us, the consumers and the businesses of this province, who will see our hydro bills go up yet again.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Etobicoke Centre.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Speaker, when I talk to my constituents, I hear about a range of issues, but there are a

couple that keep coming up frequently. One is, they talk about how important it is that we build up our province for the future; that we not only ensure our prosperity today, but that we do that for the future.

I think this budget has a number of measures—

Interjections.

Mr. Yvan Baker:—and judging from the heckling, the opposition agrees—that we invest for the future to ensure the quality of life for people in the future, but also that we sustain our economy for the future. Those are two things that are critical. That’s why the investments in infrastructure that are proposed in this budget are so important.

I also hear from people in the community about how important it is that we do so while managing taxpayer dollars wisely. I think that Bill 6 helps us to do both. I think it helps us to do both because it holds our feet to the fire, as the minister was saying earlier, to ensure that we have a long-term infrastructure plan, and it makes sure that we do it with the right criteria in place, but it also makes sure that we do so sustainably.

When I think about the experience that I bring to the Legislature, it’s from a private sector, business perspective. I worked with companies to help them ensure that they plan their future sustainably. When we look at future sustainability and making investments in the future, a lot of the things that are in this bill are the kinds of things that some of the best-run organizations, both private and public sector, do.

As an example—and I can’t talk to it all in the limited time that I have left—a few things: This requirement that the Minister of Infrastructure table a long-term infrastructure plan covers at least 10 years. This is long-term thinking. One of the reasons that we haven’t had the infrastructure investment over the years that we would have loved to have had it is because we haven’t had that same sort of planning. This is holding our feet to the fire to make sure that happens. It ensures that we take into account key priorities, long-term return on investment, maximizing tax base growth, stimulating productivity, economic competitiveness.

My time is up, but all this said, this is a bill that supports long-term planning, our long-term prosperity, our long-term economy. It does so sustainably. That’s what the people of Etobicoke Centre deserve.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonnell: It’s great to get up and talk about the informed words of my colleague from North Bay.

I think that the idea that revenue should come from income taxes is a great view, because it means people are working. We’re sitting here today, and it’s 99 months that our unemployment rate has been higher than the national average. That’s one of the highlights, or the records, that they can take credit for.

You look at the difference in revenue of this government: last year, \$118.9 billion in revenue. The year they took over, it was \$66.5 billion. They’ve got the availability of \$52 billion more in revenue, and add on the \$10

billion of deficit: Look at the money they had that the previous government—and they still don’t have enough money to put into infrastructure. I don’t know what an extra four, five, six billion would do. When you waste money like that, it just shows that there’s no commitment, no priorities.

On top of that, we look at the billions that aren’t included in that, like the hydro costs that actually go back to ratepayers. They’re paying, what, \$8 billion a year in subsidies on the electricity bill? And we wonder why our unemployment rates are so high. Our employers are being taxed to death, and as far as this government is concerned, it’s not enough. They’re looking at a carbon tax; they’re looking at an aviation tax. When is enough enough? That’s a phrase that I’m starting to hear more around home as well as up here. People are fed up. They’ve given this government this much extra revenue and they’re still out of cash. It’s just sad.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I’m going to continue what I talked about in the last couple of minutes, about the \$8.2 billion, and the up to \$12 billion that was wasted, because the question is, how are we going to pay for it?

Can you imagine what we could have done with that \$12 billion? We could have spent it on infrastructure; we could have spent it on education. Think about education, because that’s a big issue today in the province of Ontario.

“Teachers were itching” for a strike. Can you imagine: If we had taken that \$12 billion and put it into education, we wouldn’t have to be looking at increasing class sizes, we wouldn’t have to be looking at a strike today, and we wouldn’t have to be looking at closing schools. There is nobody in the province of Ontario—in the members that I represented for over 40 years—who has said to me, “Is there any way we can go on strike?” Nobody ever says that. What they want to do is, they want to go to work. They want to earn a fair pay with fair benefits. That’s what they want to do, union or non-union. I don’t think anybody wants to be out of work.

So for this minister to say that teachers were itching for a strike is—I wish she was still here; she just left, unfortunately. You could have used that \$12 billion.

And I want to—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You sit down first, and then you take it back.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): No, that’s not good: “Okay.” Stand up and do it properly. You withdraw.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Withdraw.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: The second point I want to talk about is the selling of hydro. You talk about a big mistake—selling off hydro. I had a call last week from the tourist sector that owns all the major hotels in

Niagara Falls. Think about this: They, who quite frankly aren't normally NDP supporters, called me and they said, "What am I going to do? It has gone up twice as much during prime time." He says, "I own a hotel. I've got thousands and thousands of people from all over the world in my hotel. What do you want me to do—turn the lights out? I can't afford this. What can I do?"

Selling off hydro is going to increase that again.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Nipissing has two minutes.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I want to also thank the members from Timmins–James Bay, Etobicoke Centre, Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Niagara Falls.

Speaker, as you can see from the examples I outlined in my 20 minutes, this government can hardly be trusted with infrastructure planning or funding—or, actually, can't be trusted to have anything to do with job creation or job creation numbers.

All we have to do, Speaker, is look at the Green Energy Act claims. They said that 50,000 jobs would be created under the Green Energy Act. The latest freedom-of-information said, I think, it was 2,340. The Auditor General told us that for every one job created, two to four are lost in other sectors. This government cannot be trusted to give us any numbers.

If this government was serious about transparency and building infrastructure, as opposed to photo ops and reannouncements of reannouncements—they're very good at those—they would have included the amendments that we proposed last year into the Trillium Trust Act, which were not implemented as part of the bill.

The act said that a "portion" of the sale of assets "may" be put into the Trillium Trust. Those are the wiggle words that gave the government room to manoeuvre and not have to commit money to infrastructure.

1640

In closing, we support the objectives and principles laid out here. I look forward to seeing the amendments our caucus will bring forward to the committee. But when it comes to this government's record on infrastructure planning, they simply cannot be trusted.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: There are a number of issues I want to touch on as they relate to Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015. Of course, this is second reading, so some of us have had an opportunity to address some of our concerns.

I think it's important, though, for us to point out very clearly that this bill calls for long-term, life cycle infrastructure planning. Well, who doesn't want that? This essentially is a bill to say, "Let's really think about this, and let's plan for it." You have to do that for infrastructure; that just makes sense. Unfortunately, though, the record on infrastructure funding and planning from the Liberal government thus far has been inconsistent at best.

Actually, I'm being kind when I say that, because the promises that have come and gone are actually moving

targets, with one exception. They did want to kill the Ontario Northland train, and that did happen. So there's no train anymore. I will never forget one of the members across the aisle saying, "Well, let them drive." You know what? Northerners have to drive a lot. They don't have the sort of public transit infrastructure that some of us enjoy in urban centres, but they also have to deal with the road maintenance issues that the Auditor General recently raised—a huge concern.

The fact that this government tried to save \$36 million by contracting out road maintenance to private industry when those companies didn't even have the equipment to do the work is quite something. It comes back to oversight—it actually always does—and it also comes back to accepting responsibility. So those 200 legal cases based on subpar road maintenance issues—some of them were deadly—have been brought to the courts. Obviously there's a lot of trauma involved in that, and there's no savings there; so, again, short-sighted. Perhaps, if I was feeling relatively generous, I might point out that they would have to bring forward a piece of legislation that basically mandates some level of common sense on infrastructure planning.

I want to address the jobs and prosperity component of this legislation, though. It's hard for me not to think of some of the short-sighted decisions that have been made, most recently in the 2015 budget. Yesterday and the day before, we've been talking with some of the stakeholders in this province who are very concerned around jobs, because obviously, as the former member mentioned, without jobs we will not have prosperity. In this budget, the side of the ledger that actually deals with revenue generation is, quite honestly, very weak around job creation and investment.

FilmOntario is actually one of those stakeholders that was completely blindsided by this budget—by the tax credit cuts. You have to remember that this is an industry that really has been slowly rebuilding post-SARS. The industry will tell you that it takes around 10 years to recover from a major blow like what was delivered in the budget last week.

Just to give you some sense of how unprecedented this is, Mr. Speaker, FilmOntario goes on to say, "While we understand the government's responsibility to meet fiscal objectives in a balanced fashion, the approach taken in the budget to implement proposed rate cuts to OPSTC and the OCASE tax credits, effective immediately, threatens to destabilize the entire film and TV business in Ontario."

How short-sighted can you get? Perhaps that's why this piece of legislation is needed, but the problem is that this piece of legislation, which charges the government to plan ahead, if you will, would not have stopped this decision.

FilmOntario goes on to say, "The immediate implementation means hundreds of lost jobs and business impacts now, as well as shrinking volumes due to reputational damage that could result in job losses in the thousands." This province cannot afford to lose any more jobs.

“It is distressing to think that the government would upend a billion-dollar industry over poorly planned deployment of changes in order to save the sum of \$10 million this fiscal year.”

In fact, they won't even achieve the \$10 million. That won't happen. Really, this cut comes directly from the Treasury Board because, if the finance minister was looking at the economic impact of a policy shift as drastic as this, hopefully someone in finance would do the math and come to the conclusion that film and television alone, in 2013-14, brought in \$1.8 billion in direct investment and over 31,000 direct FT jobs, not counting the spin-off industries and jobs. We haven't even heard from the hotels and restaurants and the car rental agencies—all of those other sector partners that are going to see a drastic negative impact.

For them to bring forward a piece of legislation like Bill 6, saying that the government needs a law to make sure that we make good decisions—that's essentially what this piece of legislation does—for the most part, it is window dressing. When you think of this consistent short-sightedness around fiscal planning, in this case around the Treasury Board, where for a measly \$10 million but likely under \$10 million, you're compromising a very successful industry, it's shocking.

“FilmOntario would, at the very least, ask that the government grandfather these tax credits so that the projects that are already on the ground”—already in Toronto; they're in production. Even in my own community of Kitchener-Waterloo, there are animators who know that those tax credits sometimes are the tipping point to job creation and to holding investment here in Ontario. I can't speak out enough about this issue.

But it is indicative of the way that this government seems to operate. Last year, there were 6% cuts in every ministry except for five. This year, there are 5.5% cuts in every ministry except for four. These cuts are doubling down on austerity. You will never rebuild the economy by staying focused on austerity measures. It has never proven to be successful.

FilmOntario goes on to say, “For a long time, Ontario has been regarded as open for business to investors in our industry, and the Ontario government has been incredibly supportive and key in helping to build Canadian success stories.” It was working. The tax credits were working, and they're a very accountable way of supporting industries. They go on to say, “But implementing the rate changes immediately without grandfathering will overnight undo trust built up over years” and our reputation as one of the most predictable and stable jurisdictions for producing film and television in the world. And, Mr. Speaker, it is not just foreign productions that are being hurt. “So many are VFX and animation, domestic co-productions, co-ventures and small and medium-size Ontario producers who choose to use the OPSTC. Companies will divert their resources to other jurisdictions. They will lay off staff. In some cases, they will close.”

Mr. Speaker, you can bring in a piece of legislation which essentially says, “Take a long-term view.” Well,

clearly, nobody was taking a long-term view when they proposed a tax credit cut for these two lines in the budget. It also says that “decision-makers should take into account the needs of Ontarians by being mindful of ... demographic and economic trends in Ontario.” Anybody who steps outside of this House and talks to people in this province will realize that people are hurting, and they can't find jobs. Precarious, contract, part-time work is the new reality for employment in the province of Ontario.

1650

By their own admission in this budget, they over-predicted last year that they would create 67,000 more jobs. Of course, those jobs were not realized. It's right here in the budget, and yet you're going to bring in a tax credit cut for under \$10 million, which is going to undermine an economic boost for Toronto, for the GTA and for other communities that really are fostering this new creative industry.

So what's at stake? Ontario right now “is a centre for global film and television—in part because of its skilled labour, its production infrastructure, its post-production and VFX capacity,” and, quite honestly, “Ontario entrepreneurs who run the companies that make it all happen.” This has taken 10 years to rebuild.

“Other jurisdictions around the world, when implementing changes to tax credits, have ‘grandfathered’ productions already committed to the jurisdiction prior to the announcement. It is a common sense tax policy to make sure productions don't have the rug pulled out from underneath them.” They go on to say that they are at a complete loss as to how Ontario would think otherwise.

“The damage is already being done to industry trust in Ontario as a place that can be relied upon when it comes to investing in productive capacity. The longer Ontario waits to grandfather the recent cuts, the worse it will get; the destabilization could last for years.”

What's really astounding is that FilmOntario was meeting with this government, was coming to the table and was making suggestions and trying to be part of the conversation about what role they could play. Of course, they never thought that the cut would be immediate, mid-production. Who does that? I tell you, it's completely irresponsible and it's going to have long-term impacts across Toronto and across Ontario unless the grandfathering is honoured.

In the infrastructure piece of Bill 6, it goes on to say that the government should take a long-term view. Well, there are some communities that have no choice but to take a long-term view. If you think about us in Kitchener-Waterloo, we have been living this two-way, all-day GO process—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Here we go again. Here goes the mythology.

Ms. Catherine Fife: No, it's not mythology, because I have you on the record, and I'm going to put it on the record right now.

Yesterday, actually, the member from Kitchener Centre went on to say, “Why does it take 10 years? Well,

we're addressing grade separation, station modifications, track and signal additions and all the other important work that's necessary to meet this goal. There's a whole team of engineers working" on it.

Well, I would have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when the promise was made of two-way, all-day GO every 15 minutes on electrified rails, this government knew that this was already going on. So they stood on the platform and they made a promise that they knew they couldn't keep.

So of course we have no choice but to take a long-term view because it just went from four trains in the morning coming from KW to Toronto—but of course no trains going from Toronto to KW. And that's supposed to be in two years, but that's not the promise that was made by the Minister of Transportation.

So I'm just going to remind the minister of what's on the record prior to the election. The Minister of Transportation at the time was Mr. Murray. He said that "the high-speed rail link is the third step in a three-step process.... The first step, already announced by the Liberals, is to increase GO trains between Kitchener and Toronto to four trains each way per day by 2016." This is a CBC news production from May 27. "The second step is to move to two-way, all-day GO service within five years, according to Murray, and then complete a high-speed link in 10 years."

With all due respect, this was not the Minister of Transportation, but this was a Liberal promise. It was part of their platform—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: The platform said 10 years.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a matter of public record. I can see that it's frustrating.

But I can tell you what's not going to change: Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, isn't going to make a Liberal government, pre-election or post-election, keep this promise. There's no legislation that I've ever seen thus far that can ensure that Liberals will keep their promises.

Aside from the language about "we're working on it," I just want to point out that the minister of the day at the time went on to say that one of the things that—actually, there was a lot of doubt. I should be fair in this. When the promises were made on the platform in Kitchener about this two-way, all-day, every 15 minutes, electrified rail, and a bullet train—I'm not even going to talk about the bullet train, because I think we all know how to classify the bullet train promise.

But at the time, the experts said—and this expert, actually, is Mr. Munro. He said, "The fact that they have not released the background paper on the grounds of commercial confidentiality, well wait a minute, you're talking about spending \$3 billion of public money and you're not prepared to give us the report that you're justifying this with? Can you say 'gas plant'?"

"One of the first things we want to do if we're re-elected is get those studies out there," said the Minister of Transportation at the time.

I think the key part of the sentence is "re-elected," because this was part of their election promise.

But Munro questioned Murray's assertion that the high-speed rail line could make money, because this is the big thing about transit infrastructure: It is very rarely self-sustaining; it usually is very heavily subsidized. But the value in infrastructure investment, like, perhaps, a two-way, all-day GO service every 15 minutes on an electrified rail, means it's the connectivity which actually generates the investment because it creates one cluster to another cluster.

The community of Kitchener–Waterloo has made such a compelling business case for this investment. They even commissioned their own study and they costed it out at \$396 million.

But the plan, as it stands right now, for the record, does not involve getting the 10,000 people from Toronto to Kitchener–Waterloo; it does not happen. So Google continues to bus these people, this talent, because they have investment in the people and they want to make sure those people are safe; they want to make sure those people can get to work. This government should care about those people getting to work because those people pay taxes and they generate revenue for the province of Ontario.

So here we are: We have an infrastructure plan for the province, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, which asks us to take a long-term view. Again, many communities—my own community; Cambridge, obviously, would be another community—are waiting for GO service as well and they've made a very compelling case. And Niagara has made a very compelling case for their ridership.

The longer you wait, though—and this is the key piece. The longer you wait, you lose the ridership. People are like me and they're getting on the 401 at 4:15 in the morning, and that's late. The intensity on the 401 in the morning coming into Toronto is pretty profound. So we have some serious concerns, obviously, about that.

And actually, yesterday, it was interesting: The CEO of BlackBerry—his name is John Chen—talked about talent retention and how the connectivity piece is so key, because we invest in our youth. They acquire these wonderful skills to work, perhaps, in the film industry, although I've just outlined why I have some serious concerns about that, and they go elsewhere. They go down to Silicon Valley because they want the jobs. So we invest in them and then we drop the ball because we can't somehow figure out how to actually follow through on a long-standing promise of two-way, all-day GO service back and forth to Toronto.

I did think it was really important—the economic development minister referenced the Ed Clark report. Nowhere in Bill 6 would you—this new way of making decisions here at Queen's Park, of contracting out opinions that you need to justify moving ahead with the sale of a strategic public asset like Hydro One, this legislation wouldn't do anything to prevent that, especially a pro bono offer of help, which actually cost the people of this province \$7 million.

We, of course, support the long-term view, and that decision-makers should take into account the needs of Ontarians by being mindful of demographic and economic trends in Ontario. We're really hopeful that this government recognizes that cutting the tax credits for the Ontario film industry and digital media is a negative return, for instance, and the apprenticeships program in the budget—it's a \$55-million reduction in the tax credit for apprenticeships. It's right here in the budget. That's going to hurt youth employment, because without those partnerships with the private sector, which we have always been supportive of, especially when it's a training opportunity for youth, that slams the door in their face.

1700

I think we can all agree that Ontario has the highest youth unemployment in the country. We can't afford to miss these opportunities to ensure that they reach their potential.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Questions and comments?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I always welcome the opportunity—and I've had a number of opportunities this week alone—to be here in the chamber in the afternoon on the topic of the budget, relating specifically, in my case, to transit and transportation infrastructure.

I've had a number of occasions to listen to the member from Kitchener, who has just spoken with respect to—the terminology I used the other day—the convenient mythology not just of the NDP caucus, that third-place party, but also of this member in particular. I'm not quite sure that I can find a better, more appropriate or more accurate way to describe the spin that has emanated from that particular member today and still fall within the bounds of what is parliamentary language.

What I think is most important for the people who are watching at home, particularly those from the Kitchener-Waterloo region, is for everyone to remember that on the one hand, this member sees fit on a daily basis to stand here and to castigate the alternate financing and procurement process that we use for building infrastructure in this province, and to slam Infrastructure Ontario, which has a world-leading reputation for delivering on large-scale infrastructure projects; and yet, on the other hand, that member has no hesitation whatsoever to show up in her community for the photo op when we use an IO-inspired design-build-finance-and-maintain process to deliver on an LRT that is very popular in her community.

On the one hand, that member rejects not once, but twice, our budget—last May, last summer—which includes the funding to deliver those transit investments, like two-way, all-day GO for her community; then she stands here in the House after her vote, which attempted to sideline our desire to move the province forward with infrastructure, and she has the temerity to say in this Legislature, “Why aren't you building more infrastructure?”

You can't have it both ways; it's a shame she keeps trying to.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: We talk about this particular bill. The minister wants to develop a long-term infrastructure plan for over 10 years, and I'm thinking, well, okay, 10 years; I believe it's a \$130-billion infrastructure plan, so \$13 billion a year. If you do the math, my question is, where are they going to get the money? Where is it coming from? Oh yes, wait a minute. That infrastructure is actually for the Toronto area for the most part, but it's going to be paid for by those of us who represent rural ridings—

Interjection.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Well, do you know what? We have to take a look at that.

Here's the thing that I really doubt is going to happen. I really doubt this is going to happen because this government has created so much red tape that they're going to get caught up in their own red tape—unless, of course, they want to do things like change laws or amend certain bills so that they can kind of bypass and walk right through things.

I will say this, Speaker: My riding of Chatham-Kent has a multi-million dollar infrastructure deficit. Specifically, it's home to a large number of roads and bridges. They may not know this here, but Chatham-Kent by itself is home to about 850 bridge or culvert structures greater than three metres in span length. The municipality is also home to some 19,000 smaller culverts. We've got a real issue in Chatham-Kent. Thanks to this government, we have lost a lot of business and industry. We have high unemployment, we have zero tax base, and now the people—our transit is being able to cross a culvert without the danger of falling through.

We need a lot of work done in this province. Our member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and the gas tax—guess what? A lot of that money doesn't come our way. Yes, we do have small transit, but we need to do better. This government needs to do better, and if they don't do better, then it will just be for Toronto and nobody else.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Oh, my goodness, Speaker. Things are getting kind of hot and heavy here.

I want to say, first of all, to the Minister of Transportation, I don't think the member for Kitchener-Waterloo is just making this up out of thin air.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Oh, yes, she is.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: No, because I can tell you, I am looking at information on CBC News; it's on Google—you know, the Google Alerts. I can certainly send that to you.

I've experienced an announcement in London, Ontario, where I live—my riding is London-Fanshawe—and this was actually reported back in December 2014, so that's six months after the election, because we had the election in June. The Liberals hired a third-party consultant, and it was known that this consultant was rushed; the study was rushed. It was done in two weeks, and there was documentation obtained by CBC. So the documentation was obtained by CBC—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Through an FOI.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Well, regardless—we have to have transparency and accountability. If you want to give us the documents without FOI, we will accept them. That's not a problem.

However, we had to do the—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): You know better than that.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I get that it might be a little bit personal for you, but we have to speak out about it.

Absolutely, what community wouldn't want high-speed rail? Actually, when the minister came to London to announce this high-speed rail, one of my staff was just tickled pink, and she said, "Oh, my gosh, my real estate property is going to go up." Imagine the transportation coming from Toronto to London and London to Toronto.

But besides that, I just want to point out to the minister that the member from Kitchener–Waterloo is not spinning it; she has the facts. We can certainly send them to you, without an FOI. And I have the facts here too. The previous minister said it would cost as low as \$10 to get from London to Toronto on high-speed rail in 71 minutes. I would just like to see that information. I'd like to see the actual documentation, the proof.

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

Mr. Joe Dickson: It's an honour to rise and address Bill 6, the proposed infrastructure bill for jobs and prosperity.

I find it quite ironic that when I talk to all of my friends from all three provincial parties, they know about the new infrastructure, and they're glad to see it coming forward. Time is of the essence. It should be commenced, and we're doing everything in our power to try to make that happen.

The past MPP from Oshawa, a dear friend of mine—I won't give his name; it's inappropriate to say that in this House, but I will tell you that he has proclaimed actively for the last year and a half that the Highway 407 East extension from Ajax–Pickering through to Highway 115 is the greatest financial job creation motivator that Durham region has ever seen. Quite frankly, a member of regional council—the chair, Roger Anderson—and his council agree with that. They all know how necessary it is, what it's going to do, how it's going to speed up traffic, how it's going to be a job creator—it's going to do all those things.

The minister was good enough to just recently commence with 407 East, phase 2. That process is well under way now, and if you drive out to the country, you just won't believe it. Things are happening. Jobs are going to be created from all this.

I can also mention that in addition to that, there's Highway 418, which is the north-south boundary, and that's a godsend. That's going to link the two major arteries, 407 East and 401, just prior to getting to Clarington. When I talk about Clarington, I'll make my

good friend from Clarington happy in that GO trains have to be in there; the GO trains have to get as far as Clarington.

On the street in Ajax and Pickering, in my area, people want the jobs. They're anxious. They just can't wait. I'm looking forward to that day as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Kitchener–Waterloo, two minutes.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, everyone, for the comments. Obviously, I'm going to direct my comments to the Minister of Transportation. I had to show up at the ION photo op because I had to make sure you were still going to hold to the \$300 million that you invested. Originally you started at \$600 million, so there was a considerable reduction in that.

1710

I'm happy that the minister raised the AFP model because it was actually not me who raised the red flag, it was the Auditor General, an independent officer of this Legislature. When she went through those 74 infrastructure projects, she could find no empirical evidence to justify going towards the AFP model, and that actually cost \$6.5 billion in additional financing. Infrastructure Ontario cannot afford to be borrowing money for infrastructure at credit card rates. Common sense would prevail.

This legislation, Bill 6, is not going to lend that sort of common sense lens to these decisions. Fortunately, though, Infrastructure Ontario has come to public accounts. They are reviewing their processes and they're going to come back—and that's the important part about the oversight, Mr. Speaker.

On the two-way, all-day GO, every 15 minutes within two, four, five or now 10 years, I think people understand the service level because they're down to 130 passengers in the morning. The train takes over two hours to get from KW to Toronto. It doesn't matter how much the respective members spin it, they're living the broken promises on transit in this province, and no piece of legislation is going to change that.

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

Hon. Steven Del Duca: It's a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to speak a little bit this afternoon. Of course, I'll be sharing my time this afternoon with the member from Davenport and the member from Halton, two wonderful colleagues who really and truly, like everyone else on this enlightened side of the House, understand the importance of making sure that you have an ambitious plan to invest in building the province up. I'm happy to share my time with those members this afternoon.

Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, is an extremely important piece of legislation and I will talk at length in a couple of moments with respect to why it's such an important piece of legislation. But somewhat tied into the importance of Bill 6 is this discussion that we've just had regarding some of the comments, some of the debate that's been added by members from the NDP caucus.

It's interesting to me because of course I've now had two or three occasions this week alone to talk about the member from Kitchener–Waterloo who, of course, seems to have quite the fascination with Liberal government photo ops, even though she seeks to try to torque things when she's here in this chamber. I understand that it looks good for the householder locally when you show up for the photos, but that means you have to be frank and reasonable with your broader support for making sure that we invest.

But I also found it interesting that the member from London–Fanshawe decided to chime in this afternoon and take up the torch, take up that baton left in this particular relay race, I suppose, from the member from Kitchener, and talk about whether or not we really do have the plans.

Again, what I find fascinating is that not that many weeks or months after I became Minister of Transportation last year, I was down in London with the Deputy Premier, who has so ably represented her community for so long, and we announced significant infrastructure upgrades in some of the Highway 401 interchanges in that community. I was fairly new on the job at that time as Minister of Transportation, but, again, at that time, the member from London–Fanshawe—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order: the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I do not believe that we have a quorum in the House this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The table will check.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes): A quorum is not present, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

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

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: As I was saying, the member from London–Fanshawe, who spoke this afternoon, on that particular day when I was in London to announce the ongoing interchange upgrades that the province is making as the result of the infrastructure investments that are part of our plan—that member, the member from London–Fanshawe, exactly like the member from Kitchener–Waterloo from the NDP caucus, stands here in the House and suggests that we aren't investing in infrastructure. But when we do invest in infrastructure in their communities—in Kitchener–Waterloo and in London—they have no hesitation to show up for the celebration. It makes me really and truly believe that when you think of the acronym NDP, it kind of stands for “never done with the photo-ops.” I think that's unfortunate. I think it's truly unfortunate.

Here in this government, under the leadership of this Premier and the minister responsible for economic development, employment and infrastructure, we believe passionately in making sure that we have legislation in

place that helps lay out a long-term plan for investing in infrastructure, for building the province up, and it's what we're doing.

One of the members from the PC caucus earlier this afternoon, in speaking about the importance of infrastructure in his rural Ontario community, somehow suggested that all of the investments that we're making as a government are taking place in Toronto, in the 416. Of course, that's also, I would very respectfully suggest, a misrepresentation of the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

Over the next decade—I withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): No, you'll sit down first.

You now will stand up and withdraw.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): And you can continue.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: As I was saying, that member is clearly incorrect with respect to what's in the Moving Ontario Forward plan. The \$31.5 billion that's being invested over the next decade in transit, transportation and other critical forms of infrastructure right across the province of Ontario includes approximately \$16 billion for the greater Toronto and—Speaker—Hamilton area and it includes roughly \$15 billion for communities that fall outside the greater Toronto and Hamilton area.

I know it's difficult for a Conservative to accept, but when we came up with the formula to divide how we're making these investments, we used an organization that's known as Statistics Canada. I understand: When you stand shoulder to shoulder with our Prime Minister, who has literally eradicated the work of the census and all the great statistical work that has occurred in Canada since Confederation practically, I know it's hard to accept that, in fact, we've used Statistics Canada data to decide how we're going to make these investments.

The other day, when I spoke with respect to the budget and I talked about infrastructure as it relates to the budget, I didn't have the opportunity to discuss the importance of making sure that you really do have an infrastructure plan generally in the province, but also as it relates to my own community.

I ran out of time the other day, and I want to spend what's left of my time to talk about the infrastructure investments that are at the very heart of not only Bill 6 but our government's plan to move the province forward and to improve quality of life for people and to build up the economy and to give all of us a more prosperous future, and what that means for the people who live in York region, and specifically for people in my community.

Since 2012, people in this Legislature will know that I have been a strong champion for making sure that three crucial infrastructure investments continue to flow into York region to specifically benefit my community. One of them is the Highway 427 extension. That is an extension of roughly seven kilometres, which will take Highway 427 from where it currently ends, around Highway 7 in the western part of my community, and

extend it northbound, again, by about seven kilometres, up to Major Mackenzie Drive.

The really fascinating thing for me now is that as the Minister of Transportation as well as the MPP for Vaughan, I'm extremely proud that it's me and my ministry and the rest of the folks on this side of the House who have direct responsibility for making sure that we deliver that project, and we surely will.

The other project that's really important, of course, is the combined public transit investments. There are actually three I want to highlight that benefit Vaughan and benefit all of York and, frankly, in some cases benefit wonderful communities like Barrie as well. Those three things are what we're doing on the Barrie line as it relates to GO regional express rail. I've talked about GO RER—regional express rail—a fair bit here in this chamber over the last number of weeks.

What that means for people who live in Maple, Kleinburg and Woodbridge—three wonderful communities that I have the privilege of representing here in this chamber—is that they will have, over the next decade, two-way, all-day GO service, electrified, at up to 15-minute intervals, running north and south all day long. That's something that is extremely important for people in my community, a high-growth community if there ever was one. In addition to that: the Liberal provincial government's \$1.4-billion investment in York region's Viva BRT system.

When I think about our infrastructure plan and I think about this budget and I think about Bill 6 and I think about the ambitious plan our Premier and our government have, I actually think of my seven-year-old daughter. This is the context that I put it in. I live somewhere in the neighbourhood of Islington and Highway 7. My seven-year-old daughter, in 10 years, when she's 17, when she has completed high school and she's contemplating what her future might look like and she wants to connect to other parts of this region or, frankly, even other parts of this province, will have the opportunity, because of our \$1.4-billion investment in Viva BRT, to spend a little bit of time leaving our home, walking down to Highway 7—because we only live about a kilometre north of Highway 7—getting on a dedicated bus running along Highway 7 taking her over to the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension, which is another project this government has roughly \$870 million invested in.

1720

It is all about connectivity. It is all about building an integrated transit network here in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, and it's also about making sure, whether it's by virtue of the investments that we are making in highways in the north, re-establishing a stand-alone Connecting Link fund, as we have done, investing in natural gas, investing in all other forms—bridges, roads etc.—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: All other forms? Trains?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Trains as well, of course. Perhaps the member from Nipissing is unaware, as he is unaware of so many other things, that the GO train network in its very name has the word “train.”

Beyond that, it's important for us to make sure Bill 6 passes. Bill 6 is a companion piece to the investments that are contained in budget 2015, as they were in budget 2014, as they were in budget 2013—a very ambitious plan across all sectors to invest \$130 billion over the next decade in infrastructure from corner to corner to corner to corner of this province: to the north, to the southwest, to the east, to all forums, to all aspects of this province.

I would only say that in all of the criticisms that I've heard in my two years or so in this chamber as an MPP representing Vaughan, whether I'm talking about the misguided attempts from the official opposition, the Conservative members, or those coming from the third party, the NDP, what's most troubling to me and to the people I represent and the people we all represent on this side of the House is that repeatedly on the left hand or the right hand, depending on where they start from, they want to slam whether or not we really and truly are building up the province, whether or not we really are making the investments, whether we're doing it fast enough. On the other hand, on every single occasion when they have the chance to stand with us, to stand up for Ontario and to support their own communities, for the sake of crass, short-sighted political interests, they choose not to. It's a shame.

We're going to keep building the province up. Let's pass this bill. Let's move forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? Oh, you're splitting your time. The member for Davenport.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: It really, truly is a privilege to speak on Bill 6 this afternoon, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. It is such a pleasure to hear the Minister of Transportation speak with such passion and such dedication about what our government is doing to invest in infrastructure. I wanted to congratulate him for all the great work that he is doing to build modern infrastructure, which is part of our government's plan to continue growing the economy and create jobs. That is why we are investing over \$130 billion in public infrastructure over the next 10 years.

Investing in infrastructure makes perfect economic sense. In fact, an April 2013 report from the Conference Board of Canada found that each dollar invested in public infrastructure in Ontario raises gross domestic product by \$1.14 in the near term. In addition, our own studies show that the returns on this dollar grow to \$3.10 in the long term, while supporting jobs and facilitating private investment.

Moreover, our \$130-billion investment builds much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province and will be supporting over 110,000 jobs annually. If passed and proclaimed, this bill would require our government and future governments to regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans. This will ensure that all governments recognize the importance of long-term planning.

The Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act is part of our plan to continue building a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. The proposed legislation would

increase the opportunities for apprenticeships for a wide variety of trades. This bill represents our government's priorities of building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, building new public infrastructure and creating a dynamic business climate.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a bit of time now discussing the important topic of gridlock and the importance of investment to the GTHA's infrastructure.

The need for infrastructure investment is nowhere more evident than in the GTHA. Investing in infrastructure in the GTHA is an absolute priority and necessity for our province to succeed. Gridlock is choking our growth potential. The average daily commute time for residents in Ontario is nearly 66 minutes, and gridlock costs our economy up to \$11 billion per year in the GTHA alone. Our government is investing significantly to address gridlock, and I'm happy that constituents of my riding of Davenport are direct beneficiaries of these investments.

The Union Pearson Express, which begins service on June 6, represents a component to our government's commitment to expanding infrastructure in Toronto. This dedicated rail link will finally connect Canada's two busiest transportation hubs, Union Station and Toronto Pearson International Airport. By 2020, Metrolinx expects the UP Express to attract approximately 2.5 million riders annually.

The Eglinton Crosstown LRT, which has two stations in Davenport, at Eglinton and Caledonia, and at Eglinton and Dufferin, is another example of our government building Ontario up. This project, expected to be completed by 2020, represents the largest transit expansion in Toronto's history. In fact, on April 17 the tunnel boring machines tunneling from Black Creek reached their destination point at the Allen Road. Hundreds of people watched as, late at night, the tunnel boring machines were lifted and transported to the east side of the Allen.

I'm happy that the 2015 Ontario budget continues the great work to increase transportation options for Ontarians, specifically my constituents of Davenport.

One particular plan which will benefit Davenport residents is our government's regional express rail plan, the RER plan. It will completely transform public transportation in Toronto by electrifying all GO corridors and running trains all day, two ways, up to every 15 minutes. RER will deliver electrified service at about 15-minute frequency across two GO lines which cross through Davenport: the Kitchener corridor, including the UP Express, and the Barrie corridor. This network will also be the foundation for the SmartTrack proposal in the city of Toronto.

I'm happy that our government is doing important work to improve long-term infrastructure planning. Bill 6 was introduced in July 2014, and it outlines a series of mechanisms to encourage principled, evidence-based and strategic long-term infrastructure planning. In addition, it includes measures intended to support job creation and training opportunities, economic growth and protection of the environment.

The key components of this legislation are as follows: The bill requires that the government and the broader public sector consider specific principles when making infrastructure decisions; for example, planning being done on a long-term basis and the need for alignment with demographic-economic trends. It also includes a requirement that the Minister of Infrastructure table a long-term infrastructure plan in the Legislature, covering at least 10 years. It would be required that a certain number of apprentices be involved in the construction of provincial infrastructure assets, as prescribed by regulation.

I'm happy to have been given the opportunity to speak here this afternoon.

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

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm pleased to rise and speak today in support of Bill 6, the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act. I'm pleased to also add my comments to my colleagues the Minister of Transportation, who spoke so passionately, and also the MPP for Davenport, who also spoke so passionately about this very, very important bill.

This is a vital bill. Why? Because Ontario's new 10-year economic plan includes over \$130 billion in public infrastructure investments. These are important vital investments that will affect Ontarians' lives every day in so many different ways. What this will do is build our province up. It will essentially result in support of over 110,000 jobs annually and will build much-needed infrastructure in every corner of the province. This is also the largest investment in infrastructure in our province's history, so we've got to get it right.

If passed and proclaimed, the proposed legislation would build on past work and ensure that current and future governments regularly prepare long-term infrastructure plans and continue to improve how the province prioritizes and addresses infrastructure needs. What does this mean? What this means is that we will have a plan. We will have a plan when it comes to how those dollars are spent. We will have a plan when it comes to building our roads, building our bridges, building our hospitals, building our schools and building our transit. We have to look beyond one-off projects and we have to plan for the future.

1730

Let me talk a little bit about my own riding of Halton. One of the things that we are proposing here is that we will have a plan that takes into account 10 years of projections, demographics, how things are going to grow and how we are going to make sure that we deliver the support and foundations that the people in our province need. In Halton, for example, the fastest-growing area in the country, take 10 years, a 10-year snapshot in my riding. Over 10 years in my riding, the town of Milton went from 30,000 people to close to 100,000 people. What did this mean? Well, it meant we needed strong infrastructure. We needed schools built, we needed roads built, we needed public transportation and we needed hospitals. You cannot build those things without plan-

ning. They don't happen overnight. It takes years to plan and build a hospital. It takes years to plan and build schools. You have to take into account where the growth is happening and where it makes sense for us to build these things.

For example, when it comes to health the people in my riding are going to have access to three very state-of-the-art facilities: a major hospital now being built in Oakville; also, an extension, an expansion in Milton; and the same thing happening at Joseph Brant, in Burlington. These three pieces need to work together to fulfill the needs of the people in my riding, and so planning is extremely important.

This bill ensures that we will have a plan, that we will have a vision and that we will have done our homework when it comes to spending taxpayers' money. That's what they want. They want the homework done. This is the right thing to do when it comes to our roads, bridges and infrastructure, and the right thing to do for our children and our future.

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

Mr. Jack MacLaren: It's almost surprising that we need a bill like this. You would think that planning for infrastructure would be the first thing that anybody would do before they plan any kind of construction projects or any kind of long-term work in the province for the things that we have to do, such as building highways, subways, GO trains etc. However, I guess the nature of government is such that if you don't have a plan that's legislated, and when you have a government in place doing things and you allow room for corruption, then corruption will happen. On that basis, I guess we do need to have what would seem like an unnecessary piece of legislation, because of our government.

We have a \$130-billion plan for 10 years to build infrastructure—mainly highways, subways and things of that nature—and yet we're just missing the \$130 billion. Really, what we need isn't a plan on how we're going to do things and create jobs and tender and all that good stuff, we need a financial plan as to where the money's going to come from. Because here we have a group that wants to spend \$13 billion a year for the next 10 years and they just don't have the money.

So they've come up with this idea since the election—since they didn't campaign on it—that we should sell Hydro, which used to be the idea that terrible people like those in my party would come up with, and now that party thinks it's a good idea. It's a good idea, except they're doing it in the wrong way. They're going to sell off 60% of it after they give shares to unions for the next 12 and 15 years, which means even less money for the public to realize. Part of that money is going to go to pay off debt and that will look after part of the infrastructure spending for this year. And what do we do for next year? Do we sell Hydro again? I don't think so. We can only sell it once.

So we need a financial plan—that's what's missing here—because these people have wasted too much of our money.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak in this House, especially on Bill 6, a plan to make 10-year plans.

To really look at how a government performs, let's look at their plans going back 10 years, specifically five years ago when they laid out their plan and their contracts on how to clean the roads from snow. In the auditor's report: "In addition, the ministry procured private sector contractors primarily on the basis of the lowest price bid, without properly ensuring that the contractors chosen were fully equipped to provide effective ... services. Even though ministry staff, including engineers, raised serious concerns," they went ahead.

Speaker, that was part of the plan. They were willing to risk people across the province. That is part of the plan.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Point of order, the member from Davenport.

Stop the clock.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the member opposite is not speaking to the bill. Perhaps he can speak to what's at hand right now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): If he gets off-base, I will certainly let him know. Thanks for the comment.

Continue.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'm speaking in response to the Minister of Transportation, who mentioned photo-ops—on several opportunities, he mentioned photo-ops. Here are a few old photos. Maybe he would like some of our photos, because when we started a northern road report, we asked people to send us photos: photos of roads that had this much snow—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Sit down. When I stand, you sit; you know what the rule is. Thanks very much.

I'm not quite sure that photos of you are what we're talking about here.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Don't shake your head. I would suggest you get back to the bill. Thank you.

Mr. John Vanthof: Respectfully, Speaker, I was talking about photos of the roads that were closed for hours on end waiting for a snowplow. I've got a beautiful photo of one of those overhead road boards where they have, "The 401 is moving well." I've got one where I pull out on the highway. In the middle of November, it said, "Give motorcycles room"—in northern Ontario in November. Is that also part of the plan?

Let's be real and make sure our roads are safe.

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

Hon. Bill Mauro: Speaker, thank you very much. I want to thank those who have spoken on this bill on infrastructure. I always go back to where we began on this, back to 2003. When we were first elected in 2003, and I've mentioned this before in the House, we actually

identified three deficits in the province of Ontario when we came into government.

We identified a services deficit. We've done a fair bit to address that, I would say, by hiring 5,600 more doctors, 24,000 more nurses, opening up nurse practitioner clinics, and vastly reducing the number of people who no longer have access to a primary care provider in the province of Ontario.

We also identified a financial deficit. You'll remember—we hear the Conservatives talk often about what wonderful stewards they are of the finances of the province. When we came in in 2003, during very robust economic times in Ontario, primarily on the back of a very robust economy in the US and a 63-cent dollar or a 70-cent dollar, they still left with us a \$8.5-billion financial deficit that was really an \$8.5-billion structural deficit because they'd just sold the 407 for \$3 billion.

So they really left with us with an \$8.5-billion structural deficit when the economy of the province of Ontario was red hot. No recession going on, but the financial stewards across the way still found the capacity to leave the people of the province of Ontario with an \$8.5-billion financial deficit. If you're not sure about that, just go back and check the Toronto Star headline in 2003. Toronto Star headline—very bold, very clear.

But the point is, we have massively been investing in infrastructure—the third deficit that we identified in 2003—massively investing. This bill is not the beginning of it; this is the continuation of it. Since 2003, we've been making massive investments. My community and home riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan has been a huge beneficiary of investments in roads, bridges and mass transit infrastructure. Just see the 1,200 more people who are working at the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay today who weren't there in 2003.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments? One more. Who's up? Going once. Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you, Speaker. I hear the comments about the deficit when this government came in, because I was involved with municipal government. I remember that this government in 2003-04—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Stop the clock. You guys were all concerned about the member not sticking to the agenda. While our favourite minister was up, you were all screaming. I couldn't even hear him, and he's on your side. Isn't that special? So I would suggest we cut back the decibel level in here real quick, or I'll be cutting real quick.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you, Speaker. This government spent \$3 billion in the last week of March of unfunded liabilities because they went around handing out cheques. I remember our local member said, "We're so busy handing out cheques we're going to have to let it go into April because we just can't do it, but you know that money is going to count for last year's budget." Wasn't that big of them? They did that. Plus, I don't

know what they spent between October and the last week of March, but it's probably a lot more than \$3 billion. That was all about this message they have about inheriting a deficit. That's how transparency started under this government. It was just a plan where they would tell the people one thing, promise another, do something else and then blame somebody else.

The Globe and Mail probably has a little bit more credibility than some of the papers they quote. They talked about how the Ernie Eves government actually had a balanced budget but the trickery of this government made them put it on the books by taking another credit from the federal government a year later. That's not the norm, the way the accounting works in this province. That's just typical.

We've heard promise after promise. We heard a Premier who came in—a candidate who signed something saying, "I will never raise taxes." The first thing they did was the health tax. In the next election: "I will not raise taxes." Then the GST. We also heard, "No carbon tax." The carbon tax is on the table.

This is a record that should be shameful in this province. That's not the way we've grown up. There's integrity, but it's lacking in some of these governments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The Minister of Transportation has two minutes. And be nice to the Speaker.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that.

I want to begin by thanking the members from Davenport and Halton for their eloquence this afternoon and for their commitment to actually building the province up—and of course, the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills; the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane; my good friend and colleague the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry; and the final speaker, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Really quickly, I'll mention, as a quick footnote to what the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry was saying, that as a result of us inadvertently forgetting the enormous download, the burden that was placed by the former Conservative government on municipalities, that deficit the Minister of Natural Resources talked about was actually hovering probably closer to \$11 billion or \$12 billion.

I say this in the interests of trying to help my friends across the way in the PC and NDP caucuses: I just want to let you know that, in all sincerity, the people watching at home from your communities, from time to time, I'm sure, would be gratified if you would stand with us when we go forward with a plan as a result of this legislation, or we build transit, or we build transportation infrastructure, or we extend natural gas, or we build hospitals or courthouses, or we launch the environmental assessment to support high-speed rail from Toronto to Kitchener-Waterloo, to London and ultimately to Windsor, or we upgrade interchanges along the 401, or we invest in highways in northern Ontario, or we re-establish the Connecting Links Program, which almost 80 communities

across the province, including many in the north, have asked us to do—when we do all of that to benefit towns and cities and communities in every corner of Ontario, the people you represent will from time to time thank you if you stand—don't be afraid to stand with us on this stuff. Don't be afraid to stand up. In the case of the Conservatives, particularly the member from Nipissing, I say, don't be afraid to stand up to the federal Conservatives when they refuse to invest in this province. To the members of the NDP, don't be afraid to stand with us as we build this province up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed

adjourned unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Speaker, no further debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): No further debate.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Orders of the day.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

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

This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1744.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Vacant
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo
Han Dong, Michael Harris
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Han Dong, Randy Hillier
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Continued from back cover

Trade development

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris4143
Hon. Michael Chan4143

Affordable housing

Mr. Ernie Hardeman4144
Hon. Ted McMeekin4144

Lyme disease

Mr. Michael Mantha4144
Hon. Eric Hoskins4144

Family Service Ontario

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry4145
Hon. Helena Jaczek4145

Priority hiring of veterans in Ontario public service

Mr. Jim Wilson4146
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne4146

Visitor

Hon. Mitzie Hunter4146

Privatization of public assets

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)4146

**MEMBERS' STATEMENTS /
DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

Use of digital technologies

Mr. Michael Harris4147

Cultural funding

Ms. Cheri DiNovo4147

Teresa Vasilopoulos

Mr. Arthur Potts4147

Doctor shortage

Mr. Victor Fedeli4147

Sustainable Waterloo Region

Ms. Catherine Fife4148

Earth Day

Ms. Daiene Vernile4148

Ontario economy

Mr. Jim McDonell4148

Aurora Food Pantry

Mr. Chris Ballard4149

Father Cyril William Sullivan

Ms. Harinder Malhi4149

**REPORTS BY COMMITTEES /
RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS**

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private
Bills**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris4149
Report adopted4149

Visitor

Mr. Gilles Bisson4149

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

**Veterans Employment Act, 2015, Bill 97, Mr. Wilson
/ Loi de 2015 sur l'emploi des anciens combattants,
projet de loi 97, M. Wilson**

First reading agreed to4150
Mr. Jim Wilson4150

MOTIONS

Order of business

Hon. Yasir Naqvi4150
Motion agreed to4150

Consideration of Bill 80

Hon. Yasir Naqvi4150
Motion agreed to4150

PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

Taxation

Mr. Jim McDonell4150

Lyme disease

Mr. Michael Mantha4151

Student safety

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry4151

Hospice funding

Mr. Jim Wilson4151

Lyme disease

Ms. Catherine Fife4151

Student safety

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris4152

Off-road vehicles

Mr. Victor Fedeli4152

Off-road vehicles

Mme France Gélinas4152

Water fluoridation

Mrs. Cristina Martins4152

All-terrain vehicles

Mr. Jim McDonell4153

Lyme disease

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong4153

Shale Beach

Mr. Jim Wilson4153

Hospital funding

Mr. Jim McDonell4153

Energy policies

Mr. Victor Fedeli4153

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015, Bill 6, Mr. Duguid / Loi de 2015 sur l'infrastructure au service de l'emploi et de la prospérité, projet de loi 6, M. Duguid

Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4154
Mrs. Laura Albanese.....	4156
Ms. Soo Wong.....	4156
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4157
Mr. Wayne Gates	4157
Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn	4157
Mr. Jim McDonell	4158
Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4158
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4159
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4161
Mr. Yvan Baker	4161
Mr. Jim McDonell	4162
Mr. Wayne Gates	4162
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4163
Ms. Catherine Fife	4163
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4166
Mr. Rick Nicholls	4166
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4166
Mr. Joe Dickson.....	4167
Ms. Catherine Fife	4167
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4167
Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4169
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4170
Mr. Jack MacLaren.....	4171
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4171
Hon. Bill Mauro.....	4171
Mr. Jim McDonell	4172
Hon. Steven Del Duca	4172
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	4173

CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 6 May 2015 / Mercredi 6 mai 2015

ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

2015 Ontario budget

Mr. Wayne Gates	4123
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4125
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4125
Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	4125
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	4126
Mr. Wayne Gates	4126
Hon. Michael Gravelle	4126
Hon. David Zimmer	4128
Ms. Ann Hoggarth.....	4129
Mr. Jack MacLaren	4129
Mr. Michael Mantha	4130
Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	4130
Mr. John Yakabuski	4130
Hon. Michael Gravelle	4131
Mr. John Yakabuski	4131
Debate deemed adjourned.....	4134

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman	4134
Mr. Michael Mantha	4134
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	4134
Mr. Toby Barrett	4134
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	4134
Hon. Michael Gravelle	4134
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	4134
Ms. Peggy Sattler	4135
Hon. Helena Jaczek.....	4135
Mr. Monte McNaughton	4135
Mme France Gélinas	4135
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4135
Mr. Jim Wilson	4135
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4135
Mr. Joe Dickson	4135
Mr. Todd Smith.....	4135
Ms. Soo Wong.....	4135
Mr. Bill Walker	4135
Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4135
Mr. Jim McDonell.....	4135
Hon. Charles Sousa.....	4135
Mr. Victor Fedeli	4135
Mr. Arthur Potts	4135

Ms. Laurie Scott	4135
Ms. Sophie Kiwala	4135
Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	4135
Hon. Tracy MacCharles	4135
Ms. Daiene Vernile	4135
Hon. David Zimmer	4135
Hon. Yasir Naqvi	4136
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac)	4136

Wearing of ribbons

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	4136
-------------------------	------

ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Michael Harris.....	4136
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4136
Mr. Victor Fedeli.....	4136
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4137
Mr. Randy Hillier	4137

Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	4137
Hon. Liz Sandals	4137

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4138
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4138

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4139
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne	4139
Hon. Bob Chiarelli	4140

Privatization of public assets

Ms. Lisa MacLeod.....	4140
Hon. Charles Sousa	4140

Teachers' labour disputes

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky.....	4140
Hon. Liz Sandals	4141

Music industry

Mr. Arthur Potts	4141
Hon. Charles Sousa	4141

Lyme disease

Mr. Toby Barrett	4142
Hon. Eric Hoskins	4142

Ontario film industry

Mr. Paul Miller.....	4143
Hon. Charles Sousa	4143

Continued on inside back cover