



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)**

Monday 14 September 2015

Lundi 14 septembre 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière
Deborah Deller

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



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

Monday 14 September 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 14 septembre 2015

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Welcome back. Weren't we just here?

Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBERS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that, during the adjournment, vacancies have occurred in the membership of the House by reason of the resignation of Garfield Dunlop as the member for the electoral district of Simcoe North, effective August 1, 2015, and by reason of the resignation of Christine Elliott as the member for the electoral district of Whitby-Oshawa, effective August 28, 2015.

Accordingly, I have issued my warrants to the Chief Electoral Officer for the issue of writs for by-elections.

INTRODUCTION OF
MEMBER FOR SIMCOE NORTH

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that the Clerk has received from the Chief Electoral Officer and laid upon the table a certificate of the by-election in the electoral district of Simcoe North.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The certificate of the by-election is addressed to Mrs. Deborah Deller, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly:

"Dear Mrs. Deller:

"A writ of election dated the fifth day of August, 2015, was issued by the Honourable Lieutenant Governor of the province of Ontario, and was addressed to Grace Isgro-Topping, returning officer for the electoral district of Simcoe North, for the election of a member to represent the said electoral district of Simcoe North in the Legislative Assembly of this province in the room of Garfield Dunlop who, since his election as representative of the said electoral district of Simcoe North, has resigned his seat. This is to certify that, a poll having been granted and held in Simcoe North on the third day of September, 2015, Patrick Brown has been returned as duly elected as appears by the return of the said writ of election, dated the ninth day of September, 2015, which is now lodged of record in my office.

"Yours sincerely,

"Greg Essensa

"Chief Electoral Officer

"Toronto, September 14, 2015."

Mr. Brown was escorted into the House by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Yakubuski.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Speaker, I have the honour to present to you and to the House Patrick Brown, member-elect for the electoral district of Simcoe North, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Let the honourable member take his seat.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Brown, member for the electoral district of Simcoe North, is recognized as leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

APPOINTMENT OF
CLERK-AT-THE-TABLE

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'd like to bring the attention of the members of the House to the appointment of William Short as a Clerk-at-the-Table. A lot of you will know William from his many years as a committee Clerk. As a table officer, he will serve the members in a permanent capacity and assist the Clerk and Deputy Clerk in providing procedural advice to myself and to all members.

I am certain that all members will join me in congratulating Mr. Short as he assumes his new responsibilities.

Congratulations.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

REINE ELIZABETH II

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order, the deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Her Majesty the Queen becoming our longest-serving monarch, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent: that we have unanimous consent to pay tribute to Her Majesty the Queen becoming our longest-serving monarch, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes. Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's with great pleasure that I rise to mark the historic milestone Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has achieved in surpassing her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria as the longest reigning British monarch.

Je suis ravie de prendre la parole pour célébrer ce moment historique du règne de Sa Majesté la reine Elizabeth II, qui vient de battre le record de son arrière-arrière-grand-mère, la reine Victoria, et de devenir le monarque britannique qui connaît le règne le plus long de l'histoire.

Her Majesty is renowned for the steadfast devotion to duty and public service that she has exhibited during an extraordinary reign of more than 63 years. The Queen has carried out her responsibilities with grace, dignity and intelligence, earning respect and admiration across the Commonwealth and around the world.

Canadians have shown their great esteem and affection for Her Majesty during her many visits to our country. She has made Canada a priority in her international travel, travelling here more times than to any other country. And she has been a frequent and welcome visitor to Ontario, making 14 visits to our province since 1951. Wonderful.

During these visits, the Queen has shown a preference for participating in events that celebrate selfless service to others. In 1973, she attended the first-ever Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship. During her most recent visit to Canada in 2010, she joined Premier McGuinty here at Queen's Park for a celebration of service honouring outstanding achievements in volunteerism and other forms of giving back to society.

The most visible elements of the Queen's visits are royal walkabouts, when she meets and mingles with members of the public. These walkabouts began spontaneously during the 1939 royal tour of Canada by Her Majesty's parents after they had dedicated the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The royal couple surprised and delighted the vast crowd when, instead of turning to their motorcade, they spent half an hour mingling with veterans of the First World War.

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During her reign, Queen Elizabeth has institutionalized walkabouts, developing them into a much-loved tradition. I am speaking about walkabouts today because of their symbolic importance. Earlier generations typically perceived a king or a queen as a remote figurehead, but the advent of walkabouts has helped to forge a connection between the monarch and her people and has reflected the democratic spirit of our age. Yet at the same time, they strike a careful balance by also respecting the dignity that is integral to the high office the Queen holds.

Her Majesty has done an exemplary job of maintaining the monarchy, which is one of the pillars of our democracy. By doing so, she has helped to sustain the combination of parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy that we're so fortunate to live under. Our system of government, which has evolved over many centuries, has allowed Canada to become a vibrant and stable democracy and one of the world's most successful nations. It ensures that the power of the state is not absolute; that peace, order and good government endure; and that, as citizens, we can take control of our destiny and live without fear of tyranny.

The Queen has steered a steady course for more than 63 years. She has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to public service, and she has upheld the monarchy as a symbol of stability and continuity.

La reine a maintenu le cap depuis plus de 63 ans. Elle a fait preuve d'un engagement indéfectible envers le service public et elle a fait de la monarchie un symbole de stabilité et de continuité.

Her poise, strength and integrity have offered the people of Canada and the 15 other Commonwealth countries where she is the head of state a source of reassurance and stability in a time of unprecedented change.

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I want to congratulate the Queen for achieving this significant milestone, and I want to thank Her Majesty for her lifetime of dedicated service to the people of our province and our country, and to wish her many more years in her remarkable reign.

God save the Queen.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, nothing could be more fitting for my first act as leader of Her Majesty's official opposition than to stand and pay tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on this historic occasion.

Reigning as queen for 63 years and 221 days, Her Majesty now stands as the longest-serving monarch of the United Kingdom and our Commonwealth. Along with the people of Ontario and our Progressive Conservative caucus, I express my deep and profound appreciation for Her Majesty's devotion of so much of her life to public service and the greater good.

It's next to impossible to put into perspective the sheer length of her service and dedication to her kingdom, but just to try, when she was crowned in 1953, Leslie Frost was Premier of Ontario and the very first colour television sets went on sale. When I was born, Her Majesty had already been serving as head of state for 25 years, and she has since served with dedication and distinction. It is my hope that we can all follow her lead and example of integrity.

Her Majesty the Queen has been the head of our country through some of our nation's most iconic and momentous occasions. It was Her Majesty, through the Governor General, who granted royal assent to Prime Minister Diefenbaker's Bill of Rights, finally passing into law some of our most inalienable rights: freedom of speech, equality, and the right to life and liberty. Twenty-two years later, it was Her Majesty who personally signed the Constitution Act on Parliament Hill—bringing the Constitution to Canada, finally granting our country complete sovereignty.

During her reign as Queen of Canada, she has travelled internationally as head of state and visited our country 24 times on royal tours. It was during one of these state visits, in 2010, that I had the pleasure and honour of taking my father—who was born in London, England, during the Second World War and moved to Canada when Her Majesty was beginning her reign—to

meet her. My father often recounts how, when the Second World War ended, his parents were among the thousands who gathered outside of Buckingham Palace awaiting the royal family, including then-Princess Elizabeth, and how the strength and leadership shown by King George VI and the Queen Mother brought light to the world during a very dark time. How fitting, then, that for almost 64 years, Her Majesty has served as the enduring symbol of freedom and democracy.

While we as politicians sometimes carry on with partisan banter, Her Majesty and the principles she represents remain above it all. She is above politics and partisanship. She stands as a symbol of security and unwavering leadership. She stands as a reminder for all of us not just of our past but to our future. Her Majesty brings great pride to the Commonwealth.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to stand here on my first day in the Ontario Legislature to honour Her Majesty, a remarkable and inspirational leader. I congratulate her on this tremendous accomplishment, and on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus, wish her many more years of good health and dutiful service.

God save the Queen.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The leader of the third party.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I would like to actually start by welcoming Patrick Brown, the new leader of the Conservative Party to the chamber. Welcome.

On behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus, I am honoured to rise and pay our respects to Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II who, on September 9, 2015, became the United Kingdom's longest-serving sovereign.

On the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee, Her Majesty said, "We are reminded here of our past, of the continuity of our national story and the virtues of resilience, ingenuity and tolerance which created it." At a reign of 63 years and just over seven months, the Queen has been a part of our national story for as long as many Ontarians can even remember. She has worked with 12 British Prime Ministers and 11 Canadian Prime Ministers, and as the living embodiment of the crown in Canada, she has been a proud and stoic figure. Through ever-changing times, she has ruled with equanimity and dignity and she has remained above the fray of politics.

There is no doubt that Canadians remain fascinated by the Queen and her royal family. On each of Her Majesty's 22 visits to Canada, thousands of Canadians flocked to catch a glimpse of the Queen. There is no doubt that Canada's monarchy continues to hold a special place in the hearts and minds of Canadians.

In fact, I can remember her in Hamilton in the year of the Queen's Golden Jubilee in October 2002, when she presented the new colours to her Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders of Canada (Princess Louise's). At that time, she noted the regiment's gift to the community in my riding of a commemorative pavilion in Bayfront Park, to remember those who served and especially those who gave their lives. It is also notable that Queen Elizabeth was not only quick to write to the family and regiment to

share her grief and sorrow at the tragic shooting of Corporal Cirillo, but several months later, held an audience with members of his Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders regiment, including Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence Hatfield, Lieutenant Colonel Rick Kennedy and Honorary Colonel Ron Foxcroft.

Since her youngest days, the Queen has made it clear that her role is one of service to her people, and so I'll close with a very short and succinct quote by Her Royal Majesty: "There is a motto which has been borne by many of my ancestors—a noble motto, 'I serve.'" I think that should be an important reminder for all of us who represent the people of Ontario, for all of us who are privileged to stand in this place. We would do well to follow the example of Her Majesty who, at the age of 89, still holds more than 400 public engagements each and every year. In fact, the Premier talked about her walkabouts. Personally, I have to say that I love her dogs. Every time I see a corgi, I think of Her Majesty, and I think many people are of the same opinion.

We would always do well, in fact, to follow Her Royal Majesty's example and remember that public life should be a life of service to the people, and that public service truly is a noble cause.

On behalf of the Ontario NDP caucus, I wish Her Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II good health and long life in the continuation of her service to the people of the United Kingdom, Canada and beyond.

God save the Queen.

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The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their heartfelt and kind comments. I will make arrangements to have a copy of our comments, delivered to Buckingham Palace, with our gratitude and our deep appreciation in the whole House.

I do share with you that I was very blessed to be the coordinator of the Queen's visit long before I became a politician, and I can tell you: one classy lady.

Thank you.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I trust you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Government House leader believes we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin.

Do we agree?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Can the government House leader please get in the habit of sending us copies of those? I don't have it. I'd like to have it as you read it.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Okay, I'll let that happen with House leaders.

So do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that, notwithstanding the order of the House dated Tuesday, June 2, 2015, the following arrangements be made with respect to Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin:

That the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to meet on Wednesday, September 23, during its regularly scheduled meeting time and on Thursday, September 24, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. for the purpose of public hearings on the bill;

That the committee be authorized to meet on Monday, September 28, and Wednesday, September 30, during its regularly scheduled meeting times for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill;

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 66:

That notice of public hearings be posted on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and CNW newswire;

That the deadline for requests to appear be 2 p.m. on Thursday, September 17, 2015;

That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear;

That if all requests cannot be accommodated, the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 17, 2015;

That if required, the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists;

That each witness receive up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for oral questions from committee members;

That the deadline for written submissions be 6 p.m. on Thursday, September 24, 2015;

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on Friday, September 25, 2015;

That at 4 p.m. on Monday, September 28, 2015, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period, pursuant to standing order 129(a);

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Thursday, October 1, 2015;

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 66, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time, the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day;

That in the event that the committee fails to report the bill on Thursday, October 1, 2015, the bill shall be

deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading;

That when the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment;

That the vote on third reading may be deferred, pursuant to standing order 28(h), and that, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, notwithstanding the order of the House—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Agreed? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: A point of order, Speaker: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Environmental Commissioner, and that the question on the motion be put immediately, without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice? Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

“To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

“We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, request the appointment of Ellen Schwartzel, as temporary Environmental Commissioner for the province of Ontario as provided in the Environmental Bill of Rights Act, to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act, commencing September 14, 2015, until December 1, 2015.”

And that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

“To the Lieutenant Governor in Council—”

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Dispense.

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

Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Ombudsman and that the question on the motion be put immediately without debate or amendment.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without consent. Do we agree?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I heard a no.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Do we have a point of order?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, I do have a point of order. I seek unanimous consent in order to move a motion without notice in regard to the current Ombudsman, that we extend his term for a period of six months.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay is seeking unanimous consent to perform a motion without notice. Do we agree?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I heard a no.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'd like to welcome two guests to the Legislature today. They're sitting in the members' gallery: Mr. Louis Sapi and Justin Fogarty. Welcome.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: It's a delight to welcome back to the Legislature someone who sat here for almost 25 years on behalf of the people of Trinity–Spadina, Mr. Rosario Marchese.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It looks like I'm going to have to do my introductions first before everybody else steps on my normal procedure.

The member from Eglinton–Lawrence on an introduction of guests.

Mr. Mike Colle: I'd like to introduce my good friend and former colleague who served this House with great distinction, the member from Barrie, Joe Tascona. Joe, welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I think I forced that on myself.

The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to introduce page Eastyn Klages and her father, Bryce Klages, from the great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to welcome Fred Hahn, the CUPE Ontario president, and some of his executive here today.

Ms. Soo Wong: I'm pleased to welcome my good friend Thomas Saras, the president of the National Ethnic Press, and his daughter Maria here to Queen's Park today.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'd like to welcome to the House today Chris Froggatt. I'm sure a lot of you know Chris, but if you really want to blame anybody for getting me here, Chris was my first campaign manager.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I'd like to welcome Ja Kai Shwe, mother of page Grace Maili Sengfah. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'd like to recognize and welcome the president of my riding association, the Vaughan Provincial Liberal Association, Gillian Vivona, who is here in the members' gallery with us today.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: As you can imagine, there are many, many special guests here for this momentous day, but I would particularly like to welcome the head of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, Carmen Santoro.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I'd like all members of the Legislature to welcome my dear sister Susan Houghton and her devoted husband, Roy.

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Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd like to welcome my new LA, Jessica Trepanier, and Heather Bone, a co-op student from University of Waterloo. I look forward to working with them.

Mr. Harinder S. Takhar: I am very pleased to welcome Gurdev Gill and Manjeet Gill from Brampton.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd also like to welcome my new assistant at Queen's Park, Jason Wang.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I'd like to introduce this morning, in the members' gallery, Chris Yaccato, provincial manager for government relations for the Lung Association. Welcome.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I wanted to introduce the mother of page Krishaj Rajbhandari. Her mother, Jasmine, should be here in the public gallery watching question period today.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'd like to welcome my new assistant, Cole Walsh, from the great riding of Barrie.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. And now for my tradition: With us we have three former members in the gallery. We have Steve Gilchrist from Scarborough East, from the 36th and 37th Parliaments. We have Joe Tascona, Simcoe Centre, 36th, and Barrie–Simcoe–Bradford, 37th and 38th Parliaments. Welcome, Joe. We also have, from Fort York, 35th, 36th, and Trinity–Spadina, 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th, Rosario Marchese.

Welcome, all of our guests, and thank you for being here.

ORAL QUESTIONS

JOB CREATION

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

The Progressive Conservative team at Queen's Park will be taking a new approach. When the Liberals act in the best interests of Ontario, we'll be the first to applaud them. When the government doesn't act in the best interests of Ontario, we will hold them accountable.

Frankly, today we need to hold the government accountable: accountable for 300,000 lost manufacturing jobs, accountable for skyrocketing electricity prices—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Actually, now I'm going to ask all sides to come to order. Just for the record, I will be tougher, if you—it can happen.

Please finish.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier care so little about all these hard-working Ontario families who have lost their jobs because of her reckless energy policy?

Interjections.

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

Premier.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: First of all, I want to welcome the Leader of the Opposition to the House and to say congratulations to him. I know that it takes a lot of energy and a lot of organizing to put your name on a ballot, to win a leadership and to get here to take a seat, so congratulations on that. I look forward to having debates in this place about the plan that we are implementing, our investments in the people of this province.

I know that the member opposite may not be aware, but this morning the Minister of Education and I announced a program called Experience Ontario. Six hundred young people across Ontario will have the opportunity to have a work experience after high school to help them to decide where they might go, whether they'll go to post-secondary or training or into a job. So the fact is—

Interjections.

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

It goes both ways.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I hope that he will take a look at that program because it might be one of the things that he would want to applaud.

Interjection.

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

Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier—and thank you for the well wishes. Over and over again, the people of Ontario have made it clear: Our energy rates are too high. It's costing Ontario jobs; it's costing the people of Ontario the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Just recently, Windsor was passed over for an auto plant because of Liberal policies. Recently, the CEO of Fiat Chrysler said that “you need to create the conditions to be competitive.” I agree.

Mr. Speaker, when will the Premier create the conditions in Ontario where we will stop driving jobs out of this province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, it's been a long summer. Let's just go over what has been happening.

Under our leadership, Ontario has created 564,200 jobs since the recession; 95% of those jobs are full-time jobs. In the last—

Interjections.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think you might want to hear this.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. The member from Nepean–Carleton will come to order, and shouting people down is not my idea of a good start.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: In the last seven months—so very recently—Ontario has gained over 15,000 new manufacturing jobs. For the second year in a row, Ontario is the leading North American jurisdiction for foreign direct investment.

I know that the economy is fragile. I know that we are working in a context of a global economy that is fragile, but we are putting in place the conditions that are bringing investment to Ontario and are creating jobs. That's what we're doing.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier: It appears that we have hit a nerve.

Knocking on thousands of doors during the Simcoe North by-election, I was taken aback by countless stories of families worried about the fire sale of Hydro One. The public does not support this fire sale. The Liberals should hit the pause button, given the overwhelming public opposition.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier callously proceed with this sale despite opposition well in excess of 70%?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure whether that was a new question, but the reality is that those investments that I am talking about, those investments in infrastructure, whether it's roads or bridges or transit, are the investments that are driving the recovery that I was talking about. They are driving the jobs coming to Ontario. Ontario's unemployment rate has fallen to 6.8%. It's below the national average.

Now, I know that there are still people in this province who are struggling to find a job. I understand that. That's why we are making the investments that we are making. That's why we are putting the training and education programs in place that invest in our people's talent and skills. That's why we're working with business to partner and make sure that they have the opportunity to expand.

FIREFIGHTERS

Mr. Patrick Brown: Thirteen years ago, Ontario lost a hero from Simcoe county, Bill Wilkins. Bill Wilkins was a firefighter who served the city of Barrie and lost his life protecting Ontario. Bill raced into a burning home. Sadly, tragically, he didn't make it out.

While I was in Ottawa, I worked with all parties to support a motion to provide benefits to the families of these fallen heroes. It was a small gesture to make life a little bit easier for those who have lost loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier is this: Will she support survivor benefits for the families of first responders who have fallen in the service of our province?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I just want to acknowledge the firefighters who are here. I know that some of the leadership is here. I also want to say to them that it has been a wonderful experience for our government to have been working with the firefighters in Ontario since we came into office. The changes that have been made in presumptive legislation, the safeguards that have been put in place for our firefighters, are remarkable.

This is one of those areas where we have an ongoing conversation with the firefighters of this province. I've often said that every one of the members in our government has the opportunity every year to talk with firefighters. We know what the issues are and we will continue to work with them, as we have, Mr. Speaker.

1110

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier: We've had an ongoing conversation for 12 years.

In a few weeks, we will both be participating in the National Peace Officers' Memorial Run. I'm continually amazed by the courage of our first responders. Each day, they go to work facing unknown dangers to protect us, to protect Ontario. Those emergency responders ask for very little in return. An Ontario hero fund, similar to the benefit established for fallen soldiers, would be appropriate.

While this government threw away \$1.1 billion on the gas plants scandal, while they squandered a billion dollars on the Ornge ambulance mismanagement, there's nothing for emergency responders.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier squander billions when families of emergency workers deserve and need our help?

Interjections.

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

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, I would just reinforce what I said in my first answer: that we have had a very good working relationship with our firefighters and first responders in this province, and we have made many changes—including the presumptive legislation that I just talked about—in response to challenges that first responders, including firefighters, have brought to us.

If there are new ideas that are coming from the Leader of the Opposition—we've had all-party support for the changes that we have put in place. We'll continue to work in that manner, because, like the Leader of the Opposition, I am 100% certain that the work that is done by the first responders in this province is essential. We

support them. We have done, and we will continue to do so.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Premier: Firefighters, paramedics and police officers see things we never want to see. Post-traumatic stress disorder is real, and help needs to be immediate. As you know, I said earlier today that there is no monopoly on a good idea. That's why I support the NDP motion to enable faster access to PTSD support.

While the opposition is united in the need for support, the government continues to delay. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier join the opposition and fast-track the bill to ensure no more heroes slip through the cracks?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think that the Leader of the Opposition might know that there is a very active discussion going on with the employees, with workers about PTSD. I know that the Minister of Labour is engaged on this subject.

We have never said that we were opposed to the notion of coverage for PTSD. In fact, we recognize that this is a very live and current issue. It's something that we know more about every year, and that's why we're engaged in a discussion about how we can best respond.

I would say to the member opposite that we will continue to work with him, with the third party and, most importantly, with the people who are dealing with PTSD to make sure we put the right coverage in place.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. It's always a privilege to spend the summer listening to Ontarians, and everywhere that I went this summer—from Oshawa to Sarnia, downtown Toronto to Timmins—I heard the same message for the Premier: Families and businesses want her to stop the sell-off of Hydro One. They want her to stop this costly privatization of our electricity system and keep our hydro in public hands.

My question, Speaker, is this: How can the Premier turn her back and plow ahead with a scheme that Ontarians overwhelmingly reject?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the reality of governing is that there are very difficult choices and decisions that have to be made. We know that the investments that are necessary in this province in order for us to be able to grow and thrive, in order for communities all across the province to be able to thrive—the reality is that there needs to be investment. I'm talking about across the province.

The week before last, I was in Red Lake. The number one subject that Mayor Phil Vinet wanted to talk to me about was infrastructure investment: Highway 618, the need for a road north from Red Lake to Pikangikum, transmission of electricity. Those kinds of investments are what is needed across the province.

That is the rationale, Mr. Speaker: the investments that are needed across the province. That's the plan that we put forward and that's the work that we're doing.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the reality is that this Premier is not listening to Ontarians. The Liberals' own polls show that three out of four people are against the Premier's privatization scheme, and opposition to a sell-off that is cloaked in secrecy is actually growing by the day in this province. A new poll says that a staggering 83% of folks want to stop the sale of Hydro One.

It has never been more clear that the Premier has no mandate, no public support and not a shred of evidence to back up her scheme. How can this Premier plow ahead with this sell-off that Ontarians overwhelmingly reject?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the leader of the third party is referring to some polling that she has had the opportunity to look at. Had she looked at the entire document, she would have known that an overwhelming majority of people also believe that investing in infrastructure is critical.

So here is the reality: There—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, second time.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We've made a commitment to invest \$130 billion in infrastructure over the next 10 years. We are building across the province. We know that in order for this economy in Ontario to thrive, we need to make that investment. Provinces across the country know that that's critical. It's why in the federal election, all the leaders are talking about infrastructure investment. They know it's necessary as well. We're going to continue to make those investments, because we know that the economy can thrive in Ontario, and this is the way that we need to go.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier is catering to a small group of her powerful friends. Her favourite banker is now embedded in her office, and she is ignoring the voices of Ontarians who are determined to stop the privatization scheme that even Mike Harris had the good sense to back away from.

The Premier has no mandate, she has no public support and she has no evidence whatsoever to show that the sell-off of Hydro One is the right direction to go. Will this Premier finally admit to Ontarians that they are right and that she is wrong, and stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Essentially, what the leader of the third party is saying is that we should not make the investments in infrastructure that we are making. So I would ask the leader of the third party what she would advise us to cancel. Should we cancel the electrified Barrie line that would advance weekly trips from 70 to 200? Should we cancel the Kitchener line? Should we cancel the Hamilton LRT? Should we cancel the Con-

necting Link Program for rural Ontario, which is \$15 million annually? Should we cancel any support for SmartTrack in Toronto? Should we cancel the Maley Drive extension in Sudbury? Should we cancel the four-laning of Highway 11/17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon?

Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the leader of the third party would have to advise us which of those projects we should cancel.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, no, she should cancel the sale of Hydro One, is what she should do. How embarrassing—the only Premier in the history of the province of Ontario who can't build infrastructure and keep Hydro One public at the same time. Pretty embarrassing.

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

New question, the leader of the third party.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The question is to the Premier. The Liberals have no mandate. They have no public support for the sell-off for Hydro One. But worst of all, the Premier is refusing to be open and transparent with Ontarians. When the Financial Accountability Officer tried to do his job by bringing some level of transparency to this process, the Liberals slammed the door in his face. And while the Liberals paid \$7.5 million for reports and studies, they refuse to share those studies with Ontarians.

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Why is it so easy for this Premier to roll over on her promise to be transparent and to be accountable, especially on this issue, the biggest policy shift in this province's history, at least in the last generation or so?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know the leader of the third party knows that we are acting in accordance with the legislation that she voted for, the Financial Accountability Officer Act. She knows that there are certain records that are in the purview of the Financial Accountability Officer and there are certain ones that aren't.

This is the legislation that she supported, Mr. Speaker, and here are the parameters: Ministries and public entities must "give the Financial Accountability Officer ... any financial, economic or other information that is" necessary to the performance of his or her mandate. Exceptions are provided with respect to cabinet records, personal information and personal health information. Mr. Speaker, the leader of the third party knows that full well.

She also knows that in the broadening of ownership of Hydro One, the government is retaining 40% of that ownership. The people of Ontario will retain 40%. She also knows that control of the board, in terms of being able to remove the board, remove the chair of the board, remains with the government. She knows full well that no entity will be able to own more than 10%. Mr. Speaker, she knows those controls are in place.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, this Premier knows full well that she has promised again and again and again

to be open and transparent. In her very first throne speech, she promised to be “accountable to all the people of Ontario, and work to prevent mistakes before they occur.” The sale of Hydro One is one of the biggest mistakes that the Liberals are about to make.

But when the Financial Accountability Officer asks for the facts, he’s ignored, and when the Ontario Chamber of Commerce appealed for evidence, the Liberals ignored them too.

Why does this Premier think that openness, transparency and accountability are too much to ask for when it comes to the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, the information that was asked for that fell within the parameters of the legislation was provided. We have provided all the information, with the exception of some cabinet records that were excluded by the legislation that the leader of the third party supported. She cannot have it both ways. She cannot support legislation and then turn around and say, “That legislation is not good enough and we want something different,” or, “We want you to break the law; we want you to go against the legislation.” She cannot have it both ways.

She also, Mr. Speaker, cannot—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, we are complying with the legislation. We are also investing in infrastructure around this province. That is what this is about. It is about making the investments that we know are needed across the province.

The leader of the third party has not been supportive of that, much to our surprise, because I think she should be supporting the roads and the bridges and the transit investments in every corner of this province.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, I find it shocking that the Premier pretends to be so incredulous that we expect her to be transparent and open when that’s all she’s talked about for over a year in this chamber. This is not the kind of government that this Premier promised Ontarians. Rather than openness and transparency, we see another Liberal Premier who’s keeping families, businesses and this Legislature in the dark; another Liberal Premier who puts her powerful friends and favourite bankers ahead of the people of this province; another Liberal Premier who is forcing Ontarians to pay the price for her bad choices.

Speaker, why does this Premier suddenly think that openness, transparency and accountability are just too much for the people of Ontario to ask from her?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I think it is what the people of Ontario should expect and it’s what we bring to the people of Ontario. The fact is there is a Financial Accountability Officer in place in this province. I would say to the leader of the third party that she was part of that discussion and she raised the notion of a Financial Accountability Officer. We have worked with

her party to put that in place and she supported the legislation that is now in place.

When information is asked for, we comply with the legislation; we provide that information. Most importantly, we have spent months talking about and working with communities on the infrastructure investments that they need, knowing full well that if their economies are going to thrive, if they are going to be able to provide jobs in the short term and economic well-being in the long term, they need those infrastructure investments.

That’s the plan that we ran on. That’s the plan that we’re putting in place.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is to the Premier. Premier, you’re not only selling Hydro One, you’re keeping Ontario taxpayers in the dark while you do it. Schedule 38 of the budget bill removed from Hydro One the responsibility of disclosing executive salaries, in spite of the fact that Hydro One is still in public hands for now. Hydro users who are seeing skyrocketing hydro bills have no idea how much of their bill is actually now going into the wallets of suits at Hydro One.

Premier, shouldn’t taxpayers have the right to know how much they’re paying high-priced hydro executives?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Under the Ontario Securities Commission, which would govern Hydro One in this situation, they’re required to file every year the salaries of their highest-paid executives—I think there are six or seven of them or somewhere in that number—plus the board of directors. It will be completely public and transparent.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Todd Smith: This hydro scheme is nothing but Liberals paying their high-priced Liberal friends. That’s all this is: Liberals paying Liberals. We know that there’s no bottom of the trough when it comes to Liberal friends on Bay Street.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development, come to order.

Mr. Todd Smith: When he was CEO—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. I’m not sure he heard me over his shouting. The Minister of Economic Development will come to order. Don’t test.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I don’t need another armchair.

Carry on, please.

Mr. Todd Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When Carmine Marcello was the CEO of Hydro One, his salary was in excess of \$740,000 a year, making him one of the highest-paid executives in the public sector. Last month, Premier, you hired a new CEO for Hydro One whose

previous private sector compensation regularly topped \$5 million a year.

I'm wondering if that's the reason why you took executive pay at Hydro One off the sunshine list: because you didn't want taxpayers to know that you had backed up the Brink's truck to pay for your new hydro CEO.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The new leader of the PCs is quoted as saying, "I generally believe that the private sector can do a better job than the public sector. I... think market conditions would be helpful for a lot of government agencies."

The PC Party has been in favour of taking Hydro One public for some time now. They made a failed effort in 2002. They also have in their white paper, which was adopted by the previous leader just a couple of years ago, that they supported Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One being sold partially to the public, as we're doing. Not only that, but with respect to rates, they said and they adopted in their white paper that the Ontario Energy Board could protect rates—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Stop the clock. I've heard two trends today that I'm going to make reference to. The first one, again, is that I would remind all members I am not happy when anyone uses anything else other than people's titles or their ridings. It says that way for a reason, and I want it to stay there.

The second one is that you would all be well to follow the leaders of your respective parties when it comes to questioning for this reason. I would ask you to address the Speaker and refer to the members in the third person. That helps us with the debate emotions. I would ask all of us to stay focused. You're supposed to be directing questions and answers through me. I appreciate it.

New question.

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PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. The Premier promised that the government would retain de facto control of a privatized Hydro One. Meanwhile, the Ed Clark report offers a promise to investors that the government will exercise no control over a privatized Hydro One. The Premier can't keep both of these promises. The Premier needs to disclose which of these promises she intends to break in the Hydro One prospectus. The prospectus was supposed to be released this month, but it is nowhere to be seen. What is in the Hydro One prospectus that's so bad that the government has been delaying its release?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question. I think the member opposite also recognizes the sensitivity that we're under here to try to maximize the value of Hydro One, while respecting the process and the procedures in order to go through the prospectus and to bring it to market. So as a result of that and the quiet period, which the Ontario Securities Commission requires us to do—we

certainly don't want to break that law, so that we make certain that we proceed in the appropriate manner.

We recognize that the discipline and the ability for Hydro One to succeed requires the sector to do its due diligence, and that's what we're allowing them to do. We know that the inherent value in Hydro One can be even improved. We want to make certain that occurs as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, again to the Premier: Last week, an Environics poll revealed that opposition to the government's Hydro One privatization has grown: 83% of Ontarians oppose this sale; 61% say they are strongly opposed. In fact, according to the poll, half of Ontarians are so opposed to the Hydro One sale that they are less likely to vote for the federal Liberals in the upcoming election.

Is the Premier delaying the release of the Hydro One prospectus because she knows it will enrage the people of Ontario and lose votes for Justin Trudeau?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, the process is unfolding to enable the public and investors and everyone associated to have full understanding as to what Hydro One is and will be, for the benefit of the people of Ontario and for the majority holders—which are the province of Ontario and, ultimately, the people of Ontario—and then broadening that ownership to enable us to re-invest in other assets that are just as critical, enabling us to improve our economic competitiveness.

That is what we're doing here. We're out there to protect the people's interests while maximizing its value and reinvesting into our economy, for the benefit of all. We'll continue to do so.

REFUGEES

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée, l'honorable Dr. Eric Hoskins.

My question concerns the migrant crisis, which is unfolding as we speak across Europe and beyond, as tens of thousands of refugees seek freedom and security and recognition as being part of the human family.

I start, Speaker, by offering our deep condolences on behalf of all members of this Legislature to the family of three-year-old Alan Kurdi, brother Galib and mother Rehana, and to the countless other families who are like them and those who will be like them.

Given this global tragedy, the time to respond, to pledge support, to act is now. I think that has been, until very recently, the Canadian way of doing things. Whether you're an average citizen, an elected official, a community leader, a responsive Premier or a reluctant Prime Minister, we can all work together to address this human crisis.

Minister, can you—

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

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I want to thank the member from Etobicoke North for this very important question.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be at the Premier's announcement on Saturday, announcing \$10.5 million for the Syrian refugees, many of whom will come to Canada, but also that \$2 million of that is allocated to helping refugees in the region.

The federal cuts that they made a couple of years back to the Interim Federal Health Program left our refugee claimants in this province and across Canada unprotected, and put our doctors in an untenable position, forcing them to choose who should be treated. As we all know, the Federal Court of Canada and the Supreme Court struck down the changes to that interim health program on the basis of being "cruel and unusual." They required the feds to reinstate health care to refugees.

Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court recognized that it was cruel to deny insulin to diabetics and it was cruel to deny cancer treatment—

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

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Thank you, Minister. Firstly, I commend you on your own personal, globally recognized medical service for refugees, and know that you strive to implement that vision of the Premier and her government here at home.

Sadly, Minister, as you've cited just now, it can in fact take the Supreme Court of Canada, or at least the latest polling, to extract, induce or manufacture such behaviour from the current federal government. It took a court decision to remind and reconfirm for the feds what we have said all along: that our health care system—indeed, our country—should reflect fairness, compassion and humanity, offering medical care to all our residents, old or recent.

Our government believes in one Ontario, an Ontario that protects people living here—not chosen by postal code, riding, income or any other demographic that you would care to parse.

Minister, would you please inform this House—what has our government and your ministry done to address these concerns?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Thank you again to the member from Etobicoke North for the opportunity to discuss how Ontario is acting to address the health cuts that were made by the federal government.

Our government reinstated access to essential and urgent health care services for refugee claimants through a program called the Ontario Temporary Health Program. Not only was that the right thing to do, the humane thing to do, but it also reflects our commitment to evidence-based decision-making, because it keeps all Ontarians safe and healthy. To date, our government and my ministry have spent nearly \$2 million on this program, helping our refugee claimants get the health care they need and deserve. Quite simply, waiting until a patient needs emergency care is more expensive. More importantly, it fails the patient.

We call on the federal government to end their appeal of the Supreme Court decision and restore full and essential medical coverage for these vulnerable refugees.

Interjections.

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

New question.

HIGHWAY TOLLS

Mr. Michael Harris: My question is to the Premier. Premier, after forcing motorists to idle in sweltering heat to accommodate 235 kilometres of HOV lanes, your transportation minister deserves the Pan Am gold for highway gridlock and wasteful spending.

He spent 61 million Ontario taxpayer dollars on a traffic plan that featured peel-and-stick, fly-away lane markings, and electronic messages to stay at home, while motorists fumed in standstill traffic. Now we wait for your HOV legacy to drop the other shoe on us as you magically transform HOVs into HOTs—high-occupancy tax machines.

Premier, when will Ontario motorists be forced to pay a second time for the privilege of driving on roads their taxes have already paid for?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite wants to go into the details of the transportation aspects of this, and I know that the Minister of Transportation is eager to talk about high-occupancy toll lanes.

I have to take this opportunity, though, to say what a wonderful, wonderful experience for this province the Pan Am Games were. It was amazing to be able to watch those athletes, those young people from across the Americas, come to Ontario, and to showcase the very best of what we had in Ontario. More than a million tickets were sold for 51 sporting events. More than 1.4 million people attended celebrations, like Panamania at Nathan Phillips Square. I had the opportunity to go to 21 events in Pan Am and 12 events in Parapan. It was an experience of a lifetime.

I hope that the member opposite had the opportunity to attend even one event, because he would have caught that spirit.

Interjections.

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

Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Harris: I did, Premier, but let's get back to those high-occupancy tax lanes. Premier, if your minister can't take the heat, he should move over and get out of the HOT lane.

Premier, despite your minister's recent attempts to delay the HOT toll truth, there is no secret: We all see your latest tax grab for exactly what it is. The only reason you're hiding the details of your HOT tax plan is so you won't burn your federal BFF, Justin Trudeau. Premier, quit the stalling and tell Ontario motorists what they will be paying to drive on their new two-tier highways in Ontario.

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Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by thanking the member opposite for the question, but also for admitting here in the House today that he did actually take the opportunity to go to some of the Pan Am Games. Thank you very much to him.

I also want to say that in both the original question and the supplementary, the member opposite talked about the transportation plan for the wildly successful Pan Am and Parapan Am Games. A couple of things to note, Speaker: During the games themselves, we noticed a 25% increase in GO Transit ridership—phenomenal numbers that we saw. We saw across this entire region more people car-pooling for the very first time as a result of the very robust message and plan that we put forward in advance of and during the Pan Am Games.

The Premier has said it and I've said it; through budget 2014 and budget 2015, our government explicitly said that we will be introducing high-occupancy toll lanes at some point. We continue to take all that we've learned from the experience of the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, and I will provide an update and the Premier will provide an update—our government will provide an update in the near future.

TEACHERS

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. Parents and students deserve stability in our children's classrooms, but across Ontario, this Liberal government has left too many teachers and education workers without a contract for 379 days and counting. On Friday, the Liberals failed to reach an agreement with elementary teachers and let talks collapse once again.

Families deserve better. They deserve a government that doesn't try to impose cookie-cutter deals and that never walks away from genuine and meaningful negotiations with our dedicated teachers and education workers.

Will the Premier instruct her education minister to get back to the bargaining table today and get back to real negotiations?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Education.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'm very pleased to report on the real negotiations that have been going on over the summer, because we spent hours and hours and hours and days and days and days with our friends from OSSTF, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. We spent days and days and days and hours and hours and hours with our friends from the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association. I'm happy to report that, as a result of those negotiations, in fact we have tentative agreements with both of those groups.

Currently, we have been spending a lot of time with our francophone teachers who work in the English public and English Catholic boards, and we'll be carrying on with those discussions this week. I will carry on—

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Speaker, maybe the Minister of Education should give the same consideration to the members of ETFO and CUPE.

The Premier should order her education minister back to the bargaining table today. That's what parents and students expect; that's what teachers and education workers deserve. Our children's education depends on the people who help students develop a love for learning, the people who open new doors and new worlds for the next generation, and the people who work so hard to keep our schools safe, clean and welcoming for our kids.

When will the Premier get back to negotiating in a meaningful and genuine way with thousands of teachers and education workers who have waited more than a year for the new contracts they deserve?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would point out that it was the elementary teachers' federation that walked away from negotiations last spring and that the first day they would agree to begin negotiating was September 1. We were at the table starting September 1, the first—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock, please. I gave, earlier, some advice, and that's exactly the reason why: through the Chair.

Carry on, please.

Hon. Liz Sandals: And as you alluded to in your question, we in fact did give them the same offer. The government and the public school boards have provided an elementary version of the tentative agreements. We have put similar offers on the table. We await the response of the elementary teachers, and I very much hope that they will in fact accept the similar offer based on the same framework as OECTA and OSSTF. That's what's on the table: the same offer.

COMMUNITY POLICING

Mr. Yvan Baker: My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, since being elected, I've had a chance to meet with a number of police in my community, and they work hard every day to keep us safe. I occasionally hear about interactions between the police and members of my community, and overwhelmingly those interactions are positive. However, I have heard on occasion some concerns about interactions between police and members of the community that seem to be arbitrary or based on nothing more than race. Every time a person is stopped based on their race, it erodes the trust that should exist between police and the members of the community that they are a part of.

Last week I hosted, as you know, Minister, a street-check consultation in Etobicoke Centre at the Rathburn Area Youth Project at Burnhamthorpe Collegiate. The event was attended by over 40 constituents, most of whom were young people. Notwithstanding how they felt, they came and spoke candidly about the challenges that they face, and they had fantastic ideas on how government can help them. During our discussion, they

expressed concerns about the way street checks are being carried out.

Minister, could you please explain what you are doing on this issue?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to thank the member for Etobicoke Centre for asking this very important question.

Speaker, you may recall that back on June 16 of this year, I announced our government's intention that we will be bringing regulations dealing with street checks in the province of Ontario so that we have a consistent practice across the province. As a result, we've been consulting across the province, meeting with many, many community members to hear their experiences dealing with carding or street checks.

I want to commend the member from Etobicoke Centre for hosting his own consultation and forwarding the feedback that he received to us.

I want to be very clear, because there are two very key fundamental principles that are driving Ontario's approach for developing a new practice: number one, we take the protection of human rights very seriously, and there is absolutely zero tolerance when it comes to any kind of racial profiling or discrimination; second, that we stand opposed to any police stops that do not have a clear policing purpose and which are predicated solely on bias.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. It's great to hear that you've pursued these consultations with the people of Ontario and the members of my community in Etobicoke Centre are being heard.

Minister, you have said that as a government we stand opposed to stops that are predicated on racial bias. If we are opposed to that, then they should not be allowed to continue. So Minister, could you please explain to the Legislature why you are not simply banning street checks?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I've attended many of the public consultations personally, and they have been very emotional. To hear the experiences of people from across the province, especially young people's experiences, has been moving. One thing that we have heard clearly is in terms of the definition of street checks, and they are essentially stops that are random and arbitrary, predicated on nothing more than bias, without any clear police purpose, a reason, a cause, a suspicious activity. If that is how one defines street checks, then let me be absolutely clear that our new regulations will end those types of stops. They will not be tolerated. In fact, they will be banned through our regulations.

Speaker, what we are now working on is making sure that those interactions that take place on the basis of suspicious activity or some sort of criminal activity—that there be rights-based safeguards put in place that comply with the Supreme Court of Canada jurisprudence, that comply with the rights that are guaranteed and enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Speaker, if street checks are being done in an arbitrary, random manner, they are being done improperly,

we will not tolerate them and we will ban them through regulations.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question is to the Premier this morning.

Premier, your cancelled Mississauga gas plant is currently under construction in my riding of Sarnia–Lambton. Safety at this project is a subject of great concern to the local trades.

In various media reports, this site has been described as troubled, dysfunctional and a whirlwind of potential catastrophes.

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Since this site broke ground in July 2012, dozens of safety complaints have been filed with your Ministry of Labour. By their own record, the Ministry of Labour has issued over 190 compliance orders, but it wasn't until the local trades walked off the job to protest the lack of basic safety protocol by the company—that this company that your Liberal government hand-picked—that the Ministry of Labour finally took enforcement action on this site.

Premier, it's my understanding that charges were finally laid on September 11. Why did it take your ministry so long to enforce the health and safety act and lay charges against Greenfield energy?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Labour.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the honourable member for the question.

Ontario remains one of the safest places in this entire continent to work, and most of the companies in this province act responsibly in this manner. What matters most is safety. There is no project in this province that's worth an injury or the loss of a life.

I can tell you that our inspectors have been on-site more than 70 times on this particular site. We've issued 219 orders. Some of those have been stop-work orders. We know there are concerns on the site. We continue to work with the parties. I've actually appointed somebody; I've appointed an independent mediator to go in and work with the parties.

You have to remember, Speaker, our top priority at the Ministry of Labour is keeping people safe. Sometimes that means we have to go in and we have to work with the labour relations within certain projects, but the number one priority is to make sure that when somebody goes to work in the morning, they come home at night.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Robert Bailey: My question back to the Premier: Over the last 50 years, labour and industry in Sarnia–Lambton have developed a culture of safety that is unparalleled across this province. The Ministry of Labour's own stats say that you are 25 times safer on a job site in Sarnia–Lambton than anywhere else in this province. The people in our community live and breathe safety. It must be the first priority on any site that's an energy-generating facility.

The leadership of our local trades and business community, who are experts in the construction of generating facilities, tell me that despite the recent intervention of the Ministry of Labour, their concerns are still there for safety at the Green Electron facility. As this facility nears completion and gets closer to going live, the risks of harm due to human error or mechanical failure are compounded.

Premier, can you guarantee our community that it is safe for their loved ones to return to work at this site? Would you feel comfortable if one of your loved ones worked at this place?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you again to the honourable member for the concerns he has raised. He and I will know we've had a number of conversations about this, and I thank him for his vigilance on this issue on behalf of his constituents.

It is disappointing and it is frustrating to see these issues persist at the site. I want to urge the parties to work together, to focus on what's important, to make sure that their employees are protected, that they're working in a safe environment. I've asked the ministry staff to follow this very, very closely. We've appointed an excellent mediator who knows the construction sector inside and out—Mr. John Miller.

We're going to use every enforcement tool we have to ensure that we get compliance at this plant. I'm convinced that we're able to do it.

As I said, most employers in this province do not treat projects this way. This is definitely something that's out of character for Ontario business. We aim to solve that, to make sure that people go to work and come home safely at night.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Premier. Parents across Ontario are struggling to find affordable, quality child care, and thousands of kids are stuck on waiting lists for spots that their families can afford.

Last November, the Liberals voted in favour of my motion to work with a new federal government to deliver \$15-a-day child care to families here in Ontario and right across the country. But now the Premier is more interested in playing partisan games and attacking the only federal plan that will deliver quality, affordable child care.

Speaker, why is this Premier suddenly backing away from her commitment to working with a new federal government to deliver \$15-a-day child care for Ontario families?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Quite to the contrary, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with a new federal government on child care.

What I have said is two things: The plan that was put forward, the motion that was put forward by the NDP had no details in it, but in principle, we support the notion.

Secondly, there are no details from the federal NDP about what the plan would actually mean for Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I can't say that I fully support \$15-a-day daycare when I don't know what that means in terms of the money Ontario has already put into child care.

But do I believe that there needs to be a federal partner who will work with us on issues, including child care? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: That's good to hear, Speaker, because that's exactly what Thomas Mulcair offered. It's too bad the Premier didn't hear it.

It's shameful, in fact, that this Premier is putting the interests of the federal Liberal Party ahead of Ontario children and families. Tom Mulcair has repeatedly said he will work with Ontario to respect the unique needs and existing programs in our province, including full-day kindergarten. But the Premier doesn't care and instead is—

Interjections.

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

Better. Thank you.

Please finish.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Instead, she is once again putting the interests of her political friends ahead of the people of Ontario.

After claiming to want a new federal partner, how can this Premier defend her attacks on the only federal plan to deliver \$15-a-day child care for Ontario families, that they need?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Because it's not a plan, Mr. Speaker; it's an idea. It's been put out as an idea. It would be irresponsible of me, after we have put billions of dollars into child care in Ontario, to support something that has no details in it, and we have no understanding of what it would mean to the people of Ontario.

We absolutely want a partner who will work with us on child care, Mr. Speaker. That has not changed and it will not change. I hope on October 20 we have a government in Ottawa that will partner with us on a number of issues. I have said that quite clearly. Child care is one of them.

But when a notion is put forward without details, and I don't have an understanding of what it would mean to the people of Ontario, it would be irresponsible of me to support it blindly. I will work with whoever is in office after October 19.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question is to the Minister of Education.

Minister, last week students across Ontario returned to school. We know this is an exciting time for all of them. Students entering their final year of secondary school are beginning to think and plan for what they will do beyond graduation.

Our government knows that investing in the skills and talents of our students and young people is important,

and we want to ensure that we can help students continue to achieve excellence.

Minister, can you tell us how the Ontario government is helping students make the transition from secondary to post-secondary education?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you to the member from Barrie, who's a real advocate for children.

Our government is committed to ensuring that every student has the same opportunity to succeed, graduate from high school, and pursue their career passion. That's why we believe in investing in innovative programs like Specialist High Skills Majors, dual credits, co-operative education, and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, so we can help create the right learning environment to help all students build a promising future for themselves.

Just last week I had the privilege of visiting St. Mary's Catholic Secondary School in Davenport with the MPP from Davenport, to see their transportation specialist high skills major in action. I was pleased to share at that visit that this year, for the ninth year in a row, our government is expanding its Specialist High Skills Majors program. More than 46,000 students will be enrolled in 1,760 SHSM programs across the program.

We are also expanding our Dual Credit Program to include—

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

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you to the Minister of Education for your response and for the wonderful compliment. I really appreciate that.

It's great to hear that our government is taking such important steps to ensure that all of our learners here in Ontario are getting the help they need to develop the skills and the knowledge that they need to succeed now and in the future.

While I am proud of these investments, I also understand that there is growing concern that students are struggling to make the connection between their education and training and the workplace. There still remains an uncertainty and a gap for many students leaving high school and looking to gain workplace experience.

1200

Through you, Speaker, to the Minister of Education, can the minister please inform this House of what steps the government is taking to help those students make this transition?

Hon. Liz Sandals: As I said before, our government is committed to ensuring that every student has the same opportunity to succeed, which is why I was so pleased to join with the Premier this morning to announce that Experience Ontario, a new program to help Ontario students plan for their future, is now up and running.

Experience Ontario is a two-year, \$20-million program, which in its first, pilot year will provide approximately 600 students across the province with valuable work experience, career coaching and mentorship. The program will encourage graduating high school students to choose the appropriate post-secondary educational path for them and will help them succeed once they enrol.

Each participant in Experience Ontario will have access to a career coach. They'll have access to three work placements. They're participating—actually, just last weekend, I was visiting a three-day—

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

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Speaker, in May I asked the government why my constituent Mr. Jim Lees, who was classified as a crisis patient by the community care access centre, has to wait several months for a long-term-care bed. In June, I asked the government again about Mr. Lees. In July, I wrote to the Premier directly. I have followed up with the minister's office and the ministry and the government each week since July, yet the government still has done nothing to help this man.

Now here we are in September, and the plight of this poor man remains the same. He is no closer to a bed in a long-term-care facility.

So I ask: Minister, when can Mr. Lees expect some help? When can Mr. Lees expect to get a bed in a long-term-care facility in this province?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question. I know that the Associate Minister of Health has been working hard on this issue. I believe that the member opposite has had dialogue and discussion with her, including through correspondence and with his office. When it is a matter of finding or obtaining a long-term-care bed for an Ontario citizen, we work as hard as we can through our CCACs and our partners to ensure that that bed can be provided, particularly for urgent cases such as the one referenced by the member opposite.

I would be happy to follow up with the associate minister, as with yourself, to see what has transpired over the passage of time with regard to this individual. But as I mentioned, we have a minister responsible specifically for long-term care that I know has been working hard on this issue.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim Wilson: Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: Minister, you gave me that assurance three times already in this House over the last six months. It's getting to be ridiculous. I'm a former Minister of Health. If I did the job that you're doing, I'd have been fired as Minister of Health.

Mr. Lees is stuck in a retirement home. He's an urgent-care patient, a crisis patient. That's as high as you can get in all the categories your ministry has. He should be in a long-term-care facility. He has to be in a long-term-care facility. He's deteriorating in the retirement home and your ministry's doing nothing. Each time, you slough it off to your associate minister, and she does nothing. She sends me emails—and I've got 12 of them here from the last two months: "Our staff are working very hard with his family to ensure Mr. Lees gets the safe and secure placement he needs." I get that time and time

again: October 6, July 28, April 30, August 25 and on and on and on.

Do something. For God's sake, you're in charge of the system. You're the man in charge. This man needs help. He paid his taxes. He was a volunteer in our community. He's a great guy with a great family. They're going bankrupt and he's not getting the care—

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

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Well, Mr. Speaker, when the member opposite, who I know is a former Minister of Health—he may choose to judge me, but I'm actually going to rely on the opinion of Ontarians with regard to my performance as health minister. I'm not going to be judged by the member opposite. I have to say the associate minister has been working hard on an issue which is important to her and is important to me as well.

When it comes to long-term care, we've introduced measures recently, including substantial investments to increase the number of long-term-care beds in this province, to redevelop existing ones as well, so that even more Ontarians will have access to long-term care in this province.

As I said in the first part of this question, I would be happy to address this issue with the member opposite as well as with the associate minister responsible for long-term care, so we can find a solution to this issue.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no deferred votes, therefore this House stands recessed until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1205 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Bill Walker: He was in the gallery this morning and I believe he's returning for the afternoon. I'd like to welcome Arif Khan, city of Barrie councillor, to the Legislature.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Mrs. Julia Munro: It is with great pride that I stand today here at Queen's Park, named after Queen Victoria, who is now the second-longest serving monarch of the Commonwealth. It is my honour to speak in celebration of a very special milestone for Queen Elizabeth II.

On Thursday, September 9, Queen Elizabeth II became the longest-serving monarch in a millennium of royal tradition. We have been the beneficiaries of a parliamentary system that recently celebrated its 800th anniversary. Our constitutional monarch is a rock of stability in changing times. I would like to extend my congratulations to the Queen and the royal family.

Over the last 63 years and seven months of her reign, the Queen has led with wisdom and grace. Not only is she the longest-serving monarch, but she also provided the most stable leadership of the Commonwealth. She is more than non-partisan; she is above partisanship.

Through 11 Canadian Prime Ministers, from Louis St. Laurent to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, from Sir Winston Churchill to Margaret Thatcher to David Cameron, the Queen has been a rock of stability.

I was delighted to be able to share in the presentations that were done in honour of the Queen in my riding, both in East Gwillimbury and in Bond Head at St. Catherine Byzantine church.

MARGARET WOLTZ

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, if I could beg your indulgence, I just want to say welcome to all my colleagues in the House. It really is nice to see each and every one of you today. Speaker, it is good to see you in the chair as well, looking in good form—

Mr. Arthur Potts: He got a haircut.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —and with a haircut.

The riding of Essex lost a wonderful woman over the summer. It is my honour to stand in this House to recognize the contributions made to my community by Margaret Woltz.

Any candidate who has run in an election in the region of Essex county over the last 40 years has done so under Margaret's careful watch. From 1975 until she passed on July 27, Margaret served as returning officer for both Elections Canada and Elections Ontario. Margaret committed herself to the democratic process in a way that very few others have. As a five-time candidate myself, my team and I grew to have the utmost respect for Margaret's professionalism and her ability to effectively manage elections and countless staff.

Margaret's contributions, however, weren't limited to elections. She sat as president on a number of boards, including the Essex Minor Baseball Association, the Essex Minor Hockey Association, the Essex Region Conservation Foundation, the Essex horticultural society, the Liberal association in Windsor-Essex county and the Essex BIA. She also served on town council and sat on the board of directors at the Woodslee Credit Union.

Margaret's life centred around two things: family and community. Margaret met her husband, Bill, and they became sweethearts at Essex high. They married in 1950, shared 65 years together and raised four children.

On behalf of my riding of Essex I want to say thank you to Bill, Richard, Dana, Becky, Brad and the grandchildren, Brandon and Spencer, for sharing Margaret with us for all of these years.

Thank you, Margaret, for everything. Just for today, the polls have now officially closed.

JOE MacDONALD

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I rise today to remember and pay tribute to Greater Sudbury Police Constable Joe

MacDonald, a name that will be familiar to many of my colleagues here and that we in Sudbury will not soon forget. Joe MacDonald was 29 years old, a five-year veteran of the Sudbury police force with a young family at home, when he was murdered during a routine police stop in New Sudbury.

Constable Joe MacDonald's murder was a tragedy, and while I rise today to pay tribute to Constable MacDonald, I must also acknowledge Sergeant Rick McDonald of Sudbury—I got to know his mother this past summer—and other public safety officers throughout Ontario whose lives have been cut short in the line of duty. The death of a public safety officer in the line of duty in any community changes that community forever.

In Sudbury, and in the wake of the particularly violent murder of Constable Joe MacDonald, our community was deeply wounded, none more wounded than Joe's entire family, but especially his wife and two daughters. On that night in 1993, the family of Joe MacDonald lost a husband, father, son and brother.

As a community, I believe it is our duty to help families like Joe's wherever we can, which is why I am pleased that our government remains committed to helping the spouses and children of fallen officers through the Constable Joe MacDonald Public Safety Officers' Survivors Scholarship. While nothing can bring Constable MacDonald, Sergeant Rick McDonald, or any other fallen officer back to their loved ones, this fund is a small way to help the spouses and children of these officers achieve their educational goals.

ASTHMA

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, I'd like to welcome back the students to their school year.

As we all know, asthma symptoms worsen during the month of September. I'm proud to note that this school year, Ryan's Law has been enacted to keep our students safe. Ryan's Law is a common-sense piece of legislation which allows for children who suffer from asthma to carry their puffers with them at all times. This is the first such piece of legislation in Canada.

Ryan's Law is named after Ryan Gibbons, an elementary student from Straffordville who needlessly passed away at school after suffering from an asthma attack during his recess break.

One in five children in Ontario suffers from asthma, making it the most common chronic condition among children in our province. I am extremely delighted that school boards across the province have implemented Ryan's Law into this year's school system. As schools across our province become more asthma-friendly thanks to Ryan's Law, we hope to never see such a tragedy again like we saw with the passing of Ryan Gibbons.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who supported Ryan's Law through the legislative process. To Ryan's mom, Sandra Gibbons, thank you for helping create a legacy for Ryan. Your strength and determination ensured that this bill succeeded. I would

also like to thank key stakeholders such as the Ontario Lung Association and the Asthma Society of Canada for all their hard work since day one.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who sits in this Legislature who voted unanimously in support of Ryan's Law. I appreciate the support behind that because, together, we can work to make Ontario a better place.

Let's never forget Ryan's memory as we continue to work hard to make our school system a safer place for all children in Ontario.

PUBLIC TRANSIT IN LONDON

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am pleased to update this House on an exciting initiative that is galvanizing my community called Shift: Moving London Forward. Shift proposes a 22-kilometre rapid transit network that will connect major institutions in London, including the university, the college, our two hospitals and the airport.

Community surveys have identified improved transit and transportation as the number one priority for Londoners. Western and Fanshawe students, who make up about 40% of London's bus ridership, have been advocating strongly for improvements. As an MPP, I've heard too many stories of unemployed Londoners who can't accept work in the industrial parks because those jobs are not accessible by transit.

London's current transit ridership per capita far exceeds that of many comparable municipalities such as Hamilton, Mississauga and Waterloo, yet unlike these peer cities, which have secured significant provincial investments in bus rapid transit or light rail, London continues to rely on a bus system that is bursting at the seams.

Londoners do not accept that investment in public transit is an either-or proposition, that we must choose between public transit and keeping our electricity system public. Londoners expect both. We expect our vital public assets to be protected, but we also expect transit to be funded.

London is ready. Council has committed \$4 million to conduct an environmental assessment that is currently under way. What we need now is for the province to come to the table.

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FLORA MacDONALD

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: On July 26 of this year, at the age of 89, our country lost a great political leader. Flora MacDonald left behind a strong and inspiring legacy for our country, for female leadership and for the true meaning of public service.

As the first female federal representative for my riding of Kingston and the Islands, Ms. MacDonald was a trailblazer, always striving to serve the best interests of her community. Flora, as she was affectionately called by all, set up Canada's second constituency office in 1973.

She became our nation's first female foreign minister and proved her diplomacy, skilful negotiation and compassion in international affairs.

Ms. MacDonald was a true politician for the people and of the people. She was accessible, personable and always ready to engage with her community.

In my seven years at the federal constituency office, there were so many occasions when people from the riding and beyond contacted my office to try to connect with Flora. That in itself is a wonderful demonstration of the affection our community has for this inspirational leader and for the many lives she touched.

Mr. Speaker, I am so honoured today to have the opportunity to pay this small tribute to this amazing woman. May she rest in deserved peace.

Thank you. Meegwetch.

REX CRAWFORD

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm pleased to rise to recognize Mr. Rex Crawford, a former Liberal MP for Kent, for his significant contributions to his community and to the nation.

Rex is prolific in his desire to serve and volunteer. Some of his many roles include work with the Junior Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club, being vice-president of the farmers' union, director of the Chatham children's treatment centre, Sydenham District Hospital board, the Chatham general hospital board, and ARC Industries in Wallaceburg.

As an environmentally conscious farmer, Rex has served on the board of the Lower Thames conservation authority, and he continues on the board of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority trust.

In Dover township, beginning in 1977, he was councillor, deputy reeve and reeve, working hard to maintain the agricultural integrity of some of the finest and most productive land in the country.

In 1987, he was elected warden of Kent county. The following year he was elected to the House of Commons as member of Parliament for Kent, and was re-elected in 1993. Rex was largely responsible for bringing the ethanol plant to Chatham-Kent. As MP, Rex was the voice of his constituents, and he was never afraid to challenge a position of his party if it was contrary to the interests of the people of Kent. For this, he is respected and admired by all who know him.

I continue to appreciate his advice, support and friendship.

TOYOTA

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Yesterday afternoon, I was pleased to attend the fourth annual United Way car show at the Toyota manufacturing plant in my community of Cambridge. There was a great turnout of people from Cambridge and neighbouring communities strolling through the rows of gleaming cars, enjoying the food and music, and contributing to a great cause. Events like this

are just one of many examples of how Toyota partners with local groups and remains a staple of my community of Cambridge.

On July 31, I was pleased to visit this award-winning plant, along with CEO Brian Krinock, where the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, Brad Duguid, announced that the Ontario government would be investing \$42.1 million to secure over 8,000 current jobs and create new ones in Toyota's Ontario manufacturing operations. It was a great news day.

Along with an investment of \$421 million from Toyota, this funding will support equipment and technology upgrades that will prepare the Cambridge Toyota facility to produce the next generation of Lexus vehicles. For the first time outside Japan, Toyota's specialized welding technology will be used.

This announcement is great news for the thousands of families across the Waterloo region that depend on the auto industry for their livelihood. Toyota is a major employer and driver of our regional economy, and I'm very, very proud that our government is at the table to help keep the sector competitive in the face of fierce global competition.

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN COMMUNITY

Mr. Yvan Baker: I rise in honour of Ukrainian Heritage Day today, Mr. Speaker. The first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, Vasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, arrived in Canada on September 7, 1891. Since then, the Ukrainian Canadian population in Ontario has grown to more than 340,000 people. Ontarians of Ukrainian descent, along with so many other communities and backgrounds, have a rich heritage and have contributed to making Canada the great country that it is today.

Many Ukrainians fled their homeland to find freedom from oppression and a better life. They found that life here in Canada. My grandfather was one of those people. He and so many others in the community will always be grateful to Ontario and to our country. As proud as he was of his Ukrainian heritage, my grandfather was one of the proudest Canadians I have ever known.

As a result of these reasons, the province in 2011 unanimously passed a bill proclaiming Ukrainian Heritage Day on September 7 every year. I was honoured to have worked with members on all sides of this Legislature on this bill. Later today, we shall be commemorating heritage day with a flag-raising ceremony at 4 o'clock, and I invite all members of the House to attend.

This government has worked closely with Ontario's Ukrainian Canadian community. The Premier was in Etobicoke Centre to commemorate Ukrainian Independence Day last month. She will also be attending the Bloor West Village Toronto Ukrainian Festival this weekend. I encourage all members here to join us. It's a wonderful, wonderful weekend.

The Premier and Minister Sandals, for example, worked to ensure that the internment and the Holodomor

would be included in Ontario's curriculum. They ensured that funding would be provided for a new mobile classroom that will travel Ontario to educate students about the Holodomor. And the Premier has repeatedly called for an independent and territorially sovereign Ukraine and has proudly sent humanitarian aid to Ukraine in these difficult times.

As an MPP and a member of the community, I am proud of my Ukrainian heritage, proud of the work that the Premier and the government have done with the community, and proud of the contributions that the community has made to our province and our country.

TABLING OF SESSIONAL PAPERS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I beg to inform the House that during the adjournment, the following reports were tabled:

On June 26, 2015, a report concerning Jagmeet Singh, the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, from the Integrity Commissioner;

On July 7, 2015, the 2015 annual greenhouse gas progress report from the Environmental Commissioner;

On July 28, 2015, the 2014-15 annual report from the Ombudsman;

On July 31, 2015, the 2014-15 annual report from the Financial Accountability Officer.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I also beg to inform the House that during the adjournment, the Clerks received the reports on intended appointments dated September 1, 2015, and September 2, 2015, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies.

Pursuant to standing order 108(f)9, these reports are deemed to be adopted by the House.

Reports deemed adopted.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Pursuant to the order of the House of March 23, 2015, I beg leave to present the interim report from the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment and move its adoption.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's as brief as you can get.

Ms. Vernile moves adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROVINCIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH AMENDMENT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR L'INTERVENANT PROVINCIAL EN FAVEUR DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES

Miss Taylor moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 117, An Act to amend the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007 with respect to notices of critical injury or death / Projet de loi 117, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur l'intervenant provincial en faveur des enfants et des jeunes en ce qui concerne les avis de décès ou de blessures graves.

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.

Miss Monique Taylor: The bill amends the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act, 2007, to include an obligation on agencies and service providers to inform the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth promptly if they become aware of the death or critical injury of a child or youth, and a children's aid society has been involved with the child or youth, or with the child or youth's family, within 12 months of death or critical injury.

1320

ZARA H.S.L.C.C INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Takhar moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr25, An Act to revive Zara H.S.L.C.C Inc.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

422504 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2015

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr23, An Act to revive 422504 Ontario Ltd.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

MOTIONS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Standing Committee on Estimates, and that the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this motion without further debate or amendment.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the Standing Committee on Estimates shall not meet until Wednesday, September 23, 2015, at which time the committee shall meet for the purpose of organization and to select the estimates of ministries and offices for consideration; and

That, notwithstanding standing order 63, the committee shall present one report to the House on November 26, 2015, with respect to all estimates and supplementary estimates considered pursuant to standing orders 60 and 62; and

That, in the event that the committee fails to report the said estimates on November 26, 2015, the estimates and supplementaries shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and be deemed to be reported to and received by the House.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader moves that the Standing Committee on Estimates shall not meet until—

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispensed. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe that you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the membership of standing committees.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion. Do we agree? Agreed.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committees:

That on the Standing Committee on Estimates, Mr. Hillier be replaced by Mr. Smith;

That on the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, Mr. McNaughton be replaced by Mr. Barrett;

That on the Standing Committee on General Government, Mr. Yurek be replaced by Mr. McDonell;

That on the Standing Committee on Government Agencies, Mr. McDonell be replaced by Mr. Bailey;

That on the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, Mr. MacLaren be replaced by Mr. Hillier, and Mr. Smith be replaced by Ms. Scott;

That on the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Barrett be replaced by Mr. McNaughton, Ms. Scott be replaced by Mr. MacLaren, and Mr. Dunlop be replaced by Mr. Clark;

That on the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills, Mr. Bailey be replaced by Mr. Yurek; and

That on the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Madame Lalonde be replaced by Mr. Thibeault, and Ms. Elliott be replaced by Mr. Miller, Parry Sound–Muskoka.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader moves that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committees—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Agreed. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot item number 64 be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader moves that notwithstanding standing order 98(g)—I was waiting for the “Dispense,” but there was only one sentence—notice of ballot item number 64 be waived. Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

APPOINTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Environmental Commissioner and that the question on the motion be put immediately, without debate or amendment.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

“To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:

“We, Her Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario now assembled, request the appointment of Dianne Saxe as Environmental Commissioner for the province of Ontario, as provided in section 49 of the Environmental Bill of Rights, to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act, commencing December 1, 2015.”

And that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The government House leader is moving that an humble address—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense. Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Ombudsman, and that the question—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: —on the motion be put immediately, without debate or amendment.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: No.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I heard a no—after several times, but I have to finish my job first so that you can feel comfortable—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I wanted to make sure you don't forget.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And I'm sure that I'm sure you'll be sure that I'm sure.

PETITIONS

CONCUSSION

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It is now time for petitions. The member from—

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You're so used to saying it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): —Nepean—Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You're an expert, Speaker, at my riding.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the rate of concussions among children and youth has increased significantly from 2003 to 2011, from 466 to 754 per 100,000 for boys, and from 208 to 440 per 100,000 for girls; and

“Whereas hard falls and the use of force, often found in full-contact sports ... have been found to be the cause of over half of all hospital visits for pediatric concussions; and

“Whereas the signs and symptoms of concussions can be difficult to identify unless coaches, mentors, youth and parents have been educated to recognize them; and

“Whereas preventative measures, such as rules around return-to-play for young athletes who have suspected concussions, as well as preventative education and awareness have been found to significantly decrease the danger of serious or fatal injuries; and

“Whereas Bill 39, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to concussions, was introduced in 2012 but never passed; and

“Whereas 49 recommendations to increase awareness, training and education around concussions were made by a jury after the coroner's inquest into the concussion death of Rowan Stringer;

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

“That the Ontario government review and adopt Rowan's Law to ensure the safety and health of children and young athletes across the province.”

I attended the petition launch with the member from Ottawa South and the family of Rowan Stringer on Saturday, and I proudly affix my signature to this petition and pass it to page Siena.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that was collected by Trudy Funnell, Robert Porter, David Newman and Joseph St. Denis in beautiful Biscotasing in my riding. For all of you, Google up Biscotasing. You will find it's a thriving metropolis in the north of Nickel Belt.

It's called “Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

“Whereas once you privatize Hydro One, there's no return; and

“Whereas we'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals” and infrastructure; “and

“Whereas we'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

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“Whereas we'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

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

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

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

LUNG HEALTH

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children. Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes), lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

“In the Ontario Lung Association report *Your Lungs, Your Life*, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and this figure is

estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

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

“To allow for deputations on MPP Kathryn McGarry’s private member’s bill, Bill 41, the Lung Health Act, 2014, which establishes a Lung Health Advisory Council to make recommendations to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care on lung health issues and requires the minister to develop and implement an Ontario Lung Health Action Plan with respect to research, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lung disease; and

“Once debated at committee, to expedite Bill 41, Lung Health Act, 2014, through the committee stage and back to the Legislature for third and final reading; and to immediately call for a vote on Bill 41 and to seek royal assent immediately upon its passage.”

I support this petition and affix my signature to it.

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

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition that was requested of me by the residents of Westmount Gardens Long-Term Care in my riding of London West, and it reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: Stop the Eviction of Long-Term-Care Residents.

“Whereas every resident of a long-term-care home has the right to be treated with respect and dignity; and

“Whereas section 1 of the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, identifies as its ‘fundamental principle’ that

‘a long-term-care home is primarily the home of its residents’; and

“Whereas regulation 79 under the act conflicts with this fundamental principle because it states that long-term-care residents can lose their home after 30 days in hospital and must then reapply and join wait-lists for available long-term-care spaces; and

“Whereas the risk of losing their home can create emotional distress and trauma for long-term-care residents who are temporarily hospitalized;

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

“That the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care change regulation 79 to ensure that residents of long-term care do not lose their home after a 30-day or longer stay in hospital.”

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

CONCUSSION

Mr. John Fraser: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the rate of concussions among children and youth has increased significantly from 2003 to 2011, from 466 to 754 per 100,000 for boys, and from 208 to 440 per 100,000 for girls; and

“Whereas hard falls and the use of force, often found in full-contact sports such as hockey and rugby, have been found to be the cause of over half of all hospital visits for pediatric concussions; and

“Whereas the signs and the symptoms of concussions can be difficult to identify unless coaches, mentors, youth and parents have been educated to recognize them; and

“Whereas preventative measures, such as rules around return-to-play for young athletes who have suspected concussions, as well as preventative education and awareness have been found to significantly decrease the danger of serious or fatal injuries; and

“Whereas Bill 39, An Act to amend the Education Act with respect to concussions, was introduced in 2012 but never passed; and

“Whereas 49 recommendations to increase awareness, training and education around concussions were made by a jury after the coroner’s inquest into the concussion death of Rowan Stringer;

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

“That the Ontario government review and adopt Rowan’s Law to ensure the safety and health of children and young athletes across the province.”

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m affixing my signature and giving it to page Grace.

WINTER ROAD MAINTENANCE

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a number from Gravenhurst and Bracebridge with regard to winter road maintenance, as winter is just around the corner.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and have signed it and will give it to Jaleelah.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am pleased to have the opportunity today to rise and share the voices of friends and neighbours in my area; for example, Ron Svajlenko and James Booth, Nester Pidwerbecki, Daniel Goheen. All would like me to share this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

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

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support this petition, affix my name to it and send it with page Alexander.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Mr. Arthur Potts: I also have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

"Whereas it is in the public interest for reasons of transparency, consumer protection and public accountability that the Ontario superintendent of insurance be authorized to collect from personal injury lawyers and paralegals representing claimants on tort and accident

benefits claims, information on case-specific fee arrangements, costs, disbursements and referral fees to determine the impact of such fee arrangements on the cost of auto insurance in Ontario; and

"Whereas consumers do not" often "understand how these fees are calculated;

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

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

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

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

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

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

I support this petition and sign my name to it.

ROAD SAFETY

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

"Whereas the Ministry of Transportation" is planning "a roundabout at Corbeil Corners, Highway 17 and 94; and

"Whereas traffic lights are put at Highway 17 and 94;

"Whereas R.J. Spudz remain at its current location—known as 6 Highway 94;

"We, the undersigned," seek that R.J. Spudz remain at its current location, known as 6 Highway 94, also known as Corbeil Corners.

Further, it also seeks that the Ministry of Transportation rethink their decision of putting in a roundabout.

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

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GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. John Vanthof: I've got a petition here from the good folks in northern Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

"Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price-gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

"Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

"Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;

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

“Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition.”

I wholeheartedly agree, sign my signature and send it down with page Alexander.

CHILD CUSTODY

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“We petition to provide in the province of Ontario for grandchildren to have access to grandparents, when access is denied by the grandchild’s parents;

“Whereas parental estrangement/grandparent alienation is becoming an increasing and alarming social trend;

“Whereas parental estrangement/grandparent alienation has been termed child abuse, elder abuse and adult bullying by experts in the field;

“Whereas loss of grandchild/grandparent relationship can have a long-term adverse impact on the well-being of both grandparents and grandchildren, thus contributing to the health of the wider community;

“Whereas grandparents are instrumental in being family historians, teachers, companions and babysitters. They offer unconditional love to a grandchild and can be a positive contributor to mental health. In addition, grandparents often provide financial support for grandchildren’s education, extracurricular activities, and a host of additional items as the grandchild grows up;

“Whereas the grandchild gives joy, love, fun, energy, and brings new beginnings to a grandparent;

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

“To create a bill that will facilitate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren who have been denied contact with each other by the grandchildren’s parents. This bill shall be all-inclusive to grandparents, whether there had been a previous relationship or not.”

I feel very comfortable signing this petition.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Unfortunately, that concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon, but there’s always tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DU DROIT À LA PARTICIPATION AUX AFFAIRES PUBLIQUES

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 23, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest / Projet de loi 52, Loi modifiant la Loi

sur les tribunaux judiciaires, la Loi sur la diffamation et la Loi sur l’exercice des compétences légales afin de protéger l’expression sur les affaires d’intérêt public.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Madame Meilleur has moved second reading of Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I have received a request for deferral of this vote from the chief government whip. Pursuant to standing order 28(h), this vote will be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

Second reading vote deferred.

INVASIVE SPECIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LES ESPÈCES ENVAHISSANTES

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 12, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species / Projet de loi 37, Loi concernant les espèces envahissantes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to the order of the House dated June 2, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Mauro has moved second reading of Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I have received a deferral notice from the chief government whip asking that the vote be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

Second reading vote deferred.

SMART GROWTH FOR OUR COMMUNITIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR UNE CROISSANCE INTELLIGENTE DE NOS COLLECTIVITÉS

Resuming the debate adjourned on June 4, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act / Projet de loi 73, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill, the member for Kitchener–Conestoga had presented his remarks, and I would now look to him.

We're going to have questions and comments with respect to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga's presentation. Questions and comments.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to thank the member from Kitchener–Conestoga for his contribution to the debate on this act.

Certainly the member from Kitchener–Conestoga knows something about the need for real reform of the OMB, given his experience in Waterloo region with the appeal to the OMB of Waterloo region's official plan and what that meant to the democratic process, to citizen participation in planning decisions, to the official plan that was ratified by council, that was embraced by the community, that was in fact approved by the province, because it aligned nicely with Places to Grow—and yet an undemocratic, unelected planning tribunal, the OMB, had the power to overturn that official plan. Certainly that is an issue that is of considerable concern to my colleagues and I in the New Democratic caucus because it is not addressed in this legislation.

We see this legislation tinker around the edges of the OMB. It addresses in a word here or there some of the aspects of the OMB operations, but it does not do anything to put a check on that unbridled power of the OMB that has resulted in the kinds of decisions that we saw in the member's community of Waterloo region.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments. The member for Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Thank you, Speaker. It's good to be back and good to see you in the chair again.

It's been a while since we began debate on Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015. I had the opportunity to speak at the time when we first started, but here's just a couple of things to refresh our minds about what this particular piece of legislation, if passed, will do.

Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, proposes changes to both the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act. The bill, if passed, will ensure that development charges in land use planning and appeal systems are more predictable, transparent and cost-effective, and better meet the needs of stakeholders and communities.

Amendments to the Planning Act focus on enhancing citizen engagement, achieving more predictability, supporting municipal leadership and protecting long-term public interest.

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Amendments to the Development Charges Act, 1997, focus on providing the ability for municipalities to raise

revenues for key growth-related infrastructure—for example, transit—and enhance accountability and transparency regarding the collection or spending of the development charges reserve funds.

The feedback from public consultation conducted from October 2013 to January 2014 informed the proposed changes to the Development Charges Act, 1997, and to the Planning Act.

Speaker, I just want to highlight one other piece of this piece of legislation: the review of the official plans. We're trying, if the legislation is passed, to move from a five-year period to a 10-year period, making it way less cumbersome for municipalities and also to give some stability to those community planning groups.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's always good to comment on a message from the member from Kitchener–Conestoga as he talks about the Planning Act and some of the issues around that.

In my former life as a mayor, the OMB was often tested, sometimes as a delay tactic and sometimes for real concern to the public. I think having the OMB there provides a necessary service. It allows the public the opportunity to bring their concerns and to be heard at a level that's away from the council and maybe sometimes away from some of the political maneuvering that can happen.

The OMB has provided a very important service over the years. I think we have to do some work, though, to make sure that the delays that are experienced are shortened down. It shouldn't be there just as a tool to delay developers coming along. Really, it's a tool that should be there to make sure the procedures are followed, that it is in the best interest of the municipality and that it follows the official plan.

A lot of work is put into the official plan. That's why changes should be put in up front, so that the community gets involved and there's lots of time for consultation. That's really where a community should come together to decide where they want development, where they want the recreational facilities and so forth. The OMB, in the course, should be there to measure plans against the original official plan of the municipality.

I'm certainly looking forward to amendments on this bill. I think it's a bill that needs some work before we can see it go through and really look after the needs of the province.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was a while ago that the member from Kitchener–Conestoga made his remarks, so I really have to search my memory, but he was talking about Bill 73, which amends the Development Charges Act, 1997, as well as the Planning Act.

From what I can remember there were some good little steps being taken within this bill, but there are also some big gaps in the Planning Act and a lot of people have come forward to say, "The Planning Act needs to be

changed and here's the list of changes that need to be done." But none of those are found in that current bill.

The member was sort of positive toward the bill, because what it does is not harmful. But what it doesn't do, which is really almost sinful—that is, it takes a lot of time, effort and energy to get a bill through the House and to get it enacted. That's fine; that's the way legislation should work. But there is a price to pay for opportunity lost and this is what we have with this bill. We have an opportunity to not only amend the Development Charges Act, but we also have an opportunity to amend the Planning Act.

When you look at the need for social housing, when you look at the need for inclusionary zoning, when you look at some of the bills that have been put forward that bring changes to the Planning Act and that have been supported by every side of this House—but yet, here's a government bill and it is completely silent on the biggest issues that the Planning Act is facing right now. So it's good of him to put that in for debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments.

I return to the member for Kitchener–Conestoga for his reply.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to be back after a brief recess this summer. I hope everyone did enjoy the recess with their families. But of course, we're back.

Speaker, one thing I have heard commonly in my community, within the region of Waterloo, is that the cost of home ownership is continuing to rise to the point where young families simply can no longer afford to raise their family in a neighbourhood where they have good schools. I spoke to developers and home builders, and the DC charges of 10, 20 years ago are skyrocketing today from those of many years back, I suppose.

This bill cannot result in a further piling of taxes on the backs of future new home purchasers and employers.

I know that the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore just recently joined us, and I think he did an extremely great job articulating this during the debate on development charges back on June 23, 2013, when he was a Toronto councillor and the chair of the city's planning and growth management committee. He goes on to say, "What many people assume is the developers pay. Well, the reality is purchasers pay."

The government of Ontario has a responsibility to ensure that the provincial policy statement and provincial plans are not undermined by taxation and financial burdens. Transit-oriented communities should be the most affordable and attractive communities for Ontario's future residents and employers.

Speaker, I wholeheartedly agree with the comments that the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore made.

Again, it goes to the point that families are finding it ever difficult to become homeowners. They don't want to rent. They want to own a home, to invest in their family. Bill 73 would allow some substantial additions to development charges, making it further impossible for families to become homeowners.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: On this first day back in the Legislature, Speaker, after a wonderful summer that I think all of us spent listening to constituents, it's a real privilege for me, as MPP for London West, to join the debate on this important piece of legislation.

As I prepare to offer my comments on the bill, I'm struck once again by the responsibility each of us bears as an MPP—the responsibility and the privilege—to be the voice for the thousands of people we represent in our ridings. I know that is a task we all take very seriously, and I am honoured to add the perspective of the people I represent in London West to this second reading debate on Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act. Bill 73 is also known as the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

During my remarks, I'm going to be reinforcing some of the points that were made by my colleague the member for Windsor–Tecumseh when he spoke to the bill in his capacity as NDP critic for municipal affairs and housing. He gave that one-hour speech just before the Legislature rose for the summer.

Over the course of that speech, he spent a fair bit of time focusing on two issues that are of particular concern to those of us on this side of the House who are members of the NDP caucus. Those issues specifically are inclusionary zoning and Ontario Municipal Board reform.

As I have stated before, when I have participated in debates in this Legislature, I come from a policy background. Prior to my election, I was a policy researcher, so I like to focus on those aspects of legislation that respond to what the evidence tells us—what we know from data and from experience about the actual problems that exist—and also what we know from other jurisdictions and from best practice about the best solutions to address these problems.

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From that perspective, I would say, and members of my caucus would agree, that Bill 73 gets a passing grade. It does identify that a lack of transparency in the planning process has hindered the ability of citizens to participate in building their communities and that OMB appeals have undermined municipal official plans that are developed and passed with strong community support when a developer challenges the OMB immediately following the passage of the plan. Nevertheless, Bill 73 is far from the OMB reform bill that the government has been promising since 2003 and which Ontarians have long demanded.

In addition, while Bill 73 amends the Development Charges Act to allow municipalities to recover more of the costs associated with new transit projects, it could have gone much further to enable municipal government to fully recover growth-related capital costs—in other words, to really ensure that growth pays for growth.

Despite more than a year and a half of public consultations on this bill, consultations that began in the fall of 2013, Bill 73 does relatively little to address some

of the most pressing problems in land use planning. As my colleague the member for Windsor–Tecumseh said, many Ontarians were hoping that this bill would go much further than it does. They were hoping that Bill 73 would implement inclusionary zoning to address the chronic shortage of affordable housing across the province. They were also hoping that it would put some real checks on the extraordinary power of the OMB to override the express wishes of Ontario municipalities. Unfortunately, these issues are not addressed in the bill.

But before I go into more detail about these missed opportunities, I want to highlight some of the provisions that are included in the bill and which do improve some of the issues that we have seen in the planning process.

The first part of Bill 73 proposes a series of amendments to the Development Charges Act, 1997. It removes the current mandatory 10% discount that must be applied to transit-related growth costs in the determination of DCs. It allows the Lieutenant Governor in Council to prescribe municipal services whose DC recovery costs can be estimated based on planned levels of future service rather than historical past levels, which could help municipalities undertake transit expansion or build new recreational facilities etc. It also imposes additional reporting requirements on how development charges are collected and spent to ensure greater transparency in the DC process.

The second part of Bill 73 amends the Planning Act. It places a two-year moratorium on amendment applications from developers following the adoption of a new official plan or zoning bylaw—and this is what I had referred to earlier. Previously, we had seen developers applying for amendments following the adoption of an official plan—an official plan that had been developed by means of an extensive consultation process. This allows the official plan to be in place for at least two years before an amendment can be applied for.

Bill 73 also prohibits global appeals of new official plans and allows appeals only if they are connected to specific issues with a plan. It makes planning decisions more transparent by requiring approval authorities to explain how written or oral submissions that were received during the planning consultation process affected the final decision. It changes the time frame for a developer planning appeals to the OMB by effectively stopping the clock if parties wish to pursue alternative dispute resolution. The clock restarts on the time frame for appeals once the ADR process is completed.

The bill requires municipalities to create planning advisory committees, or PACs, which must include at least one resident of the municipality who is not on council and not a city employee. This will require some municipalities, like my community of London, to shift planning responsibility from where it currently resides within a standing committee of council, to a PAC committee instead.

The bill allows municipalities to request a 90-day extension of the current 180-day deadline to make a decision with respect to an official plan or an official

plan amendment. It requires a comprehensive review of new official plans 10 years after they first come into effect instead of the current five years, but it then requires updates every five years thereafter. Similarly, it also changes the timeline for provincial policy statements so that the PPSs have to be updated every 10 years instead of the current five.

The bill requires municipalities to have a parks plan in order to collect cash in lieu of parkland dedication, but reduces parkland dedication payments from a rate of one hectare for every 300 residents to one hectare for every 500 residents.

Speaker, some of these amendments are certainly welcome and long overdue. For example, allowing municipalities to base development charges on planned future levels of service, instead of historical average levels, and removing transit from the arbitrary 10% DC reduction could provide a much-needed revenue stream for municipal transit projects.

This is of particular significance for my community of London. We are projecting a population increase of 77,000 people by 2035 and have been moving ahead with an ambitious rapid transit initiative called Shift London, which, of course, will require significant investment in transit vehicles and infrastructure.

Speaker, New Democrats are certainly supportive of these provisions. We are also supportive of the amendments in the act that increase the authority of municipal governments to make decisions on local matters and that reduce the impact of appeals. As I mentioned, placing a two-year moratorium on appeals to the official plan is a significant step forward, given the comprehensive process that is involved in developing and adopting a new official plan.

I do want to say with some pride that in my community, London's new draft official plan involved the most extensive process of civic engagement that has ever been undertaken by any Canadian municipality. That plan is still in draft form. It has yet to be approved by council, but once it is adopted, the extensive consultation process that went into its making should be respected.

In fact, it's the provisions of Bill 73 related to the process of adopting the official plan that will have the biggest impact on my community of London, as well as other communities that are at a similar stage, because we haven't yet adopted the official plan. For that reason, council is considering delaying approval of the London plan until these amendments that are included in Bill 73 are in place.

With regard to the proposed DC amendments, London's main concern is to maximize flexibility for local councils to set their own policies and to use DCs to fully recover growth-related capital costs. The city has identified four specific areas related to DCs that they would like to see amended before the legislation is finalized: area ratings, mandatory reductions, ineligible services and OMB appeals.

Currently, municipal councils are able to determine if certain services and/or areas should have differential DC

rates. Bill 73 states that regulations may require councils to use differential DC bylaws for different parts of their municipalities, which would really limit the policy-making authority of councils. It will be important that the new regulation respect council's ability to determine their own DC bylaws according to local needs and circumstances.

Second, although transit is being removed from the mandatory 10% reduction for soft services, other services such as parks, recreation facilities and libraries are still considered ineligible for DCs. This limits the ability of councils to fund legitimate growth costs and increases the cost for local taxpayers. In London's 2014 DC study, the 10% reduction to these services meant that approximately \$5.3 million of growth costs could not be recovered.

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Third, the DC Act outlines a number of ineligible services that cannot be funded from development charges, ranging from museums, theatres, art galleries, tourism facilities, parkland acquisition, municipal administrative buildings and waste management. I understand that waste diversion is being considered under Bill 73 as eligible for DC recovery and this is certainly another change that is long overdue. However, many would argue that there should be no ineligible services, that the principal of growth paying for growth should make all growth-related services eligible for DC funding. The Urban League of London, in its input to the bill, pointed out that removing the discount for municipal buildings could actually incentivize municipal governments to build to LEED standards, which would, in the long run, save money on energy and is just better for the environment.

From our perspective in the NDP caucus, the most troubling omission from Bill 73 is around the issue of inclusionary zoning. This has long been identified as a planning priority by the NDP. In particular, I want to acknowledge my colleague the member for Parkdale–High Park, who has shown considerable leadership on this issue by introducing a private member's bill. We also know that many Liberals also support inclusionary zoning. We saw a private member's bill from the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore which includes a lot of regulation around inclusionary zoning. That PMB would make it mandatory, in fact, that developers make new units available to people who require affordable housing. This is definitely a direction we would like to go in, and we have some questions about why that private member's bill was not included in this government act.

We know that there is a crisis in affordable housing across the province. The latest report from the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Association, the 2015 Waiting Lists Survey, shows that 3,643 more Ontario households are waiting for rent-geared-to-income housing, compared to 2014. For the second year in a row, the average wait to get housing in Ontario was almost four years.

In my community in London, we are a bit better off than other parts of the province; our average wait time is only 1.56 years, and there was a slight decrease over the last year in the number of families waiting for affordable

housing. But the number of singles and couples with no children on the wait-list jumped 18% between 2013 and 2014. The reality is that rent remains too high for many single people or childless couples who are looking for small units in London. If you are on Ontario Works, there are few, if any, apartments that are available within the housing allowance of \$375. If you're working at a minimum wage job in London, you will be hard-pressed to find an apartment that you can afford when market rent for a bachelor apartment is about \$586, and it's \$767 for a one-bedroom apartment.

So inclusionary zoning would have been a critical tool to help municipalities like London and other communities across the province to increase the stock of affordable housing, particularly, in our case, in London, of affordable one-bedroom units, which could help ease the pressure we are experiencing.

In London, as my colleague the member for London–Fanshawe and I have also spoken about in this House, we are tragically familiar with the consequences of not providing access to affordable housing, particularly for people who are vulnerable. It forces people who want to leave shelters to move into substandard housing, such as rooming houses or unregulated group homes and puts them at significant risk.

Last fall in London, we learned of the death of David MacPherson, a 72-year-old man who died in a house fire in an unregulated group home, a fire that also left two dozen other people homeless. Later in December, a man was burned out of a room he was staying in at a low-rent motel in London. Earlier this year in London, a wind-storm ripped off the roof—the total roof was blown away—of a substandard walk-up apartment building. Again, almost a dozen low-income tenants were left homeless. So inclusionary zoning, as I have said, would go a long way to help increase the stock of affordable housing.

As I indicated, there are some references to the OMB that are included in Bill 73, but in our view, it completely misses the boat on OMB reform. Many citizens in communities across Ontario have learned the hard way that the OMB holds really extraordinary powers, even to the extent of being allowed to make up its own rules.

This is an issue that has been raised numerous times in this place by my colleague the member for Kitchener–Waterloo. In her community, the OMB overturned an official plan that was 10 years in the making, a plan that was designed to curb urban sprawl and promote transit-friendly compact development. It was endorsed by local politicians, embraced by the community, approved by the province, but following a developer's appeal to the OMB, it was overturned. It was replaced with sprawling development that is much more extensive than anyone in the region had contemplated, which is leading to a significant loss of farmland, a reduction of green space and increased threats to the groundwater. Not only did the OMB's ruling show complete disregard for the community planning process, it also totally ignored the provincial government's Places to Grow Act.

Overall, New Democrats support this bill. We'll be voting to move it to committee because we do feel that it deserves to have public input, but we will be listening carefully to the amendments that are brought forward by municipalities like the city of London and we will be interested in hearing the views of all Ontarians who have an interest and a stake in decisions about land use planning. As I have indicated, we will certainly be looking to introduce our own amendments related to OMB reform and inclusionary zoning.

Thank you very much, Speaker, for this opportunity. I look forward to questions and comments from other MPPs. Thank you.

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

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin by thanking the member from London West for her comments here this afternoon as it relates to this important piece of legislation. I listened very carefully to what she said. Of course, I'm very happy to hear that there will be support to have this legislation continue through the process and get it to committee.

I've had the chance as we were here in the House to have conversations with a number of my colleagues, including the minister responsible for this legislation, someone who I know has worked very hard on this legislation. He and his team, of course, have worked very hard on this legislation over the last number of months.

It is really important, and the member from London West did allude to this. I know that many of us on all sides of the House, and not that many weeks ago, had the opportunity to be at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference. I certainly was there and spoke to a number of municipal representatives, including some from London. Of course, not surprisingly, and I think we all know this: It is extremely important to our municipal partners, to various elements of the private sector and of course the work that's taking place at MTO in terms of how we go forward to invest in critical transit and transportation infrastructure to make sure that we have a very balanced and responsible approach to ensuring that we have the resources available to make the kinds of investments, to build the sustainable, healthy communities that we need, both from an economic standpoint but also from the standpoint of a prosperous economy, which I know is an objective that we all share in this Legislature.

Again, I'm very happy to hear that that member from London West understands the importance of moving forward in a balanced and responsible way. I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, my good friend from Hamilton, represents a community not unlike London, not unlike many others in this Legislature that definitely need more support in terms of the resources that need to be allocated to build out that critical infrastructure.

I welcome more debate on this. I thank that member for her comments, and I think we all look forward to the continuation of the legislative process on Bill 73.

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

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Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I am pleased to rise to comment on the 20-minute address that the member from London West has just put before the House.

One of the things we heard strongly at the recent AMO conference—and I want to talk about AMO a little bit—was that they need the provincial government to listen to them and to be a real partner. I think we heard it again—in fact, I know we heard it again—at AMO.

About two years ago, I had a resolution pass this House concerning liability insurance with municipalities. We were expecting the government to listen to well over 200—in fact, it was closing in on between 250 and 300 municipalities that agreed that liability insurance had to be addressed in Ontario, and we have those records.

We were fully expecting—and the municipalities were expecting—some kind of move by this government to address this situation. Of course, we heard the results: The government was just flat out no; they weren't going to touch it. So when we say that the government is interested in working with AMO and the municipalities in Ontario, we're somewhat suspect on that, and we are concerned that this legislation is happening before all consultation is done.

As part of the minister's mandate letter, he was tasked with conducting a full review of the Ontario Municipal Board, but this bill tables a number of changes to the board before the review is conducted. I would hope that the government listens to the municipalities in this province and does conduct more hearings and better hearings than they've been doing already. Municipalities want to be our partners, and we should give them full partnership in any decisions that are being made.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was very interesting listening to my colleague from London West talk about Bill 73, an Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act. Not only did she give a good overview of what is in the bill, but she also gave some very relevant live experience, I will call it, from her riding, from the town she represents, from London, where some of the work they had done was completely overlooked. It didn't matter that the town had engaged in a meaningful consultation process, and that they worked on it for a period of 10 years. They submitted their plan, and then a developer came along, went straight to the OMB and it's like none of that work ever happened, none of that work ever mattered. That has brought problems to the people in London, and certainly the member was good at explaining what happened.

All this is to say that we agree that the Planning Act needs to change. We agree that this is 2015, and things we had in 1997 don't look anything the same almost 20 years later. Here again, it's not what's in the bill that is problematic as much as the big gap, the opportunity lost, the known problem with parts of the Planning Act as well

as with the Developmental Charges Act that should be included in this bill.

Why are we so timid when we already know there is an elephant in the room? We already know there are some severe problems with the Planning Act. Here is an opportunity to fix it. Don't let it go by.

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

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I just wanted to say that in my riding of Barrie and the surrounding area, they are constantly hearing of issues with planning and citizens upset about something going one way or another and feeling that they haven't been consulted.

I think our reforms to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act would make sure that growth in Ontario is managed smartly. We are proposing changes to the tools and processes that communities and citizens use to determine how their neighbourhoods grow, and to plan and pay for this growth. And they should have a say.

Our proposed amendments would give residents a greater, more meaningful say in how their communities grow. It would make the planning and appeals process more predictable. It takes way too long now and, as a former speaker says, it comes out sometimes a way you had no idea it was going to. It would give the municipalities more independence. It would make it easier to resolve disputes at the community level.

I think that there is still some work to be done, so our government will be launching two working groups that are doing a further review of some land use planning and development charge issues. I think that's a good idea, too.

One of the most important parts of the bill, as I see it, is that, to encourage parkland and green space, municipalities would need to put in place a parks plan. The plan would involve input from school boards and community members. The municipality would need to report publicly each year on how the parkland funds are used. Children and families need places to play close to their homes and their schools.

I urge you to support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments.

We return to the member for London West for her reply.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to thank the Minister of Transportation, the member from Perth–Wellington, the member from Nickel Belt and the member from Barrie for offering some comments on my remarks.

I did want to clarify something with the member for Nickel Belt. It was Waterloo region that went through this horrendous experience with the OMB, not my own community of London. But Waterloo region is not unique. This is an issue that has been shared in this House by the member for Kitchener–Waterloo on numerous occasions because she is so close to the power of the OMB to override this community-based planning pro-

cess, what the implications are and what the fallout has been within that community.

The Minister of Transportation mentioned the AMO conference, and the member for Perth–Wellington talked about municipalities looking to the provincial government to be a real partner in the consultation process. What we heard—the members of our caucus who were at the AMO conference—is that, too many times, the government is not there as a real partner. The example of liability insurance was raised as one of those cases where the province has not come through. Transit investment: Even though there is currently the exemption in Bill 73 to remove the 10% reduction and it will go some way to help municipalities fund transit, it won't do everything that's needed.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I wish to correct my record. I said that the town of London had had a difficult time. It was really Waterloo. I'm sorry for the mistake.

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

I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. McNaughton assumes ballot item number 64 and Mr. Pettapiece assumes ballot item number 71.

Further debate? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me to speak on Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, which was tabled by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, whom I had the honour of joining when the minister introduced the bill, along with his parliamentary assistant, the member from Northumberland–Quinte West. I remember that.

Speaker, I stand here to speak on this very important issue around land use planning in my capacity—my very important responsibility, in fact—as the member of provincial Parliament for Ottawa Centre. I have, since 2007, an incredible privilege of representing my community of Ottawa Centre. Those of you who have had the opportunity to be in my riding—and I hope that's every single member in the House, because I have the most rare and unique opportunity of representing downtown Ottawa in our nation's capital, with national institutions like the House of Commons, the Senate of Canada, the Supreme Court of Canada, the Bank of Canada, and many national museums, something that everyone should come and visit.

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I've had the amazing opportunity to work with my community on some very important issues as we work together to grow our community and make it even more livable and healthy for all members of our community. One of the issues, Speaker, that I've been quite actively working on with my community since, I would say, 2009

or so is the issue around land use planning, the issue around development in our community and the challenges, at times, that come up with that development if it is not done right.

My community, given that it is a downtown community, is home to many desirable neighbourhoods that are sought after across the city. I would say, with all due respect to all the members from the Ottawa area, you will see neighbourhoods like the Glebe, or Westboro, Hintonburg, Carleton Heights, Centretown, Carlington, Mechanicsville—all these neighbourhoods, Speaker, are absolutely just growing. They're growing with young families moving in, buying their first home. They are growing with a lot of what we colloquially call empty nesters: couples whose kids have grown up and have now gone to university or have their own homes or jobs, who are downsizing, coming into downtown and perhaps moving into condominiums. That's another big development you'll see in my community: vertical neighbourhoods, as I often call them, with condominium buildings being developed.

But with that intensification, which is very much welcomed in my community, come challenges around how that development is taking place, to what extent the community is engaged and involved in that development, and how we are working together to ensure that the development that is taking place in our community is being done in a manner that keeps the fabric and the character of our neighbourhoods. That's one of the things my constituents often talk about: making sure the development we are having really maintains that fabric, that tradition, the values of our neighbourhoods, because the neighbourhoods in my community go back over 150 years, since the building of the Rideau Canal and Bytown, and of course the development that took place that is now the city of Ottawa.

As a result of that tension, at times, I've been quite engaged with my community in working along with them in developing the next steps to ensure that the process of development and the process around land use planning is one that brings everybody together—brings the developers and the community and the municipality together—so that we can work together in creating what we refer to in my community as community-inspired development, where everybody is working together so that the intensification that is taking place is something we can all enjoy and live with.

As a result of many conversations and meetings and consultations with our community associations and with neighbours and friends in my riding, in the election of 2011, I came up with a very concrete proposal as to how we can have community-inspired development. There were four things that I proposed on behalf of the community—and I committed to the community that if I'm elected, I will work on those things—that I wanted to very quickly highlight.

One was to change the Planning Act to require municipalities to adopt completed community design plans into their official plans—that's something that our

communities spend a lot of time developing, these CDPs, or community design plans—to make sure they actually become part of official plans as sort of secondary plans, so that everybody has the predictability and certainty around what has been decided as a community. That includes developers as well.

Another proposal that I had put forward as part of our community-inspired development proposal was that we ensure decisions of the city council around official plans are respected by the OMB. Many times, communities feel that the OMB overrules those decisions and elected representatives in city council sometimes lose their voice.

Thirdly, that we impose mandatory mediation in all development appeals, as opposed to the adversarial process that exists; and lastly, introduce anti-SLAPP legislation to protect the participation of individuals and community groups advocating or speaking out on these and other issues.

Since my re-election in 2011, I've been very actively working on all those four aspects, and I'm really happy to see that Bill 73 adopts many of those suggestions that my community and I made in that process.

As for the anti-SLAPP bill, I took the step of introducing Bill 132 in October 2012, as a private member's bill, to have the legislation around strategic litigation against public participation. I'm very excited to know that the voice and the will of my community, expressed through Bill 132, was then adopted by the government, by means of Bill 52, which is being debated in this House as well. I am hopeful that it will become law in this session through the support of all members in the House.

But the other three elements have been something that we've been discussing and I've been advocating to the community. As a result, in 2012, I hosted a community consultation, something that I do—it's called a sustainable community summit—where we take different topics that are important to our downtown urban needs. We had over 100 people come to that consultation with some excellent presentations as to how we can reform our land use planning system.

We had presentations—and I do want to mention these individuals, because they're very active in my community—from people like Jay Baltz of the Hintonburg Community Association, who had done extensive work on the OMB process and was actually also part of the adjustment committee at the city as well. We had January Cohen, who is a development lawyer with Soloway Wright LLP, who brought the practitioner's own perspective into the conversation. We also had a developer, Neil Malhotra, who is the vice-president of Claridge Homes, who very candidly offered development's point of view as to the planning that goes on on behalf of developers when they are proposing projects.

That robust conversation resulted in a report that we tabled to the then Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing—the current Premier of Ontario—to sort of undertake, where we very candidly canvassed issues like these: Should we just maintain the status quo? Should we create local appeal boards, as opposed to OMBs, to look

at decisions? Should we enhance community-inspired development, something that I had proposed and we see reflected in Bill 73? Should we dissolve the OMB?

I have to tell you that the overwhelming response by the members of my community was, number one, against maintaining the status quo, because they felt that something is broken and needs to be fixed, and against dissolving the OMB. They felt that the OMB has an important role as a quasi-judicial tribunal, an arm's-length body which is not government. It's a court-like body with expertise. Rules maybe have to be looked at, but it's important to keep that body in place. But really, it was sort of focusing on, what we need is more community-based development. We need more community voices in that development process.

Let me just highlight and share with you, Speaker, a couple of things that my community said, which we noted in our report. Minister, if you want a refresher copy of the report, I would be more than happy to share it with you again as well.

Interjections.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: No, I'm not being facetious. Actually, if I may say so, it's a very extensive report. It really captures the views of my community from a downtown perspective. It's a very thoughtful conversation that took place, looking at a variety of options and discussing that with the help of some experts in the room.

One of the participant members of my community said that the OMB works. The problem is at the level of the city's official plan zoning and a commitment to working with the official plan zoning.

Another participant said, in that consultation, that it's not about the OMB but about how communities and citizens are able to communicate perspectives and valuable opinions into the official plan and CDPs.

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Those are just two examples where people very strongly talked about how we can improve the system by making sure that community voices are present at the discussion when a proposal is put forward by a developer and then that proposal works through the system to the city level.

I'm of the view, Speaker, that if we can have a better conversation, if we have better feedback at the initial stage, you will eliminate the majority of OMB appeals right from the get-go. The reason OMB appeals take place is because something got broken at the front end, where people were not talking, where projects were being rammed through, either through the developer or at the city council. Somebody is unhappy, and that unhappiness then reflects in the appeal process.

That is why I am so excited about Bill 73: because this is exactly what this bill achieves to do. It makes the citizen engagement piece an integral part, a mandated part, through legislation, from the moment a proposal is put forward and then all the way to the OMB process, if you get that far.

The fact that we are now requiring city councils or city planners to have citizen engagement as part of the official

plan, I think, speaks to the community-inspired development. This bill requires that developers must consult with the communities when they put forward a proposal and then shall—the language is mandatory—respond to that and reflect changes accordingly.

The fact that we now require that the city council or city planning committee also consider community feedback and make sure that the developer actually responds to that is an important step—then reporting back on that, then taking that thread further if the matter does go to the OMB, making sure that the OMB also gives regard to that process. I think that's a very sensible move and something that has been appreciated in my community.

In fact, Speaker, I will say to you that since we have tabled this legislation, many communities and developers are now working together and already starting to do that, because they realize—hopefully this bill will be passed with the permission of all the members—that this is the right thing to do. We're starting to see development take place in the community where—in the past, people did not speak to each other; the community did not speak with the developers or vice versa—they are actually walking hand in hand because they are talking to each other and they are influencing each other.

I'll give you the example of Old Ottawa East, also a neighbourhood in my community, where a whole new development is starting to take place on Oblate lands. It was church land. It was a beautiful green place with heritage buildings. The church had to sell the building, but the city made sure that they engaged in a community design plan that was very consultative in nature. The developers who bought the land made sure that they worked with the local community association.

I'll never forget that photo that got published in the Ottawa Citizen—half a page—where the developers and the members of the community association were, all four, walking through this piece of land arm in arm. That's what the photo was. We never used to see that, but the reason we were able to see that is because they all worked together. They were able to influence the development as a community. The developers were able to respond to the needs of the community. What we will have is a more community-inspired development, a wholesome community that will be developed and intensified because this was green space that was being developed by the Rideau River—it's a beautiful piece of land—in a manner that reflects the views of the community.

This leads me to the second point, which is very important in Bill 73 and something that my community raised as part of a proposal around sustainable community development: We need more certainty also from our city councils. When communities work extremely hard through their community design plan process, that needs to get enshrined in the official plan; that has to become an effective, mandatory part of our CDPs.

Where you get challenges—and I can tell you some really not-so-pleasant experiences in my community, where, for two or three years, the community worked

together in the Westboro and in the Wellington West neighbourhoods in my community, where we've seen a lot of intensification. They worked together in developing those CDPs, and those CDPs then were ignored as developers came forward and put proposals forward. I won't blame the developers for that. I would say that the city should have done a better job in saying, "No, no, no. The CDP says nine storeys, not 35 storeys, and we will hold your account to nine storeys only."

The solution to that is that, once CDPs are developed with broad consultation, we should make them part of the official plan. This bill does that through the community design permit system. It really asks that we bring that certainty and predictability. When communities work together in developing a community design plan for a neighbourhood, through this permit system that is allowed for in Bill 73, it becomes part of the official plan as a secondary plan, and the municipality then updates their zoning bylaw to reflect that change that has been established through the community design planning permit. That one change will go such a long way, because it's like posting a speed limit. When you say, "You shall drive at 50 kilometres an hour," then that's the speed limit and you can't go through the speed limit. If you do, there are consequences. That provides predictability for the communities and for the developers, because then they can plan accordingly. I'll guarantee you, Speaker, that you will see a big reduction in the number of OMB appeals as a result of that.

Let me just very quickly, Speaker, given my time, also talk to you about another important aspect of this bill, and that is around the predictability of 10-year official plans. I think that's an important step, to make sure that there's incentive for municipalities to create official plans. We see a lot of municipalities which don't renew their official plans accordingly, as prescribed in the Planning Act, and I think that a longer time frame gives them that perspective. Having a two-year freeze in that timeline helps as well. The city of Ottawa has been very good in that regard, in terms of renewing their official plans. But that is an important aspect.

The last point is around development charges, and the predictability, transparency and accountability that is being proposed. I will speak in relation to public transit, which is very important to my community in Ottawa Centre.

These changes are welcome changes. This is something that my mayor, Jim Watson, who is a former member of this Legislature, has been asking for. I believe that Waterloo has also sought the same type of changes. Those communities where we've not had systems like the light rail transit system we're building in Ottawa, which runs through my community in Ottawa Centre—the current model of calculating development charges on historical 10-year data does not work. That historical 10-year data does not exist, because we've not had that mode of transportation. That's not the case, for example, in the city of Toronto, which has had a multi-modal transit system for some while. So the change that is being

proposed that will allow for a more prospective way of calculating development charges is a welcome change, because it will allow for our municipalities to be able to take those development charges and be able to invest in further public transit as well.

There may be some disagreement, I understand, between the development community and what municipalities are asking for. I know the minister and his staff are doing a very good job to bring everybody together and get some peace in the valley, as they say. But I think, at the end of the day, it's a step in the right direction to ensure that we encourage communities like mine in Ottawa and Waterloo to actually take development of public transit and be able to attract more of what we call "transit-induced development." We want more and more people living closer to public transit so that they are not relying on driving their cars too often, and it will result in better planning and better neighbourhoods.

Speaker, my time is up. I just wanted to say that I'm very excited that this bill is going forward. I encourage all members to vote in support of this bill, something it is supported very wholeheartedly in my community. We also look forward to working with the minister on his consultation on OMB reform, because that is important work as well. But this is a very good step in the right direction.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, and reference a few things commented upon by the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I certainly respect his opinion in many cases. He's a good member of the House, but he's brought up a couple of points that I just can't look past.

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He used the words "a better conversation" in there. I find that very interesting in the fact that they oftentimes move forward without even waiting to consult or have a conversation with the people whom they are imposing their rules on.

He talked a lot about downtown works. I just want to remind the minister that we need to be inclusive in our approach to legislation that respects both urban and rural needs. Not all of us have cities in our ridings, so there's a lot of difference in rural Ontario that needs to be respected.

There was talk about consultation in there. I believe that in the minister's mandate letter there was supposed to be a review of the Ontario Municipal Board, yet they are going to move forward. Part of that review, I believe, was supposed to be the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the actual OMB, but now they've brought legislation ahead of the supposed conversation or consultation.

At the risk of sounding a bit cynical, I recall in my three and a half years here a lot of discussion about the Green Energy Act, where they actually took away that ability for a local municipality to have a say in the

sustainable growth of their community. So I find it a bit challenging to believe that they're going to make this legislation work better than the Green Energy Act when they've already superseded their own conversation and consultation in regard to something that's going to have a significant impact on all of our municipalities, Mr. Speaker.

At the end of the day, we need to ensure that our communities have sustainable growth. We've asked them, for at least the last two years—one of the most significant pieces of legislation is our hydro pricing. That's driving people out of our communities, out of our province and out of our country, to be absolutely frank. At the end of the day, I would hope that they'll also address that portion of their mandate to ensure that we actually have rates that people can afford. We definitely need balance; we need a balance for our Development Charges Act.

There are a lot of pieces in here. We need the conversation and consultation to ensure that it's actually legislation serving all Ontarians.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It's my privilege to be back in the House and be able to stand and speak on an important topic. I'm glad to have the opportunity to make some comments in response to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I appreciated some of what he was saying about the development of neighbourhoods, and—I think as he put it—the fabric and character of the area being so important to the residents and neighbours. That's true also in Oshawa: that members of the community really do value the fabric and the character of the area.

An interesting piece, though, was when the minister spoke about the intensification being something that we can all live with and enjoy. While I'm not arguing that point, I would say that we have many neighbours in our downtown Oshawa area and community. That intensification likely looks quite different than it does in Ottawa Centre, but that intensification is happening. Those individuals don't have anywhere to live and therefore are not in a position to enjoy that situation. As we've talked about this being a missed opportunity with this piece of legislation to really bring affordable housing into the conversation and to the table—we have to do that.

The citizen engagement piece: I spent a lot of this summer doing just that, at some of our charitable barbecues, and people were coming into our offices in dire need. We have individuals who still haven't paid for a winter's hydro bill and are wondering how they're going to do that and what's coming this winter with costs going up. With affordable housing being something that is in such short supply, our waiting lists are growing quickly, but not the opportunities for safe and affordable housing for many of our residents.

As I mentioned, intensification—oops; I'm out of time. I look forward to speaking to this another time.

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

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I'm very pleased to be able to rise today and speak to my honourable colleague's comments as it relates to Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. I know we're looking at doing a refresh of this—what's the word I'm looking for?

Interjection.

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: The bill is a refresh. Thank you. It has been a long time, Mr. Speaker. We haven't had to stand here since June.

Anyway, it's a great opportunity for us to be able to talk about that. Reflecting on the comments that my honourable colleague was making earlier, he talked about community-based development and community-inspired development. Those are two things that I know have happened in my community of Sudbury often.

If you go back decades to the unfortunate circumstance of people deciding the caption of us being the "NASA of the north," where we had astronauts coming out and practising their drive on the moon, we've done a great job of really developing our community. It took the will of the community to come together to actually re-change, to re-modify our community. Now we've won UN awards, we've won re-greening awards, national awards and international awards.

That's what this bill, I think, is talking about too. It's bringing together the opportunity for all of the community—citizens, developers and the city—to work together. I know my honourable colleague mentioned that when you're talking about community-inspired and community-based development, you actually start to eliminate a lot of those OMB appeals.

I think what we see here, as I said earlier, is a refresh and an opportunity for us to help both rural and urban municipalities and actually bring our communities together to continue to grow our communities with, as this bill says, smart growth for our communities.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I would like to rise and comment on the member from Ottawa Centre's speech concerning this bill. I think, as we have listened to all the comments in this House, it gets down to being a matter of trust.

We have seen in rural Ontario—and I'll speak from that perspective, having been on a farm most of my life and seen what the legislation has done to rural Ontario, especially the Green Energy Act. It has created distrust of the government over the placement of wind farms in our area. Neighbours are fighting neighbours. It has disrupted, over the last number of years, our communities in rural Ontario, and I would hope the government would take that to heart, that they have to listen to who they're dealing with. They are not doing that.

We heard that at AMO again this year. As Mr. McNamara said, you'd better start listening one of these times, because you're not doing it now. This government needs to understand that they are not the only government in this province. There are three tiers of government and we all have to work together.

When I was a councillor with North Perth, it was the same thing. We would go to AMO and other conferences, we would have meetings with the ministers, and it just seemed like we got a pat on the head and they said, "There, there, we know better."

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: That was with the Harris government.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: No, it wasn't with the Harris government when I was a councillor. It was not with the Harris government when I was a councillor, sir. Get your facts straight.

This seems to be an ongoing thing with this government, that they say, "Oh, thanks for coming in and thanks for talking with us." I hope they understand that this has to change. I hope they will take that to heart, because the municipalities are really getting frustrated with these things, and hopefully this legislation is not going to make municipalities suffer too much.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments for this round.

I return to the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I would first like to thank the members from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, Oshawa, Sudbury and Perth-Wellington for their comments on the comments that I made earlier.

I'll say this again from the outset: I'm speaking here today on this bill from the perspective of being a member of provincial Parliament for Ottawa Centre, which is a downtown community. The number one responsibility that I have, and I'm sure everybody will agree—we serve our community first. I'm very much bringing forward the perspective that I am aware of, the perspective that I work with as the representative from my downtown community, and I'm accountable to them.

I wanted to present to you, over the last 20 minutes, a bit of a picture of the kind of circumstances and situations that we have dealt with and how my community has worked in a constructive, proactive manner to develop solutions that will help improve the manner in which decisions are made around land use planning at the municipal level and then at the provincial level. We, working collectively, have been working along with the government in suggesting and promoting these ideas. I stand here quite heartened to see that a lot of the things that my community has been talking about, a lot of the things that my community has stated will help ensure that we have development that is more community-inspired, are reflected in Bill 73.

The work that we've done through my local consultations and the consultations that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing did—in fact, they were held in my riding in November 2013, as I recall, at Carleton University, and many, many people from my community attended that. Then, those aspects being in the bill. In fact, I have a bit of a kitchen table of community activists that I work with on this issue, and they have been working along, and they see this as a step in the right direction. I ask for all members' support in that regard.

1500

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: Good afternoon, everybody. I think it is hitting home that our proceedings have commenced. I actually thought it was quite appropriate to commence this session of the Legislature with the unanimous consent motion recognizing the fact that Her Majesty is part of this legislation that we are debating, acknowledging in this first session and all sessions of this Legislature that debate is conducted under the auspices of the Queen. It's entrenched in our constitution: Her Majesty is at once a human being but also an incarnation of this process. The institution within Ontario—within Canada—provides with us the authority to do what we are doing this afternoon, whether we are a federal member, a provincial member and, I would assume, by extension through the provincial government, municipal members.

Quite honestly, I've never been a municipal councillor. I don't know whether municipally elected representatives swear allegiance to the Queen. That's a question I might put out for somebody who may have an answer. But we're not allowed to set foot in this chamber without swearing an oath of allegiance to the Queen. In this bill itself, Bill 73, the first two words of this legislation, if you open it up, are "Her Majesty," and it continues from there.

So, through this legislation, under the auspices of a politically neutral monarch who personifies the Canadian state, ensuring that those of us who are elected, those of us conducting business this afternoon—and I would assume municipal councillors as well—remember that the power is only loaned us to by the crown on behalf of voters.

I know there has been considerable discussion this afternoon about whether the public engagement, the citizen participation, with respect to this legislation was adequate. It's not complete. Quite honestly, I don't know. I am assuming there will be hearings when we finish second reading. But our job, under the authority of the Queen, is to come up with the best law possible. Indirectly, it does go to Her Majesty to be sanctioned in her name.

If you open up the legislation itself, I think it's page 2 or 3, where the meat of it commences with the endless pages of amendments, it commences with, "Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, enacts as follows: Development Charges Act, 1997." Then we see close to five pages of amendments to the Development Charges Act alone. As people here would know, the rest of Bill 73 is a list of amendments to the Planning Act.

But first I wanted to talk a bit about the Development Charges Act. As I mentioned, I was never a municipal councillor. It's something that is out there. For many people, I would think, their eyes would glaze over discussing development charges. Many other people may not understand it. I didn't understand a lot of details until

I started looking at this legislation. At minimum, I think that people—certainly municipal people—would think we have to have a balance. Are the charges high enough to fund the infrastructure that's required when you start building more condos or more homes or shopping plazas, facilities like that, commercial facilities? Are they perhaps too high? Are they going to inhibit economic activity? Are they going to put undue pressure on young families who wish to purchase a condo or purchase a house, or pay rent in an apartment in a building that is subject to development charges?

So we've got proposed legislation. It provides the authority, it provides the rules for a municipality, if this passes, to levy development charges, done through a bylaw. It's a revenue tool. I haven't heard the term "revenue tool" come up this afternoon, but it is yet again another revenue tool. We understand in our readings that much of the focus is to enhance public transit, something I really do not have in my riding. There is really no such thing as public transit in Haldimand-Norfolk, certainly not in Haldimand county. Our public transit relies on making sure the gravel roads are there and we have culverts and bridges. Now, Norfolk county, more recently, got a government grant, so they have a little tiny bus with tinted windows. I'm not sure how many people ride this little bus from the various far-flung communities in Norfolk county. So public transit is a non-issue in my riding, essentially.

There was a petition a number of years ago coming out of the town of Dunnville down in Haldimand county to encourage the municipality to set up some kind of a bus service—about 1,000 names on that petition—at minimum, perhaps to help people to get up to the city of Hamilton for shopping. But any thought of a bus or any form of public transit just does not exist at all in the east end of my riding.

So we have a revenue tool, one more way to raise money, obviously, designed to help municipalities pay for a portion of growth-related capital—not operating budget, capital—costs incurred to provide services to new residents, new businesses. I have heard the expression, and this came up at the AMO conference this summer, "Growth to pay for growth." I think that's a good approach. It's an oversimplification. So development charges—I hear them referred to as "DC" in some of the debate this afternoon—imposed at the municipal level, imposed on developers, if and when they get that building permit, again, to pay for the increased capital costs. Of course, these costs are passed on, as all costs are, to the homebuyer, for example. These charges are not to pay for operating costs or future repair or future rehabilitation of the newly developed infrastructure required for the new buildings.

So we have a set of reforms before us to the system, again, to try and achieve that balance—I think this was described in the EBR posting as a balance between municipal and development interests. I would suggest we also have to consider the balance required with respect to the tenants of apartment buildings, the owners of new

condos, or the owners of new houses. So the number one focus: enhanced funding for municipal transit—again, something that doesn't really exist in my riding; secondly, enhanced transparency and accountability with respect to the payment of these development charges or any additional fees.

I will say, Speaker, not having transit in my riding—I do admit I have worked in the city of Toronto, downtown, for many, many years, beyond being an MPP. I spent eight years working in this city. This would be back in 1974. I've been commuting on the Gardiner Expressway, off and on, for the last 40 years, I suppose. In more recent years, the last 10, 12 or 15 years, I've seen the—obviously, we've all seen the tremendous growth of the high-rises downtown, the condo towers on either side of the Gardiner Expressway.

1510

Where was the money? I assume these condo developers paid development charges. To what extent has that money gone into the Gardiner Expressway, which is the artery that goes right through that corridor of condos? I think of the Trump tower. I guess I ask myself—Mr. Trump certainly pats himself on the back for negotiating really good deals—who was on the other side of that deal, and what did we get out of that deal? Quite honestly, I don't know what the development charges would have been for that particular tower or the other dozens and dozens of towers that have gone up. But what I can say is—and I haven't talked to any downtown Toronto municipal politicians who maybe have knowledge about these deals—what did they get in return? What I see is a Gardiner Expressway that really—other than dealing with the rust on the rebar under the concrete over the years, I haven't seen any improvements to the Gardiner.

As a weekly commuter, we're all fully aware of the problems. Out of necessity I commute in and out at either one or two o'clock, either one or two in the afternoon or one or two in the morning. I rode in at one o'clock this morning to attend the opening session, and I hit a combination of a bump and a pothole that woke me up at the bottom of Yonge Street, at Front Street.

Yonge Street doesn't look like it's had any work done to it in the 40 years that I've been coming up and down Yonge Street. When I first worked in Toronto, at that time, you could walk to the bottom of Yonge Street, stick your thumb out and hitchhike home. You can't do that now. So my question: With the development in downtown Toronto, what happened to Yonge Street, what happened to the Gardiner, if anything?

I look at those condos and I assume somebody has added up the input to the economic base of the city of Toronto. I would get the impression, looking at these buildings, the overseas money that has gone into these buildings, that you could bury the Gardiner and you could build two brand new Gardiners, one on top of the other. You could widen the Gardiner, as we do with highways, although, again, going back to the deal, somebody

has very skillfully ensured that the Gardiner Expressway will never be wider than it is now.

We've been building railway tracks in this country for 150 years. We build roads. You make allowances. You allow 60 feet, 120 feet, whatever, on either side, and you do not allow brand new residential buildings next to a railway track. We see these residential buildings going up in downtown Toronto cheek by jowl to the Gardiner Expressway. I guess that was part of the deal.

Again, I don't consider myself a resident of Toronto, but I guess I've worked in Toronto for something like 28 years, downtown. I may have worked in downtown Toronto longer than some of the Toronto residents who are representing their areas down here.

So there are some of my comments on development charges. We do know—and I think this goes back to the EBR explanation—the intent here is to identify those services which are ineligible for the collection of development charges. This would be done through regulation. It's not spelled out in the amendments that we have before us today, Speaker. It requires municipalities to examine an application of varying development charges within different areas of a municipality. That makes a tremendous amount of sense to me. The town of Caledonia was one of the most rapidly growing towns in Canada—up until nine and half years ago, when things hit the fan. I would assume, that with a high-growth area like that, you would need a much different approach to other parts of Haldimand county. I should say the whole county of Haldimand pretty well has the same population it had 100 years ago. We're not dependent on immigration to make money, we're not dependent on artificial population growth to make money off newcomers. We are a sustainable economy in Haldimand county based on agriculture, based on steel, based on refining; up until recently, a coal-based economy as well.

The fifth point to enhance the reporting requirements—and I will mention, as far as community involvement, that I polled my office last week, my constituency office. Nobody has phoned me about this legislation, nobody has sent me an email. I've had a few conversations in the past with developers indicating that the charges in many municipalities make up a very significant portion of the price of a new house. However, yesterday I had an opportunity to have a chat with our local Norfolk county mayor, Charlie Luke, just newly elected a year ago, although he's been on council for something like I think over 30 years. He indicated to me that the county had a review a couple of years ago of development charges, and Mayor Luke, very astute, very knowledgeable of issues municipal, right off the top he indicated that, yes, over the years it's always been that question of striving for a balance between how much money you hit the homebuilders with in consideration of how much is going to be passed to the prospective homeowners—in many cases new families—so that balance between encouraging economic activity and at the same time trying to get at least enough money from this growth that will help to pay for the growth, ensuring

that the funds are there. Again, transit is not an issue down our way.

We cannot have a situation where, in certain municipalities, perhaps if there's any kind of mandated regulation, this would slow economic growth; but I know that's a factor in greenbelt areas. I know our previous speaker, representing part of the city of Ottawa—as I understand, there's a scale. They have a higher development charge for construction in a greenbelt. I guess you're allowed to build in a greenbelt but you pay more in development charges as disincentive for construction in a greenbelt area in the Ottawa area.

Patrick Brown made a speech at AMO this August fully recognizing that municipalities play a key role as drivers of our economy, fully recognizing the importance of giving municipalities—our councillors, mayors and reeves—the tools they need to better enable all of us within the province of Ontario to try to bring back our economy. These elected people are very close to the ground, good communicators, and can play a key role in bringing our economy back. Any approach—I mean, this goes without saying—has to be sensible, has to be pragmatic, at minimum, just to ensure that we can maintain that economic balance and, if anything, try to bring back a strong economy in the province of Ontario; and to better enable municipalities, as well as the provincial and federal levels, to continue to attract investment from those sources of money. Again, I think of the condos in downtown Toronto.

1520

Red tape is my concern with this legislation—I mean, there's page after page of amendments. We know there is going to be a plethora of regulation coming with this, and if we vote for this legislation, the last thing we want to see is a plethora of bureaucratic red tape, rules and regulations, and forms to fill out. These municipalities do not have the resources to handle that kind of paper burden.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: I'm starting to get back into the rhythm of things. This morning, I wasn't too happy to be back, but right now it's kind of good to be back. It's always a pleasure to have an opportunity to comment on a bill—this is Bill 73—and follow the comments of the member for Haldimand-Norfolk.

Having listened closely to his comments, his area, although we're far removed geographically, is fairly similar to mine. There's not a lot of urban development in either of our areas; we're a small-town kind of folk and sometimes it's a bit harder to relate to this bill specifically. But there are parts of it that have an impact in his riding—he's mentioned it—and also have an impact in my riding, because we do have municipalities, they do have land use planning and they do have some challenges with the OMB.

I think that people throughout rural Ontario have had challenges truly believing—I don't mean this in a partisan sort of way—that this current government actually

listens to consultation from smaller areas. The Green Energy Act: We're in favour of green energy, but the way the Green Energy Act was implemented across rural Ontario, and now through northern Ontario, has created huge divisions. That's the opposite of what I think this bill is trying to do. This bill is trying to minimize divisions.

We are in support of this bill, but we are hoping this government is actually truly willing to try to minimize divisions instead of being fully willing to create huge controversies among rural Ontario.

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

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I'm delighted to rise to speak to the House today on the issue of Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

For my region, Waterloo region, this bill matters, and I'll tell you why. Our regional chair, Ken Seiling, with whom I've had the opportunity, on a number of occasions, to sit down and chat at length about why this matters to him, has two things on his radar that he wants to see us advance: development charges and changes to the OMB process. He and our region are looking for a more workable process.

With respect to development charges in my region, allowing municipalities to raise revenue to pay for infrastructure is really critical at this time. You might have heard that we are building a light rail transit system, an LRT, in my region. The province has very generously committed \$300 million to that project. The regional portion will be better addressed by allowing municipalities to raise their own capital and direct that funding into projects like our LRT in Waterloo region.

My region is also very supportive of reforming the OMB process. There are times when appeals in my region have really hindered the ability of our municipality to get the job done and to get on with business. Growth has been a huge issue in Waterloo region, and funding transit and infrastructure is a very top priority for us.

These measures are going to streamline the process. It's going to allow my municipality and other municipalities across Ontario the opportunity to breathe. I'm proud to say that my regional chair, Ken Seiling, has been part of the consultation process; we appreciate his know-how. This act is something that municipalities need. They're asking for it; we're delivering it to them for better planning.

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

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm happy to speak for a couple of minutes to Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, and to speak after my colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk, who really put a lot of issues on the table regarding this bill. I'd also like to mention that our critic from Oxford county has done a good job in addressing some of the concerns that we have with Bill 73, which affects the Development Charges Act, 1997, and the Planning Act.

One of the things that we as a caucus and I know MPPs on all sides of the House heard strongly at AMO from municipalities was that the provincial government needs to listen to them and be a real partner. I can speak personally about my municipalities in Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. It's something that I continue to hear wherever I go in the riding, when I come across municipal leaders, regardless of municipality. I know that my colleagues and even a member from the third party have brought up the Green Energy Act today. It's continuing to divide municipalities, families and communities in rural Ontario. I know that the government heard a lot at AMO regarding the Green Energy Act. It's something that this government is going to have to address if they really want to have one Ontario, as the Premier likes to talk about.

While there are some positive changes in this bill, as I said, we've heard from a number of municipalities and municipal organizations that have concerns. For instance, municipalities have told us that the mandatory planning advisory committee for upper-tier municipalities won't work, and this is something that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is going to address.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise and offer some thoughts on the remarks that were presented to us by the member for Haldimand-Norfolk on Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

The member highlighted a couple of areas that I think are really significant. One—he concluded, actually, on this point—was about ensuring that there are not additional resource pressures on municipalities in terms of the reporting practices that might be put in place by this bill.

This was something that we heard from AMO. It has been clear that too many times the province has moved forward with new initiatives for school boards, or for municipalities, in this case, that impose significant reporting requirements. It is very important that there not be additional workloads or administrative burdens placed on municipal governments that are not funded as a result of adhering to this new legislation.

I also wanted to comment on development charges. One of the things that's very important for my municipality, the city of London, is ensuring that municipal councils retain flexibility in determining their own policies about development charge bylaws. That may be differential charges in certain settings or geographic areas of the community, but it also means that there should be more consideration for including more services as being eligible for development charges.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for questions and comments, so I return to the member for Haldimand-Norfolk for his reply.

Mr. Toby Barrett: The member for Timiskaming-Cochrane: I spent some time up there this winter. I understand that the member spent some time in my riding

this summer. I think maybe I should go up there this summer. I haven't quite figured that out yet.

You've got some good agricultural land up there. You don't have much in the way of public transit. Public transit seems to be the taxi you get from the airport to wherever you're going.

In many of the areas, in New Liskeard and some of the towns, I get the impression that any development or redevelopment of existing buildings—you've got the footings; you've got the concrete and everything there—would be welcome with reasonable development charges.

1530

Kitchener Centre: Now there's, in contrast to New Liskeard, a high-growth area in Waterloo region—too much growth, I might say as a farmer. I just wonder if it's a little bit too fast. If you build a light rail transit system to Toronto, that's just going to encourage growth in your area.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: No, it's only in our region. It's not to Toronto.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Okay. Well, it may get to Toronto eventually. But I wonder if you're just going to encourage it.

Our member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, a former councillor: I listen to what he says. We have to listen to the municipal councillors. He used the example of the Green Energy Act. I would hope that, council by council across the great province of Ontario, they're having debates similar to this. I'm not sure. Maybe councillors really don't get too involved in the negotiations around charges.

The member for London West's presentation this afternoon: I found the 20 minutes really quite valuable. I share her concerns with respect to the administrative burden. We were hearing this at AMO this summer as well.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: What a pleasure it is to be back here in the House, is it not?

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, and also to be speaking to Bill 73. This piece of legislation has actually taken a long time to come here. It's been a long process and it had a lot of consultation—I think, actually, almost 18 months of consultation on this particular piece of legislation.

Obviously, Bill 73 is intended to give communities a greater say in how their communities grow. If many of you were at AMO this year, you would have heard councillors, wardens and reeves from across the province express an interest in actually having some support, but not too much interference, in how those communities grow.

Interestingly, the issue of development charges was one of the first issues that our regional council brought to me as a new MPP. I think that there's a lot of discussion right now in the province of Ontario on how those development charges are collected, how they are spent and what is a level of accountability and transparency with regard to those funds. Certainly developers have had

a very strong voice in this province and have had a lot of influence on the discussion of how communities are planned for and how those communities grow.

Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, amends the Development Charges Act to remove the arbitrary 10% discount that must be applied to transit-related growth costs when calculating development charges. It also allows the LG in Council, or the cabinet, to prescribe services whose costs shall be estimated based on future plans, not past policy, which of course is important for municipalities expanding services like transit, for which it currently must base the development charges on service standards that existed in the past.

Of course, this has been a major obstacle. For almost a decade I sat on the local school board, and it is really difficult to plan and budget for future growth. The hands of municipalities are tied in this regard. Also, I can honestly say that there needed to be greater communication between the school boards and the cities on planning for those community hubs that this government has talked about for years.

Of course, it is very difficult to create a community hub in a school that is set to close. It's unfortunate that the Ministry of Education amended the funding formula around students and how funding flows to school boards, because it makes it difficult for schools to actually stay open in communities. All of us have these issues in our ridings, because the value of that community school is actually not evaluated or supported at the provincial level. I do think that there is an opportunity to expand that conversation and ensure that municipalities have options. That's really what they were asking for.

Bill 73 also mentions that there are no more global appeals of official plans. So this is really interesting, because as the member from London West mentioned, Waterloo region is one of those test cases for how poorly the Ontario Municipal Board has operated in the province of Ontario.

Our regional council went about an extensive consultation process. We have a very engaged community in Waterloo region. They care about how their community grows, they hold their politicians to account like no other, and they were included and engaged in this process of where to intensify the growth as it related to the Places To Grow legislation. They bought in wholeheartedly. Part of that anchor was the LRT, and that LRT is going in right now. It was all coming in very well until the developers decided to take the regional level of government and their plan to the Ontario Municipal Board. At that time, the region of Waterloo had only planned for 83 hectares of growth. They had budgeted, because there is obviously a cost. When municipalities do not take in the infrastructure maintenance and upgrading cost—there's a cost to irresponsible planning. It's a reality. The developers won. They took their case to the OMB. Not only did they overrule the regional level of government, but they added almost 1,000 hectares to that growth plan. Now, imagine how the electorate felt at that point in time. This is one of the issues that Bill 73 does not address.

So, from our perspective, it's a missed opportunity, Mr. Speaker. Municipalities from the north to the south, the rural and urban, have been asking for some reform around the Ontario Municipal Board, because they do not like getting overruled. Those OMB members are unelected. Nobody holds them to account. They are appointed by the government of day. Fundamentally, the way the public sees this issue is as unfair. You actually can't blame them for feeling that way, Mr. Speaker.

The other weakness that we see for Bill 73—aside from, really, a fundamental missed opportunity in addressing structural reform in the Ontario Municipal Board—is the missed opportunity around affordable housing. You know, in this day and age—I mean, all of us have been paying close attention to the federal election. All of us know that the parties are focused on housing as an economic driver; as a much-needed infrastructure investment; as a poverty reduction standard, obviously; as supportive housing for those in our society who are on the margins and who do not have the financial supports to live independently. Housing pulls it all together. It is unfortunate that inclusionary zoning is not part of this legislation.

We actually heard a lot about it at AMO, at our independent meetings, and I know that the government heard it. I did actually ask the mayor of Mississauga at the time, "Where are you on inclusionary zoning?" The member from Parkdale–High Park has, I think, brought this piece of legislation in maybe five times now. Is it five times? Maybe the sixth time will be the charm. But the mayor of Mississauga said to me, "You know, we don't have any trouble with that. Just don't tie our hands on it, because that's a problem." So they want that tool; they want the inclusionary zoning tool to be in their toolbox. This is not news. The government has heard this for a number of years. I don't fully understand the resistance to putting this tool on the table for municipalities, because they are looking for some flexibility in this regard.

Just a recent—I mean, obviously, the city of Toronto is not part of AMO, but on May 8, Councillor Layton and Councillor Ana Bailão moved the recommendation to Toronto city council that they "direct the city manager, the chief planner and executive director, city planning and the director of the affordable housing office to report to planning and growth management committee on a strategy to implement inclusionary zoning in the city of Toronto." The city of Toronto is desperate for a tool so that they can meet a growing need for affordable housing—they are.

The second point of the recommendation of this motion was that "City council request the province, as part of Bill 73 Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, to make appropriate reforms to the Planning Act to include permissions for municipalities to enact inclusionary zoning for affordable housing of all types."

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The city of Toronto wants the province of Ontario to come to the table. We support that. We support the inclusion of inclusionary zoning in Bill 73, the Smart

Growth for Our Communities Act. We are going to try to, obviously, make this piece of legislation stronger. What I don't understand is why inclusionary zoning was not included in the first place. This is not a new issue for the province, for the Liberal government of Ontario.

This motion goes on to say that the "Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is currently undertaking three parallel public consultations impacting housing in municipalities"—the minister's here today—"the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, Bill 73 Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015 proposing changes to the Planning Act, and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe." Personally, I think that you should probably be looking at the Toronto housing corporation as well, and all that that entails.

The motion, actually, is really very strong, Mr. Speaker. It goes on to say, "Inclusionary zoning would empower the city to make responsible land use decisions that would have lasting benefits to the city and province. Inclusionary zoning allows us to build complete communities, it would help us to build a more affordable city and to overcome inequalities between communities."

This is something that needs to happen in the province of Ontario. We can make a strong economic argument. We can make an environmental argument. There are justice issues and health care issues at play here. That is how powerful housing legislation is when you get it right. Bill 73 needs to be stronger on this issue.

It goes on to say, "Despite the city of Toronto's repeated requests for inclusionary zoning over the last decade, the province does not permit Ontario cities the authority to enact inclusionary zoning. Meanwhile, our city is desperately in need of more affordable housing.

"Inclusionary zoning would empower the city to require developers to include a percentage of affordable housing units in residential developments with over 20 units and in return they could receive fast-tracked approvals and other incentives. This would help us to create a steady and growing supply of affordable rent and affordable home ownership units across the city, building and fostering mixed-income neighbourhoods and providing our residents with more equal access to resources and opportunities."

This is how you build strong cities. If you build strong cities, if you empower cities to meet the needs of their constituents, you have a stronger democracy. When you have stronger cities, you have a stronger province. When you have a stronger province, we have a stronger country. That is how powerful getting progressive planning practices right, that is how powerful getting housing policy right can be.

I know that the members on the other side of the House have heard this. I know that the minister understands how inclusionary zoning works. I know that he has heard it for years. I know that his community, his constituency would benefit from inclusionary zoning. And yet, Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015, does not include inclusionary zoning.

I get a little tired of this. I just don't understand why you would not craft a piece of legislation at the first and make it as strong as you can. If you had this piece in it, you would take a major avenue of criticism out. Of course, when it gets to committee, we're going to try to make sure that inclusionary zoning is included.

But just to recap, this motion was brought by Councillor Layton and seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão on May 8, 2015, so this just happened in the spring. This is a current motion. This is the biggest city in the country asking the province to get behind a proven method of building affordable housing, creating greater equality in our communities, mixed-node growth, and for some reason, it's missing. I'm always interested to hear how the government is going to respond to this, but I have to tell you, while there are some good things in this bill, there's always something that has made its way through, year after year after year, which is actually pretty strong.

The United Nations, just in June, came out and criticized this country, and thus these provinces, for failing on affordable housing. You would never meet your poverty reduction standards—or targets, if you had targets—without a progressive, affordable housing strategy.

The motion goes on to say, “The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is currently undertaking a review of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and the Greenbelt Plan. These plans aim to manage the rapid population growth and employment growth in Ontario. Any growth strategy must include provisions for the need for affordable housing.”

This is why housing connects everything in the province. You have people who can no longer afford to live in the core of Toronto unless those housing stocks are so dilapidated and they're just holding on to those rental spaces. When those people leave those rental spaces, then the population of the local school drops to the point where you no longer have the funding to keep those programs and those schools viable. Therefore, that school then closes, and then the government comes out and says, “We want to create community hubs in high-needs areas.” You can't do that because you don't have the housing, you don't have the students, you don't have the families and you don't have the tipping point to create stronger community hubs which are more equal and more prosperous and safer. That is the power of housing, and that is missing from Bill 73, which is most unfortunate.

There does appear, though—with this motion, there's a bit of hope. There's a little bit of light at the end of the tunnel here, because the motion goes on to say, “There appears to be an appetite for inclusionary zoning from some members of provincial Parliament and across political party lines”—and I do believe that. You know how I know that that exists? Because one of their own members, the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, introduced Bill 39. It's interesting, because Bill 73 is far less ambitious than Bill 39—and that member is from Etobicoke–Lakeshore; he's not here right now—and we

did support that bill. We supported that bill, but we complained that it should have been part of the government's bill.

This is also a disturbing little pattern here. Individual members on that side of the House have great knowledge. This member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore was a councillor, so he understood the challenges that municipalities have in working with the province, and he brought forward this private member's bill to address the gap, if you will, in knowledge and political will and funding so that municipalities don't have their hands tied on creating affordable, accessible housing. When he brought this forward, nothing happened with that. That private member's bill is just going to sit there. The strongest parts of the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore's bill are not contained in Bill 73. The government, for some reason, ignored one of their own members and the recommendations that he had in that legislation which would make this piece of legislation stronger. For us, that doesn't make any sense.

However, that goodwill is still there. There are still people in all of these parties who recognize the value of inclusionary zoning. They like that idea because there isn't any cost to the province. So if the President of the Treasury Board is looking at ways to stimulate the economy and strengthen communities and address poverty, then the best way to do that is to ensure that municipalities have the flexibility to actually act upon the goals of those said policies around poverty reduction.

This motion ends by saying, “The city should make sure it is in a position to implement inclusionary zoning as soon as permission is granted so that there is no delay in taking action to build a more affordable city.” I would add: “when the province creates a piece of legislation that allows the city of Toronto to actually follow through on that mandate.”

AMO is a major player, obviously. We all were in beautiful Niagara Falls this summer. We all had the opportunity to sit down and listen to our local counterparts from across the province, and we have a responsibility to act on what we heard.

For me, this is my third anniversary of standing in this House—

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Mine too.

Ms. Catherine Fife:—yes, as well as the member for Vaughan's.

Every year I go back there, and it's beginning to feel a little bit like Groundhog Day at AMO, because we hear the same things over and over again.

However, this year, there was a little bit of an edge, I must say. The municipalities, I think, have reached the end of their rope with the talk and with the conversation and the consultation. There was a little bit of an edge, and you can tell that that's reflected as they respond to Bill 73.

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This is from AMO's web page and from their response to Bill 73. It says: “AMO remains concerned that growth is not adequately paying for growth.” The planning

process is not responsive enough to actually afford the kind of growth that the province is asking of municipalities.

“Provincial plans must be better coordinated, with clear time frames for review”—that goes without saying.

“Under Bill 73, changes that limit appeals, require more rationale for appeals, and require the OMB to ‘have regard’ for municipal decisions” are a step in the right direction. But the language of “having regard”—so the Ontario Municipal Board, an unelected, unaccountable group of people, must “have regard” for municipalities that are duly elected by the electorate and who are responsive and engaged with the electorate?

So Bill 73 misses a much-needed opportunity to do some true reform of the Ontario Municipal Board. I think I made my point clear on how I feel about inclusionary zoning and why it needs to be part of this legislation. I hope, as this piece of legislation moves forward, that the government is receptive to incorporating some of the ideas that we have put forward that would make a difference to the people of this province.

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

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: I listened very carefully to the comments from the member from Kitchener–Waterloo. I know that she mentioned a number of things that could be improved in this bill. Part of the process here is that the opposition speaks to the government in debates to hold us accountable in this Legislature. We do go to committee, and hopefully the minister will bring this bill to committee and have substantial discussion at committee. Because some of the points that were brought up by the member for Kitchener–Waterloo are valid, but I only have about a minute and a half to address them.

I think, first of all, this piece of legislation is very important. I spent nine years as a city of Scarborough councillor and another six years as a city of Toronto councillor, and planning was everywhere. When I first got on city council in 1988, council was deciding minor things like minor variances, so we’d hear it during the planning committee, and then we’d have another full hearing at the city council. So we were backlogged with minor variances and zoning applications, and then every five years we’d have to update our official plan. I had an opportunity to be on the city of Toronto council when we updated that plan. It was a very, very complicated discussion and I think the majority won out. There were a lot of people who were unhappy on council.

Just in the few minutes, I want to say that this bill is very important in both the development charges and in the Planning Act. It got to some point on city council where councillors who had a development in their riding, a big one, would bully the developer, saying where the money—the development charges—should go. Sometimes it had nothing to do with the building itself. It would leave a lot of people frustrated at the end of the day.

I think that when this goes to committee, it will have a chance to be debated properly. Unfortunately, my two minutes are up. I wish I had more time.

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: The member for Kitchener–Waterloo made reference to ideas picked up at the Niagara Falls AMO conference. There was a thread—you know, we’ve all got to work together and costs must be manageable and funding has to be predictable, something we hear from the farm community as well. All three levels of government have to operate and continue to operate through mutual respect to be effective and to strive to be financially sound.

I know that the president of AMO, Gary McNamara—I didn’t hear his speech, but I took a look at a transcript. It was a bit of a hard-hitting speech, talking about the money side of it. He indicated that, sure, the province wants to work with municipalities to achieve better outcomes, but the interpretation from the province to achieve better outcomes oftentimes comes at the expense of the municipality. That’s been a kind of burr under the saddle for many, many years.

In his address, McNamara brought out some figures. He indicated that provincial and federal governments receive four to five times more tax revenue than municipalities, as far as their share. Municipalities comprise about nine cents out of every household tax dollar. They make it clear that they have a revenue problem. I do not feel that the province of Ontario has a revenue problem, and for that matter, the federal government doesn’t have a revenue problem.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It’s a pleasure to be back in the House after our short summer break, and a pleasure to stand here as one of 107 voices, speaking on behalf of the citizens in Windsor–Tecumseh.

Following the comments of my colleague from Kitchener–Waterloo and my friend from Haldimand–Norfolk, when we were at AMO I certainly heard the president of AMO, Gary McNamara, the mayor of Tecumseh, lay out a warning to the Liberal government: “No more nudge-nudge, wink-wink, we’re on side with you,” and then, as soon as the election was over last year, they broke the promise to fix joint and several liability. It’s driving up costs for municipalities. You can’t have smart growth if you keep getting sued and have to pay the price for somebody else because they say you have deep pockets. You’re 1% responsible, and those that are 99% responsible don’t have any money.

There was a sacred trust that was broken, a handshake agreement that was reneged on, and the president of AMO and mayors and councillors across this great province have put the Liberal government on notice: “No more of this stuff. We’ve got to be working together if we’re going to grow Ontario in a smart way and have smart growth.” That’s the message I heard at AMO.

If any of the Liberals weren’t at AMO, I went to their web page today and all the addresses are on their web page. Go and watch the president of AMO, Gary McNamara. Go and watch his speech and tell me if you

don't think he gave you guys a warning. You're not living up to your word, you're not living up to your promises and AMO has put you on notice. They're not going to stand for that anymore.

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

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Speaker, I just want to make a couple of comments to clear up a few things. I've heard a couple of things this afternoon from both opposition parties, and just to put it in perspective, Ontario is the only province or territory in this country that meets on a monthly basis with AMO to talk about joint issues. We don't always agree on everything. I have the pleasure of attending those meetings—they're closed-session meetings with the minister. Yes, we don't agree on everything, but it's the only province in Canada that has that kind of relationship with municipalities. It isn't a dictatorial commitment that the former government did.

I just want to touch on a couple of other things to clarify the air a little bit. One is that we've heard, not necessarily from the previous speaker but from the official opposition, that we lack consultation; we need to do more consultation. Speaker, just for the record, more than 20 public workshops and stakeholder meetings were held from October 2013 to January 2014. We received more than 1,200 submissions. We also held a webinar and other submissions through mail.

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That's why we're debating this here today. But to take that kind of approach, that we're not listening and we're not consulting with AMO—that's totally off base.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: We meet with them once a month.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Once a month, Speaker: You know, it's the only province in this country that has that relationship with municipalities. The other piece—oh, I guess I'm running out of time. I'll just say that's why we're having this debate. We're listening, and I'm sure at the end of the day—I hear the NDP are going to support it, which I'm delighted to hear.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments.

I return to the member for Kitchener–Waterloo for her reply.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Well, to the last speaker, the member from Northumberland–Quinte West: You will not hear from us that you need to consult more. This took a year and a half and it's missing the major points that your own member brought to it in Bill 39. We're going to try to get your member's components and ideas embedded in the government bill, so thank you for that. That criticism came from the other party.

To the members from Scarborough Southwest, Haldimand–Norfolk and Windsor–Tecumseh: As always, thank you for raising the ire that AMO had for this government on housing. It wasn't just as it relates to planning and tying the hands of municipalities; it actually has more to do, and more so than any other year, with the

cost of maintenance of the affordable housing units that they have within their own communities.

If you think about this, this is a long-standing issue that AMO has brought to the government. Think about this: We have already invested in that housing. That housing stock has already been paid for by the people of this province. It would be short-sighted for us not to take better care of it. In order for us, meaning municipalities, to take better care of it, they need the province to partner with them.

Just as a final thing, ACORN's major complaint about this legislation is that it does not include anything for affordable housing. You can't have progressive planning for smart growth in communities and leave affordable housing out of the equation.

Just to go back to Mr. Layton's motion on inclusionary zoning: This would empower the city of Toronto to require developers to include a percentage of affordable housing units in residential developments with over 20 units. In return they could receive fast-tracked approvals and other incentives.

This is a revenue-neutral recommendation for the government. This needs to be a part of Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. We'll be fighting for it at committee to get it included in there.

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I'll be sharing my time with the member from Ottawa South.

It's always a pleasure to rise in this place on behalf of Cambridge citizens to speak today to Bill 73, the proposed Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, which proposes changes to the Planning Act and to the Development Charges Act, 1997.

In my community of Cambridge there's very good citizen engagement on planning-related issues. Citizens are engaged in seeing what's going to come out of this bill. I know that there's great hope that it will be improved upon. I myself sat on many planning-related issues and task forces before I was elected so it's certainly something that I'm very happy to weigh in on.

This bill, if passed, would ensure that the development charges and land use planning and appeal systems are more predictable, transparent, cost-effective and that they better meet the needs of the stakeholders as well as the communities. The proposed amendments to the Planning Act focus on enhancing citizen engagement, achieving more predictability, supporting municipal leadership and protecting long-term public interests.

Amendments to the Development Charges Act, 1997, will focus on providing the ability for municipalities to raise revenue for key growth-related infrastructure—for example, transit—and enhance accountability and transparency regarding the collection and spending of development charge reserve funds.

The feedback from a public consultation that was conducted from October 2013 to January 2014 informed the proposed changes to the Development Charges Act, 1997, and the Planning Act. Some of the proposed

amendments are going to address things like increasing funding for growth-related infrastructure. Removing the mandatory 10% discount required when levying a charge for transit service will certainly help municipalities that are looking to find ways of increasing revenue, to ensure that their communities can weigh in and have some more transit-related issues—certainly, something I heard a lot about at the AMO and ROMA conferences recently.

It will also enhance the transparency and accountability. It will require municipalities to reflect capital projects funded through development charges in a very detailed report. It will also link development charges to municipal asset management plans, which is very important to municipalities across Ontario. Certainly, it's important to my communities of Cambridge and North Dumfries township.

It will require development charges to be set as of the date that an initial building permit is issued for buildings, even those requiring multiple permits. One criticism I've heard from developers over the years of sitting on many planning-related issues is about the lack of streamlining when it comes to addressing putting in an initial proposal, from a heritage impact assessment or what's going to go on in the future. This will certainly help to streamline the process for developers, as well as municipalities, and get on with the project at hand in a much more time-sensitive manner.

This bill will also restrict payments outside the development charges regime for the capital costs that are associated with servicing new development, and it will require municipal treasurers to certify that no payments have been received that are in contravention of this restriction. It will also create an authority for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to investigate any municipality in relation to its compliance with this act. It will also create an authority for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to require a municipality to cover the cost of a compliance investigation, something that will certainly help to solidify the municipalities in doing things in an open and transparent manner.

Another thing that I really was pleased to see in this particular proposed bill was the enhanced citizen engagement. Speaker, I sat on many community groups, not-for-profits etc. dealing with planning-related issues, heritage matters, and found that the one issue that they really complained about in any development application process was that once they got to a public information session, they felt that it was too quick, that the messages were key messages that were brought across to the meeting and that the citizens really had no meaningful debate or commentary on these issues. I know that many interested citizens and community members that I dealt with in Cambridge and North Dumfries would often say that it seems to be a line item on a list of things the developer has to tick off. They had the public information meeting; they ticked it off; they went away. They took no notice of what was said by the citizens when it came to that planning-related issue that they wanted to weigh in on.

This proposed bill will require municipalities and approval authorities to explain how public input affected their planning decision.

It will also require the municipal official plans to include locally designed public consultation policies, which I find very effective, because not every municipality, as we know, is created alike. I come from a municipality that's part urban, part rural, and the citizens often approach their planning issues in a bit of a different way. So this helps to individualize what's going to work for that particular community.

I'm also pleased to see that there will be increased use of planning advisory committees, and it will ensure that citizen membership on these committees is robust and that they actually have a voice.

I'm also pleased to see that there's going to be increased local decision-making and accountability. Renaming the development permit system as the community planning permit system really cements and underlines the fact that this government is listening to the citizens of Ontario and putting in more opportunities for citizens to be engaged in the planning of their communities. It will prevent applicant-initiated amendments to it for five years, in order to facilitate implementation of the system. It will also provide municipalities more time to resolve disputes locally, which is where it should be done.

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Another real benefit to this proposed bill is to increase certainty and stability, and reduce costs. When any municipality embarks on making a new official plan or reviewing their current plan every five years, it's a significant cost and time effort that really underscores the fact that having it reviewed on a 10-year, rather than five-year, basis will really assist the municipality to get through the process in a timely manner. It will limit approvals or appeals from a lower-tier official plan, unless it conforms to the upper-tier official plan.

One other issue that happened in Waterloo region was that Waterloo region embarked on its ROP, its regional official plan, a few years ago. It was appealed and taken to the OMB. That held up several developers from being able to get on with their planning-related projects and cost the citizens and the developers in terms of time and the ability to get on with these.

I'm very happy to see that this particular proposed bill will remove the ability for appellants to appeal an entire new official plan. I think that that's going to certainly streamline the process and allow the developers to get on with their approved projects and get these things built. It will also prohibit appeals when municipalities are implementing specific provincially approved matters into their own official plans. That will certainly help.

The last thing that I really am very pleased to see in this bill is a stakeholder working group that would be relating to the Planning Act. A stakeholder working group would be established to provide recommendations on these issues we've been talking about, issues regarding the definition of minor variance, regulation

standards for notices, and regulation standards for public engagement.

To wrap up, Speaker, I really do support Bill 73. Our reforms to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act would make sure that growth in Ontario is managed smartly. We are proposing changes to the tools and processes that communities and citizens can use to determine how their neighbourhoods grow and to plan and pay for this growth, which is certainly important to my constituents in Cambridge and North Dumfries township. It will mean that our proposed amendments would give residents a greater, more meaningful say in how their communities grow, would make the planning and appeals process more predictable, would give municipalities more independence and would make it easier to resolve disputes at the community level.

I thank you for your time, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South has the floor.

Mr. John Fraser: I would like to say that it is great to be back here in the Legislature. I want you all to know that I missed you greatly. It actually feels like we never left. Anyway, I just wanted to put that greeting out to everybody.

It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 73 today.

Interjections.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you. You're so kind.

Bill 73: the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act: This bill is an important bill because it talks about how we're going to grow, build and develop our communities, and also how we are going to engage the population, the people who we serve, in the process of that happening. There are some very important changes here.

Just as a summary for Bill 73: It changes two acts, the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act. The bill, if passed, would ensure that development charges and land use planning and appeal systems are more predictable, transparent, cost-effective and better meet the needs of stakeholders, families and communities.

Amendments to the Planning Act focus on enhancing citizen engagement, as I mentioned before, achieving more predictability, supporting municipal leadership and protecting long-term public interests.

Amendments to the Development Charges Act focus on providing the ability for municipalities to raise revenue for key growth-related infrastructure—things like transit—and enhance accountability and transparency regarding the collection and spending of development charge reserve funds.

The feedback from the public consultation, I understand from talking to the minister—I'd like to congratulate him for bringing forward this bill. A bit short of 17,000 people were consulted, and as the member for Kitchener-Waterloo mentioned earlier, it has been a big, long process in getting here. That's reflected, I believe, in the bill.

The feedback from the public consultations from October 2013 through to January 2014 is reflected in this bill. It increases funding for growth-related infrastruc-

ture. Most importantly, in relation to the Development Charges Act, it enhances transparency and accountability. It will:

- require municipalities to reflect capital projects funded through development charges in a detailed report;

- link development charges to municipal asset management planning;

- require development charges to be set as of the date that the initial building permit is issued for the buildings that require multiple permits;

- restrict payments outside the development charges regime for the capital costs associated with servicing new developments and require municipal treasurers to certify that no payments have been received that are in contravention of this restriction; and

- create authority for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to investigate a municipality for compliance, and also the authority to compel the municipality to pay for those compliance investigations.

My colleague mentioned the stakeholder working group for development charges. The government will establish a working group of key stakeholders to support potential regulatory amendments and to review substantive issues that were not addressed during the consultation period, such as:

- a planned service level for transit services and if a planned service level should be considered for other services;

- a review of ineligible services to determine if they should be made eligible for development charges;

- the potential to remove the mandatory discount of 10% from services beyond transit; and

- the potential implementation of mandatory area rating or differentiated development charges to encourage intensification.

With regard to the Planning Act, the bill, if passed, would increase municipal transparency by requiring detailed reporting for municipal collection of density bonusing and parkland fees; change the alternative parkland dedication rate for cash-in-lieu payments to incent the acquisition of physical parkland; and require more municipalities to prepare park plans, in consultation with school boards and the public, in order to facilitate planning for parkland/green space and park facilities.

That's an important point because inside municipalities we can often miss the boat in terms of connecting with other publicly funded entities, like schools, and ensuring that we have enough green space around them so that we can have use for the school and for the community that surrounds the school.

We mentioned earlier that it will enhance citizen engagement through requiring municipalities and approval authorities to explain how public input affected their planning decision; require municipal official plans to include locally designed public consultation policies; and increase the use of planning advisory committees and ensure citizen membership on these committees.

It will also increase local decision-making accountability by renaming the development permit system as

the community planning permit system and prevent applicant-initiated amendments to it for five years in order to facilitate implementation of the system—this will require some regulation; and providing municipalities with more time to resolve disputes locally.

It will increase certainty and stability and reduce costs. It will:

- provide for new official plans to be reviewed on a 10-year cycle rather than five years;

- prohibit privately initiated amendments for two years after new official plans and zoning bylaws come into effect;

- limit approvals and/or appeals of a lower-tier official plan or official plan update unless it conforms to the upper-tier official plan, both in-effect and adopted policies;

- remove the requirement for municipalities to review employment land policies as part of their official plan reviews; and

- extend the provincial policy statement review time frame from five years to 10.

In terms of resolving disputes, it will:

- prohibit appeals when municipalities are implementing specific provincially approved matters into their official plans;

- remove the ability to appeal policies authorizing residential second units at the time of official plan updates;

- require appellants to provide clearer reasons for appeals;

- remove the ability for appellants to appeal an entire new official plan;

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- provide enhanced opportunities for alternative dispute resolution; and

- remove the ability for proponents to apply for a minor variance for two years after a site-specific rezoning without council approval.

I listened very closely to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, who spoke and made some very good points. I did recognize that she felt that the legislation was strong in some areas and she was supportive of it. I appreciate that very much.

I believe very strongly that this legislation creates some balance between those forces that exist in the development of our communities, which are the need for planning and public and citizen engagement as well as the ability to make sure there is a clear process for those people who invest in developing our communities. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to support Bill 73.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to provide some comment on Bill 73 once again. I'm going to be speaking a little bit later, but I'll just comment a little bit, particularly on a comment made by the member from Cambridge. She was suggesting that there were concerns about holdups with regard to development.

It's a bit contradictory, because one of my municipalities, Grey county, has voiced its concern with certain parts of Bill 73. One of those is that there's a two-year freeze period for applications to amend an official plan or a zoning bylaw following the adoption of a new official plan—subsection 22(2.1)—or the global replacement of a municipality's zoning bylaws—subsection 34(10.0.0.1). They're concerned, again, that there is going to be a limitation. What if someone came along within that two-year period who wanted to develop and they couldn't do that? The challenge would be that we want to make sure people have expedited time to do this.

I'm going to reflect again that one of the key things would be that if they had provided some consultation time with the actual stakeholders, perhaps this wouldn't have been so contradictory and we would have been able to have good, effective legislation right off the kick.

It brings me back to a couple of other pieces of legislation where, again, I don't believe this government has really listened to the people and the stakeholders. The Green Energy Act: They usurped and took away all powers of local municipalities to be able to have a say in something that's going to hugely impact their communities. The Hydro One fire sale: We already have, I believe, 185,000 constituents saying they don't want this to happen—no consultation there. The ORPP, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan: Again, a number of stakeholder groups out there are saying this is a bad idea. There's no consultation. They just speed these things through.

I believe, as I said earlier today, the minister's mandate letter was that there was supposed to be a review of the Development Charges Act, yet they brought this legislation through before even doing the review.

They're supposed to review the greenbelt, the Niagara escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine and the OMB, and none of those have been completed, yet we have legislation again being forced upon the users, with a lot of challenges, a lot of confusion and a lot of contradictory information.

On principle, I relatively like that we're going to do the review, but we needed to have done that before enacting the legislation.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's again a pleasure to stand this afternoon and make comments on this proposed bill and to comment on the comments that were made by the member from Ottawa South and the member from Cambridge. Both expressed the view that there has been a lot of consultation on this bill. That's a positive thing, when you go out and consult with people.

When you reflect on the bill, however—let me just zero in for a moment on one aspect of it, inclusionary zoning, and credit the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, a former city councillor in Toronto, for his private member's bill which would include inclusionary zoning, and also credit the former member from Trinity–Spadina, the former member from Beaches–East York

and the current member from Parkdale–High Park, Ms. DiNovo, as well as Mr. Marchese and Mr. Prue. All had, over the years—Ms. DiNovo, five times—inclusionary zoning private members' bills adopted and sent to committee, and there they languished. Mr. Milczyn from Etobicoke–Lakeshore has one there now on inclusionary zoning.

Everybody agrees it's a good idea, but it isn't part of this bill. So in all of your consultation, why isn't your own member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore's private member's bill included in the smart growth act? I don't get it. Everybody says it's a good idea. Now is the perfect opportunity to make it happen. You've accepted all of the NDP ideas before. Use them as your own. Take full credit for the idea, but put it in the bill. It will help with the homelessness problem, it will help with the housing crisis in Ontario, especially in Toronto where we have so many members of the Liberal government representing ridings. This will help you. Put it in the bill. Take some credit for it.

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

Hon. Bill Mauro: I want to thank our members from Ottawa South and Cambridge for their comments. I want to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for bringing forward Bill 73 and talk a little bit, actually, about the relationship that I think this speaks to between the government and the municipalities.

I've been in the House for over an hour. I heard some of the comments from previous speakers relating to this legislation, relating to the relationship between our government and the municipal sector, and consultation or lack thereof. A number of us here were elected for the first time back in 2003, going on concluding 12 years for me and a number of others who are here. I think it's fair to say that a number of us ran for provincial politics because before that we were in the municipal sector as elected municipal councillors. I think those of us who came to this place remember very well the relationship that existed—or did not exist, one could say—between the government of the day and the municipal sector.

I remember several key examples where they left me shaking my head in terms of some of the things that were contemplated. So I think it's important to recognize that this particular piece of legislation that directly impacts the municipal sector—all the mayors, reeves and county wardens out there—to let people know that before anything like this that touches on them so significantly it has almost certainly gone through significant consultation with the municipal sector.

In fact, when the minister was here previously, we were talking about the AMO round table that we set up. It was a commitment back in 2003. We set it up, and any legislation that directly impacts on the municipal sector goes through significant consultation and goes through the AMO round table that the minister meets and hosts once a month. That process has been in place for quite some time now. I can tell you that this particular legislation has seen the light of day through that process

as well. Before it gets to the floor of this chamber, you can be sure that the municipal sector has had plenty of opportunity to comment on it. Speaker, I thank you for your time.

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

Mr. Monte McNaughton: Again, it's an honour to rise and speak for a couple of minutes regarding Bill 73.

I'd like to read some comments in a news release from the Ontario Home Builders' Association regarding Bill 73: "The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced proposed changes to the Development Charges Act and the Planning Act that expand the ability of municipalities to use new revenue tools to pay for transit and enhance community engagement in the planning process." The OHBA "is concerned that new transit taxes on development will disproportionately increase housing costs for residents and the cost of setting up new businesses.

"This cannot be a piling on of higher taxes to pay for municipalities' infrastructure programs.... New neighbours ultimately pay every new tax generated by government. If municipalities believe that transit is the priority project, they have a responsibility to be accountable, transparent and fair in how they determine the entire tax bill that falls on the back of new home buyers and businesses."

There was also a concern raised by AMO. Of course, I said earlier that we heard that, all members did, at the AMO conference recently. AMO has said that elements of the bill are problematic. It goes on to say that AMO objects to the requirement for an upper-tier planning advisory committee with at least one member of the public. The mandatory PAC will create more issues than it resolves. This was a requirement of the Planning Act in the 1970s and 1980s, but PACs were deemed not to be effective on a broad basis and made discretionary.

I wanted to read these comments into Hansard to ensure that the government is aware what some of the stakeholders are saying about this legislation.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our opportunities for questions and comments. One of the government members can respond.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's been interesting for the last little while to hear from members from Ottawa South, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Windsor–Tecumseh, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, and the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. I appreciate the comments. I think you can hear through the commentary that we've heard in the House this afternoon how much interest there is about this proposed Bill 73 among many constituents in Ontario. It's interesting.

I just really wanted to reiterate that the fact is the proposed changes to the Development Charges Act, 1997, and the Planning Act actually came from public consultation that was conducted from October 2013 to January 2014. That feedback really did help to inform what we have in front of us. The reforms are also based

on recommendations from the review of land use planning and appeal and also the development charges systems.

I just also wanted to point out that we'll be setting up working groups of stakeholders to review further the complex development charges issues, taking a considered look at what the proposals are, at the land use planning elements, and propose some of the solutions.

I'm very happy that the proposed changes aim to give the municipalities more opportunities to fund growth-related infrastructure like transit and waste diversion—certainly, key topics of interest at the recent AMO and ROMA conferences that we had earlier this year and something that I hear from my mayors a fair bit. Also, it would make development charges—section 37, density bonusing and parkland dedication systems—more predictable, transparent and accountable, something that we certainly all do support. Thank you very much for your comments today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Before I call for further debate, I need to read this to the House.

Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been more than six and one half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader or his designate specifies otherwise.

I recognize the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Hon. Bill Mauro: We do wish for debate to continue, Speaker.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Mr. House leader, for allowing me to continue. I've worked very hard on this file. Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, is a very important bill. The objective of this legislation should be to ensure that families can have a new home and new businesses can be built and create jobs while controlling sprawl, protecting our environment and preserving prime agricultural land.

We're disappointed that this bill puts legislation before consultation. I've said that a couple of times already in this House. I'm going to spend a bit more of my 20 minutes now to talk about that. As part of the minister's mandate letter, he was tasked with conducting a full review of the Ontario Municipal Board, but this bill has tabled a number of changes to the board before the review has even been conducted.

The province indicated that they want to have conversation, consultation, and I believe that the Liberals like to use these words interchangeably often. What we want to see at some point is action that, sadly, is lacking. The province has indicated that Bill 73 would give residents more say in how their communities grow, would set out clear rules for land use planning, give municipalities more independence to make local decisions, and also make it easier to resolve disputes through a so-called community planning permit system.

Mr. Speaker, forgive me if I seem a little bit cynical, but I wonder if there will be any more consideration in regard to the location of wind turbines, seeing as the Liberal government took power away from municipalities for something like this, a planning issue in all of our municipalities across Ontario. They took the ability from municipalities to even have a say in that. I struggle when they come out with new legislation saying that they're going to give all of this say and all this input, again reflecting on how they've rammed the legislation through before they actually finish the review of the OMB.

Municipalities will levy development charges to recover the capital costs in providing municipal services to new housing subdivisions and developments, i.e. roads, sidewalks, sewers and waterlines. In 1997, the province put strict limits on the funds municipalities could recover through development charges. AMO says that \$550 million in growth-related costs went from developers to taxpayers with this change. Development charges represent about 15% of total municipal capital funding for most communities.

I'm disappointed that Bill 73 puts legislation before consultation. We've seen this over and over again, Mr. Speaker. Just recently, the fire sale of Hydro One—a lot of people are coming out against that. They want to be heard. They want their voice heard before this happens. The government seems to be steamrolling. I've already said earlier with the Green Energy Act—a very similar lack of consultation. The Ontario Retirement Pension Plan is another one of those that significant groups—the Canadian Federation of Independent Business came out, the chamber of commerce has come out, saying that this is bad, that small business is worried significantly about that. Where has the consultation been? Where is the ability to have their voice heard?

In this case, the greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment, the Oak Ridges moraine were all supposed to be completed, along with a review of the Ontario Municipal Board. However, they've now put legislation forward without any of those being actually completed. So again, Mr. Speaker, when they say that they want to have the conversation, that they want to have consultation, it's very challenging for me when they actually bring the legislation forward before those are completed.

We're very concerned that there's going to be more red tape in the governance of municipalities in Ontario. Again, similar to small business, large business—we're hearing of more and more red tape that is stifling their ability to be as productive as possible, challenging them to spend more and more precious hours doing paperwork, administration and bureaucracy than actually working with their customers and clients.

Development charges are and should be a balance between encouraging economic activity and ensuring that municipalities have the funds to provide services for added growth. While we support funding transit, we have concerns that this act may allow development charges to be increased so much that it actually slows down economic growth.

Our primary focus remains, in our party, balancing the budget and returning Ontario to financial prosperity. This economic growth would benefit our municipal partners as well, as long as we're allowing them to move forward in an expedited, balanced manner to ensure that there's more growth, there are more jobs, and thus, the creation of a sustainable economy.

As the government minister heard at the recent AMO conference and at the Ontario Good Roads Association earlier this year, a number of municipalities feel that the proposed changes to the Development Charges Act and the Planning Act could be more of a roadblock than a benefit to development. Again, you would have thought that they would have had wide, broad consultation and ensured that all of the thought that they are putting into this would have actually allowed for a smoother system, a more precise system, that everybody understood and could move forward with, that there wasn't confusion, there wasn't contradiction. I'm going to talk about those in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker.

You want legislation to be actually valid for all of the users. You want to consult them and make sure that we're not putting things in, even inadvertently. We can all make mistakes, but if you had done proper consultation, if you had spent the time out in the communities, talking to the municipalities and not just a couple of hand-chosen people to say you're consulting—like was done in many of our educational files—then we could have truly said that we had consultation.

In my great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, Grey county has actually voiced its concerns with certain parts of Bill 73. Namely, the consensus is that everyone is concerned that the new official plans cannot be amended for two years after being approved unless initiated by the municipality itself.

Concern number one is raised: a two-year freeze period for applications to amend an official plan or zoning bylaw following the adoption of a new official plan, subsection 22(2.1), or the replacement update of a municipality's zoning bylaw, subsection 34(10.0.0.1).

Grey county is concerned about the impact on economic development opportunities. They see this as potentially a roadblock. What if someone comes within that two-year period and wants to do a development? They can't even talk for two years. With 700,000 people unemployed in this great province, we need to be finding ways to allow people to move forward as quickly—in a balanced manner, of course—as they can to ensure that development takes place, and the resulting jobs are created as a result of that.

If a development proposal came forward within the two-year freeze period, and the development required either an official plan amendment or a zoning bylaw amendment, then the developer would not be able to apply for an amendment. That doesn't make sense, Mr. Speaker. There have to be provisions to allow that to move forward.

Then there are more unique situations, such as if a proposal came forward that was never envisioned or contemplated by a council at the time when planning

documents were being prepared and updated, and therefore was not identified as a permitted use.

One such example of a unique land use—we've seen it across the province—is medical marijuana facilities. The council may not have even thought of that being something that the federal government was moving forward on when they actually did their zoning bylaws or their planning documents. But it's a reality of our country today, of our province, certainly, today, and that has to be able to have a provision to incorporate that and to, again, expedite.

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Many communities, many developers are out there. They've got projects almost half done, waiting for final approval. What would happen in this case? A two-year roadblock. Many companies can't afford to wait two years with investment money sitting there. They want to be able to move forward. They want to be able to create that employment. They want to be productive, contributing corporations within our province. Lord knows we need it, with 700,000 people unemployed and more every day due to the rising costs of power, our hydro, the fire sale that's imminently coming forward.

We need to make sure that when you create legislation it allows the opportunity for these unexpected, unintended things to be brought forward and dealt with in a timely manner. A council may very well, as I've said, be supportive of these facilities, but never considered permitting them specifically in the municipalities' planning documents because they are a fairly recent phenomenon. What the municipalities in Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound have recommended to the minister is that he revise these sections to indicate that the receiving of such applications within the two-year freeze period be at the discretion of council, to ensure that any economic development opportunities that council supports could still proceed in a timely manner.

Those local municipalities need the ability to move forward. They are the closest to the people. They understand their community best. I've referenced in here a number of times—today, even—the Green Energy Act, where this Liberal government took away the ability for local municipalities to have any say in those types of developments. It has had a huge impact, a negative impact, certainly across rural Ontario specifically, but across the whole province. The unintended consequences of that are thousands and thousands of people losing their jobs and companies leaving this great province because of the increased hydro rates, as a result, partially, of those significant developments.

Concern number two: The proposed section 8(1) would require that the council of every upper-tier municipality and the council of every lower-tier municipality that is not in a territorial district shall appoint a planning advisory committee and shall include at least one member who is neither a councillor nor a municipal employee. Should the above sections be approved by the province, the county would be required to establish a planning advisory committee with at least one representative who is not a councillor or a municipal employee.

It is not clear at this stage what the roles and responsibilities will be of the planning advisory committee. Would the planning advisory committee be responsible for reviewing planning applications? You would think something so simple could be black and white and very clear from the very start of that legislation. Why is such a basic question still being asked, even though this has been implemented, supposedly with lots of conversation and consultation?

The requirement for public representation on planning advisory committees could fundamentally change the current standing committee structure that the county has in place for planning matters. Questions remain about the roles and responsibilities of the planning advisory committee, and staff recommend that the province provide further detail on the purpose of the planning advisory committee and expectations on the roles and responsibilities of the said committee.

Concerns about duplication: If they already have a planning committee, and now you have to have another advisory committee—I think you would agree with me, Mr. Speaker, it makes no sense to continue to review and review, when you've already got a body in place to do it. I ask the question: Could conversation/consultation have had a positive and more effective result for this legislation if they had taken the time to do it, rather than moving forward in such haste?

Concern number three, as brought forward by the municipalities: Section 8(2) indicates that the council of a lower-tier municipality, the council of a single-tier municipality that is in a territorial district, or the township of Pelee, for example, may appoint a planning advisory committee. It appears that the wording of these sections conflicts with one another with respect to whether or not lower tiers are required to appoint a planning advisory committee.

Section 8(1) states that unless you're in a territorial district, lower-tier municipalities shall appoint a planning advisory committee; however, it appears that section 8(2) provides an option for lower-tier municipalities. As such, Grey county recommends that the province revise these sections and clarify whether or not lower-tier municipalities have the option of appointing a planning advisory committee. Again I ask, Mr. Speaker, could conversation/consultation avoid duplication, wasted time and resources?

Municipalities are always challenged with more legislative requirements, more administration, more bureaucracy, but expected to produce the same and not raise taxes. Here's another example, yet again, of those municipalities being hammered by a government that hasn't taken enough time to consult properly and ensure that they're not going to actually put an unintended negative consequence onto them. I'll reference, back in my old critic role—SAMS was one of those. It was rolled out after being suggested it be deferred, and it was deferred a couple of times. However, at the end of the day they rolled it out, and they have now spent \$20 million of your taxpayer money, Mr. Speaker, to actually

pay the municipalities for overtime incurred because of their haste and their lack of consultation with the right front-line stakeholders.

I know the minister has tried hard to rectify this. It may not have been her total responsibility that this was an absolute boondoggle. On the other hand, we're not letting her off the hook. We will stand here and keep her committed. My colleague Mr. Pettapiece has now picked up the torch of community and social services. I know that he is prepared, on behalf of the taxpayers of Ontario, to continue to push that minister to fix that system and not waste any other money, money that is not going to our health care needs, to our education needs, to those people in Community Living that don't have the housing they so richly deserve, and to the mental health services that we so richly deserve. So I know we're in good stead with my colleague Mr. Pettapiece, who will continue to push. But it's just an example that I highlight, that a lack of consultation in moving something forward is actually costing the taxpayer a lot of money and is resulting in a lot of cases.

About two weeks ago, I was in another riding accompanied by our leader, Patrick Brown, at a seniors' care facility. It was interesting to see that some of the cuts to physiotherapy were starting to impact some of the residents there. They weren't able to be as mobile, which then created more falls, which then sent them to the emergency—our most costly form of health care in our province.

I'm trying to paint the picture that some of these decisions, when they're hastily made, actually impact people on the front lines, particularly those people who need services in a timely manner, Mr. Speaker.

Concern number four—I'll go back to my concerns, and I'll revisit a few of these points a little later—is the requirement to report in notice of decisions the effect, if any, that written and oral submissions had on decisions. The county is very concerned that this could be difficult to implement and interpret unless there is a prescriptive accompanying regulation. Depending upon the level of detail required, the notice of decisions could become quite lengthy. It is recommended that further information be provided by the province regarding the level of detail expected to be included as part of the notice of decision. These are people at the municipal level. These are the councillors who are actually required to implement these pieces of legislation, and the staff.

I ask again, and I think this is the third or fourth time today in my short 20 minutes that I ask: Could conversation/consultation have avoided confusion, costly delay and frustration for municipalities to conform to legislation that we don't believe, hearing directly from them—these aren't my words. This is them providing their input back to me as the democratically elected representative for the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, that I'm bringing on their behalf to this government to say: Please stop before you do this. Let's actually do some consultation. Let's truly listen and learn before we implement, rather than having to reverse everything afterward and wasting all that time, all that energy and all

of those resources, not to mention the angst of all the people involved, the challenges for the developers who want to invest money here in Ontario, and we hope they will stay around long enough to invest. We need to do it, Mr. Speaker, with thought to what the end result is and how many people we can continue to serve.

With regard to development charges in my riding, builders have called on the Owen Sound council recently to bring in a moratorium on charging the fee, calling it a hindrance to much-needed growth in the city. This is after the city reduced development charges back in 2010. The president of the Grey-Bruce home builders' association said that when a community introduces development charges that are too high, people simply don't build in that community.

It's challenging. It isn't something where there is conformity across all jurisdictions. If one municipality actually implements development charges and the other one doesn't, typically that money flows to the community that doesn't have development charges, so again we're creating unequal playing fields. We need to make sure that we do this in a balanced manner, we consult all people, and we do it in a way that is going to benefit everyone.

This president of the Grey-Bruce home builders' association is absolutely right. In the end, Owen Sound unanimously voted in a two-year holiday on the city charging the fees for new residential construction. They did so to spur on more growth, again hoping that that developer would choose to come to the great city of Owen Sound to develop, as opposed to going somewhere else across the province.

On the other hand, again in my riding, the great town of Meaford is debating increasing their charge for a new single-family home to \$13,700 from \$12,000. Again, it's no easy decision, as unaffordability can and will impede development in small-town Ontario.

It becomes challenging. All municipalities, again, because of the added challenges, the added cost of hydro, the added payroll tax that's coming, the added cost of hydro that's going to double and triple in the next three years—the increased red-tape burden that this government keeps putting on them continues to challenge them to stay and provide the services without exorbitant tax increases.

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Of course, there are municipalities in Bruce and Grey with no development charges for new residential, commercial or industrial development, such as Hanover and Georgian Bluffs. Again, it's very challenging. Within the same geographic location some do charge, some don't charge, so it's a very challenging dynamic.

While we, in principle, agree that growth must pay for growth and the cost to expand infrastructure shouldn't fall on existing taxpayers, Bill 73 would increase development charges and, I fear, the impact on local communities and families. It may actually result in a negative impact, as opposed to the intended—I trust—positive impact.

Unlike here in downtown Toronto: When I drive into the city every week when we come back to the Legislature, I see the cranes. You see how much activity is here. Some are actually showing concern that there may be too many condos being developed here. That's not my place to say; the market will work itself out. But it certainly isn't case the in rural Ontario, where housing is not booming all over the place and we cannot necessarily afford to be slowed much more.

If we don't have development, if we don't have the ability to continue to move and grow, we are again going to be in a state of stagnation. The building necessary to sustain all of the services and programs in rural Ontario will very much be hindered if we aren't able to develop and grow as a result of this legislation that I believe has not had significant consultation and conversation with the stakeholders, with the people out there who really know their game and can really step up to the plate.

This government loves to talk. This Liberal government loves to talk about transparency and accountability. Its municipal affairs minister likes to talk about how planning disputes should be dealt with locally whenever possible. I could go on and on about how their mantra does not hold true for rural Ontario when it comes to the Green Energy Act, as I've said before. They took away all of the rights of the municipal, democratically, locally elected people to have a say in the development of those types of structures in their own backyards, despite the people of those areas overwhelmingly not wanting them.

In the case of auto insurance and the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan, there has been very little consultation. A lot of people out there do not want this, do not understand it and are worried about what the negative impact could be.

I have to finish on the fire sale of Hydro One. We have people from across this great province saying this is a wrong-headed decision. This is not good in the long term for us as taxpayers. It's not going to be good for my kids and grandkids down the road. Please step back and rethink this. Truly do consultations and serve the people you've been elected to.

This government continues to override municipal planning and to force wind turbine projects on unwilling host municipalities. The objective of this legislation should be to ensure that families can have a new home and new businesses can be built and create jobs, while controlling sprawl and protecting our environment and preserving prime agricultural land.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I read War and Peace one time—"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times"—and I asked the English prof, "Why would a book start like that?" He said that the author got paid by the word.

My friend from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound obviously doesn't get paid by the word, but he manages to get more words in in a 20-minute block than anybody else I have ever met. I have great respect for him.

I have to take issue with one thing he spoke about, though. He talked about the medically grown marijuana

facilities. I'm overdue to visit some friends of mine who own one in the municipality of Leamington. I'm overdue for a visit. But of course Leamington is in the Conservative-held riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex, and I get the sense from the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound that these are terrible facilities. And I'm saying to myself, "They're the most heavily regulated, the most heavily inspected, the most secure facilities in all of Ontario." You can get into a distillery or a brewery a lot easier than you can get into one of these facilities, and their product that they produce is helping people with cancer, helping people with glaucoma that are losing their eyesight. This is medical science, it has been approved, and it's in secure facilities.

I don't think that all of these facilities have guys on the corner in black leather jackets selling drugs to kids. That's not what they are there for. They are there because they are providing a service that we should all enjoy.

I don't know where the member was going with his criticism of it but I—

Interjection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: All right. Thank you for clarifying because I know your member from Chatham–Kent–Essex would have a great deal of angst directed in his direction if he found out that a member of his caucus was against such facilities in such a community as the municipality of Leamington.

Speaker, a thank you from me to add that this afternoon.

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

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: It is a pleasure to rise again in the House after the summer recess, especially on the issue of Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

I was listening intently to the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and his comments on it. There was a great deal there, much that might not really have anything to do with Bill 73.

I do want to say that I, in particular, am very proud to stand up in the House in support of this legislation. It is legislation which addresses the concerns that municipalities have been raising for years, concerns about letting municipalities have more flexibility to design development charges that work for their communities. Those communities that choose to have lower development charges can do it. Those that have critical demands on their infrastructure have the choice now to increase development charges in a focused way to pay for public transit, waste diversion and forward-looking services. That is a good thing. That is what municipal councils have been asking for.

Municipal councils and residents have been asking for greater certainty so that when a city or a town passes an official plan or passes a zoning bylaw, that, in fact, is the law that governs planning and development in their community.

This act will give more power to the municipalities, more certainty to residents that the official plans and zoning bylaws that they rely on to govern growth and

development in their communities will actually have the teeth to be enforced and will not be readily overturned—sometimes on a whim—at the Ontario Municipal Board.

This is an excellent piece of legislation. I wholeheartedly support it. I urge all members to support it. There are other issues that the member opposite raised that could perhaps be dealt with in other legislation that have nothing to do with planning.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It's a pleasure to comment on the speech that my colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound just gave.

Speaker, I come from an agricultural background. I was educated at the Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology. I lived on a farm most of my life. I've milked cows and raised hogs.

There's something that I can bring into this conversation about agriculture. If you go into a well-managed dairy barn, where the cows are fed well and everything is working well, you know what you hear in that dairy barn? Nothing. You hear nothing, and I think my colleague from the north could say that. You hear nothing because the cows are lying there. They're contented, because they're being listened to by the farmer. If they're not contented, the farmer will listen to these animals and he will deal with the situation. It's something that this government could take a lot of advice from.

From what I hear from AMO and from the municipalities in my riding, they just feel they aren't being listened to. I hope that when this bill gets to committee, which it probably will, they will take advice that they are getting from municipalities and all stakeholders to improve this bill—because that is the frustration, I think, that municipalities feel with this government. When they have something important to say that could help a bill along or could improve a bill, they're not being listened to. I hope they will listen to us, because we'll be bringing that message from our municipalities to committee: that they listen to amendments to improve the bill and help things go along a lot smoother.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's always a pleasure to try to keep track of what the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is saying, because he does speak very quickly. But his comments on Bill 73 I found a little interesting.

He did mention affordable housing several times. Perhaps this is just part of the new cottony, kitteny version of the party, because we haven't heard much about affordable housing from the PC caucus for a while. But I've been encouraged to hear it.

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I'm not sure why the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound didn't venture into the missing part of this bill, which all of us should be supporting, and that is the inclusionary zoning version. Just to remind people what inclusionary zoning does: The city of Toronto, as I mentioned in my 20 minutes, passed a motion, and they say in their motion, "Inclusionary zoning would em-

power the city to require developers to include a percentage of affordable housing units in residential developments with over 20 units and in return they could receive fast-tracked approvals and other incentives.” So this actually would be pro-development as well, because the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound was very concerned about the impact of development charges, very concerned about developers.

This is a good solution, inclusionary zoning. We heard it at AMO too. As long as any legislation that comes from the government doesn't tie the hands of municipalities, municipalities, including the largest municipality in the country, the city of Toronto, want this to be in their tool box so that they can create more affordable, more accessible, equal housing.

The truth of the matter is, though, that there has been a lot of consultation, and not a lot happened. So I think that I would agree with the member in that there really isn't much to show here for over a year and a half's worth of consultations. In fact, though, they already had a good template. Bill 39, the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore's private member's bill, was far more ambitious than this government's Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. That is why we were very supportive of it, and actually we're going to fight to try to get some of that member's private member's bill embedded in this government bill, which, you know, is a little surprising.

So you can't have a piece of legislation and call it “smart” and not include affordable housing, Mr. Speaker. You can't.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. That concludes our time for questions and comment. We return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound for his two-minute response.

Mr. Bill Walker: I want to thank my good friend and colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh for the kind compliment. I do want to clarify, though. I wasn't suggesting anything negative about medical marijuana. What I was merely suggesting—as a matter of fact, I have two in my riding that are waiting for approval. But it's the challenge that if they came to a municipality asking to be able to have that type of facility and they didn't have it in their zoning plan, there could be up to a two-year delay to even have that considered, my concern being that they don't want to sit there for two years waiting for that to happen. I want to make sure it happens so that we can create jobs, with 700,000 people unemployed today as a result of the fiscal mismanagement of this government.

To the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore, thank you very much for your comments. You suggested that not a lot was related to Bill 73, but I would suggest to you that there's a lot related here, the trend being the lack of consultation. Again, I'll bring up the Green Energy Act, where you didn't consult municipalities but simply stripped away their authority, and the fire sale of Hydro One, where you're going to move forward and take apart something that actually most Ontarians want to leave

exactly the way it is. The Ontario pension plan: Again, many people are actually very, very concerned about what the impact is going to be when it's actually implemented. What's going to happen to the dollars? Where are they going to come from? Who's truly going to benefit and who's going to truly lose out of that? So I see a significant trend of lack of consultation by this government when they impede and impose legislation on the great people of Ontario.

My colleague from Perth–Wellington: Again, his reference was to this government that does not listen. He's been trying since I think he arrived in this House to have them listen about the issue of joint and several liability, which they continue to not do. Again, a municipal issue: He was a municipal councillor and can talk about it first-hand because he understands what he's talking about, and yet this government, in my mind, has not shown any interest to even discuss it.

To the member from Kitchener–Waterloo: I just want to ask you to check Hansard, because you'll find the words that I do get in, most of them are about those people that are not getting the services because of the mismanagement of this government. I truly do care and I'm very concerned about those who are less fortunate. We need to do more and quit wasting so much so there's more provision of services for all the people of Ontario.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House and discuss the business of government, and in this case Bill 73, An Act to amend the Development Charges Act, 1997 and the Planning Act. I guess the name the government's using is the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act.

One of the great things about being able to sit and listen to these debates is that you hear perspectives from different walks of life, different parts of the province. Actually, if you really sit and listen, especially to this debate—planning is not usually a riveting discussion, but it's a very important discussion. Anyone who has any municipal background knows that some of the most fierce debates and fierce problems are with planning. Coming from northern Ontario, I'm going to be really upfront: In rural Ontario, we don't have a lot of the same type of issues with planning as some of the really urban parts of Ontario. It's one of the great things about our province that we are so varied, but it's also, for places that are outside the norm like some parts of rural Ontario—and northern Ontario is a lot like that—a lot of our issues regarding land-use planning are—maybe the word isn't “forgotten” or “overlooked” but “diminished.”

We do have issues with the OMB. We actually do have, in some of my bigger municipalities, issues with development charges because a lot of the infrastructure in the older parts of town is falling apart and you can't really develop the newer part of town until you fix the older part of town, because they're interconnected. That's a huge problem. We don't get, in my office, a lot of calls about that, but we do get a lot of calls about other parts of planning. The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound

mentioned something about agriculture, and we get a lot of calls about agriculture planning in my riding.

I have a lot of agriculture in my riding. The centre is very agriculture-oriented. The north is getting there too. Here in the south, you're no longer allowed to build solar farms on class 1, 2 and, I believe, 3 land. That's great. I'm not a big solar farm fan in the first place, but that's great. But in northern Ontario, guess where all the solar farms are going? Our best land. It's the same province. It's supposed to be the same planning—but different rules, and that's a problem. Should it be addressed in Bill 73? I don't know, but it's a planning problem. If one of the goals of Bill 73 and other initiatives like the greenbelt—if one of their initiatives is to protect agricultural land, why aren't we protecting all good agricultural land? If someone is going to say, "Well, that's just northern Ontario," I defy you. The combines are, right as we speak, in fields in Timiskaming taking yields off that are equivalent to anywhere else in the province and, I'd say, for this year anywhere else in Canada. Yet, there is nothing protecting that land from solar farms. Somehow, that has been missed.

We hear in this bill that there are different rules for single-tier municipalities and two-tier municipalities. Well, an issue we have in the north is the zero-tier municipality, the unorganized municipality. We don't talk about that a lot, but we have municipalities that have no representation by any other elected body than the province. They pay their taxes directly to the province, and their taxes are very low. That's a good thing for the people who live there, but as a result, a lot of people move to the unorganized municipalities, which makes sense. If you're close to an organized municipality—a town—you expect your soft services from the town: your arena, your library, your pool; stuff like that. You expect that from the town. But not a cent of that tax goes to that municipality.

The province has made steps. They're talking about it. They're talking about changing the tax regime for unorganized municipalities. We're not opposed to that. Where we have to be really careful is that when they make those adjustments to actually make those people pay realistic taxes, those taxes actually go to the level of government that's providing the services to those people. That's not happening now. That, in the big picture, might not be a huge issue, but for the planning decisions for the people in my part of the world, it's a big, big one, because it's stretching the towns, who are surrounded by unorganized—it's stretching them to the limit. A little bit of tax tinkering and having more money come to the province from unorganized is not going to solve that problem.

1710

Likewise, the people in unorganized, who have had to create all of their own hard services—their own water, their own sewer—a lot of people don't realize that there are a lot of people in northern Ontario who don't have 911, specifically in unorganized townships. They're worried, and rightfully so, that their taxes are going to go through the roof, because there are services they're never

going to get. In most unorganized municipalities, you are never going to see water and sewer, so you're always going to have to pay for that yourself.

They're rightfully worried. They don't want to pay the same taxes that people who have full services have. It has happened in our area that towns have annexed other parts of unorganized basically as a tax grab, and people are rightfully worried about that. That is a huge planning issue in northern Ontario.

I'd like to return, because it's—what's your riding, Randy? What's your riding?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Perth–Wellington.

Mr. John Vanthof: Perth–Wellington. He's stealing my farm shtick.

I'd like to go back to agriculture. I'm not going to talk about cows, but I'm going to talk about farmland. If you're going to talk about farmland and protecting farmland, let's talk about it across the province.

The reason that in northern Ontario class 1, 2 and 3 isn't protected is because it isn't classified—it never got that far; that's another thing we don't have—and our temperatures are a little bit different. But we keep hearing about climate change. Do you know what? One of the impacts of climate change is that we grow great crops in northern Ontario. It's time that, if the government is serious about things like climate change and about the big-picture things, it should also think about the little details—which aren't little—to protect the land that actually is benefiting from climate change. You should protect that as well, because when it comes—there are some areas that are going to lose. It's pretty sad if we cover over the areas that are actually going to become more productive, good agricultural land, with industrial installations which, in some cases, we don't really need.

What really galls me about a lot of these discussions—I'm not saying that this is a bad discussion. Hopefully, I'm adding to it. Hopefully, we are adding to it. But we could be talking about much bigger issues, like, why didn't we have a full, wholesome, public debate about the advantages—if there are any—and disadvantages of selling Hydro One? Why don't we have that debate? That's what bothers me sometimes about how this government operates. They take little bills, which—we're not against this bill. But there are huge things that they're doing that deserve—that need, that demand—public scrutiny in this House, and this government is not willing to do that.

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

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I'm very pleased to rise today in support of Bill 73, the proposed Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, introduced by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The act proposes changes to the Planning Act and Development Charges Act, 1997, which, if passed, would give residents a greater say in how their communities grow, and provide more opportunities to fund growth-related infrastructure such as transit and waste diversion through the development charges system.

The idea behind smart growth is to ensure fiscally responsible environmental and social sustainability of communities, particularly by reducing urban sprawl and increasing more sustainable transport options, such as walking, cycling and public transit.

In my community of Kingston and the Islands, I have to say that we have observed a mini explosion of bike lanes, for example. Those are the kinds of things that are incredibly important to our communities to make them sustainable and to reinforce more healthy living.

If passed, the act would create the community planning permit system to include residents and stakeholders in planning from the very outset of the process. It is that community engagement that is so important to positively engage our constituents.

One part of the bill my community of Kingston and the Islands is particularly supportive of is making the planning and appeals process more predictable and making it easier to resolve disputes at the community level. I'm particularly excited about the efforts to encourage the development and protection of more parkland and green space in our towns and cities.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to lend my support to the passage of this bill. Merci beaucoup. Meegwetch.

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

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thank you very much, Speaker, for allowing me to comment on the speech delivered by the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. I'm glad that in my first opportunity in the fall session I'm able to respond to the member, because I really enjoy his speeches that he speaks to, mainly talking about the province in northern Ontario.

I can tell you this much: The problems you're having in northern Ontario pretty much are the problems we're having in rural, southern Ontario, which basically is a government that moves forward without consultation.

I'll give you a good example. You talked about how your solar farms are going on class 1, 2 and 3 lands, which is a terrible thing to be occurring and should be stopped, even though it's not been. This government approved a solar farm right beside developed land outside of a small municipality. With some of the setbacks that were given as a provision, it's basically neutered any ability for development to occur in a certain part of this land, where they have already paid for sewer and water to be there. So the city has just wasted tons of amounts of money to invest in this. The developers have that money sitting there that they're hoping to get back from the constituents who buy the houses, which aren't going to be developed there. It's that type of non-consultation that's going forward.

I'm sure this whole situation probably could have been fixed, because the municipality has a piece of land which is not going to be developed for anything, ever. It could be suitable for a solar farm. They probably could have worked out a great deal with the ministry and the solar development company and still have had the development go forward.

It's the lack of consultation that you spell out that is not occurring in northern nor in southern, rural Ontario. I'm sure eastern Ontario is quite the same. I would hope the government would change their tactics. They don't seem to be listening to anyone right now.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, I just want to say that I spent many years on city council in the municipality of Stoney Creek. Over the years, we had many disturbances with the OMB. It took forever to get decisions to go ahead for planning and for development, which frustrated the residents as well as the developers and the builders. We always had problems.

To streamline the act and to make it better is certainly a movement in the right direction. However, over the years, I also saw some very bad decisions. In reference to landfill sites, I can give you a perfect example: the Taro landfill, which was a real controversial landfill that was built on Hamilton Mountain, on fractured bedrock. The government of the day allowed that project to go forward. They actually weakened the EA process at the time. That also falls under the Planning Act, because a lot of planning and development that goes on in municipalities overlaps other jurisdictions and other ministries.

To streamline it is good, but the problem is the enforcement. Once again, that landfill—there was supposed to be non-hazardous material going in there. There was hazardous material that went in on fractured bedrock. I saw that.

1720

So it's great to have a bill, but if you don't enforce and follow up with the bill, then things can happen. I saw so many times where it ended up being appealed and shot down by the OMB because the decision had already been made. But if the Planning Act is not followed and the municipality cannot enforce the Planning Act, and the government here in Toronto doesn't co-operate with the decisions of the OMB, then it causes major problems. I saw that on a regular basis, and I don't see anything in this act that talks about landfills, environmental hazards and things that have been a real problem for my municipality in the past. That's a weak spot in it.

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

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I am pleased to rise and comment on Bill 73, and comment on what the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane put forward in his presentation. He spoke mainly about northern Ontario and about unorganized communities. I had the opportunity, in my role as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance, to meet with different communities in regard to that recently at the AMO conference, so I appreciate his comments in that regard.

The riding I have the privilege to represent, York South–Weston, is an urban riding. So the perspective I bring to this House is that of my constituents, so a particularly urban one. My community is growing and being revitalized thanks to the investments that the province is making in infrastructure. We have a new

hospital that is going to open shortly in the riding just north of us. We have the Georgetown South GO line, now also frequently called the Kitchener line; the Eglinton Crosstown project; and the Barrie line, which will have a stop in my riding in the near future.

What's happening is that we see a renewed interest in some of our neighbourhoods by developers. What I like about this bill is the fact that it proposes to make sure that communities are consulted at the beginning of projects. What happens now is that they're often consulted later or the OMB often overrules what the community has to say. That's the aspect of this bill that I like, and one of the reasons that I think we should support it. It empowers communities to say more at the start.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes questions and comments for this round. We return the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane for his reply.

Mr. John Vanthof: I'd like to thank the members from Kingston and the Islands, and Elgin–Middlesex–London, my colleague from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek and the member from York South–Weston. I appreciate the comments, especially the ones that actually had something to do with my comments.

This bill deals with communities that are growing. We appreciate that, and I appreciate that. But in a lot of places in the rest of the province, communities are stable or declining. We like to talk about transportation and transit, but I have people in my communities who no longer can live there because they can't get to the hospital. We used to have a train—that's gone—and now you can't even get direct bus service unless you want to go at, like, 2 o'clock in the morning. If you're 70 and you need to go to a Sudbury hospital for tests, you know what? You're getting to the point where you can't live in my riding. Now is that smart planning? No.

Are all the communities in my riding growing? No. But the communities in my riding provide income for the province, and they're going to provide a lot more income to the province. But if you want to promote agriculture and things like that, you're not going to move to a place where your parents are not going to be able to live in your community because they can't get to the hospital unless it's a four-hour bus ride with three stopovers.

There's something wrong with the planning of the province, because it's all focused on the growth areas, but not enough focus is on the stable areas or the areas that actually provide wealth to the province, other than just growing population. That's something that we're going to have to address, if the Premier is serious about this "one Ontario," because right now, it's not one Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the government House Speaker on a point of order.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I believe that you will find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice with respect to the Ombudsman, and that the question on the motion be put immediately without debate or amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is there unanimous consent of the House to move a motion with respect to the Ombudsman? I heard some noes.

Further debate? The member for London—

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Elgin–Middlesex–London.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Elgin–Middlesex–London. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Thanks, Speaker. I just spoke about two minutes ago. I'm glad you could put that together here.

First of all, I would just like to point out, it's very interesting that we're in the middle of debating this bill, and the government has stopped debating. They didn't consult on this bill, and now they don't want to debate on this bill. I think that's a totally sad state of affairs for this government and democracy, when the governing party has decided that they'll just bring forth legislation without consultation, without debate, and vote it through. I'm pretty sure when it hits committee, not a single opposition amendment will pass. I think we've had maybe two that passed since we started. I just think that's a travesty, and unfortunately, it's too bad we've hit this point in democracy. Hopefully, the people of Ontario are seeing what is occurring with their democracy in this province, when they have a government that's more focused on a federal campaign than actually dealing with the issues of the day in our own province.

But Mr. Speaker, I digressed a bit, and I'd like to speak a little bit on Bill 73, the Smart Growth for Our Communities Act. It's worth noting that I just mentioned the lack of proper consultation that went in with regard to developing this legislation. We've seen lack of consultation most recently with the Hydro One sale. We've seen that over 50% of Hydro One would be sold, even though it's not a majority of Hydro One—I am not sure how that works out to not be the majority. But the constituents of this province were not consulted about this sale. It is important to note that our leader, Patrick Brown, earlier today stated that over 70% of Ontarians are against this deal. However, there's still no consultation with the bill, and in fact, they've removed the Ombudsman from the process. So all of this deal going forward, the sale is not under public scrutiny. It's not being able to reach the average taxpayer or ratepayer of what's going to go on with this Hydro One sale, that at the end of the day, our rates are only going to increase.

Why? Why are they rushing that? Why are they rushing Bill 73? Is there any reason to ensure that this goes through any quicker than possible? Do you not think that when you rush a piece of legislation—without consultation, without debate—and ignore the committee process by probably not listening to the opposition, you're going to end up with errors or problems?

Look at the Green Energy Act. They can't say there haven't been problems with that act; otherwise, they wouldn't be changing the way the subsidies are ruled, or the fact that they might actually let municipalities have a say. I think the fact that they've totally disregarded what municipalities have had to say over the life of the Green

Energy Act is probably one of the reasons why it's been such a colossal failure.

This government needs to slow down and do things the proper way. The best way to do it is to start to consult with people before proposing new legislation, as opposed to after. Slow and steady wins with the race, and nothing good happens when a product is rushed to market. That is the same thing that's going to occur with this legislation.

The Smart Growth for Our Communities Act affects municipalities, developers and new homebuyers. New homebuyers range from young people just entering the market, just by entering the workforce, to those who are retiring or moving into a new community. Buying a home and moving into a new and existing community gives one a great sense of accomplishment. It provides us with a feeling of great achievement as we settle in and build a new life. For many, building a home the first time is not a pleasant experience. One of the reasons is extreme cost with owning. Home ownership is a very rewarding experience, but it's very, very tough to start, especially in this province.

1730

Ontario was a place, long ago, 15 years ago, where you could find work, raise a family and buy a house. Unfortunately, Bill 73 is not helping correct that situation, returning us to a "have" province. Bill 73 impacts municipalities in a negative way, when we need to be there to assist them as a working partner. Our municipalities are always operating on thin ice, and with this proposed legislation, it will only become increasingly more difficult to finance the new homes being built, as well as the necessary infrastructure associated with the increased population. Municipalities need support, and they are not receiving such support with this provincial government, as their concerns are not being heard.

This bill affects the Development Charges Act. Amendments to the act would include a mandatory planning advisory committee for upper-tier municipalities. As such, it would basically remove talk from an open room back into the bureaucracy to have things decided. Instead of having open town council meetings where constituents can attend and voice their opinions, this new committee would include members of council, but only one member of the public. As we've seen from other things this government has done, getting the voice of one member of the public or of a group does not actually count as proper consultation. It is therefore crucial that development debate stays within open and transparent public city council meetings.

The minister's own mandate letter states that he must conduct a full review of the Ontario Municipal Board before making any changes; however, I feel that he has not listened to his Premier. The Smart Growth for Our Communities Act comes at a time before this review has even been conducted. Not only has this review yet to be conducted before the legislation is put through, but we have heard from many key stakeholders that the reviews and analyses have yet to be completed.

This bill includes a number of changes to the Development Charges Act. Historically, builders paid fees to

municipalities to fund infrastructure projects such as sewers, roads and water. If passed, the amendments proposed in this bill would remove that section that prevents the development charges to being limited only to those three items. Therefore, if this section were removed, development projects such as museums and galleries could be left on the bills of new homeowners, which is interesting—it's not the entire province that is undergoing development.

I could easily see this government, with its \$10-billion deficit, \$300-billion debt, and only increasing—

Interjection.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Yes, isn't it crazy, the amount of money they're behind? But I can just see this government going to the municipalities: "You now have the development charges; you can use that money. We're going to cut more funding," like the OMPF funding that they cut from rural Ontario day in and day out.

I can you tell you, many municipalities in my riding do not have the strong development going on—because there are no jobs in the area—for them to actually create the money that this government is probably going to pull away from them. So it's very, very curious that they would go forward without consulting the general public and rural Ontario—and I'm sure northern Ontario as well would have the same problems.

Just another point: Development charges in the surrounding Toronto area right now are between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per single-family home. Now, take that comparison to Calgary and Edmonton, which I would assume have the same type of growth areas that Toronto is experiencing, and they're down to less than \$8,000. That's kind of disheartening for the taxpayers of the province and the home builders of the province, the fact that costs can even go higher. We're not even competitive with other jurisdictions.

As I mentioned earlier, as a member of a rural riding, this government has lost over 6,000 manufacturing jobs in my riding alone. It alarms me to think that a newcomer coming into our community would even be able to afford a new home to start with, or in fact move, or even have a retiree try to move into a new community to downsize, for someone actually coming in and buying their house.

The last thing we want to see are families turned away because they're unable to own a home. Housing and home ownership is becoming more and more of a problem within our province.

When we look at social housing, that is also another problem. There are 165,000 families on the wait-list. I get that every day in my riding: people coming in looking for social housing, because there's not enough housing there that's suitable for them. This government gives a certain amount that's spent over three years in all of Elgin county, and the projects eat it up just like that. It doesn't even touch the wait-lists going on.

In fact, I just want to commend one of my constituents, Jason McComb. He was a homelessness advocate and actually doesn't own a home. He lives in a storefront in St. Thomas. He has Homeless Happens—I

had him in the Legislature once a few years ago. He's just trying to raise awareness of homelessness. He's walking across Canada, and he's somewhere in northern Ontario right now. I'm sure the winter is going to slow him up quite a bit. If you see him out there as he's heading off into Manitoba, be sure to give him your best.

I think it's people like that who are spelling out to this government that not only is social housing an issue that's missing, but people's access to homes—making these changes is going to make it more difficult for people to enter the housing market. It's going to put a burden on municipalities with their ability to actually utilize development charges that they're going to allow them to charge, but if there's no development, the charges aren't going to go forward.

Thanks for your time, Mr. Speaker. I've run out of time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I thank the member for Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was really interesting, listening to the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London. I was surprised to see how much of what he had to say can more or less directly apply to my riding of Nickel Belt.

He talked about homelessness. It wasn't that long ago that people thought that there was no homelessness in the north because it was too cold, and where would people live? We have an average of 350 to 500 homeless every single night in Sudbury and surrounding areas. Access to social housing is just as much of an issue in Nickel Belt and Sudbury as it is in his riding, with people coming to see me, like they went to see him, about needing access to housing.

We have an opportunity here today. We have an opportunity with this bill to really make sure that everybody has a home. We have this opportunity to make sure that affordable housing of all types is part of the plan so that, moving forward, whether you are in a high-growth area or a more or less stagnant area—that I represent—the laws are put in place so that they make sense throughout the province and they make sense so that we make sure that as things move forward, everybody ends up with a home, a home that they can afford and a home that makes sense.

It was rather interesting to see him explaining what was going on, because I could really relate to what's going on in my riding also.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It is very interesting to hear all these comments which I had the great pleasure of listening to all afternoon.

The fact that we are actually debating this bill now indicates, I would say, that we, the government, extended the debate a couple of hours ago. If you look at the standard time to debate, it's typically for 6.5 hours. We had the wonderful pleasure of hearing about this debate and we're almost at eight hours at this point on Bill 73.

I'm not sure what the member opposite earlier was referring to, in the interests of having meaningful debate,

but when I think about a meaningful debate, I also think about committee, where a lot of the work gets done. So, certainly for me, listening, that we're all somewhat agreeing that Bill 73 is an important bill for this government and for some of the members of the opposition and the third party, I would say that we should try to bring this bill where it belongs, which is in committee, where we can start working on making sure that it will represent what we all want, which is making Ontario better and putting the people of Ontario in a better position. I thank everyone for listening. Thanks.

1740

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's always a pleasure to follow my colleague from Elgin–Middlesex–London. I want to congratulate him on his new critic portfolio of health care. He's a compassionate person who always is thinking about people and how he can help them, back to his pharmaceutical training.

I want to just say, though, before I start with my comments for him, that the member from Northumberland–Quinte West did come across the aisle and have a chat with me and provide a clarification that, apparently, there are two-year-freeze exemptions for municipalities. I appreciate that. The reality, though, is that there is still lots of confusion, which he admitted to. Grey county actually brought it to me. My staff obviously have not had the clarification that clearly, so we'll go back and look at that.

I think what it alludes to again is that there was a lack of proper consultation across all levels, or we would have had the wording right. If we had had proper consultation, it wouldn't be rushed legislation, which my colleague did talk about a fair bit. That rushed legislative process wastes valued time and resources, which could be better spent helping people.

We need balanced growth, as one person said in here today, across all areas of our province. The legislation should reflect and respect urban and rural areas, and foster growth in all areas across Ontario.

We've just heard that there are similar challenges in northern Ontario, as there are in Elgin, St. Thomas, London, Middlesex, and certainly in my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound as well.

He spoke about the lack of consultation and highlighted one: Some 70% of Ontarians are opposed to the fire sale of Hydro One—again, that trend of them not listening, and moving forward and rushing things through before the people who are going to be impacted the most truly can have a real, strong, forthright opportunity to have a say. The Green Energy Act, as I've said in here a couple of times today—they rushed it through and again took the ability from municipalities to have actual say. I'm a little bit challenged and perhaps cynical that this is going to be better, when I see how the result of that has happened.

One thing is that the minister is supposed to have a full review of OMB before any changes, and yet here is legislation sitting in front of us.

I hope we can get to committee, do some clarification and make sure that the amendments actually reflect the needs of the people of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We can have one last question or comment in this round.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's indeed a pleasure to stand and comment on the presentation made by the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London. I'll just focus on one part of what he had to say.

He talked about development fees. He said that in Calgary, for example, they were about \$10,000, compared to Toronto—\$30,000 to \$50,000 in the GTHA.

Let me compare that, if you will, to the municipality of Leamington. Leamington is in a three-year experiment where they have done away with development fees. They're not charging anything. At first blush, you would say, "That doesn't make any sense." But since they initiated that, Speaker, three new subdivisions are under way, are being built, are under construction. New industrial places—new commercial space—are going on in Leamington because they dropped development fees as an incentive to get people building again.

A great idea? Some people say yes. The town of Harrow thought it was a pretty good idea, but they weren't so sure, so instead of dropping their development fees to zero, they went to 50%. They dropped their fees down to 50%. They're getting stuff going in Harrow.

The city of Windsor, by contrast, voted on June 1 to increase their development fees, because development fees in Windsor were the lowest in the province for a municipality of 200,000 population or more. If I recall, the increase in Windsor, which will be staggered over a number of years—the residential increase is going up 47%, and I think its commercial rate is going up by 15%.

Development fees across the province are all different, just like the number of voices in this Legislature when we bring discussion to an issue—and why we have to have a full and fulsome and wholesome debate on the issues.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): We return to the member for Elgin–Middlesex–London for his reply.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to thank the members from Nickel Belt, Windsor–Tecumseh, Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and Ottawa–Orléans for their input on the debate.

I'm glad the government party decided to offer their two minutes' worth of debate to that section as opposed to just sitting there on their hands, as they have been doing for the last 12 minutes—and have removed themselves from debate and this process.

I do want to note that the Ontario Home Builders' Association is concerned with the way that the development charges are being collected and distributed. The CEO has been quoted as saying, "New neighbours ultimately pay every new tax generated by government. If municipalities believe that transit is the priority project, they have a responsibility to be accountable, transparent and fair in how they determine the entire tax bill that falls on the back of new homebuyers and businesses."

We understand that municipalities could use the extra funding, possibly using developmental charges. How-

ever, that is not the solution to the problems of the municipalities.

I think a perfect opportunity this government has, which they should think about—the member from Haldimand–Norfolk brings it up quite often; the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke brings it up quite a bit—especially for rural Ontario and northern Ontario, is the expansion of the gas tax. However, that never really gets brought forward. Unless you have a transit system in your municipality, you're unable to access that gas tax. Our federal cousins have made that change, and it has been expanded into municipalities that don't have a transit system, and they're using it for great opportunities. I think it's a great way—if you really want to develop economic opportunities, help with infrastructure, the expansion of the gas tax is step one, and maybe we can see legislation fast-tracked on that, if they're in the business of fast-tracking all legislation.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Merci, monsieur le Président. Ça me fait plaisir de prendre quelques instants cet après-midi pour vous parler du projet de loi 73, le projet de loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les redevances d'aménagement et la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire. Je voulais en parler parce que bien que le projet de loi nous parle de communautés en croissance, moi, je représente un comté où il n'y a pas de croissance. C'est la stagnation dans Nickel Belt. Il y a quelques petites parties de Nickel Belt qui sont en croissance, comme Vallée Est et Rayside-Balfour, mais la plupart des autres, qu'on parle de Foleyet ou de Gogama, de Mattagami ou de Biscotasing, de Westree, de Shining Tree ou d'Alban, on ne parle pas de croissance.

Mais, on est en train de changer une loi qui va s'appliquer partout en Ontario, une loi qui va s'appliquer autant dans mon comté et dans le nord-est de l'Ontario que dans le restant de la province. Depuis longtemps, on sait que c'est une loi qui fait des changements à deux projets de loi, vraiment. C'est une loi qui fait des changements par rapport aux redevances d'aménagement et une loi qui change également la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire.

Si on parle spécifiquement de la partie sur les redevances d'aménagement, la loi est vraiment faite en sorte pour dire qu'on donne la permission d'augmenter les redevances d'aménagement afin, vraiment, d'augmenter les revenus. Mais, il faut que tu prennes en ligne de compte que dans certaines municipalités, pour s'assurer qu'il y a une croissance, parfois on va en sens inverse, et que le sens inverse a autant de bon sens dans certaines municipalités que de leur donner la permission d'aller chercher d'autres outils et d'autres fonds.

Plusieurs des personnes qui ont parlé devant moi ont peur que si les frais d'aménagement deviennent trop élevés, ce qu'on va faire, vraiment, c'est arrêter la croissance plutôt que d'encourager les entrepreneurs à développer de nouvelles entreprises domiciliaires, de nouveaux « buildings » appartements ou même de nouveaux condos. Si les redevances sont trop hautes, ce

qu'on va faire c'est qu'on va stopper ça. Mais, d'un autre côté, si la loi est faite pour aller en sens unique où la seule chose que tu peux faire est d'augmenter les frais, bien là...

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Mon collègue de Windsor–Tecumseh a donné des exemples. Dans son comté, ils ont décidé de tout simplement abolir les frais de développement et ils ont eu des résultats. Il a parlé de trois nouvelles entreprises domiciliaires qui ont vu le jour. Il a parlé d'un nouveau complexe industriel, de nouvelles places pour des entreprises, et tout ça avec une décision du conseil municipal qui était de tout simplement enlever les frais. Il a parlé également d'autres municipalités qui, elles, ont décidé de diminuer les frais de développement de 50 %, et pour ces municipalités-là, aussi, ça a été gagnant. Ça a été gagnant parce qu'elles ont été capables d'augmenter le nombre de nouvelles constructions, d'habitations et de commerces, etc., qui se sont développés sur leur territoire. Donc, avoir un projet de loi à sens unique, c'est toujours un peu problématique.

L'autre partie du projet de loi qui parle spécifiquement de l'aménagement du territoire, ça, monsieur le Président, c'est encore plus problématique à cause de ce qui n'est pas dedans. On n'a pas souvent l'opportunité de changer des lois. Si on regarde, en ce moment, la Loi sur les redevances d'aménagement, c'est une loi qui date de 1997. Donc, ça fait 18 ans de ça. Il va probablement se passer un autre 20 ans avant qu'on fasse d'autres changements.

Il y a une opportunité en or de s'assurer qu'on met dans le projet de loi 73 des changements à la loi qui nous permettraient de s'assurer que tout le monde a un logement. En anglais, on appelle ça « inclusionary zoning ». Puis, ce que ça fait, c'est qu'au fur et à mesure qu'il y a de nouveaux appartements qui se bâtissent, s'il y a plus de 20 appartements dans n'importe quel immeuble—donc, n'importe quel immeuble à logement qui se bâtit qui aura plus de 20 unités devra avoir une unité de logement social, de logement à prix abordable. Qu'on parle d'un condo, ça va vouloir dire que tu devrais être capable d'acheter des unités, ou si tu parles d'un appartement à louer, tu devrais être capable d'avoir un appartement à louer.

Depuis qu'on a commencé à parler du projet de loi 73, il y a un éléphant dans la Chambre. Tout le monde le sait. On a besoin de plus de logements à prix abordable. On en a besoin dans les quatre coins de la province, que tu parles du Nord-Est, du Nord-Ouest, du Sud-Est, de Toronto ou d'Ottawa. Partout, on a besoin de plus de logement social. On a une opportunité en or, et cette opportunité-là, c'est le projet de loi 73, mais ce n'est pas dans le projet de loi.

What I was trying to do with the 10 minutes that was allocated to me to speak about this bill is really to show that the first part, the part about the Development Charges Act—the modification to this part is really

focused toward bringing new revenues to the municipality, it is really focused in the direction of improving revenue streams for municipalities, but my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh made it clear that not every municipality believes that increasing development charges is the way to prosperity. Some have even gone the way of no development charges, and they saw the benefit of that. They saw three new different subdivisions grow that probably would have never been there. They saw a new industrial park, they saw new commercial areas, and this is with zero development charges.

Yet the bill is written in a way that you can only see growth if you see a growth in the development charges. People in the business world, when I go to the Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, they call that red tape. They call that a step in the wrong direction. Let us who are living in those municipalities decide. Don't set a bill that directs you into the direction of increasing those charges.

In the second part of the bill, that has to do with the Planning Act, there is a big, big hole, and that big hole is inclusionary zoning. Throughout the province, we need more social housing. I'm sure that each and every one of us has had families in our office, often feeling very, very uncomfortable, talking to us about housing that they just can't afford, and the hardship it brings on their families, on their loved ones and on their children because they just can't afford it, and what they have to do without, because so much of their paycheque goes towards paying rent.

Here is an opportunity to grow our social housing stock without having to spend a single penny from the province. Mandate, in Bill 73, inclusionary zoning, which means that every time you have construction of more than 20 units, at least one of them will be for social housing. Whether they are condos or big apartment buildings would make no difference. Every time you have 20 new units, you get one more unit of social housing. Make it the law. Make our neighbourhoods more inclusive, so that we have social housing throughout all of our neighbourhoods, so that they are there, they become available, they become accessible and they become used.

This bill needs to be amended. The Liberals have to understand that when you make changes to a bill, when you open up a bill, you cannot let opportunities like that go by. Their member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore had a bill that did just that, and we all voted in favour of this. Let's move on with that, Speaker.

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

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1757.

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