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**Journal  
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**Wednesday 30 September 2015**

**Mercredi 30 septembre 2015**

Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 30 September 2015

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 30 septembre 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**STRENGTHENING CONSUMER  
PROTECTION AND ELECTRICITY  
SYSTEM OVERSIGHT ACT, 2015  
LOI DE 2015 POUR RENFORCER  
LA PROTECTION DES CONSOMMATEURS  
ET LA SURVEILLANCE  
DU RÉSEAU D'ÉLECTRICITÉ**

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 24, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 112, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 and the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 / *Projet de loi 112, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2010 sur la protection des consommateurs d'énergie et la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Twenty-six minutes? I thought I would get a new 60; that the clock would start over. Apparently, that's not the way it works here. I got up early looking forward to the opportunity to speak to this bill a little longer.

On Thursday, we heard the speech from the Minister of Energy; he barely spoke about Bill 112. Yesterday, I got the same speech in the Standing Committee on Estimates. He must be trying to perfect it and hoping that if he says it often enough, over and over again, he's actually going to believe it himself. I guarantee you, Mr. Speaker—oh, a new Speaker; that was quick—that he doesn't believe what he's saying himself. But I think he's got instructions from the corner office on the second floor: "Minister, you have to say this speech over and over again at least three or four times a day for the next few weeks so that you will believe it."

For the new members here, they just hook them up to the intravenous Kool-Aid and they've got them all fixed up within a couple of weeks.

I want to talk about some of the things the minister has been talking about in addition to Bill 112, which he never spoke about—he had an hour to speak, and he used about 15 minutes, maybe. I don't even know if he mentioned

the bill, and I question whether he's even read the bill. He's been so busy reciting his speech trying to defend the government's sale of Hydro One and how the Ontario Energy Board is going to protect consumers.

Bill 112 is essentially a consumer protection bill. But I guess I would ask the question: If this government is so bent on protecting the consumer, where in the name of Sam Hill have they been for the last 12 years, when energy rates in this province have tripled and skyrocketed to the highest in North America?

When you consider consumer energy bills and compare them with Quebec or Manitoba—and my colleague here from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has made a pretty big deal and done a lot of research on the cost of hydro in Manitoba and Quebec relative to here in Ontario. He's not talking through his hat or taking these numbers out of the air like the government likes to do. He has actually done the analysis. He has compared specific, legitimate energy bills from Manitoba versus those here in Ontario, and specific, legitimate energy bills from Quebec and those here in Ontario. There are bills with people's names on them. They're not a reasonable facsimile generated out of the minister's office. They are actual people in Manitoba with real homes and real businesses, and people in Quebec with real homes and real businesses. He has compared them: One of them is about half the price of ours and one of them is about two thirds the price of ours.

So, if you want to talk about consumer protection, the best consumer protection you can give is to give the consumer a fair deal, one that they can afford, so that they can live their lives in comfort and dignity. I say "dignity" when I'm talking about the elderly in this province. When you think about—for some of us—your parents in the 1970s and how many of your parents built a home in the 1970s. Remember the 1970s?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I do.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, you would.

Yes, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs would remember the 1970s. He would probably remember the 1930s.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, I remember plenty of the 1970s; some of it I'm trying to forget.

If you look at the 1970s and how many of your people, who might have been parents—or in the case of the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, it might have been his brothers or sisters who were building homes in the 1970s. All the rage then was, "You know what? You've got to heat that thing electrically. Get them electric baseboards in there because, you know what? You're not going to

have to worry about a furnace. You're not going to have to worry about an oil tank and fuel or gas lines. You're just going to have them nice, cute, little electric baseboards down at the bottom of the walls in your home. You're just going to take that little dial and just turn it up, because, you see, electricity is virtually free. It's so cheap, you can't even put a price on it. So heat your homes electrically."

Do you remember the water heaters? I won't sing the song in the Legislature here, but you remember the Cascade 40 water heater? You know, you've got to heat your water—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, we've started off with little outbursts, have we? I believe the Speaker instructed the House that we are going to go through the Chair, and I see that's slipping again. So let's get back on track, folks. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, if there was any implication that I'm not going through the Chair, I apologize. If it seems I turn—I just like to keep my feet moving because if I stand in one place too often, I might grow roots.

I just want to say, Speaker, do you remember those Cascade 40 ads about how important it was to get that water heated electrically? One of the ads said, "You know, with the new Cascade 40 electric water heater, you can virtually leave your tap running forever and never run out of hot water." What a bunch of baloney that was. But, again—

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** You watch too much TV.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I say to the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex, it's not how much TV you watch, it's how much you pay attention. I'm going to give you some advice, through the Speaker, of course: Always pay attention and you might learn something. I hope you're paying attention now.

0910

That water heater—you could leave it running forever, because the story behind it was, and the message behind it was, that electricity is so cheap in this province it's not even worth putting a price on. It's not even worth the trouble of pricing it, it's so cheap. And that's what happened. So now those same people who built those homes in the 1970s are aged. They need that heat on a lot more than they did in the 1970s when they might have been in their thirties or forties, and now they're in their seventies or eighties. When those cold winter days come and they have to turn that thermostat up—it's killing them. Not because they're freezing to death, but because it's a choice between freezing to death or going broke because of the energy policies of this government.

I say to the minister, if you are so bent and determined to protect the consumer, where the heck have you been? Where have you been in the last 12 years when the consumer has been crying for some relief on energy rates? They're crying while you turn your back on them, close your eyes and ignore their pleas, because every time we

turn around, your policies have driven the price of electricity up.

Mark my words, Speaker—and I say this through you directly: On November 1, when that great protector at the Ontario Energy Board that has been so protective of consumers that we've seen electricity rates triple under this government, because it can't do a darn thing to prevent the rises in electricity rates when it is faced with the policies of this government—mark my words: On November 1, when hydro rates get set again, they're going up. They're going up because of this insane policy of the government that they invoked under the Green Energy Act—the cost of electricity, the contracts they have signed.

In June alone—I know that on that side of the House, when you say the name "Parker Gallant," they all roll their eyes. But this guy is an educated banker; he's retired. He decided he didn't like what he was seeing on his electricity bills. He is speaking for all people, everyone in Ontario, when he challenges the government not only on their policies, but on the way that they dispense information and whether or not they are truthful when they tell the stories about their energy rates here in Ontario.

Parker Gallant had a piece in the paper that said in June, Ontario lost—I may get the figure just a little bit wrong, so forgive me if I'm not 100% accurate, because I didn't write it down; I'm just going by my memory, because I try to pay attention—\$224 million. Some \$224 million in June alone was the price that Ontario paid to give away electricity to other jurisdictions.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Yeah, right.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I see the man from Newmarket has awakened and he says, "Yeah, right." Well, if he's got some other figures, let's hear them.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** "Yeah, you're right." Oh, I see. Yes, right. You're confirming what I—through you—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** To the Speaker—not through the Speaker; to the Speaker. And you got off the track again, didn't you?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's the heckling.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, get that car back on the road. Thanks.

Go ahead.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** To you, Speaker, I want to thank the member from Newmarket-Aurora for confirming what I said about \$224 million being wasted in June alone by giving away energy to other jurisdictions.

Let's talk a little bit about Bill 112, which the minister chose not to do. This is, again, the government trying to purport themselves as the other great protector of the consumer. They're bringing in this legislation that bans door-to-door sales in the electricity and energy contract business—in that sector. Nobody is arguing that. In fact, the sector itself has pretty much gone away from door-to-door because they recognize the challenges they've had in that, and they recognize that when you have rogue salespeople you're going to have problems. I spoke a little bit about that when I spoke earlier, on Thursday.

But some of the steps they're taking, quite frankly, go too far. If they want to actually do that, then they might as well just support Sarah Campbell's bill—pardon me, the member from Kenora–Rainy River. I think her bill is Bill 111, if I'm not mistaken. Her bill would just ban the practice altogether of having energy contracts available for sale.

They don't want to do that, you see—and that's why the member from Kenora–Rainy River's bill is not going to go anywhere—because it would be subject to an amazingly long, protracted, painful court challenge; you'd be outlawing the rights of people to make a living. But the government may as well do that, because that's essentially what they are doing here. But they want to do it by stealth and trickery and chicanery, as opposed to doing it straight out.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I might suggest that is about as far away from parliamentary language as you can get.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That may be your opinion. If I think he goes over the borderline I'll let him know. He's treading on the line right now with those ones.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Certainly I don't think it's ever been against the law to tread on the line, Speaker, has it?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It is when the Speaker thinks it is.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Apparently you don't at this juncture. I appreciate that. I'm saying this to the Speaker.

A part of this bill that really doesn't make sense to me is the 20-day cooling-off period. We understood that with electricity contracts there had to be a verification call and all of this and stuff like that. But this 20-day cooling-off period applies to any product that an energy re-marketer would offer to consumers—and the Minister of the Environment would love this—even an energy-saving, greenhouse-gas cutting, high-tech thermostat that would reduce use because it would make energy use in the home or business more efficient. If I wanted to buy one of those under this legislation, I would have to wait 20 days, and I'd have to go through a verification call with 26 actual questions I would have to answer. You know what most people would be saying? “You can take that thermostat, and you know where you can”—yes, exactly.

Essentially, what they are saying is, “You're not going to be in business.” So why don't they just do that? But you see, that's not the way this government works. It doesn't like to do things in a transparent and open and accountable way. That's what they talk about but, my good gosh, all we have to mention is the word “Sudbury.” Energy prices in Sudbury are just as wrong as they are across the rest of the parts of Ontario. Those poor people in Sudbury who have to pay a high price for energy are paying a high price in the news today, because their lovely city is in the news because of a bribery scandal. They'd love to be talking about electricity rates in Sudbury, but all anybody wants to talk about is the bribery scandal.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Pursuant to standing order 23(b)(i), I ask the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, through the Speaker, to return to the subject of the marketing of energy contracts door to door, which is exactly what this bill is discussing.

While the member is free to have his opinions about whatever issue he feels may be germane, they do not relate to the subject of the bill at hand.

**0920**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you for your point of order. If it would have been a little shorter, it would have been nice, but I get the drift.

The member will refrain from drifting again: next time, last time.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, I do my very best to stay on the subject. But I think it is fair to say that from time to time there are overlapping interests. I appreciate when you intervene and say that we have to move back to that. I appreciate that, and I will accept gratefully those admonishments. I don't think it's necessary to get the point of order all the time that the member from Mississauga–Streetsville likes to take a week to deliver—and talk slowly so that it takes more of my time off the clock.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Be careful, that's a point of order, on making an allegation—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yeah, yeah, allegations. Yes.

I'll tell you what they do care about in Sudbury. They wonder if some of these energy producers in the province that are getting rich on \$50 billion in global adjustment that is going into the pockets in the last 10 years—some people would call that bribery. So I guess for the people in Sudbury, they figure there are two bribery scandals going on: one on the energy rates and one, of course, that Mr. Olivier was offered a bribe to not run as a candidate in the election.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We can say “bribery” because the OPP have said it's bribery.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay, my patience is thinning.

A point of order from the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, if the member will actually read the standing orders, he will know that he is presuming the outcome of a legal proceeding and making an unsubstantiated allegation. That's at least two points of order that the member has drifted from, in addition to straying, once again, from the topic of the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Mississauga–Streetsville likes to bring up points of order, but he also likes to yell after he's done. That won't be accepted.

The member will not drift again.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing the fact that the member from Missis-

sauga—Streetsville really just likes to create discord in the House as opposed to actually making legitimate—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I've been up a lot. I'm getting tired of getting up and down like at a football game.

The member—you're not exactly innocent from causing aggravation. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's interesting that you would use the term "innocent," Speaker. In this day and age, the funny thing about the Liberal government on the other side is that they presume—you see it in the Premier every time she drifts on a subject. She presumes that if someone has not been proven guilty, then they absolutely are innocent of any wrongdoing whatsoever. That's the premise she seems to work on when conducting business in her office.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If you don't get back to the subject we are discussing, I'll be moving on to a new person. Last warning.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I accept that warning. I fully understand the authority that you have on these matters.

Bill 112, An Act to amend the Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010 and the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998: We understand the genesis of this legislation. I was here in 2010 when they made the changes. Everybody agreed with it. That act passed with the support of all parties in the House because it did the right thing. It prevented—what's the word?—in my opinion, the wrongful acts that were taking place at the door in marketing retail energy contracts. I think we kind of took care of that.

We're okay with banning the practice of selling an energy contract at the door. As I said, we're concerned about some of the measures in this bill that are designed to portray the government as being so caring about the consumer that they're going to bring in the strongest possible legislation that they can to protect them, when, in fact, all they're really trying to do—you'll see. You will see when this passes. It's going to pass, I suspect, although I haven't had the word from the third party at this point. The critic for the third party will speak later. I believe he's speaking this morning on the bill. I suspect that the third party is going to support this legislation. They may not support this legislation. Depending on what a good job the government does—well, they've got the majority. The bill is going to pass. I'm quite certain the bill is going to pass.

You're going to see these Liberal ministers going out there, and big press releases saying, "The Liberal government stands up, protecting consumers in Ontario once again with the strongest consumer protection law in the country when it comes to retail energy contracts." And they're going to blah blah blah, but you won't have any part in their talking about what they've done to the Ontario energy consumer over the past 12 years. In fact, they walk around like they've got blinders on or their heads are in the clouds, thinking somehow these energy rates rose as a result of—gosh, I can't even think of the

process. The process of osmosis, maybe; I don't know. Somehow they just, on their own, rose in the province of Ontario, and the government policies had nothing to do with it.

I recall, Speaker, when George Smitherman—remember George Smitherman?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Oh, yes.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, yes. George knew everything, and you knew he was going to save the world. He was going to save the world, and he brought in the Green Energy Act. Speaker, do you remember that?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Drifting.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'm not drifting at all. You talk about consumer protection.

In 2009, the Liberals, with their massive majority, passed the Green Energy Act. I might say that they had the support of the third party on that as well.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** How do we get these majorities? Out of osmosis?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The smugness of the Minister of the Environment: Now he's saying, "How did we get these majorities?" You just keep up that smugness. One of these days you'll get your comeuppance, because you know what? You can't rule this province forever—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Don't give me the hand manoeuvres or anything. My patience is gone. And the minister knows better than to get into a one-on-one.

You have one minute, thank goodness. Go.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I feel like they're opening the gates of the gallows here, Speaker. What's going on? I have one minute. I'm glad that I received that last minute, because if I didn't, I probably wouldn't be around for questions and comments either. I'm sorry about that.

I do want to say that we're going to support this legislation and we'll look for amendments, because it does go too far. It does go too far, and the government needs to know that. They don't have to go too far in order to protect the consumer.

In fact, what they're doing here with this bill is they're taking away legitimate consumer choice. You can balance the two. This government doesn't seem to get it. They're so fixated with putting a pretend image about themselves out there that they're forgetting the reality of what's going on in the world.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's a pleasure to rise to contribute to this debate this morning.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke always starts us off in the morning with his debates. He's very electrified. I notice that you are working very hard when the member is speaking. It's great that we're all engaged in today's debate.

This bill talks about consumer protection, Speaker. It's not news to anyone here how many calls we get in our constituency offices about these door-to-door sales con-

tracts that people enter into, that they really had no idea what they were signing.

**0930**

I had an example—actually, one of the constituents from not my riding but London North Centre. They came to me last year, and I didn't have the heart to say that I couldn't help them, so I personally sat and helped these constituents. I called the energy company. They were very co-operative, believe it or not, to actually cancel the contract with the constituents. But it was a mess, and these people were devastated. They had to pay these high electrical bills, thinking that when they signed this contract, they were going to get competitive rates. It didn't turn out that way.

In this bill, they talk about the cooling-off period. Ten days originally was the cooling-off; it is now 20 days. It's never going to be enough, because people don't understand these contracts. The bill that's been presented by our member from Kenora–Rainy River is really the bill that we should be supporting in order to protect consumers and make it transparent—what rates look like when you enter a contract. There shouldn't be that practice allowed.

I just want to thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for giving us his entertaining debate this morning, and I look forward to further debate on this bill.

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

**Hon. David Zimmer:** What has been lost sight of, at least in this morning's debate so far, is that this piece of legislation dealing with the Ontario Energy Board really has to be considered in the context of the plan to broaden the ownership of Hydro One. We're all aware of the initiative behind and the reasons for broadening the ownership of Hydro One.

Hand in hand with broadening the ownership of Hydro One is the reform of or changes to the OEB. With the ownership of Hydro One being broadened, it's very important that the OEB play a strong oversight role.

It sets out the OEB's mandate to act as a fair, impartial and independent regulator. It will provide the OEB with a really robust set of powers to oversee and regulate the energy sector, and that includes the following: setting just and reasonable rates; enforcing its oversight powers through the ability to impose penalties for non-compliance; and licensing market participants, including electricity transmitters and distributors, and imposing various licensing conditions; for instance, service and reliability standards.

The OMB will now have—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** OEB.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** —OEB—an increased responsibility, and this is important, for reviewing and approving applications for mergers, acquisitions, and divestures for transmission or distribution of assets, to ensure that ratepayers are not harmed as a result of this transaction.

So you see, you have to take the new OEB Act and consider it in the context of what we're trying to do with

broadening the ownership of Hydro One. It's to ensure protection and fairness.

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

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Stormont.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It's been a lovely morning. Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker. I see you're having a mental lapse here, I suppose, listening to some of the debate this morning.

I always enjoy listening to my colleague here from Renfrew talking about some of the issues, especially when it comes to hydro. I mean, could there be a bigger mess under this government—\$50 billion over the last 10 years in global adjustment. People would not have believed that. Of course, this government doesn't want anybody to believe that.

I was watching the press interview last year after the Auditor General's release. Their only tactic was to say that she wasn't qualified to make decisions. This is where this government has gone. It's an embarrassment. Even they're embarrassed; they're trying to discredit some of the officers of the House. Of course, we see that in the last budget, when they took away their powers, so these things won't happen again. These officers come out and really talk about some of the ridiculous policies that we've seen in the last 10 years—\$224 million in June alone.

These are embarrassing figures, and the ratepayers are paying them. The member from London–Fanshawe talked about the constituent who is desperate to look for savings and, of course, signing up for contracts they shouldn't get into.

Seniors are desperate for savings in the electricity field. What used to be, as the member from Renfrew said, an extremely cheap commodity in this province is now off the wall. It's out of reach. People are walking in, turning off their heat in the wintertime, trying to save heat so they can go out and buy some food. That's where we've gone under this Green Energy Act and with the policies. It's the biggest question I get every day. It's no wonder when this government comes out to rural Ontario, they actually get booed and have issues.

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

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** It's a pleasure to be in the House this morning. I want to talk to our House leader and make sure I'm on House duty every time the member from Pembroke–Nipissing—what is your—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Renfrew.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Renfrew, sorry. He never disappoints. He brings it with a level of intensity rarely seen in here. However, I still am no further educated on the bill than I was before he spoke. Thankfully, our caucus experts provide us with these wonderful briefing notes that I've been going through and, with a cursory look at this, the bill seems to show that there's a little bit of sugar-coating on the topside, in the first part of the bill, dealing with door-to-door salespeople when it comes

to energy sales—those folks who show up at your door, typically younger students who are struggling, looking for work. They jump into these door-to-door sales positions. They are trained to be very aggressive. They are trained to get into your house, get your bill, take a look at it, talk you into circles and have you sign, and get out the door with a contract signed. People have no idea what they have just signed. There's no question that these types of processes and the predatory aspect of it have to be reined in.

However, the back side of this bill, the second part, deals with an enormously complex issue in the Ontario Energy Board. Essentially, the government is paving the way, clearing the road, for large, private multinationals to circumvent the OEB process when it comes to new transmission lines. This is, I would imagine, an ask out of the negotiations that have been taking place behind closed doors between the government and the proponents of private energy, something that will lessen public scrutiny, lessen oversight, lessen transparency, but most definitely increase hydro rates for ratepayers and businesses all across the province of Ontario. We're very fearful of this bill, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I want to thank the member from London–Fanshawe, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and the member for Essex for their comments. I say to the member for Essex, if he thought he learned little about the bill in my speech, he should have been here for the minister's one on Thursday.

Part of the reason that they brought in this bill—it's a bit of cover, too, with the Hydro One sale. They're making sure that they've got themselves covered on the Hydro One sale, but first, they want what they see as a positive piece of legislation for consumers, and secondly, part of the changes to the Ontario Energy Board Act are to help them with the sale of Hydro One and allow it to conduct itself should it become privatized, or should at least a portion of it be sold to private interests.

Again, as I say, this is designed to get some positive stuff out there because the government has botched the sale of Hydro One so badly—so badly that most recent polls have 83% of the public opposing the sale of Hydro One. When 83% of the public oppose something—it's often you'll find 47% opposed, 46% are favour and 5% don't care, or 38% are opposed, 37% are in favour and 15% don't care, whatever. But in this case, when the numbers are so staggering and stark—over 80% of the people polled said they don't believe the province should sell Hydro One. They are doing everything they can to give themselves a smokescreen and to cloud the issue when it comes to Hydro One.

We have an opposition day motion today and it's calling for transparency and accountability and a release of the analysis and the figures, and I hope that these folks over on the other side of this aisle actually do the right thing for a change and support that motion.

**0940**

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's a pleasure to be able to address the matter of Bill 112, the government's—and I say this with some irony—Strengthening Consumer Protection and Electricity System Oversight Act, 2015.

I will address some of the main points in this bill. I will then look at what was said by the minister when he spoke to this House a short while ago. I'll touch on some of the dangers that are implicit in the government's drive to bypass the Ontario Energy Board.

First, I want to say that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke got it pretty right when he said that this government is taking a beating on the sale of Hydro One. It has intended to try and surround that sale with as much camouflage as it possibly can. If you listen to the Minister of Energy, he speaks about the power of the Ontario Energy Board to control prices because he well knows that this ill-fated venture to privatize utilities—not just Hydro One, but to allow privatization across this province—will mean much higher hydro rates. His only shield—his only argument—is that he has a regulator that can actually take action to protect consumers. In this act, he substantially undermines that regulator, and in saying that the regulator can control prices, he ignores the reality of what has happened in Ontario for the last 12 years and he ignores the reality of what happens when you have privatized energy systems.

There are two bills here: One presents itself as a consumer protection act, and this is clearly where the government wants to focus; the second is the whole question of the regulator and how that regulator will operate in the future.

This bill will give the government explicit authority to bypass the regulator when it brings forward new transmission projects. These projects could be very expensive; they could be totally cost-ineffective. They could be projects that are driven politically by a cabinet that is responding to economic demands of big players in the energy sector.

We were in estimates yesterday, and I asked the minister about whether Hydro One would be allowed to go ahead with a transmission project given the cabinet push for a transmission project and the sidelining of the Ontario Energy Board. What he said to me was interesting. He didn't think we should necessarily think it would be Hydro One that would build these transmission projects. There may well be other companies, power players in North America, maybe power players globally, that want to put in transmission lines. As you may well be aware, Speaker, the way the market, the electricity system, works in Ontario, is that, if a company like Hydro One puts in a transmission project, its ability to profit goes up. It gets to reclaim about 9% profit on that. Whether it's helpful to the people of this province, whether it's good for the energy system or the electricity system is, by the way, not central to this system.



What we've had historically—and I will admit there have been flaws and there will be flaws with anything that we have in terms of energy provision—is a system where governments have tried to focus on meeting the needs of the economy and the people of Ontario. That is going away. This government has decided that what's good for investors is something that Ontario will have to live with. This bill will aid this government in privatizing Hydro One and allowing privatization of utilities across Ontario.

Right now, the government has all the power it needs to initiate and champion priority transmission projects. What it's doing with this bill is giving the power to bypass the OEB and bypass public hearings where consumer advocates and those who represent major power companies, major manufacturing and processing companies would no longer have the opportunity to question whether or not the project was needed in the first place. We've had that happen already here in Ontario. I'll get into that later when we talk about smart meters and how the government completely bypassed the regulatory process and burdened us with a \$2-billion bill for smart meters that produce virtually no savings and don't allow the government to meet its target for reducing peak demand. The government has already gone down this road. It has shown that it can't be trusted to bring forward policies that are allowed to be tested in open hearings with people who know the field, who can question and take apart bad projects.

The OEB is required to review and approve private sales of transmission companies to make sure they're in the public interest. If the government is sincere about wanting to strengthen the OEB's ability to protect consumers, it would take the whole sale of Hydro One and put it before the OEB for a hearing. Now frankly, I don't think it should be privatizing it at all—not a moment, not a bit should be privatized. But even using the government's own logic, a sale like this needs to be put into a public forum where it can be dissected and those who propose it can actually be forced to put the numbers on the table to show that it's valid or not valid, and be forced to defend their theories about how a private market works in the electricity sector. But they're not going to do that. They're going to let this whole thing go through, and after all the horses have left the barn, kick the barn door closed and say, "Well, God, we took care of that."

Bill 112 also proposes to change how consumer interests are represented at the OEB hearings. We have to ask—because it's not spelled out in this legislation—exactly what they have in mind. Is the government getting ready to stop paying money to people who intervene on the part of consumers and put in their own little government-owned watchdog? It's an open question, not answered in the legislation or in the numerous discussions that are taking place more widely.

The bill attempts to reform the electricity retailing industry, but this is a predatory industry, and it is one that needs to be phased out, not reformed. My colleague from Kenora–Rainy River introduced a bill to phase out these

predatory retailers. If the government really wants to protect consumers, they should follow the member from Kenora–Rainy River's private member's bill. We debated this a number of years ago—it might have been five or six years ago—the last time the Electricity Consumer Protection Act was before us. Our caucus at the time said to the government, "You can't reform these guys. You can only shut down an operation that doesn't bring benefit to the people of Ontario. That's the way to protect consumers." They wouldn't go there. They brought in rules that they said would protect consumers. We said at the time, "You'll be back because this won't protect consumers." It hasn't.

These further steps won't protect consumers. They may remove some irritation; that remains to be seen. But frankly, when you have an industry that only exists to make money for those people who are selling energy—that does not, in fact, reduce the bills for consumers; in fact, it adds to their monthly expenses—then you have to ask, why on earth does this exist? What's the utility, what's the use to the people of Ontario who are already facing severe problems trying to pay their hydro bills?

Customers sign up with these retailers, often just through pressure. The people who have come to me in the past who have signed up are typically seniors or people who don't have English as their first language, people who are more likely to be intimidated or confused by a salesperson at the door. They think that they may be getting some protection from future bill increases. They are not. The contracts are for the price of power only. They don't protect against increases in the cost of delivery, regulatory charges, the global adjustment or other non-energy charges.

#### 0950

In their recent review of this industry, the Ontario Energy Board could not find a single fixed-rate contract that saved the consumer any money. But at the same time, energy retailers impose a cost on all of us, because we have to pay for the policing and enforcement of the rules that are in place now. Bill 112 would increase those regulatory and enforcement costs. Predatory industries are operating not in the interests of the people of Ontario, and their time to go has come.

I want to move over to the comments made by the Minister of Energy when he spoke to this bill on the 24th of September. I have to say it has been interesting this morning, watching members of the government go after the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, because the minister ranged just as widely when he spoke. In fact, I was talking to that member the other day, and we both agreed that what the minister had done was set a framework where you could basically bring in anything when you discuss this bill, because there were no constraints on where he was meandering—none.

I want to speak first to one of the phrases that this government has been using, and I'll quote the minister: "This legislation moves forward one of the vital pillars of our electricity modernization plan announced last spring...."

Now, “modernization plan” is a code word, or a waffle word, that we have learned over the last few years. That’s what privatization is when the Liberals talk about it before an election. They talk about modernization. They mean “selling it off”; getting rid of the public interest, bringing investors into the mix so that decisions about our future are made by how much an investor can make, not by what we need to build our economy and run our homes.

The minister went on: “As announced in April, our government is broadening the ownership of Hydro One....” Right now, Hydro One is owned by the people of Ontario. Across this province, from Kenora to Kingston, from Timmins to Windsor, the people of Ontario, as a body, own this corporation, and their ownership is going to be cut back dramatically so that a number of large corporations will be able to buy chunks of our electricity system.

So when the minister talks about broadening ownership, he’s talking about cutting out the people of Ontario and giving opportunities to investors on the London Stock Exchange, New York Stock Exchange, Tokyo—take your pick—people who operate globally, to buy up our electricity system. He’s taking what has been our birthright, something built by generations before us, and making sure that companies all over the world can own and control it. “Broadening ownership” can only be seen as an Orwellian term when it is used to describe what is going on with the sale of Hydro One.

The minister talks about the need to get money for infrastructure. I want to point out to you, Speaker, because I’ve listened to the Premier—she has talked about spending \$130 billion over a decade. This sale is projected to bring in \$4 billion.

Speaker, you don’t sell the plumbing in your house so that you can get wiring. You don’t sell your garage so you can pave the driveway. You don’t do those kinds of things, because the operation of a household, or the operation of an economy, requires many vital pieces of infrastructure. The ownership of Hydro One is vital to our ability to set our own course economically for the future.

I like the way the minister put this: “It is important to recognize that these billions of dollars in proceeds will pay down debt and pay for infrastructure, and that will be done without borrowing, without adding new taxes or without cutting important programs.”

It’s magic. How is it that government previously—how is it that during the Second World War, when Canada and Ontario were facing a great challenge on a global scale, we didn’t have to sell off our vital infrastructure? How is it that through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, when we were building much of modern Ontario’s infrastructure, we weren’t selling off these assets?

Sir Adam Beck, the person who spearheaded the development of Ontario Hydro and spearheaded the development of public power in this province, was well aware that there was huge money to be made in the privatization of the hydro system. He warned consistently that there would be attacks to break off pieces of that

system so some investors could make a fortune, and so the people of Ontario would be forced to pay more.

I have to ask, if selling off Hydro One is so good—it’s magic; there’s no debt; there are no taxes; it’s fabulous—is it going to stop there? Ontario Power Generation? I’m sure you could get a buck for that. This building? It’s got great real estate potential. There could be a lot of condos in this building if you designed it right. Are we going to sell off schools? Are we going to sell off roads? Ah, roads: Yes, the government is a bit sensitive about roads. They saw what happened when the Tories sold off the 407.

However, Speaker, let’s look at the reality. This government is selling off critical pieces of infrastructure, undermining our ability to control our future, and talking on and on and on about the need to get this money. This doesn’t make sense.

The minister says the Ontario Energy Board is a central part of this focus on protecting the public interest, that the independent agency has the power to approve or disapprove rate increases. This board doesn’t review the Independent Electricity System Operator. It didn’t review the Ontario Power Authority when it made power deals with Bruce Power, which impact the electricity rate. They didn’t review the gas plants in Oakville or Mississauga, which had a substantial impact on our energy rates. This government has tried to make as much of the electricity system outside of the regulatory framework as possible. They want to continue on in this bill.

Speaker, this government has a huge public relations problem. More than three quarters of the people in this province oppose the sale of Hydro One and it is doing everything it can, putting out as much smoke as it can, putting mirrors up on street corners, lots of smoke and mirrors to try and confuse people about what’s really happening.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** No.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It is indeed, sir. It is indeed, Mr. Speaker.

The minister went on: “We have heard a great deal of baseless, unmitigated spin by members opposite that a utility like Hydro One, as its ownership is broadened”—that Orwellian word again—“would see rates rise as a result of broadening ownership.”

This government doesn’t understand, even though the facts are there to be seen, what privatization does to hydro rates.

Nova Scotia privatized its hydro system in 1992. It’s looking at the highest rates in the country, up there, contending with Ontario. Ontario has seen a sharp increase in its rates since the Liberals came to power in 2003 because it continued the privatization schemes of the Conservatives. What it did was slice by slice by slice. Ontario Power Generation couldn’t build any new generation, they couldn’t engage in renewable energy, and all the new power generation that came on stream was privatized—or virtually all, Speaker. We’ve seen the rates go up. We know they’re going to go up even more dramatically.

This government has ignored the track record of the last 12 years and the impact of privatization on Ontario. They've ignored the impact outside the province. When we look at Manitoba or Quebec, where the people and governments of those provinces have wisely retained ownership of the electricity system in their own hands, they have the lowest hydro rates in Canada.

Speaker, there's always a mix of technology and ownership when you talk about electricity rates, but the big difference between us, Quebec and Manitoba is this ongoing privatization and another great leap forward for private ownership of Ontario's infrastructure.

**1000**

The minister talked about the Ontario Energy Board and how in the last six months there had been a reduction in the cost of gas that was sold by Enbridge and Union Gas. Now, you may well be aware of this, Speaker; I'm hopeful that the minister is: Those distribution utilities, Enbridge and Union Gas, charge for their delivery. They charge for their system of pipes, compressors and their service.

Generally speaking, though, they pass through the cost of gas. They passed through a whopping increase two years ago, and as the price of gas has declined, they are bringing down that price. It wasn't that the Ontario Energy Board went and rattled their cages and said, "You've got to cut your prices." No, there was already a system in place, a pass-through of costs, and that is all we saw with the decision earlier this year. If the minister is saying that the Ontario Energy Board has the power to roll back all those increases, he's ignoring the reality on the ground with the OEB.

Interestingly, as well, the minister says, "To help streamline and clarify the ability of utilities to expand their business beyond electricity delivery, this legislation will provide greater scope to engage in non-utility activities and to participate in the many services related to the energy sector." Well, Speaker, as I understand it right now, these utilities can engage in conservation programs. They can put in place renewable power. A number of them have put in their own solar panels. But this is a far more problematic step.

A number of months ago, the minister was quoted as saying that one of the good things that may come out of this is that these increasingly privatized utilities will also be able to take over water delivery. The idea that we've privatized electricity and water, two essential services in this society, is one that people should recoil from, one that they should be shocked by. But this government is planning to change the tax rules so that smaller utilities can be purchased by Hydro One, this looming large, private giant in the electricity system, or by other privatized utilities or utilities that become privatized, bringing in private capital, expanding beyond electricity into water delivery.

That has got to make people pause. It has got to make people very concerned. If you ask people in Ontario if they want Hydro One privatized, 83% are against. If you suggested—and this is a reasonable conclusion from the

trajectory this government is going on—that there will be privatization of water services as well, you would be a lot closer to 100%.

This government wants Hydro One and other utilities to engage in a wide variety of business activities. The difficulty for any regulator is going to be separating which money gets assigned where—because it may well be that a private electricity company, a utility like Hydro One, decides to get into a venture in the United States. In fact, that has been contemplated in a number of discussions we've heard in this House. Let's say it's losing money there—can't make money on that. Very sharp accountants can bump up rates in Ontario to help pay for those losses elsewhere, and it can be extraordinarily difficult for a regulator to disentangle that whole mess.

This government is continuing to make life more difficult for Ontarians, and the privatization of Hydro One is going to be a significant part of that making life more difficult. This bill is designed to increase the cover that the government needs to proceed with its plans.

I want to note that the minister also says, "In the busy age of social media and technological change, customers are more immediately able to offer feedback. At present, the ways in which the Ontario Energy Board relates to consumer groups—residential, commercial and industrial—are locked in a rigid process designed for a different era."

Right now, when a utility comes before the OEB with a proposal for a rate increase, school boards are allowed to attend and challenge that rate increase, because it will reduce the amount of money available for education. People who represent low-income energy consumers can go before the energy board and challenge the increase. Major power consumers can go before the board and challenge the increase. No system is perfect; trials are not perfect, but a hearing in an open tribunal, where the decision-makers can be questioned under oath, where documents can be demanded, presented, reviewed and dissected, gives us the best chance of getting at the truth. The government is setting things up so that that open hearing process, making it possible for advocates to actually fight on behalf of consumers, may well be set aside. Speaker, that should worry you; it should worry your constituents.

I want to just say, the last point that the minister made was "the legislation before you today would give cabinet the power to designate key transmission corridors to expedite their construction." As I said at the beginning, the Ontario Energy Board would no longer be able to question whether a given transmission corridor made sense for the system as a whole. They would only be able to determine whether or not the money spent to build this new corridor was reasonable or unreasonable.

Speaker, you've been around the block a few times. You know that very powerful companies have the ability to speak to cabinet, speak to governments, and say to them, "We desperately need this, and, you know what, if we don't get this, we may have to cut back on employment or investment in other parts of Ontario." So, in fact,

the potential is, with a very large private Hydro One, controlled very likely by interests across North America and elsewhere in the world, they may well come to the cabinet and say, “We need this transmission project. We don’t want to have to justify whether or not it’s viable. We don’t want to have to justify whether or not it’s necessary. Our investors need the return. You override the OEB. Use that bypass mechanism that you put forward in the legislation, and let us build it so we can make more money in this province.” It would be very, very difficult for the province to resist. That is the danger in this bill.

The minister’s comments were useful, as I have noted, but I also want to talk a little more on background. Right now, under section 92 of the Ontario Energy Board Act, no one may construct a transmission or distribution line without OEB approval, which in most cases requires a public hearing and formal review. This approval under section 96 of the act must be given if the OEB believes the project is “in the public interest.” That’s the standard. That’s our concern—not does this make the investors and Hydro One richer, but is it in the public interest?

Subsection 96(2) of the act defines the public interest as “the interests of consumers with respect to prices and the ... reliability and quality of electricity service.” In some cases, the public interest may also be considered with respect to “the promotion of the use of renewable energy sources.”

This bill allows the cabinet to bypass this public interest needs test by making an order declaring that a transmission line is needed as a priority project. If such a designation is made, Bill 112 says that the OEB “shall accept that the construction, expansion or reinforcement is needed when forming its opinion under section 96.” This is an extraordinary power and an extraordinary removal of public oversight.

I want to talk about an example from recent history in Ontario that shows why you need to actually have a review of a business case for a project like this go before the Ontario Energy Board, and I’ll talk about the smart meters. Some may have seen the 2014 annual report from the Office of the Auditor General. She did a very solid job of tracking the history of this project, noting how billions were spent with no savings realized, targets for reduction in peak demand not met and how the public interest was not served, whereas in other jurisdictions, people did look carefully at what was being done and did take a pass.

#### 1010

The Auditor General writes, “The government announced smart metering in April 2004, and shortly thereafter the Minister of Energy issued a directive to the OEB under the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998. The directive required the OEB to develop an implementation plan to achieve the government’s targets of 800,000 smart meter installations by 2007 and complete coverage for all residential and small business ratepayers by 2010.” Not only was the Ontario Energy Board bypassed when it should have been doing an assessment, a business case

for whether or not smart meters made sense in Ontario, made sense for ratepayers, they became part of the planning process. Their ability to actually critically assess what was going on was removed—“No hearing, and you’re now part of the implementation, not the regulation.”

That, Speaker, was a very substantial problem. The ministry didn’t complete any cost-benefit analysis or business case prior to making the decision to mandate the installation of smart meters. Zip, zero, nada—no business case before they engaged in a project that has cost \$2 billion. Other jurisdictions, including British Columbia, Germany, Britain and Australia, all assessed the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of their smart metering programs before they went forward.

In Germany, the government decided that in fact, for a small consumer, someone who’s got a one- or two-bedroom house, it just didn’t make sense. They didn’t consume enough energy for the smart meter to pay for itself, as opposed to giving them a loan or a grant to upgrade their insulation, upgrade their windows, ensuring that they actually could consume less energy. Germany didn’t do what we did. They didn’t take on this massive debt. They are putting in some smart meters, but they’re rolling them out where it makes economic sense. In Ontario, the Liberal government bypassed the Ontario Energy Board, didn’t do the analysis, and so we got stuck.

There was a subsequent cost-benefit analysis done. The Auditor General writes, “After the government announced the rollout of smart metering in April 2004, the ministry” then—I’m adding the word “then”—“prepared a cost-benefit analysis of smart metering, and submitted it to cabinet in October 2005.” This is after the instructions were given to get rolling. “However, the analysis was flawed; its projected net benefits of approximately \$600 million over 15 years were significantly overstated by at least \$512 million because it excluded an annual net increase in the projected operating costs of distribution companies.” In other words, the net benefits should have been reflected as only \$88 million over 15 years.

There’s a big difference between half a billion and \$80 million, and the people in our ridings, the people in your riding, are paying the cost of a decision that didn’t involve the kind of business case analysis you need when you spend money to buy a house or buy a car. They didn’t even do that.

This province has been stuck with this extraordinarily expensive system that the Auditor General says didn’t deliver the goods. She noted that 77,000 ratepayers with smart meters paid set rather than time-of-use rates because they were paying money to some electricity retailer. Their consumption patterns were about the same as those on time-of-use rates. In other words, the impact of the smart meters was minimal.

Speaker, there’s much more that I have to say. I’ve got a little time left. I know that we’re coming to the end of this period this morning. I thank you for your indulgence.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd like to thank the member from Toronto–Danforth. His entire presentation came toward me. Well done.

This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.  
*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I'm really excited to announce that members of Ontario's Hispanic community will be joining us for question period today: Mirtha Coronel; Dr. Felipe Gonzalez, who is the president of the Hispanic Pastors Association of Canada; Pastor Jose Arias and his wife, Pastor Deysi Arias; and Pastor Morena Monico.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It's with great pleasure and honour, actually, that I welcome my sister Irene Lowell to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Following up with your suggestion from yesterday, I know that Jamie Lim from the Ontario Forest Industries Association will be here today, so we welcome her.

We also invite people to the reception tonight here in the building with the Ontario Forest Industries Association.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'm pleased to welcome, from home, two wonderful people, John and Lou Cull. It's great to have you here today.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm very pleased to welcome my new constituency assistant, all the way from London, Matt Gilbert.

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** Il me fait un grand plaisir d'avoir deux invitées aujourd'hui : M<sup>me</sup> Andrée Myette et M<sup>me</sup> Anick Tremblay. Je connais très bien les parents de M<sup>me</sup> Myette, et je voudrais la présenter ici en Chambre. M<sup>me</sup> Tremblay travaille pour moi. Donc, une grande bienvenue.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Merci beaucoup.

Further introductions? The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you'll bear with me, I have several introductions. Of course, our page captain today is Jaleelah Ammar, and her mother, Marie, and brother Hasan are in the gallery joining us today.

I'm also happy to welcome Faces and Voices of Recovery, or FAVOR, to question period today. FAVOR Canada helps individuals who are struggling with addiction, and their families, connect to the right services and supports. Please join me as we help FAVOR celebrate and recognize September as Recovery Month.

I'd also like to introduce Paul Zimmerman, who is father to my extremely talented policy adviser—she wrote this, but she is extremely talented—Shannon Zimmerman. Welcome to question period.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** We had seven members of our party this morning at breakfast with the Ontario Forest Industries Association downtown. They're having a re-

ception this afternoon from 4 until 7, and I'd invite all members to join the forestry industry at their reception.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** On behalf of the Minister of Finance, Charles Sousa, the MPP from Mississauga South, it gives me great pleasure to introduce in the House today our page captain Duha Muhammad and her mother, Nora Hindy. She's here in our members' gallery. Welcome.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It gives me great pleasure to recognize my friend Craig Brockwell, and Carole from OEFTA, in the gallery on this side. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome. Further introductions?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce special guests who are in your gallery, actually, because one of them needed accessibility: Amani Oakley and Neil Oakley, who are two lawyers, as well as Felicity Polera and Brian Pittana, who are here at Queen's Park to talk about the payments to injured people from doctors and the CMPA.

### ORAL QUESTIONS

#### BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Premier. The Premier has failed to hold herself to the high standard expected from the Premier's office. The Premier has failed to hold the staff to the highest standard that Ontario deserves. Two thirds of Ontarians believe her deputy chief of staff, Pat Sorbara, should resign because of the alleged bribery.

Ms. Sorbara is on tape, telling Mr. Olivier that if he stepped down as the Sudbury candidate, the government would be very open to a job in the const office for him.

Sorbara also said, "Whether it's a full-time or"—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Sorry for the interruption. There are debates going on between both sides, and it needs to stop while the questions and the answers are being put.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Ms. Sorbara also said that "whether it's a full-time or a part-time job in a const office, whether it is appointments, supports or commissions," there are a lot of options.

Mr. Speaker, did the Premier instruct Pat Sorbara to offer Olivier an array of options?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Excuse me. We will be starting quickly with individuals. It stops.

Carry on, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I have said in this Legislature a number

of times, I have been open with the Legislature, I've been open with the media and I've been open with the public about the allegations related to the Sudbury by-election.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Just answer—

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

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have answered 102 questions on the subject in this House. I have addressed those questions in dozens of interactions with the media.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds–Grenville, come to order.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There is an issue that is now before the courts and we're going to let that process unfold as it should.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Premier: The Premier has stated over and over again that there won't be criminal charges against Pat Sorbara. But frankly, that's nothing to celebrate, because the people of Ontario already know, and they've reached their own conclusions after listening to those tapes, after hearing Ms. Sorbara say, "You're being asked to do the ... favour I guess to make the sacrifice this time, and that also can go a long way, in terms of opening up options...."

Mr. Speaker, we'll stop asking the questions if the Premier actually says yes or no. Did the Premier instruct Pat Sorbara—yes or no—to ask Mr. Olivier to step aside for those options?

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I did not ask for any comments when I asked you to be seated.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just so that we're clear—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew and the member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —Pat Sorbara's counsel informed her that she will not be facing any criminal charges. I understand that the Elections Ontario investigation is ongoing. We have co-operated with the investigation and we will continue to do that.

I would refer the Leader of the Opposition to Hansard between February 17 and April 2. I answered questions over and over again.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Answer the question: Yes or no.

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

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have answered questions 102 times. Again, I refer the Leader of the Opposition to between February 17 and April 2 of this year. Hansard is there, and he can see my comments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I understand the seriousness of this situation, and I'm going to try to make sure that we get questions and answers put properly. For those who are trying to signal to others to continue to

make the House even more raucous, I will name you. I want this place to have those questions and answers done properly.

Final supplementary?

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Premier: If Pat Sorbara isn't being charged criminally, then there is no excuse for evading these questions.

We know the Premier called Andrew Olivier on December 11. We know Pat Sorbara called Andrew Olivier on December 12. We know that on December 10, Pat Sorbara called the deputy director of HR, in the Premier's office, responsible for public appointments.

**1040**

It's clear the Premier will not answer any questions in the House about her role in this scandal. Will the Premier at least confirm, if she is subpoenaed at a trial—if you're not going to answer here, will you answer at the trial of the criminal corruption of your office?

*Interjections.*

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

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I have answered questions in this House; I've answered questions in the media. I will continue to co-operate with authorities, as I have done. There is a matter before the courts and I'm not going to comment further on it, Mr. Speaker.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Of the many municipal resolutions passed with regard to the proposed sale of Hydro One, one reads as follows:

"Whereas in spite of widespread public concern about the impact on Ontario citizens of privatizing Hydro One, the government of Ontario will go ahead with the sale;

"Whereas residents of Ottawa depend on Hydro One for their supply of electricity, and there is a general public interest in retaining Hydro One as a publicly owned asset;

"Therefore be it resolved that the city of Ottawa express its concern to the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Environment and Energy about the negative consequences of privatizing Hydro One;...."

The Minister of Energy supported this resolution in Ottawa as mayor in 2002. Can the minister explain why he's no longer prepared to stand up and fight for the people of Ottawa about their concern over this fire sale?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Comparing the effort that the Progressive Conservatives did in 2002 to try to privatize Hydro One to what we're doing now is trying to compare a pig to an angel. The reality is, they did it illegally. They got shut down because they did it illegally. Secondly, they were doing 100% of it and 100% of control was be-

ing given away. It's absolutely different from what we're doing now.

What we're doing now is, we're doing it in a way that is responsible. We are doing it in a way that's protecting the public interest, and we're doing it in a way that will invest in infrastructure. Mr. Speaker—

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** That government in 2002 was investing \$2 billion a year on average in infrastructure. We have been investing \$11.5 billion—

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure the Minister of Energy believes his own answer, so let's go a little further.

The story doesn't end there. In fact, the resolution was also supported by the Attorney General, who was an Ottawa city councillor at the time.

To speak specifically to the resolution, it says: "Be it further resolved that the city of Ottawa urge the government of Ontario not to proceed with any further proposals relating to the sale of provincially owned electricity assets before there has been an opportunity"—and hear this—"an opportunity for a full and public debate on this issue, both in the Legislature and elsewhere;...."

We all know there's been no consultation outside the Legislature this time around. Can the Minister of Energy explain why previously he supported public consultation outside the Legislature and he doesn't today?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister of Energy?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I can't believe the words coming out of the mouth of the Leader of the Opposition. I want to re-create some words that came out of his mouth. Number one, "I generally believe 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." And for the member for Carleton-Mississippi Mills: "We need to look seriously at privatizing the delivery of electricity."

His predecessor, Mr. Hudak, in effect adopted a policy, a white paper on the energy sector, Mr. Speaker. That white paper proposed broadening the ownership of Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One. Not only that, it said that they would rely on the Ontario Energy Board to protect rates.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Minister of Energy: Because I appreciate his words so much on this topic, I'll read further on in this resolution:

"Be it further resolved that the city of Ottawa urge the government of Ontario to conduct a broad public consultation process on the sale of provincially owned electricity assets, that this consultation process include the views of municipalities which depend on Hydro One for

the transmission of power, and that the results of this consultation process be made known to the public before the provincial government proceeds with any further plans...."

Well, Mr. Speaker, despite the pledge of the former mayor of Ottawa to include and engage municipalities, 166 municipalities have passed resolutions opposing the sale, largely because of a lack of public consultation. How can the Minister of Energy say "engage" and "consult" municipalities—and today say you don't care?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Speaker, if my government was trying to privatize Hydro One the way they were trying to privatize Hydro One, I would object too.

On the other hand, we have been very open, very transparent, in terms of what our agenda is. Again, I will say, we have made it very, very clear that we are going to repurpose our assets, including energy assets and Hydro One. Moving forward, we are going to do exactly that for the right reason. The reason is that every municipality across Canada is in an infrastructure deficit. Our Premier—with a 10-year program of \$130 billion, of which the proceeds will contribute, is a smart thing to do for our community, for quality of life and to keep our economy competitive.

#### BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier has said that Mr. Lougheed "is not government or Liberal Party staff. He speaks for himself." But when Mr. Lougheed, in a recorded conversation, said, "I come to you on behalf of the Premier," there certainly seems to be more to the story.

This statement by the Premier is already on the public record, so there's no reason why she can't answer the question as to whether or not she still stands by that statement: that Mr. Lougheed wasn't acting on her instructions or the instructions of anybody else in her office.

My question to the Premier is: Does she still stand by that statement?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I will say, again, that I refer the leader of the third party to Hansard. I have answered 102—I guess it's, I don't know, 105 questions now on this issue. I will continue to co-operate with the authorities.

The fact is, this is a matter that is now before the courts, and I'm not going to comment further.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier said yesterday as well that she's answered all the questions that she's been asked by the opposition, but there have always been giant holes in her story, Speaker. The Premier says that Mr. Lougheed was a rogue operative, but the tapes of conversations with Mr. Lougheed and the Premier's deputy chief of staff tell a story of backroom Liberal conver-

sations that involved the Premier and the member for Sudbury.

Does this Premier still stand by her statement that Mr. Loughheed was not acting on her instructions or the instructions of anybody else in her office?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** There is a process that is taking place outside of this place. This is a matter now that is before the courts, and I'm not going to comment further.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** If we look back through political history, we see time and time again that it isn't the crime that gets the politician in trouble, it's the cover-up. The Premier didn't used to be so shy about absolving herself of any responsibility, but now that she might be sworn in before a judge, she doesn't seem so sure anymore.

The Premier shouldn't have to hide behind the courts to tell the people of Ontario that nothing her office did was illegal. Will the Premier tell Ontarians that nothing she or members of her staff did was against the law, or is she worried that this would be proven to be untrue in a court of law?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Although I'm not asking for this, I just want to caution about the word usage. I know that it was in a general sense, but it was close, so I just remind the member.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.  
1050

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Again, Speaker, I'm going to remind the leader of the third party—in fact, all members in this House—not to solicit members in the Legislature to interfere in a judicial proceeding. Now, I know the leader of the third party takes offence at me telling her what the rules are, but these are constitutional rules, and we should abide by them. I refer her to a Supreme Court decision from 1997, the Tobiass case, and this is what the Supreme Court noted in that decision: “A well-known rule of parliamentary practice holds that no member of the House of Commons should comment upon any matter that is pending before the courts.”

She may not take my word for it. She should take the advice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and should not interfere in a matter which is pending before the courts.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Premier. The Premier promised Ontarians that the process of selling off Hydro One would be “transparent, professional and independently validated.” Yet, they've removed all oversight of the process and refused to provide any evidence whatsoever that the sale will actually benefit Ontarians.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** That's not true at all. Stop making things up.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Economic Development.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It was bad enough that the Premier wasn't up front about her plan to sell off Hydro One with the public, but now she's refusing to be transparent, refusing to be professional and refusing the independent validation that she had promised Ontarians.

Will this Premier actually be transparent and allow for public consultations and an independent review of the sell-off of Hydro One before the first tranche is sold?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I think it's very important to be clear about how we are broadening the ownership of Hydro One and the transparency and oversight that we put in place, so I just want to go through that, Mr. Speaker. This plan was included in our 2014 budget and the 2014 platform. The advisory council issued an interim report and a final report. Both were publicly available. We held a technical briefing for both opposition parties and the media. To further ensure transparency, we brought in Denis Desautels, who's a former AG of Canada, to oversee the IPO.

The member opposite knows that publicly traded companies are subject to different oversight rules and mechanisms than crown corporations and that Hydro One will be regulated by the Ontario Business Corporations Act, the Ontario Securities Act and the Ontario Energy Board. So there are protections in place in terms of oversight, and we have provided for transparency.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This Premier, in this chamber, promised to be open and transparent, but not only do we have the same old Liberal behaviour, this Premier has taken arrogance to new heights in the province of Ontario. The Attorney General, the Ombudsman, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and the five other independent officers of the Legislature all criticized the sell-off of Hydro One because the Premier has removed the sale from public scrutiny. This is an unprecedented action by Ontarians' watchdogs, and it's been completely ignored by this arrogant Premier.

Will the Premier allow for public consultations and an independent review of the sell-off of Hydro One before the first tranche goes on to the market?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the leader of the third party actually knows that there are different mechanisms in place for the new Hydro One company, because it's a different kind of company.

*Interjection.*

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

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It will be regulated differently. It will continue to be regulated by the Ontario Energy Board, but it will also be regulated by the Ontario Business Corporations Act and the Ontario Securities Act. They will have to file information with the Ontario Securities Commission and they will have to disclose information in accordance with that. But as I say, the Ontario Energy Board will continue to have oversight and will approve electricity rates.



So the leader of the third party, I know, is not happy with this move. But the leader of the third party has absolutely no plan. She has put forward no proposals for how she would build the infrastructure that we are building as a result of taking this action and others. We know that every municipality, every community in this province needs infrastructure building. That's why we're moving on this.

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

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier of this province should not have to cover the sale of Hydro One behind such a veil of secrecy. If she believes that the sell-off will benefit Ontario families and businesses, then she should be comfortable giving Ontarians the transparency that she had promised them. But since the Premier has removed all independent oversight, it's not surprising that the people of Ontario are fearful that they're getting a raw deal with this sale.

Whether it's the Sudbury bribery scandal or the sell-off of Hydro One, it seems that this Premier does all of her governing in a Liberal backroom away from public scrutiny.

Will this Premier do the right thing and allow for public consultation or an independent review of the sell-off of Hydro One before it's sold?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I've gone through the measures we took to be clear with the people of Ontario that we were going to be looking at assets and that we were going to be repurposing assets in order to be able to invest in infrastructure—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, apparently what we said and did was clear enough that even the leader of the third party understood what was being contemplated. On July 9, 2014, she said, "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'"

She knew that there was a continuum of possibilities that we were looking at—and that is exactly what we did. We looked at possibilities, and we made a decision. In fact, the leader of the third party ran on the fiscal plan that we had put forward.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. In the House and in committee yesterday, the minister stated repeatedly that the government would retain control over Hydro One. However, when the minister was asked about Ontario jobs that could be lost to overseas companies due to the Hydro One sale, his answer was that he couldn't speculate on what the new board at Hydro One or the future boards at Hydro One would do.

So when Ontarians are worried about rate hikes, the minister will brag about how much control the province has, but when he's pressed about potential job losses, suddenly the board has all the control at Hydro One. Either the minister has the control to save these people's jobs from executives who have a history of offshoring jobs to other countries, or he doesn't have the control that he keeps telling the House and committee that he has. Why is he trying to have it both ways?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The government has taken the necessary steps to ensure that Hydro One jobs remain here in Ontario. While Hydro One will operate like any other public company, reporting to its board of directors and shareholders, as part of budget 2014, our government amended the Electricity Act to ensure that head office, control centres and the operation of transmission and distribution systems remain right here in Ontario.

The infrastructure investment that has become possible as a result of broadening ownership will support 110,000 jobs per year right here in the province, with projects such as roads, bridges, transit systems, schools and hospitals across the province. In addition, Bill 112, which I understand that party is going to support, perhaps with some amendments, gives additional power to the Ontario Energy Board to protect the interests of the people of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Minister, that's a bogus answer and you know it. What has happened in other jurisdictions where the CEO has come in is that he has cleaned out the headquarters. Sure, the shell remains; it's a skeleton crew that remains at that headquarters building while IT jobs are shipped overseas.

The Hydro One sale terminates the province's offshoring agreement, which protects the jobs of hundreds of people at energy in London, in Markham and right here in Toronto. Before the sale is even closed, the province's directive that their jobs must stay in Ontario is history. It's gone. That's hundreds of good middle-class jobs on the block because this government can't sell Hydro One fast enough.

Why is the government in such a hurry to let Hydro One's new high-priced executives, making \$4 million a year in compensation, move a bunch of good-paying, middle-class jobs out of this province, possibly even to other countries?

1100

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I really want to focus on his words saying that it's so much in a hurry. In 2013, we made it very, very clear before the election that we were going to repurpose assets. There was a good reason for that. It's because there is an asset infrastructure deficit across the country. It's about \$120 billion.

In Ontario, this Premier is going to solve that problem with a 10-year program, \$130 billion, and the repurposing of Hydro One with billions of dollars that will be invested in infrastructure. That's billions of dollars that will not come from borrowing, that will not come from taxes,

that will not come from reducing programs. It's responsible fiscal management and I support it 100%.

#### BY-ELECTION IN SUDBURY

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** My question, through you, Speaker, is to the Premier.

When you read the transcripts of both Sorbara and Lougheed, it is pretty clear that there are conversations going on within the Premier's office about how to approach Mr. Olivier in regard to getting him to step down from running as a candidate. Mr. Lougheed is clear, Mrs. Sorbara is clear, and you're implicated in regard to what they have to say about what happened.

So here's the question: Can you confirm, yes or no, that you're involved in this particular issue and you're actually the one who ordered these people to go and make the approach to Mr. Olivier and ask him to step down?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Again, the member for Timmins—James Bay can try every which way to interfere in a court proceeding. We're not going to engage in that unconstitutional practice. As I mentioned earlier, the Supreme Court has noted that there is a parliamentary practice not to speak to matters that are pending before the courts. Let me quote the Honourable Marc Rosenberg from his academic article entitled "The Attorney General and the Prosecution Function on the Twenty-First Century." This is what he said:

"The parameters of independence in the prosecution function are also firmly established, and have achieved the status of a constitutional convention...."

"As Professor Edwards said, 'It is now well recognized that any practice savouring of political pressure, either by the executive or Parliament, being brought to bear upon the law officers when engaged in reaching a decision in any particular case, is unconstitutional and is to be avoided at all costs.'"

I urge the member to avoid this unconstitutional urge at all costs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Again, Mr. Speaker, through you to the Premier: It is pretty clear that Mrs. Sorbara said that the Premier didn't want Mr. Olivier to think that he was in Glenn's shadow, so she turned around and offered Mr. Olivier whatever it is that he would most want to do, just like Mr. Lougheed had done before that. We know that the Premier, Mrs. Sorbara, Mr. Lougheed and the member from Sudbury were all making plans behind the scenes. The recordings say that too. To me, this was a coordinated plan executed from out of the Premier's office.

My question to the Premier is this: Who gave the order to offer Mr. Olivier a bribe?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I find it ironic the opposition often accuses the government of not answering the question and here, they're not listening to the answer and still continuing on with their prepared notes and urging the members of this House to break a constitutional convention.

Once again, this matter is before the courts. We're not going to engage in trying to answer questions. This is not a court of law. This matter has to be decided by the judge and these issues will come there.

Let me just also refer you to what Justice Linden said in the Ipperwash Inquiry:

"Governments should not be allowed to influence specific law enforcement decisions or specific operational decisions of the police. These decisions are legitimately within the scope of police expertise and discretion. Government intervention in these areas risks both the appearance and reality of partisan or inappropriate political influences affecting the administration of justice and the rule of law."

I once again urge the members opposite not to ask these questions because they're unconstitutional.

#### MINIMUM WAGE

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. Ontarians across the province continue to advocate for greater support for low- and middle-income earners. Minimum wage earners in my community of Beaches—East York are working hard to provide for their needs each and every day and they want to continue to be able to do so. But minimum wage earners are particularly hard hit by inflationary pressures in Ontario and they are trying to keep up.

Now, I know that many of my constituents were pleased with the increase in the minimum wage to \$11 in 2014 and others have argued for immediate increases to even \$15. But I understand that there will be changes to Ontario's minimum wage very shortly, based on the very predictable changes we introduced last year.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister please give us an update on any changes that are coming to the minimum wage in Ontario?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member for that excellent question. You will know that before we came into power the minimum wage was frozen in this province at \$6.85 for eight long years. We knew we could do better than that. As the member knows, I was proud to announce last year that we took the politics out of determining Ontario's minimum wage and we did this by annually tying that minimum wage increase to the rate of inflation.

The first increase following this legislation comes into effect tomorrow, Thursday, October 1. The general minimum wage will increase in this province from \$11 to \$11.25, making it the highest minimum wage of any province in this country. The minimum wage for students, for liquor servers, hunting and fishing guides and home workers will also increase. This is the ninth minimum wage increase since 2003 and it is part of our plan to make sure we have a fair society in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** This is of course extremely good news for all of Ontario and I want to say that I'm extremely proud of the work that this minister is doing in

order to balance the different interests between employers and employees. He's striking the right balance and we should all be supportive of that.

I'm also particularly proud of the work that our government has done, the hard work for those communities and those individuals who work very hard for themselves and their families, because these increases to the minimum wage do impact Ontarians across the province and will assist them in more ways than one.

As the minister mentioned, I remember when the minimum wage was stuck at \$6.85 for over eight years. I was a consultant in labour relations back in those days and we've come a long way since then. Thursday, the change will represent a 64% increase since those days, and some are still calling for additional change.

Through you to the minister, Speaker: How was this method of increasing the minimum wage arrived at and what makes it such a preferable method for going forward?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Speaker, my thanks again to the member for the question.

We've heard from experts, we've heard from workers, we've heard from business. They want stable and predictable increases to the minimum wage in this province. We've had recommendations from the Minimum Wage Advisory Panel and they advised the government on the best approach: to tie future minimum wage increases to inflation. And that's exactly what we've done.

What that means is that each and every year, our government will announce the new minimum wage on April 1. Businesses then have six months to prepare for that, for the new minimum wage which comes into effect on October 1, the same as it's doing this year. By doing this, we're helping the vulnerable workers in our society cope with increases in their own cost of living but we're providing predictability for Ontario businesses to plan for those payroll changes and ensuring we still have a strong economy in this province.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy.

Minister, despite massive public opposition to your plan to sell Hydro One, you seem unwilling to change your direction and provide Ontarians with the information they have every right to. Your government claims to be open and transparent, but the way you've conducted this sell-off of the crown jewel of our electricity system has shown that your words are empty and hollow.

Minister, you're nearing Damascus. You still have a chance to redeem yourself. Will you commit to the people of Ontario, the actual owners of Hydro One, to hold off on this fire sale so that they can thoroughly examine this deal and render their judgment at the ballot box?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** First of all, they did render their judgment at the ballot box. We won the last election on the basis of repurposing our assets.

In terms of information, the opposition, the public, in fact, has been provided a 320-page prospectus that sets out more detail than anybody has ever seen with respect to Hydro One.

We actually are going through estimates, where every dollar that's been spent in the ministry is under review and analysis by the opposition. Much of that has to do with the preparation and lead-up to the Hydro One project. Ed Clark, chair of the assets committee, has made himself available for extensive media interviews and answered all the questions five or six times in the minutest detail.

We have been sharing information. People knew that it was part of our agenda, and we're implementing a mandate that we have.

1110

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, for the minister to imply that they received a mandate to sell Hydro One in the 2014 election shows just how hopelessly arrogant this government has become.

Minister, the only reason you're going to sell Hydro One on the auction block is because the Premier has maxed out the provincial credit cards and she can't pay for infrastructure the way that every other Premier before her paid for infrastructure. That's why the people of Ontario universally—

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Finish, please.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That's why the people of Ontario universally oppose their plan to sell Hydro One. It does not pass the smell test. If it did, they would have campaigned vigorously on it during the 2014 general election, but they didn't because they knew it would be a bad deal for Ontario ratepayers.

Minister, if you're not willing to hold off on this fire sale, will you at least heed the call of our leader and the opposition and release all the reports and financial analysis to justify your dismantling of this vital public asset?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The member mentions the level of spending for infrastructure. I indicated in an earlier answer that that government averaged \$2 billion per year investment in infrastructure over the last three or four years of their term. We have been investing \$11.5 billion.

When it comes to the electricity sector, they left us with a deficit of electricity. They left us with a deficit, a declining amount of generation and transmission, and we had to invest \$34 billion to fix the mess they left us with.

#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** My question is for the Premier. Today, there's a media report that suggests this government has another SAMS outsourced computer problem on its hands. You'll recall the SAMS program sent out

incorrect social service payment amounts, or none at all, disrupting thousands of Ontarians' lives, people who badly need the assistance. You'll also recall, Mr. Speaker, that the minister responsible referred to the problem as a "small glitch," and the Premier likened the fix to re-booting your BlackBerry, an astonishing answer.

Today, we learned that a computer formatting error prevented the province from collecting sales tax on used car sales last May, resulting in lost revenue of over \$2 million.

An outside service provider that the government outsourced failed again. Is this government's appetite for privatizing government services so great that it can continue to make these costly mistakes?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question.

Unfortunately, there was an error that was created and, as a result, unreported taxes occurred and certain individuals didn't pay their fair share. Some Ontarians prior to the error did pay their full share—certainly thereafter they did. As a result, we've taken measures to inform those who were affected. We're going to have a number of individuals who are going to be available to them directly, and we've already taken the necessary steps to correct it so it doesn't happen again.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Again to the Premier: Already the minister responsible is saying he has full confidence in the private services sector and that this was an isolated incident. Meanwhile, anyone who in good faith purchased a used vehicle last May is now left on the hook. How many of these so-called isolated incidents does the public need to suffer from this government?

Will this government demand accountability from its friends in the private sector, or will the government again put its head in the sand? Does this government have a new excuse for what went wrong here, or will the minister's excuse be a gently used one?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Minister of Government Services.

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** We're obviously aware of the issue, and we have worked to correct that immediately.

The member opposite is referencing third-party providers. The reality is that the Ontario government doesn't determine the value of used vehicles in the province of Ontario. That's determined by industry and industry standards. We get that information on the value of these vehicles in terms of what we're supposed to be charging for tax for used vehicles in the province of Ontario. That information is given to us through industry. It's provided to the Ministry of Finance. There's an assessment made and that is entered into the computer database so that when individuals come in to purchase vehicles, register them, we are ensuring that they are paying the appropriate tax. This has not been a problem in the past; it was a problem for a brief period during the month of May. It was corrected immediately. We're reaching out, to resolve this issue, to residents.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** My question is for the minister responsible for women's issues. Earlier this week, the Canadian Securities Administrators released a report on the number of women on the boards of TSX-listed corporations and in senior executive roles. They found that while we have seen some progress on this important matter since January, companies are still under-utilizing the significant talent of women.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please update the House on the measures the Women's Directorate is taking to promote female leadership in the private sector?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member from Ottawa-Orléans because it's an important question. She's done tremendous work herself on boards and in the private sector, so I know she realizes the immense value of having women on corporate boards. Thank you for that.

As I think we all know, last December Ontario became the first Canadian jurisdiction to introduce comply-or-explain regulations for companies listed on the TSX. We did this to ensure that women are adequately represented in the executive suite.

We also know that this is very good for business. Companies without women on boards are missing out on a significant part of the talent pool.

Research tells us as well that gender diversity in corporate leadership is linked to improved governance and stronger performance on both financial and non-financial measures.

Just yesterday, I was so pleased to hear the CIBC announcing their own targets to increase women on their boards. That's fantastic news.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** J'aimerais remercier la ministre pour cette réponse.

Minister, Monday's report found that only 14% of companies on the Toronto Stock Exchange have adopted a formal policy for improving their proportion of women on boards. Out of the 772 companies, 65% decided to not adopt a written diversity policy. The remaining 21% either have an unwritten policy or disclose a general policy without provisions that relate to women. As a woman, a former businesswoman and someone who sat on numerous boards, I found this very troubling.

Minister, I also know that just yesterday, there was a round table to discuss progress on the representation of women on boards, held by the Ontario Securities Commission.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister outline the current approach that our government is taking to ensure positive change with respect to women on boards?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Minister of Finance, please.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Thank you to the minister responsible for women's issues and the member from Ottawa-Orléans for their leadership.

We appreciate Monday's report from the Canadian Securities Administrators and the leadership of the On-

tario Securities Commission with respect to yesterday's round table.

We know that more work needs to be done to enhance equality in corporate boards. Ontario, in fact, is the first jurisdiction to develop the comply-or-explain regulation, and several other provinces have followed our lead since its introduction in December 2014. It's because of this approach that we finally have better information on the number of women in corporate board positions, which will help us create policies to promote equality.

Our government is proud of the transparency this brings to corporate boardrooms, and we look forward to tracking further progress through future annual reports.

We know that a diversity and gender-equality increase in boards and in senior positions of management is not only good for our economy, it's best for the companies as well.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the energy minister. Nowhere have the effects of your unaffordable energy policy been felt more than northern Ontario. Our winters are longer and colder, and those who rely on electric heat are now paying hundreds of dollars more per month in order to stay warm. In some cases, northerners are paying more for their hydro bill than for their mortgage. For some, it's literally a choice of whether to heat or eat. Now, the Hydro One sale threatens to force those unaffordable hydro rates even higher.

How can this government, with any measure of conscience, be willing to force even more northerners into energy poverty?

1120

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The member knows that Hydro One cannot raise its own rates. He, like the third party, has been crossing the province saying that rates are going to skyrocket because of the broadening of ownership of Hydro One. The Ontario Energy Board controls rates. We've gone over that over and over again.

Last week, the Supreme Court of Canada confirmed the extent of power that the Ontario Energy Board has over rates. The rates are controlled for every LDC—for every utility—including Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation, Union Gas and Enbridge. The whole sector is controlled. The Supreme Court was very, very clear. The Supreme Court upheld the right of the Ontario Energy Board to ensure consumers pay just and reasonable rates for electricity, even if that means challenging Ontario Power Generation or any other utility on expenditures like collective bargaining labour agreements.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Nothing the minister just said helps address the problem. His words are cold comfort to northerners struggling to keep the lights on because of this government's disastrous energy policy.

Municipal councils all over the North, including several in my riding, have passed resolutions opposing the Hydro One sale. The news we revealed yesterday that

this government lost \$61 million on the Ontera sale gives northerners no confidence that this government can be trusted with the Hydro One sale.

Speaker, will the minister disclose all of the reports and financial analysis used to justify the Hydro One sale and provide proof it won't send the hydro rates of northerners any higher?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** In a previous answer I indicated those areas where there's been full disclosure and information provided. I refer to the mandate that this government has to repurpose assets, including the energy agencies.

There are programs for northern Ontario energy support, including the Northern Ontario Energy Credit. I wonder how many times the member has referred his constituents to that program. There's also very significant support—and northern Ontario on the industrial sector has among the lowest rates in North America.

Ontario is in the middle of the pack in North American jurisdictions in terms of energy prices. Higher jurisdiction rates include Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Florida, Massachusetts—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Prince Edward Island—and their 13 million residents?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Your time is up, and the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned.

New question.

#### PENSION PLANS

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** My question is to the Premier. On September 19, OLG locked out 1,000 workers across the province who are represented by Unifor. Workers at slots in Sudbury Downs as well as workers at Woodbine and in Brantford have been locked out. They have been negotiating with OLG to make sure that they get the pensions they paid for.

As this government moves ahead with more privatization, this time at OLG instead of Hydro, what these workers want is simple: They want to know that the pensions that they've been paying into for so long will be protected, the pensions that provide, in the Premier's own words, "a secure and predictable income in retirement."

Mr. Speaker, I want to know the same thing from the Premier: Why is your government allowing an attack on these Unifor workers' existing pensions as you move ahead with more reckless privatization schemes?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the question.

OLG respects the collective bargaining process. Of course we did endeavour to treat all employees fairly and respectfully. As can be appreciated, the OLG modernization is a complex transformation. Both the government and OLG are focused on getting it right in order to benefit all Ontarians. We require that the new service providers keep the employees for a period of 12 months at their

current locations and current positions and at the same rate of pay.

OLG is also requiring the service providers to continue to provide the same pension and benefits and also provide a registered pension plan for eligible employees after the 12-month period. OLG is prepared to go back to the bargaining table. We want to make certain, and remain hopeful, that all outstanding issues will be resolved as soon as possible.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** To the member: OLG locked them out; let's be clear on that.

This Premier talks a good game about supporting unions and the importance of pensions, but under her watch, we have seen nothing but disrespect for the pensions of hard-working Ontarians.

We are now seeing the same thing coming out of OLG—a refusal to recognize that these workers deserve to be treated fairly. This is after the Premier said, “The reward for a lifetime of hard work should not be poverty in your golden years.”

This lockout is having a devastating impact on these 1,000 families and their communities. When is the Premier going to step up and ensure that the OLG honours its pension obligations and doesn't try to sell its workers down the river with reckless privatizing schemes?

*Laughter.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** And I don't believe this is funny.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you, Minister?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member for that excellent question. Ontario, as he will know, has an excellent record of dispute resolution. Negotiations by their nature are tough, but in Ontario, 90% of all agreements are reached without either strike or lockout.

We encourage the employer in this case and the union, Unifor, to make every effort to resolve their differences at the bargaining table. We're confident still that by working together, the parties can reach a settlement, including the issues that the member has raised.

Speaker, the Ministry of Labour has a mediator involved in this issue. He's going to remain available to assist the parties at the bargaining table with the hopes of achieving a resolution to these issues right at the bargaining table, where they belong.

## FOREST INDUSTRY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. Ontario was, in many ways, built by the forest industry. Many heritage buildings in my riding of Cambridge were built from local pine and oak stands.

The sector continues to play a key role in Ontario's economy. In fact, MNRF employs fire rangers to protect Ontario's forests. Forestry supports 170,000 working families across Ontario and contributes \$11 billion to Ontario's economy each year.

I know that the forestry industry was one of the industries hardest hit by the recession and that since then, the forestry industry has been working to transform their operations to continue to meet the needs of an ever-evolving market.

Through you, Speaker: Can the minister please explain what his ministry is doing to support our Ontario forestry industry?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member for the question. She's right that in 2005-06, this particular industry was hammered by a series of variables that really did bring the industry to its knees for quite some time. In my home city of Thunder Bay, five or six mills right within the municipal boundary closed that had been long-time contributors to the economy of Thunder Bay, both pulp and papermills and sawmills.

There is some positive news now. The industry is coming back. We're harvesting about three million more cubic metres of fibre than we were some time ago, although it is still an industry that I would say is very much challenged.

Over the span of that last eight or 10 years, we have done a great deal to support the industry. I would reference one example—and only one—in the time allotted to me in the first question, where we have provided this year up to \$60 million of funding for roads programs in the province of Ontario for the forest industry. That brings that total to over \$600 million—just one program of support that we have brought forward for this particular initiative.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you, Minister, for your answer and your work on this file.

In the minister's mandate letter from the Premier, the minister was tasked with working with the forest industry, First Nations communities and other partners to ensure that crown forest resources are being put to their best use in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable fashion.

Ontario ranks among the leaders in the world on sustainable forest management, and approximately 80% of Ontario's forests are certified, which means that customers can have confidence that Ontario wood products meet third-party ecological, economic and social standards. This is important to Cherry Forest Products in Puslinch; near my community of Cambridge, which employs over 100 people.

Speaker, could the minister please explain what his ministry is doing to help promote Ontario forest products both inside and outside our province?

**1130**

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** This is an important and timely question, and I very much want to thank the member for raising it.

When our industry is challenged in regard to how they are harvesting forests in the province of Ontario, the industry is not only being challenged but, in fact, the government of Ontario is being challenged. If they're saying that industry is not harvesting sustainably, they're

saying that they're breaking the laws that exist in the province of Ontario.

We have regulation and legislation in the province of Ontario that is very significant. In fact, we would say that we are a world leader when it comes to how we harvest our forests here in the province of Ontario. Almost 80% of the forests in Ontario are third-party certified. We are a leader when it comes to that.

Along with my colleague Minister Lessard in Quebec, and others across the country, we are working with the customer base in New York City, Vancouver, Minneapolis and other jurisdictions to ensure that the customer base is aware of how sustainably we're managing and harvesting our forests here in the province of Ontario.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is for the minister responsible for seniors. In May 2002, there was a member who stood in this Legislature and said, "I want to remind the Premier today to hold on to this precious public resource, for once it has gone back to private hands, the public will never get it back. It is my call to the Premier not to privatize Hydro One...."

Could the minister tell us who said that and whether, for the sake of Ontario's seniors, he still believes it?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** This is a good question.

Let me give the facts: In 2002, we were addressing a particular issue raised in the House by former Premier McGuinty with respect to the sale, by the PC government, of 100% of Ontario Hydro, which would have meant another 407-style sale. I was speaking against that entire motion.

What we are trying to do today is completely different than what the PC government was willing to do in 2002: selling a fire sale of Ontario Hydro. This is totally different, and I was referring exactly to that.

*Interjections.*

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

Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Back to the minister for seniors: The minister didn't stop there; he repeated his statement in a press release. He called the sale of Hydro One a "grave mistake."

Today, the minister will speak on the International Day of Older Persons. If he wanted to show seniors he cared, he would stand by his statements about Hydro One. Instead, the Liberals' policies mean that seniors will have to choose between heating and eating.

When will this minister apologize to Ontario seniors?

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Thank goodness, Speaker, that because of our efforts working from the opposition, the then government of Ontario, the PC government, did not go through with the sale of Hydro —

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Two arguments going on on both sides is not helpful and it'll stop.

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** Thank goodness we didn't go through with the sale of Hydro the way they wanted to, otherwise it would have been another 99 years of a 407-style sale, which today we are paying for through our nose.

What we are planning to do today is completely different than what the PC government was doing in 2002. I was speaking in opposition to what they wanted to do: selling Hydro completely without reservation or concern for the people of Ontario. This is what I was speaking about. I was speaking on behalf of all the people of Ontario; I was speaking on behalf of the seniors of Ontario—

*Interjections.*

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

New question.

#### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Premier—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the members for their advice. I'll take care of the House.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Premier. Experts and community leaders are sounding the alarm that recent changes to the Partner Assault Response Program made without any meaningful consultation are putting women and children at risk. These changes run counter to the 2009 report of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council, which recommended that PAR be strengthened, not watered down.

Will the Premier stop ignoring the advice of experts and community leaders? Will she place a moratorium on any further cuts to PAR, and instead start listening to the voices of survivors, PAR providers, community service agencies and criminal justice professionals in reviewing the PAR Program?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Attorney General.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, let me say that the funding for the program has not been changed, and it has not been reduced. Our government is really, really determined to seriously address domestic violence. The Partner Assault Response Program is one part of our response to domestic violence. It provides court-mandated group education and counselling services for domestic violence offenders.

What has changed is that now it's a 12-session model, which allows the program to serve an additional 2,200 offenders per year, which is an increase in program capacity of more than 22%. This amendment has been made after wide consultation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** The 2009 report of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council, which I mentioned earlier, also recommends that PAR include differentiated responses to intervention, instead of a one-size-fits-all. This would help screen out violent offenders who shouldn't be

in the program, and it would also provide access to abusers who voluntarily want to change.

Why did the government choose to completely ignore the advice that was received in 2009 from experts and community leaders about ensuring that PAR would be an essential part of a coordinated and integrated response to violence against women?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** To the minister responsible for women's issues.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** As the Attorney General mentioned, domestic violence is a very serious problem in Ontario, and the PAR Program is a component of our coordinated response to domestic violence. I take this issue very seriously as the Ontario minister responsible for women's issues, and I want to highlight a number of initiatives that this government has implemented since 2004 to raise awareness of domestic violence and strengthen supports for the victims.

Most recently, as we all know, we adopted a permanent round table on sexual violence, assault and harassment. We have all sectors of domestic violence and sexual violence at that table, helping to guide the Sexual Violence Action Plan. We've also had a number of other specific initiatives related to domestic violence, around public education, training for front-line professionals, an employment training program for abused women and at-risk women, and a language interpreter program service.

#### TAMARA POMANSKI

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Etobicoke North on a point of order.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Respectfully, Speaker, I would like to invite all members of the House to join with me in saying farewell, goodbye and good luck to one of our very able table officers. Tamara Pomanski has ably served this Legislature for many years. She is leaving—I believe this week—for Winnipeg. She has helped me in my responsibilities as Chair of justice policy. I think we are now both veterans of almost a hundred meetings, and today, I believe, is her last day sitting at the table in the Legislature of Ontario.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Even though that's not actually a point of order, we really do welcome that. Congratulations on behalf of all of us, and we thank all our staff for the great work that they do.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Finance on a point of order.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I just want to take the opportunity to congratulate our page captain today, Duha Muhammad, who is here today with her mother, Nora Hindy, witnessing. Thank you very much, Nora.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no deferred votes, therefore this House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1140 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd like to introduce Elizabeth Venditti, who's in the gallery. She's from Carleton Place. I've had the opportunity to meet with her on a number of occasions. She has brought a petition today with regard to regulations on oral and maxillofacial surgeons to be read in by one of my colleagues here today. I'd just like to welcome her to the Legislature and congratulate her.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### JOHN D. BRADLEY

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's with a heavy heart that I rise today to offer my condolences and prayers to the family and friends of John D. Bradley, a trailblazer, if there ever was one, who left a lasting legacy on our whole region.

John grew up on a family farm in Dover and was an active citizen in the Chatham-Kent community for his entire life. John served his country proudly during World War II and continued to serve his community when he returned home. He basically built most of northeast Chatham. Projects such as the Thames Lea mall, the Wheels Inn, the development of the Birdland subdivision, Thames Towers, the Union Gas building, the Country Kitchen restaurant and the Holiday Inn are all part of his legacy.

John never gave up on Chatham. He saw an opportunity where others saw a loss. John and his two brothers developed the Wheels Inn out of the old Progressive Welders factory. That's a long time ago, Speaker. I might add, I grew up right around that area, and I remember it very, very well. In operation for 37 years, the facility was extensively expanded to include the Wheels Fitness and Racquet Club, the Wheels Country Spa, the Wheels Bowling Centre and the Wild Zone amusement park.

While passionate about business, John was perhaps even more passionate about his community. In 1990, he founded the Chatham Kent Community Foundation, which now gives hundreds of thousands of dollars to local charities. He's a strong supporter of Ducks Unlimited, following in the footsteps of his father Bruce when it came to wildlife conservation. And to show how much he meant to the municipality, they named the John D. Bradley Convention Centre in his honour.

His proud and honest spirit embodied, he will never be forgotten. He was a man who did all he could to build a community, in every sense. Chatham-Kent will surely miss one of its favourites.

Thank you, Speaker, for allowing me to continue with this. I appreciate that.

##### MARTY GERVAIS

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Speaker, because of a bend in the river, the city of Detroit is actually due north of the city of Windsor. I know it's hard for some folks to



picture that, but my friend Marty Gervais is Windsor's Poet Laureate, and here's his poem Upside Down:

It's not a happy face  
 this shoreline of ours,  
 maybe it's because  
 we're upside down  
 looking north instead of south  
 like the rest of the country  
 maybe we haven't learned  
 to smile so readily—  
 our weakness betrayed  
 in that frown  
 I heard this first  
 From the nuns in Riverside  
 At the school two blocks  
 South of the river  
 And with my buddies,  
 We'd slip down  
 Past the heavy sewer grates  
 And wend our way  
 Underground  
 down to the shoreline  
 soaken ankles, wet shoes and pant legs  
 and emerge wide-eyed  
 to Detroit's dark smoke-rising signals  
 that blackened the blue sky  
 We were a band of boys pretending  
 to be Tecumseh or Simon Girty  
 or John Wayne or Gene Autry  
 The nuns in Riverside  
 Said we were  
 The upside down people  
 So we did our crazy cartwheels  
 along the solitary riverbank  
 saluting the Americans to the north

Speaker, Marty has invited five other Poets Laureate to a special reading event at Willistead Manor in Windsor on the 12th of November—save the date. I invite all members of the Legislature to join us, to see the value in my private member's bill to create the position of Poet Laureate for Ontario.

#### JANE STREET HUB

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I am pleased to rise in the House today to speak about the Jane Street Hub in my riding of York South–Weston, which celebrated its fifth anniversary just this past week.

This project has been funded by the government of Ontario and United Way Toronto, and has now become an integral part of the community. It is a one-stop centre for health and social services, which benefits residents of the Weston, Mount Dennis and Trethewey neighbourhoods and surrounding areas.

As an MPP, it is sometimes hard to see a project from start to finish. It has been my pleasure to be part of the Jane Street Hub project since its initial stages, from

drawings to development of operations and, now, to a flourishing hub where six different community organizations have partnered together. Those include Unison Health and Community Services, Macaulay Child Development Centre, Midaynta Community Services, North York Community House and Yorktown Child and Family Centre. These non-profit organizations provide a wide range of invaluable services to those in need, and they are all under this one roof for the benefit and convenience of our community.

The hub also provides space available for community meetings, including the use of a kitchen that residents' groups, non-profit organizations and others utilize.

I'm very proud to have the Jane Street Hub located in York South–Weston.

#### BEAR CONTROL

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Communities in Nipissing are continuing to struggle with the problem of nuisance bears. They note that there continues to be a large number of human encounters annually, which tie up police resources and personnel, costing local taxpayers significant dollars.

Municipalities know that MNR is currently assessing the success of the spring bear hunt pilot project, established in eight locations in the north. But they also note that the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters advises that the annual hunt is a successful wildlife management tool that minimizes human encounters and brings \$40 million in economic activity to Ontario.

The city of North Bay and the township of Chisholm passed resolutions this summer asking that the annual spring bear hunt be reinstated permanently and be allowed to continue during the province's review of the two-year pilot project.

I can tell you about my own personal experiences with bears coming onto my property in Corbeil. In fact, Patty and I just saw another bear while driving to a ratepayers' meeting a couple of Fridays ago.

To the minister I say this: You know that northerners know what the solution to this problem is. We've always known. It's time to listen.

#### HEROES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** There are heroes among us, Mr. Speaker.

Hero Ian Bos lost his father, Ted Bos, after a fight with cancer. On May 21, 2015, Ian embarked on a cross-country walk in memory of his father and in honour of the excellent care his father received. His walk is to raise awareness of end-of-life care and stimulate the difficult discussion for palliative care societies across Canada.

His message is simple: Support hospice palliative care in your community.

I walked 26 kilometres with this gentleman. We talked about family, dreams, his family, his dreams and the need for proper guardrails across the country—Ian knows what I'm talking about.

This man is walking across Canada: Ian's Walk for End of Life Care. Look it up. That's a hero.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario awarded Mindemoya general practitioner Dr. Andrew Stadnyk with the 2014 Outstanding Physician Award. With over 20,000 doctors in Ontario, only four doctors receive this significant award.

In a humble hero's reply, he said, "I just find it a little awkward when there are so many other doctors across the island and province who are more deserving."

Dr. Stadnyk, along with his superhero sidekick Dr. Nick Jeeves, saved what has now been a thriving hospital in Mindemoya, and they have mentored a team of health care professionals who are all heroes in my book.

Dr. Stadnyk, you are hero to so many.

Sometimes heroes must remain anonymous, but like any caped crusader who swoops in to save the day, the township of Assiginack has a super local garden hero who donated an entire harvest to the local food bank. A truck and trailer filled with locally grown produce is greatly appreciated by area families in need.

Thank you, Assiginack super local garden hero, whoever you are. You saved the day.

#### THINK OUTSIDE THE CAR

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I rise in the House today because it's time for all of us to "Think Outside the Car," and my riding of Burlington is embracing this opportunity. Our mayor, Rick Goldring, has launched a social media campaign to promote alternative transportation this fall, to help facilitate a greener, healthier and less congested Burlington.

1510

In my riding, 90% of all trips are made by car. In 2011, 50% of daily trips in Burlington were five kilometres or less. That's slightly higher than the national average of 40% of all trips, and it's only a 20-minute bike ride.

The city of Burlington's Think Outside the Car Challenge began on September 15, shortly after students returned to school, and will run until October 30. In fact, the launch event was held at a high school in my riding, M.M. Robinson. Many of the students at M.M. walk or ride their bikes to school, and they are led and encouraged by their very enthusiastic teacher, Geoff Sheppard.

We know that approximately 40% of urban air pollution is generated by the transportation sector and that obesity is a rising problem in our province. Alternative transit like cycling, walking or public transit reduces air pollution, improves physical health and helps to build a more safe and connected community.

As a regular GO train commuter and cyclist, I think outside the car because it gives me a chance to see my community from a different perspective, helps me to stay active and also makes economic sense.

Speaker, I'd like to challenge all the members of this House and their constituents to think outside the car and to share their #ThinkOutsidetheCar moment on social

media. To participate in the challenge, please visit the city of Burlington website, or follow the hashtag #ThinkOutsidetheCar on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

#### REFERENDA

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Referendums have a long history throughout this country and our province. Some of the biggest questions facing our nation have been determined by referring the matter to a referendum, such as the conscription crisis of 1942, the referendum to repeal Prohibition, and the Charlottetown accord.

Referendums are a necessary tool that complements our democracy and empowers citizens by giving them the opportunity to influence public policies directly. We have also seen referenda used recently in Ontario for both de-amalgamations and proportional representation.

Referenda are always at the prerogative of the government, not at the behest of the people. If all governments were responsive and respectful of people, there would never be a need for either democracy or referenda. However, sometimes majority governments attempt to steam-roll legislation through and, in the process, stifle public opinion and influence. This has become all too familiar here in our assembly. The sale of Hydro One is but the most recent example.

Today I'll be introducing my private member's bill, the Referendum Act, which will allow the people of Ontario to trigger a referendum via a petition, and mandate the government to hold a referendum on these important policies.

Referenda would be a great step forward in empowering citizens and enhancing our democracy here in Ontario. I encourage all members to support the Referendum Act.

#### BREAD AND ROSES CO-OP HOMES

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** This past weekend I had the pleasure of helping mark the 25th anniversary of the Bread and Roses housing co-operative in Kitchener. This is a very unique not-for-profit, mixed-income community. It's situated in a heritage building in downtown Kitchener, and it's just down the street from my constituency office.

Launched in 1990, the co-op consists of 66 apartments in two adjacent buildings. The heritage building has 21 apartments, and the six-storey high-rise includes the remaining 45.

What makes this residence very unique is the rent: It's affordable, in downtown Kitchener. The people who live there promote collective responsibility and well-being. Everyone pitches in, sharing their skills as they govern themselves through collective decision-making and the handling of their finances. There is a special focus on diversity and respect among neighbours. The residents are also concerned with their impact on the environment, as they try to minimize their environmental footprint wherever possible.

The story behind the name “Bread and Roses” is rooted in a 1920s union song sung by textile workers who were rallying support for better working conditions and wages. The line “give us bread, but give us roses” was the inspiration for the founding board. They believed passionately that residents needed affordable housing with a very strong sense of community.

I congratulate them on creating such a unique, affordable and healthy place to live, and I enjoy having them as neighbours.

#### UNITED ACHIEVERS' CLUB OF BRAMPTON

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Today I rise to recognize the 17 high school students in the Peel region who recently received a United Achievers' Club Scholarship. On September 19, the United Achievers' Club of Brampton held their 31st Annual Scholarship and Recognition Awards dinner. This annual event recognizes students with black or Caribbean heritage who have a strong academic record and have been accepted to pursue post-secondary studies at a registered college or university.

Thirty-one years ago, the United Achievers' Club of Brampton presented its first \$250 scholarship to a graduating student from Brampton. In the three decades since, a total of 334 students have been awarded scholarships totalling nearly \$337,000.

In addition to academics, the students claim a variety of interests and talents, as well as strong community involvement.

Established in 1980, the United Achievers' Club of Brampton also recognizes members and community workers who have made significant contributions to the growth and development of the organization.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the United Achievers' Club of Brampton for the leadership they provide to youth in my community and their 35 years of promoting the culture and achievements of Canadians of black and Caribbean heritage.

I also wish to commend this year's scholarship award recipients on their achievements to date. I am grateful for this recognition you have received and for all you will contribute in the coming years to make our province an even better place to live.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT BILLS ACT, 2015

##### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE DES PROJETS DE LOI ÉMANANT DU GOUVERNEMENT

Mr. Harris moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 125, An Act respecting government bills / Projet de loi 125, Loi concernant les projets de loi émanant du gouvernement.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Today I introduce the Transparency in Government Bills Act, 2015.

This act requires certain information to be tabled in the assembly when a government bill is introduced. The information must include, among other things, a statement describing the problem that the bill seeks to address, a description of the public policy goals that the bill seeks to achieve, and a summary of the financial cost the bill would have on the government, municipalities, the public and any affected industries or businesses.

#### REFERENDUM ACT, 2015

#### LOI RÉFÉRENDAIRE DE 2015

Mr. Hillier moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 126, An Act to provide for citizen-initiated referenda to require the introduction of legislation / Projet de loi 126, Loi prévoyant le dépôt obligatoire de textes législatifs par suite de la tenue de référendums à l'initiative des citoyens.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I won't read the complete explanatory note, but I will read from it.

This bill, the Referendum Act, 2015, enacts a new act that provides a process by which a person who is eligible to vote in an election of members of the Legislative Assembly, called a “registered voter” in the act, can initiate a province-wide referendum on a question that falls within the constitutional competence of the assembly.

A registered voter can apply to the Chief Electoral Officer at any time for the issuance of a petition, except if the officer has previously issued a petition with respect to that question that, in the officer's opinion, is of the same manner. A proponent of a petition has 60 days to return the petition to the Chief Electoral Officer with the signatures of persons who, on the day of the issuance of the petition, are registered voters and who represent, for at least 10 electoral districts, at least 25% of the total number of registered voters who voted in the previous election. In that case, a writ is issued requiring that a referendum be held on the referendum question.

If at least 50% of the valid referendum ballots cast in a referendum indicate a yes answer to the question, the government is required to take steps as soon as reasonable possible to implement the result. Those steps consist

of ensuring that the Lieutenant Governor in Council or a member of the council makes a regulation, if it is legally possible to implement, or otherwise introducing legislation.

1520

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member, because that is what we are required and requested to do, and that is to read from the explanatory notes or condense them if it's longer. I appreciate the member doing so.

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

### SENIOR CITIZENS

**Hon. Mario Sergio:** I rise today to recognize October 1 as International Day of Older Persons and National Seniors Day. Today is a day to celebrate Ontario's seniors and everything they do for our great province.

Ontario's seniors are mentally and physically active. Many volunteer, and some are still working and contributing to the overall well-being of the province. Seniors also have a wealth of knowledge and experience to pass on to our younger generations. Their expertise is vital to helping our province compete and succeed.

Internationally, the population of those over the age of 60 is expected to reach 1.4 billion by the year 2030. In Canada, seniors account for a record-high 14.8% of our population, and the number is rising. Today in Ontario, we know there are over 2.1 million seniors, a number that already accounts for a larger share of our population than kids under the age of 15.

Speaker, these numbers highlight a trend seen around the world: Older adults, particularly those in Ontario, are living longer, healthier lives than before.

Even though our seniors are very capable, older persons do have a dynamic set of needs. That's why our government created Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors. This plan has three fundamental principles, the first of which is to help seniors access the best health care.

For example, earlier this year we announced our continued investment in research through the Ontario Brain Institute. This investment will foster greater understanding about diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, ALS and other neurodegenerative diseases, and could also lead to quicker diagnosis and better care. This investment will help improve the lives of all of those living with these diseases, including older Ontarians.

Our government is equally committed to strengthening home and community care. We know that people prefer to receive care at home and in their communities, where they can be closer to loved ones, living as independently as possible. That's why in May we released *Patients First: A Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care*, which lays out the 10 steps that our government is

taking to modernize the home and community care system.

The second principle of this plan is to ensure that seniors are living safely. As an example, we have implemented the Retirement Homes Act, 2010, which enforces new care and safety standards to keep retirement home residents safe.

Third, we believe it's important that seniors live in inclusive, welcoming communities. We launched our \$2-million Seniors Community Grant Program and our \$1.5-million Age-Friendly Community Planning Grant program to support socially inclusive environments for seniors, helping seniors to remain connected and engaged as they age.

A few weeks ago, I came across a report that showed Canada is the fifth-best place to age. Speaker, Ontario can do better. Our goal is to make Ontario the best place to grow old, and it's up to all of us to accomplish this.

Throughout the year, but particularly today, I ask you all to join me in recognizing seniors around the world and, even more, seniors in this province. Honour them for their wisdom, their hard work and their lifetime of contributions.

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

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I am pleased to rise today in celebration of the International Day of Older Persons. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons, which was designated by the United Nations General Assembly. Every year, October 1 is a day for us to come together to celebrate the accomplishments of our province's seniors and to raise awareness about the issues that they face.

Speaker, I am not only a senior, I also have the privilege of representing seniors in this Legislature. I always enjoy connecting with other seniors and hearing their stories. They have seen so much change throughout their lifetimes and can offer very insightful feedback on today's issues. In Perth-Wellington, I have frequent opportunities to celebrate our seniors. Last year, on National Seniors Day, I was able to visit four retirement and long-term-care homes in Perth-Wellington. I shared meals with residents, participated in an exercise class and attended a social hour.

This year, I will be in Mount Forest attending a mayoral proclamation of National Seniors Day and visiting with local seniors. I would like to make special mention of the residents of Cedarcroft Place Retirement Residence, who, I believe, are in Stratford watching us today. Every year I get to attend the All Seniors Care Seniors Games, and I'm always so impressed. They hold friendly competitions and activities like Wii bowling, Wii golf, bocce, shuffleboard, and card and board games. The games are an excellent way to stay active in mind and body.

The theme of this year's International Day of Older Persons is "Sustainability and Age Inclusiveness in the Urban Environment." According to the UN, six out of every 10 people in the world are expected to reside in

urban areas by 2030. This phenomenon means the number of older persons in urban areas is also increasing. I strongly agree that we must ensure that seniors have access to accessible housing and inclusive activities close to home.

However, I would like to take a moment to share the issues that face many seniors in our rural and small-town communities. I frequently hear from seniors in Perth–Wellington who are concerned about access to transportation. Train service to Stratford and St. Marys has been cut in recent years, and some of our communities have no public transit at all. This is a serious issue for seniors who have to travel to visit family and friends, to do their shopping and to attend medical appointments.

Access to long-term care is another serious issue in our rural communities. I have been informed that there is a great deal of concern that many of our long-term-care beds may be transferred to larger cities. People who have lived their lives in a community like Mitchell or Palmerston should not have to leave their hometown in order to have access to the care they need.

On that note, health care is another area where this government must do more for seniors. In Perth–Wellington, we have had a number of doctors recently retire, leaving many people without access to a family physician. The government's solution was to send everyone to the hospital's emergency room for routine issues like prescription refills. Our seniors have worked hard all their lives. They deserve access to a trusted family physician close to home, not a government telling them to sit in an ER for hours on end.

While we have made great strides in expanding opportunities for seniors, there's obviously still much to improve on. Currently, more than 1.8 million seniors live in Ontario. This is projected to more than double by 2036. It's so important that, as our population ages, we address the challenges and difficulties of aging at home, and transitioning to assisted living.

I will continue to be a strong voice for seniors in this Legislature and represent the issues that are important to them. I will also continue to advocate for organizations which provide essential services to seniors, organizations like the Alzheimer Society of Perth County, the Local Community Food Centre, the Maple Lane residents' committee and countless others. These organizations rely on funding to provide certain seniors' programs, and I urge the government to commit to stable, long-term funding for these invaluable community resources.

Tomorrow, let's all take the time to celebrate the seniors in our lives, who have contributed so much to this province. To all of my fellow seniors, happy International Day of Older Persons.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It is my honour today to rise on the occasion of International Day of Older Persons, which has been celebrated every October 1 since 1990. Some background on this: On December 14, 1990, the United Nations General Assembly designated October 1 the International Day of Older Persons. This was

preceded by initiatives such as the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing, which was adopted in 1982 by the UN General Assembly; and later, by the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, passed in 1991.

**1530**

I am happy to be speaking on this important day on behalf of the Ontario New Democrat caucus.

Mr. Speaker, older adults are an essential part of our diverse and beautiful province. They are parents, grandparents, friends and our neighbours. They contribute economically and socially to the fabric of Ontario.

In my own riding of London–Fanshawe, there are programs in place specifically for older adults, whether they are social gatherings or sporting events. In 2010, the city of London became the first city in Canada to join the World Health Organization's global network for age-friendly cities. The World Health Organization defines an age-friendly city as an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active aging. After extensive community consultations, a review of activities that the city already had planned and a review of what was missing in the programs specifically for older persons, the city of London launched the three-year age-friendly action plan. This plan included 37 strategies and 133 steps of action in respect to outdoor spaces, social participation, community support, health services and many more. I am proud to come from a city that looks after older people to make sure that they have the services they need.

Mr. Speaker, the theme this year for International Day of Older Persons is "Sustainability and Age Inclusiveness in the Urban Environment." In the spirit of this year's theme, I want to bring up three important issues that I have heard from older persons across this province and in London.

The first is the fire sale of Hydro One. As older people are beginning to think about retirement, settling down and spending more time with family, the last thing they should be thinking of is if they need to make ends meet. The plan of this government to privatize Hydro One would hike up rates across Ontario and make it more difficult for those on a fixed income to pay the bills.

The second is health care and increasing costs of prescription drugs. As people get older, their health becomes a much larger concern, and it's imperative that they have the services they need. According to numbers from the Ontario Medical Association, there are over 800,000 people in the province who do not have a family doctor, and over 140,000 new patients entering our health care system every year, yet the Liberal government has cut 50 residency spots. We should be making sure that our aging population has the health care they need and deserve.

Finally, there is the issue of home care and long-term care. Older adults should be able to live in dignity in their home and be able to spend time with family and loved ones. Provinces across this country are beginning to invest in home care to ensure that our seniors and older adults are being looked after. Yesterday the Globe and

Mail reported that there are more seniors over the age of 65 in Canada than there are children under 15. This is a milestone in Canadian history, but also shows the need for home care and palliative care strategies in this province. The article also pointed out that there is a skyrocketing rate of people living with Alzheimer's, showing the need for a dementia strategy to help with that pressing issue as well.

In fact, 10 years ago, the government of British Columbia created a Premier's Council on Aging and Seniors' Issues in order to address the challenges and opportunities presented by our growing seniors' population.

I think it's time this government started taking the concerns of our older adults, seniors, seriously.

In conclusion, on the International Day of Older Persons, let's ensure that our aging population is being respected and appreciated for the vital contributions that they've made to our province.

## PETITIONS

### CURRICULUM

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I have yet another petition on the sex ed component of the health and physical education curriculum. Mr. Speaker, this has now been signed by well over 200,000 people across the province of Ontario. It's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas in 2010 the Ontario Liberal government promised to consult with voters before implementing a revised sex education curriculum which many parents felt was age-inappropriate and too explicit; and

"Whereas since 2010 the Ontario public has not been given adequate opportunity to provide feedback on proposed sex education changes; and

"Whereas in late October 2014 the Ontario Liberal government announced that more revisions to the sex education curriculum would be implemented in time for the next school year; and

"Whereas the announced plans to consult only one hand-picked parent per school does not constitute broad public feedback on the curriculum, and therefore, the Ontario Liberal government are breaking its 2010 promise to consult the people of Ontario;

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

"Repeal the sex education component of the health and physical education curriculum planned for September 2015 and start over with a meaningful parental consultation process that actually gets buy-in from parents" across the province.

I affix my name to this petition.

### DENTAL CARE

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas thousands and thousands of adults live with pain and infection because they cannot afford dental care;

"Whereas the promised \$45-million dental fund under the Poverty Reduction Strategy excluded impoverished adults;

"Whereas the programs were designed with rigid criteria so that most of the people in need do not qualify; and

"Whereas desperately needed dental care money went unspent and was diverted to other areas even though people are still suffering without access to dental care;

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

"That the Legislative Assembly do all in its power to stop the dental fund being diverted to support other programs; and

"That the Legislative Assembly fully utilize the commissioned funding to provide dental care to those in need."

I couldn't agree more. I'm going to sign it and give it to Anna to be delivered to the desk.

### DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

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

"Whereas the Canada health act states that 'continued access to quality health care without financial or other barriers will be critical to maintaining and improving the health and well-being of Canadians';

"Whereas Ontario is the only province in Canada that does not allow oral and maxillofacial surgeons (OMFS) to refer their patients for magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs) and other diagnostic imaging;

"Whereas the practice of OMFS using an intermediary (e.g. family physician) to refer their patients for MRI and other diagnostic imaging and for patient consults with other specialists adds costs to the health care system without adding value, creates unnecessary inconveniences for patients and delays diagnosis, treatment and access to medically necessary care;

"Whereas the practice of OMFS using an intermediary (e.g. family physician) to refer patients for MRIs and other diagnostic imaging and for patient consults with other specialists compromises patient care by: delaying diagnosis and treatment; wastes the time of patients by forcing them to run around unnecessarily; contributes to the burden of work for physicians and OMFS and prolongs the pain and suffering of patients;

"Whereas the lack of a family physician could act as a barrier for patients seeking care, treatment and requiring referrals for MRIs, diagnostic imaging or to other specialists;

"Whereas the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's (MOHLTC) action plan promises ensuring that the health system has the health human resources to deliver quality and efficient care including exploring expanding scope of practice and regulations for providers;

“Whereas the average wait time for an MRI in Ontario is 84 days; having to go from OMFS to an intermediary for a referral adds on a longer wait time for patients of OMFS;

“Whereas quality and efficient health care is not delivered when patients have to see a number of health care professionals to get referrals for diagnostic procedures, imaging or referrals to other specialists;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to enact legislation to allow oral and maxillofacial surgeons in Ontario to refer their patients for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and other diagnostic imaging and to refer their patients to specialists so as to not penalize patients seeking access to care and treatment.”

I support the petition and I give it to page Grace.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I love those short ones.

The member from Nipissing.

#### LAKE NIPISSING WALLEYE FISHERY

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has stated that the walleye population in Lake Nipissing is in decline; and

“Whereas their answer is to manage through the recreational fishing regulations; and

“Whereas that is not a viable solution if the commercial fishery on Lake Nipissing is not regulated; and

“Whereas the Lake Nipissing Stakeholders Association wants to restock the lake at large volumes to replenish the waning walleye population, but is not being allowed to do so by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry despite the fact the ministry commits to stocking 1,200 other” lakes “in Ontario each and every year;

**1540**

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to allow the Lake Nipissing Stakeholders Association to restock Lake Nipissing with walleye to protect our local fishery for future generations.”

I support this, sign my name and give it to page Nuh.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** On behalf of the great residents of Blind River who have collected this:

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition, Mr. Speaker, and provide it to page Jacob to bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I think we’re going to change the rules around here for the length of petitions.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

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

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

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

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

“Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

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

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

“That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario.”

I’m pleased to sign and to support this petition, signed by many members of the community in my hometown of Mississauga, and to send it down with page Matthew.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you for the short one.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I have a petition from the towns of Huntsville and Bracebridge signed by hundreds of people in support of the hospitals. It reads:

“Whereas the provision of a full range of core hospital services, including acute care in-patient, emergency, diagnostic and surgical services, at both the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge by Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) is vital for all of the communities in the entire MAHC catchment area, including Algonquin Provincial Park; and

“Whereas the continued delivery of those core hospital services at both the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital is crucial to the long-term sustainability and economic vitality of the two communities and the entire MAHC catchment area, including Algonquin Provincial Park; and

“Whereas the residents of Huntsville, Bracebridge and the other communities in the MAHC catchment area have strongly supported multi-site delivery of a full range of

core hospital services, including acute care in-patient, emergency, diagnostic and surgical services, at both the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge and the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital; and

“Whereas, contrary to the wishes of the people of the entire MAHC catchment area, the board of directors of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare has approved the ‘one-hospital model’ as the preferred model for hospital service delivery in the future;

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

“(1) That the province of Ontario ensure that a full range of core hospital services, including acute care in-patient, emergency, diagnostic and surgical services, are maintained on a multi-site basis at both the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital in Bracebridge;

“(2) That the province of Ontario ensure that the changes to Ontario’s health care delivery system currently being implemented do not negatively impact access to services and the quality of care in Bracebridge, Huntsville and the entire MAHC catchment area, including Algonquin Provincial Park;

“(3) That the province of Ontario ensure that the changes to Ontario’s health care delivery system currently being implemented recognize the unique and important role that smaller hospitals, such as the Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and the South Muskoka Memorial Hospital have in promoting economic development and creating sustainable communities in Ontario.”

I support this petition and have signed it.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** “Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions” of dollars “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.”

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Mr. Todd Smith:** This is on behalf of residents in the Marmora area who want to protect their prime agricultural farmland.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:



“Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture has protected class 3 agricultural land from development for the purposes of projects under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas the United Nations has declared the vital importance soil plays in human civilization and protection of this vital resource; and

“Whereas the solar energy facility, SunEdison Cordova Solar Project, planned for Ledge Road, Clemenger Road and Twin Sister Road, in the municipality of Marmora and Lake will occupy agricultural land that has previously been protected against development under the Green Energy Act;

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

“That the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs take the necessary steps to ensure that projects, including the SunEdison Cordova Solar Project, that are on protected agricultural land are protected from large-scale, industrial energy development.”

I agree with this petition, will sign it and send it to the table with page Angelica.

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

## OPPOSITION DAY

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** I move that the government provide the House, and therefore the public, with all reports and financial analysis used by them to justify the sale of Hydro One no later than October 8, 2015.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Brown has moved opposition day number 2. Mr. Brown.

1550

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, the public does not support this fire sale. Two thirds of Ontarians, according to a number of polls, have said categorically that this is not in the best interest. Ontario has among the highest energy rates in North America, and they're expected to rise by 42% from 2013 to 2018, further crippling businesses and placing a huge financial burden on families trying to get by.

Ontario families, under the Liberal watch, are paying more than \$1,000 more. Rates have tripled because of their bad energy policy. Given the overwhelming public opposition, will the government hear the voices, hear the public that is speaking so loudly against this bad deal, against these decisions being made behind closed doors, or will they continue to keep the people of Ontario in the dark?

The Ontario Energy Association, in their recent polling, also reported that 78% of Ontarians are demanding assurances from the government that the fire sale will not increase their electricity bills, because they have the same concern that everyone else does: that electricity prices are going to rise. Apparently that's not enough for

the government to pause. It's not enough that seniors living on fixed incomes are choosing between putting food on the table and keeping the power on. These out-of-control electricity rates in Ontario will make the winter even harder and even more precarious for seniors living on fixed incomes.

What's more, here we have seniors struggling to keep up with their bills, to manage to make ends meet, and at the same time this government has the audacity to give out executive compensation packages of \$24 million, \$4 million for the CEO alone—almost 10 times the price of the hydro CEO in Quebec. It's out of control.

Where are the government's priorities? When Ontarians are struggling to make ends meet, these outrageous compensation packages that this government is allowing are alarming. Frankly, it's a slap in the face to the people of Ontario.

Last week we highlighted how Dalton McGuinty believed selling off Hydro One was a bad idea. I'd like to read some of the quotes the former Liberal Premier made—by the way, the same Liberal that our current Premier refers to as “boss.”

Dalton McGuinty said, “Selling off [Hydro One] is a bad idea.... It's a quick fix, and it's a bad one.”

“[W]hen you turn a natural public monopoly over to the private sector, it is the consumer who ultimately pays the price. Rates would go up. Rates could in fact go up dramatically and there is nothing consumers could do....” I would hope the Liberals would actually listen to their mentor Dalton McGuinty.

He also said, “Selling off this valuable public asset is something the public should” always “be consulted with ... let them have their say.”

He's not the only Liberal who believes there should be public consultation in regard to the sale of a public asset. The Minister of Energy, who, when he was mayor of Ottawa in 2002, passed a motion—by the way, the Attorney General also supported that motion as a city councillor—demanding that government have public consultation.

The exact words used by the city councillor, now the Attorney General, and the mayor, now the Minister of Energy, were, “widespread public concern about the impact on Ontario citizens of privatizing Hydro One....”

“Whereas residents of Ottawa depend on Hydro One for their supply of electricity, and there is a general public interest in retaining Hydro One as a publicly owned asset; ... ” It's alarming that their perspectives on this could change so quickly.

The resolution expresses the concerns they have for Ottawa. That's not all. It actually urges “the government of Ontario not to proceed with any further proposals relating to the sale of provincially owned electricity assets before there has been an opportunity for a full public debate.”

This morning I asked the Minister of Energy to explain why he is no longer prepared to fight for the people of Ottawa in their opposition to the Hydro One fire sale, why he no longer believes the people of Ottawa

should have their voices heard with this fire sale and why he no longer believes municipalities should have a say in this fire sale of Hydro One.

I would note that it's not just Liberal Premiers and Liberal ministers who have concerns. The mayor of Sarnia spoke on behalf of 166 municipalities who have passed similar resolutions to the one that Ottawa did. The resolution was quite unequivocal. Municipalities are concerned how this is going to affect energy prices across the province of Ontario. But beyond a former Liberal Premier, beyond Liberal cabinet ministers questioning the judgment of this government, the independent officers of the Legislature wrote a historic letter just a few months ago asking the Premier to reverse this plan because she has taken away all oversight powers.

In addition to the request of the independent officers, the Financial Accountability Officer requested access to information and was refused. It's incredible. This government promised to be different. They promised transparency. They promised accountability. If that's the case, then why are they refusing to share this information? I would hope—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Because you have your head down and turned away—I still hear you, member from Barrie.

Continue.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** The government promised to be different. We had hoped that the government would be different. We had hoped that when they said they believed in transparency and accountability, they meant it. If the government has any shred of decency, if they hope to protect the promise that there would be some form of transparency, they would support this motion—they would support the opposition motion—because the people of Ontario are demanding it. If they choose not to support our motion, they are showing that they really aren't in it for the people of Ontario.

The prospectus released last week does not provide background information, and nothing to determine the valuation or to justify executive salaries that have been disclosed. Rising electricity rates hinder the ability for businesses to compete and have a level playing field to create jobs, retain jobs and recruit jobs from around the world.

Whether knocking on doors in the recent by-election in Simcoe North or in my travels across Ontario, I hear again and again that businesses are struggling to keep jobs in Ontario because of this reckless energy policy. This year, Goodyear halted its multi-million dollar plant expansion in Napanee. Cascades, a paper-making company with a long history of doing business in Ontario, have their newest plant in Niagara Falls, but it's Niagara Falls, New York, not Niagara Falls, Ontario. One of the biggest reasons is power prices.

The Liberals seem to have forgotten to respect the opinions of Ontarians. Twelve years ago, they said that the opinions of Ontarians mattered, but all of a sudden today they don't matter, municipalities don't matter, the

opinions of their own cabinet ministers don't matter. Let me be very clear about this: No one in Ontario believes—not for a second—that the government has a mandate for the fire sale of Hydro One, no matter how many times they say it. You can say a misrepresentation a hundred times; it's still a misrepresentation. Mr. Speaker, will the Liberals—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'll remind the member that he doesn't use the word "misrepresentation." You will withdraw that.

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Withdrawn.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, will the Liberals come clean and involve the people of Ontario in this conversation about the sale of their public utility that they, their parents and grandparents built with their hard-earned tax dollars over the past century?

If the Liberal government won't listen to their own members, just recently, the Toronto Star wrote an article. Normally I don't quote the Toronto Star, but the Toronto Star wrote an article the other day that said many Liberals are concerned about this fire sale. Many Liberals in the caucus are concerned. We have quotes from Liberal ministers. We have quotes from a former Liberal Premier. Municipalities are up in arms. If that's not good enough, listen to the overwhelming population in Ontario that wants the government to do the honourable thing: to correct course, to disclose, to be transparent, to be accountable. I implore the government.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** On behalf of my NDP colleagues and the people of Timiskaming-Cochrane and across the province, I'm honoured to be able to speak today on the issue of providing documents to the public before the sale of Hydro One. Several times we have heard the Premier in this House say, "We are broadening ownership." My colleague from Oshawa brought up a point today that was very pertinent. She said, "How can it get much broader than all of the people of the province owning it?" By privatizing, you are not broadening ownership; you are concentrating ownership into companies' hands.

**1600**

People in my part of the world have gotten lots of experience with high hydro bills, and that's why they're so concerned. Many people across the province, particularly in northern Ontario, have no option but to heat with hydro. It's cold comfort to them when they say, "OEB will protect you," or, "We've hired our own internal ombudsmen," because when the billing problems with Hydro One started to surface, one of the only things that saved the people of rural Ontario from some of those crazy bills was the Ombudsman. Now with this privatization scheme, the first thing they do, before they sell a share, is say, "We won't let the Ombudsman get involved any longer." Again, they talk about transparency and they talk about open government, but their actions are exactly the opposite.

Another example: In the North, we recently dealt with a Liberal privatization scheme when they tried to divest,

fire-sale, the ONTC. I remember that they told us at the time, “The government is going to save \$265 million, give or take, by divesting”—another word for broadening—“the ownership of the ONTC.” But then a nasty little report from the Auditor General said that, actually, it would cost the government \$800 million. So due to the people of northern Ontario and the Auditor General, the government put the brakes on. You’d think they would have learned. Do you know what, Speaker? The government did learn something from that fiasco: “The next time we try to privatize something, we are going to take the Auditor General out of the picture because she’s very troublesome.” That, again, is the exact opposite of openness and transparency.

If the government believes this is such a great idea, they should be very willing to show that proof. They shouldn’t try to block out the Auditor General, try to block out—not “try”; they’ve succeeded. The most self-proclaimed open and transparent government in recent history—the first thing they do, in the most major policy change in a quarter century, is block out the independent officers of the Legislature, the people who actually work on behalf of the Legislature, not the government. It’s an insult to the people of Ontario, particularly to the Auditor General.

Do you know why, Speaker, it’s so important that the people see the information before the government is allowed to make this major—in our opinion—policy mistake? Again, we’ll turn back to the example from the ONTC. The government decided to keep four of the lines and sell one. They decided to sell Ontera, but, again, this wasn’t done in full public view. We have learned just now, out of public accounts, that, actually, for the \$6 million that they netted, they spent \$6.5 million on consultant fees, on advice on how to sell Ontera. Again, if those had been identified earlier, maybe the rest of us could have helped them make some better decisions. It’s very, very troublesome; it’s disastrous when you see those figures after.

So what happens in a year, two years from now, when we see in public accounts that, “Oops, we thought we were going to net \$5 billion and use that on infrastructure, but we forgot about this”—they’ll use much nicer words, Mr. Speaker—“and we only netted \$2 billion. That \$500 million that we used to get in dividends from Hydro One, well, we don’t get that anymore.”

I’d like to close my portion with: We hear from the government that they need to sell Hydro One to pay for infrastructure. Often, the Premier and the ministers have a whole list of all the infrastructure things—their \$130-billion list. What they say they are going to net, after they pay off the debt of Hydro One, I believe, is \$4 billion—maybe \$5 billion. Well, that doesn’t pay much out of the \$130 billion. Then the next year, when you no longer have the dividends, what are you going to sell next? That is not the way to run the province.

No businessman in his right mind would sell something that actually makes money. Why do you think the private sector wants Hydro One? Because it makes money. That’s why the public should keep it.

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

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** It’s a pleasure to join in this debate about a very interesting opposition day motion from the PC Party.

I’d like to start by using a phrase that the Leader of the Opposition used in his opening remarks. He used the phrase “bad energy policy.” I thought it would be worthwhile to really talk about a bad energy policy that the province of Ontario has had in the past. That bad energy policy occurred on the watch of the government of Premiers Harris and Eves. Let’s talk about the principles of a bad energy policy which was a Progressive Conservative energy policy. I’m just going to go through this motion and talk about this motion in the context of what the party continues to advocate, which is a bad energy policy.

There are four principles to PC energy policy. The first principle and the most important is to do nothing. PCs talk about, “Oh, well, we’re going to prevent rates from going up.” Their way of doing that is to simply do nothing. Take your transmission assets, take your generation assets and run them into the ground. Now, in the short term, that actually does keep your rates down. You could see what that policy does by looking at many of the utilities in the United States.

I’m reminded of a conference I was at last year, in 2014, in which I was talking with my counterparts in the northeastern states. What my counterparts, state senators and state legislators, said to me was, “You know, we envy you in Ontario. You guys had the backbone to take a lot of the tough decisions 10 years ago.” Here’s how they put it: “You bought yourself tomorrow’s infrastructure and you paid for it with yesterday’s dollars at near-zero interest rates.” That, Speaker, is the flip side of doing nothing. You can do nothing and let your infrastructure, your generation, your transmission and your substations run right into the ground. Indeed, that has been PC Party energy policy, but it is not the policy of this province and this government.

We’re looking forward to a day when our children and their children can live as we did as we grew up. We grew up in an era where industry was expanding, people were coming to this province. We had the generation assets we needed. We had the transmission assets we needed. We had the electricity system that we needed. We had it because governments of the day had the backbone to make the decisions to build Ontario’s power dams and to build Ontario’s transmission networks after the war. It was called “rural electrification” in all of the provinces in Canada. The idea after World War II—in the 1940s and the 1950s—in the lifetime of many of us who sit in this House, was that there were a lot of people outside the major cities who didn’t have electric power. A lot of that infrastructure, which was built 40, 50 and 60 years ago, is still substantially in place today.

What difference has it made? You can see, in the States, where they have problems when their systems go down. We had that too back in 2003, and our government

said, “No more.” That means that Ontario has built some 5,000 kilometres of new or refurbished transmission lines. That’s all to ensure that Ontario doesn’t run into the same problem that it did 12 years ago.

**1610**

The second principle of PC energy policy is very simple: to burn coal. Nothing is quicker, nothing is cheaper and nothing is dirtier than burning coal. What did this same party do on its eight-year unfortunate watch between 1995 and 2003? They burned coal. They burned all the coal they could. What difference did it make? It meant that kids were going to school and having to have puffers, that smog days here in the greater Toronto area were most days during the week during the summer. How many smog days have we had in the last three years here? I believe you can count them on the fingers of one hand.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Almost none.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Exactly. We just don’t have smog days. These days, elementary school kids are not having to show up at school with puffers. More kids are enjoying the benefit of clean air because this government has had the backbone to violate the second principle of Progressive Conservative energy policy, which is to burn coal. We don’t burn coal in the province of Ontario anymore. Not a single lump.

In the vein of burning coal, let’s look at the third principle of PC Party energy policy, and that is to buy US electricity, most of it generated by burning coal, at spot market rates. Let me give you an example of just what kind of a disaster this is. Back at the turn of the century, when, by the way, it was a Progressive Conservative government that originally proposed the sale of Hydro One—and that truly was a fire sale, because they were going to sell off 100% of it. Under their watch, the province of Ontario and its taxpayers would own nothing, not a single bit of Hydro One. That’s not what is being proposed now. What is being proposed now is that the province of Ontario retains a controlling interest in Hydro One, and retains it forever.

When the PCs had their unfortunate eight years to experiment with their neo-con philosophy in electricity generation and transmission, what they were doing—do you remember the stranded debt, that debt that is now almost completely paid? That stranded debt began in the late 1990s, at the same time that the PC government of the day had frozen electricity rates at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour. The power system in Ontario was so weak and so shaky that the PC government of the day had to contract to buy power on the spot market—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. The member from Mississauga will sit down. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I bring to your attention standing orders 23(h) and (i): making false allegations against members, such as the members of this caucus, and also imputing false or unavowed motives to other members. He is speaking about policies that he has no knowledge

of whatsoever, inventing this, and then ascribing them to another party in this Legislature. That is clearly against the standing orders and he should be forced to withdraw it. In fact, using the term “neo-con” is not acceptable in this chamber when talking about other members of this House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Your point of order has been duly noted, but I do believe some of the substance was correct, what he was saying. Some of the substance may require further research, but the bottom line is I don’t think that he’s out of order.

Continue.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

That third principle of buying US coal-fired electricity on the spot market and paying upwards of a dollar per kilowatt hour and reselling it at 4.3 cents per kilowatt hour—in fact, contributed to nearly a billion dollars on Ontario’s stranded debt—a billion dollars. So that amount meant that—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, let’s hope it’s legit. Go ahead.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, I believe it is. Speaker, today’s opposition day motion reads as follows: “That the government provide the House, and therefore the public, with all reports and financial analysis used by them to justify the sale of Hydro One no later than October 8, 2015.” It would be helpful to this House if the member would actually spend five seconds of his dissertation speaking to the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Since you’ve been up twice, I’m going to take a five-minute break. I’m going to discuss it with the Clerks’ table and I’ll come back with an answer.

*The House recessed from 1615 to 1621.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member might want to get back in his seat. Go ahead.

I have come to a decision on this matter. The whole process of a point of order is to go directly to the point where it’s felt the violation has taken place. It doesn’t include a long speech about what the person said or what they didn’t say. It’s my decision to cut it off when I cut it off.

It’s probably not good to make comments from the Chair on certain points of order, too; that is true. But when it becomes a game to just disrupt the other person—and that does happen in here, both ways; it happens all the time where people are doing it deliberately to shut down debate—I will not put up with that. If it isn’t to the exact point of order, you’ll be shut down quickly.

I ask that you please don’t do it just to disrupt the other person—and that applies to everyone—because I think it does a disservice to this whole Legislature. Please try to co-operate in that manner. Thank you.

Further debate?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you for clarifying that, Speaker. I do have to say, however, that my friend the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is an honourable man and a good member, and I am proud to say that I can call him a friend.

Speaker, I was in the middle of explaining the four principles of the PC energy policy, because they are very important to understanding the motive and the response to the motion that has been made here. Let's just summarize those four pillars quickly.

- (1) Do nothing at all. Run your assets into the ground.
- (2) Burn coal. It's quick, cheap and dirty.
- (3) Buy US coal-fired power on the spot market.
- (4) When all of that doesn't work, blame the Liberals.

Now, let's get on to the subject of this particular motion, which asks that all reports and financial analysis used by the Ministry of Energy and the government to justify the sale of Hydro One be provided to the House. Speaker, in fact, it has been, and it's called the Hydro One preliminary prospectus. It's a very substantial booklet, running to nearly 300 pages.

I do want to discuss some parts of it. For example, Speaker, where the Leader of the Opposition has asked for "all reports and financial analysis," I would point out to him that if he's looking, for example, for the largest distributors of power in Ontario, he could find that on page 7. Presuming that he would like to see Hydro One's capital expenditures, he could find that on page 11. Should he, for example, be wishing to read the Hydro One return on equity for both transmission and distribution, he could find that on page 13. If he is looking for operations data—very critical in determining the viability of Hydro One, especially by prospective investors—he could find that on pages 17 to 19.

One of the things that is well worth reading the prospectus for would be the overview of the electricity industry. It is simply one of the best overviews I've ever read anywhere, and he could find that between pages 20 and 28. I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition, in asking for reports and financial analyses, would be very interested in how Hydro One would become a rate-regulated utility. He could find that on pages 29 to 33. I'm sure the other thing that he would be keen on finding out is what are Hydro One's capital expenses by category, and he could find that on page 35.

If I were the Leader of the Opposition, and considering the request that he's made to the government, he might be looking for distribution rate applications, because this is something that they keep going on about. Now, he could find that on page 45. Not only does he not have to wait until October 8 or any other date that he'd wish to name, it's already there. He could have had it a week ago.

Now, Speaker, perhaps he is looking for the consolidated financial information. That is on page 51. Indeed, he could be seeking out the changes in credit ratings. He could find that on page 55. The Leader of the Opposition, in asking for some of the material that the government used in making this decision, might be interested in purchased power costs, for example. That's published on page 60 of the preliminary prospectus.

Among the other things he could find are the contractual obligations and commercial commitments. That would be page 72. Or the customer satisfaction measure-

ments employed by Hydro One. That would be on page 74. The leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition might be interested in how Hydro One and the province view relationships with the Independent Electricity System Operator, Ontario Power Generation, the Ontario Electricity Financial Corp. and the Ontario Energy Board. There is a discussion that begins on page 90 about that.

One of the things that they talk about as a contributor to rates would be the pension plan contributions. Of course, that's on page 94. You could, in fact, find the entire proposed corporate structure on page 101. Among the other key things that I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition is looking for would be the governance measures, which are described in great detail beginning on page 108. I'm sure he would be interested in reading up on the directors and some of the details about them in their biographies. That's covered in a lot of detail beginning on page 121. Indeed, the entire board mandate is covered on page 130.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I'd like to draw your attention on a point of order to section 23(d) of the standing orders, where it says that if, in the opinion of the Speaker, the person "refers at length to debates of the current session, or reads unnecessarily from verbatim reports of the legislative debates or any other document," it would be ruled out of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I believe that the member was relating his points of information to the motion at this point. If I feel that he's straying from that too far, I'll certainly clamp down.

Continue.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you very much, Speaker. Indeed, what I'm reading from is in my own handwriting. The actual document is sitting here on my desk.

The point that I'm trying to make is that the very information requested in this opposition day motion is information that not only doesn't have to be tabled by October 8, it was already published a week ago Friday.

Among the other things that I think are germane to this discussion is that they keep saying elsewhere where such a measure has been done, the electricity bills are higher. Where is this "elsewhere"? I've been listening very carefully in this debate throughout and no one has actually quoted this to me. Now, they've often referred to Ontario's proposed means of financing the infrastructure needs that Ontarians very, very much need in this province at this time as a "fire sale." That term may apply accurately to the proposed disposal of Hydro One some 15 years ago by a Progressive Conservative government but not by this government.

**1630**

As my colleague from Durham has pointed out, if you really want to see an example of a fire sale on the watch of a PC government, all one has to do is look at the disposal of Highway 407. The Spanish consortium that

bought Highway 407 has been pulling profits out of this province—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I think we're drifting a little bit. Member from Mississauga, please get back to the motion. The 407 is the distant past. Thank you.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you, Speaker. There's plenty in the motion to continue to talk about. In fact, it was the party opposite that had used the predecessor of Hydro One, that being Ontario Hydro, and its generation spinoff, Ontario Power Generation, as sinecures for many of their loyalists during the waning years of their government, something which again—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** "Sinecures" is a good word.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Yes. The government in fact did learn from what the Leader of the Opposition called "bad energy policy," but it was bad Progressive Conservative energy policy. That's why, Speaker, this job is being done in this way.

As this measure is done to finance the building of infrastructure, I have to ask the party opposite, you either believe that we need better infrastructure or you don't. Their default position has been to do nothing. Very likely, they don't believe that our infrastructure, our roads, all of our regional infrastructure needs are in fact necessary at all. If you believe that our roads, our transit, our bridges need to be improved, then you're either willing to do something about it or you're not. So far, what we've found out is that the Progressive Conservative Party either doesn't believe that our infrastructure needs to be improved, or they're not willing to do anything about it.

If you're willing to do something about it, then you're willing to make the choices to get the job done or you aren't. And if you're willing to make the choices to get the job done, let's look at the options in front of you.

The first option, the PC default option, of course, is to do nothing. This government doesn't feel that doing nothing is an option for Ontarians in the future.

So what are our options in order to get the work done that this province very much needs? Should we raise corporate taxes? Should we borrow it all? Should we raise income taxes? Should we raise sales taxes? Should we toll public roads that we've already bought and paid for? Should we take apart what works well, such as health care and education?

I think if we show Ontarians that this is the range of choices we actually face if we're going to pay bills of this magnitude, and then say that in addition to these choices—borrowing it all, raising corporate taxes, raising income taxes, raising sales taxes, tolling our roads, taking apart our health care, our education, our justice system, all of those things that serve us well—what we could do is acquire more public assets, as a province, by extracting some value from some of our existing public assets and, in essence, broaden our asset portfolio—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I do have to object. The motion before us is about the production of documents about the sale of Hydro One. The member has not drifted; he's way off on infrastructure, toll roads, and a host other government initiatives and policies that have nothing to do with the production of documents regarding the sale of Hydro One.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** From what I can observe, he's trying to relate why they're selling Hydro One to do those particular things. It does relate indirectly to the Hydro One sale, because that's what the proceeds are going to be used for. So I would suggest that, no, he isn't out of order, but if he does, I assure the member, I'll let him know.

Continue.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you very much again, Speaker. I would in fact remind the member opposite that if what he wants to see is the production of documents, he can find 133 pages of financial statements, including the board mandate and the audit committee mandate, in the Hydro One preliminary prospectus. It is in fact very much a comprehensive document and represents the most complete disclosure of financial and other information on Hydro One that has ever been produced by the public.

So this opposition day motion really boils down to whether or not the party opposite believes that we actually need to renew our infrastructure. The government believes we do; they may not. It then says if you believe that we're willing to renew it, then you're willing to do something or you're not. We believe that we're willing to do something on this side; I doubt that they are. If you're willing to do something about it, then you're also willing to make the choices. I know that on this side, the people of Ontario and this government are willing to make that choice, and the opposition party is not. That, Speaker, is why this opposition day motion does not deserve the support of this House and that's why I urge that it be defeated today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm pleased, as the Hydro One critic for the Progressive Conservative Party, that I get the opportunity to support the opposition day motion put forward by our leader, Patrick Brown.

Before I get into some of my remarks, I would just like to say that it doesn't sound like the Liberal government is going to turn over any documents to justify their sale of Hydro One. From what I just heard from the member for Mississauga-Streetsville, it doesn't sound like they're willing to turn over documents. But given that the last time that they were forced to turn over documents at the estimates committee it didn't work out so well for the government of the day—I think not only did we see the Premier resign and prorogue; we also saw the energy minister resign and maybe even a couple of other members of the Liberal cabinet decided that they might want to depart early. So you can understand why they might be a little bit sensitive about releasing any documents.

However, we have a new Premier over there who said she was going to be open and transparent and that she was going to do things differently than the previous administration did here at Queen's Park. Clearly that's not the case, because it doesn't sound like, anyway, they're willing to support the motion that was brought forward today by our leader, Mr. Brown.

I would just like to touch on a couple of other items. That has to do with allegations from the member that the PC Party hasn't done anything. It was PC governments of the past that built our nuclear power plants. It was PC governments of the past that built our hydroelectric facilities in the province of Ontario. I'm talking about more than 80% of our base load power in nuclear and hydroelectric. All this government has done is create chaos in our electricity sector by adding unwanted, unreliable, expensive, unaffordable green energy projects that aren't providing the electricity that we need in Ontario.

Yesterday the Minister of Energy asserted in his remarks to the estimates committee that the government had a mandate to sell Hydro One. What a joke. What a joke that is. However, the sale of Hydro One seems to have occurred in the dark, behind closed doors, with edicts having been delivered from on high, with stationery not marked with the Premier's stationery or by the Minister of Energy. It says, "From the desk of Ed Clark" on it. He's not an elected official.

The reason for that is that there are basic methods of accountability that are built into our system that the process for selling Hydro One seems to have avoided completely in this case. The most basic of these is the airing of issues in an election. However, the Liberal platform from the 2014 election is completely silent on the issue of selling Hydro One. The closest it comes to mentioning anything even remotely resembling what would become the Hydro One sale are two passages where it states, and I quote from the Liberal election platform, "We will explore opportunities to sell properties such as the LCBO and Ontario Power Generation headquarters and the Seaton lands in Durham region, providing a return to the province."

Another passage reads, "We will reduce the number of agencies by 30% in 2015 compared to the number in 2011, and make them more accountable for the taxpayer dollars they spend. We will undertake compulsory reviews of agency mandates that will seek to determine whether or not particular agencies should be downsized, declassified, consolidated or divested." No specific mention of Hydro One was ever made in the Liberal election document.

**1640**

Given that there was no mention in the Liberal platform of the sale or divestiture of Hydro One and no mention of the Premier's famous "broadening of ownership" is ever used, the government simply can't make the claim that it has a mandate from the electorate in Ontario. And there's a reason for that: The best public opinion polling data that we have says that 83% of the Ontario public

opposes selling Hydro One—83% oppose selling Hydro One. A recent poll conducted on behalf of the Ontario Energy Association—get this—found that 55.5% of Ontario Liberal supporters oppose the fire sale of Hydro One.

Now even Liberal candidates in the upcoming federal election are coming out in opposition as well. While Justin Trudeau and the Premier are joined hip to hip, side by side, throughout this election campaign, I can't help but wonder if the Premier knows what Mr. Trudeau's candidates are saying as they go door to door and at local debates in all-candidates meetings across the province.

Mary Jean McFall, the Liberal candidate in the new riding of Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes—a beautiful place, Mr. Speaker—said at an all-candidates meeting on September 22, 2015, just over a week ago, "This is not the time to sell Hydro One." She continued, "I don't think we know enough about what the consequences of that sale would be. I also think we would like to know from the government, the Liberal government of Ontario, whether that means rates are going to go up..."

The next built-in method for accountability that we have to ensure that government action takes place in the daylight is at the legislative committees and hearings. The Hydro One sale was, however, included in an omnibus budget bill with dozens of other schedules. Traditionally, in the past, when crown corporations were being privatized, they were debated separately from the budget, and hearings for that bill were dedicated solely to that subject matter, the sale of the crown asset. This sale, by contrast, was included in the budget with dozens of other matters and was expected to share the five days of committee hearings—all of which took place here in Toronto—that were dedicated to the entire budget and not specifically about the sale of Hydro One. Even if someone wanted to conclude that that in some way constituted consultation, it's certainly insufficient to the gravity of selling a crown corporation with a 100-year history.

So we have a policy that was never proposed or debated in the election. When it was brought before the Legislature, it was included in a bill that included a number of other issues and precluded it from the kind of treatment at committee that would have compelled the disclosure of documents, as this motion put forward by Mr. Brown envisions. The government knew this, which is why the government likely rammed it through with the rest of the budget bill.

Presently, Hydro One is still entirely in public hands, but the schedules of the budget remove it from all oversight, as we know. So it's not just that the opposition has no access to information and documents pertaining to the sale; the officers of the Legislature have no ability to oversee the details of the sale either.

The Hydro One preliminary prospectus additionally removes much of the Auditor General's ability to receive necessary information about revenue and expenditure for the public portion of Hydro One. It also removes all

ability to gain information through freedom-of-information requests.

There is clearly, Mr. Speaker, something about the sale of Hydro One that the government doesn't want people to know, because it's removing literally any way of them learning it.

Still, yesterday, the minister appeared before the estimates committee and stated that he believed the government had a mandate to sell Hydro One. His reason for claiming this mandate: Prior to the election, the government had already tasked Ed Clark with the responsibility of maximizing the value of government assets. The only problem is, Ed Clark's name wasn't on the ballot anywhere. There was no way for the public to pass judgment on his performance or demand further information about his process, because if there had been, we'd have known in advance, as we do now from industry sources, that one of the original proposals was to split the Hydro One distribution assets from the transmission assets. In the words of one industry executive, the original recommendation was to "sell the highways but not the gas stations." That was subsequently rejected because of pressure in the Premier's office.

The public would have no knowledge of this, because the process by which it was determined which assets would be sold, and how, was conducted entirely behind closed doors. But I suppose the members of the government aren't going to take my word for it. We've already heard the leader of our party recite some of the words of the mayor of Sarnia from his press conference here earlier this week. He came to Queen's Park and stated that the government did more consultation with municipalities on regulations for pit bulls and clotheslines than it did pertaining to the sale of Hydro One.

To date, 170 municipalities have passed resolutions opposing this sale. That's a third of the province's municipalities who oppose losing an invaluable public asset. Four of those municipalities are in my riding. All of them are on Hydro One, and all of them will be deemed low-density areas in terms of distribution—they're pretty spread apart customers. They have no access to documentation; they had no consultation. They, like members of this Legislature, like the workers who will be affected by the offshoring agreement I brought up this morning in question period, like ratepayers in low-density areas who will see their bills go up, are forced to learn things through the media.

Never once has this government sought a mandate for this change. It has never once given the public a chance to pass judgment on whether it wants the sale. In lieu of that, it owes the public access to all possible documentation that it can provide. In a sale that the people of Ontario oppose, that 170 municipalities oppose as of today, that 55.5% of Ontario Liberal supporters oppose, this government has denied them access to information about it. More than that, it has denied access to information to the watchdogs.

However, members of this government continually get to their feet and respond to statements they previously

made opposing any sale of Hydro One by saying that what they really opposed wasn't selling Hydro One, it was just the government that was selling Hydro One that they opposed, which is a bit like saying that you don't oppose smoking, you just oppose Joe Camel or the Marlboro Man.

We don't have independent evidence to suggest that rates won't go up; we only have the minister's word that the OEB will try to keep rates down. We don't have independent evidence that the government will actually get the revenue it expects from Hydro One. The Premier is actually just expecting us to take Ed Clark's word for that.

The amazing part? Our Auditor General has a history with Manitoba Hydro. She has experience in the electricity sector. This is an individual who is not only qualified to tell us whether the Ontario public will be well served by this sale; she has the unique experience in the electricity sector to tell us whether the government is trying to sell us a bill of goods on ever-increasing electricity rates.

When you question the government, what do they respond with? They start telling you how terrible the government was that was in power when the Spice Girls were in the Top 40. That's what they do.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** "Stop right now, thank you very much."

**Mr. Todd Smith:** The fact that the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell can sing Spice Girls songs is quite remarkable and, I think, says a lot about that member as well.

You know what? It's incredible. It's as if the last 12 years never happened to the government. It's like the last 12 years never existed. They've had 12 years to get things right in the province of Ontario. They have made things a hundred times worse in our electricity sector. Then these members will go on and tell you that the sale of Hydro One is necessary as part of a \$130-billion infrastructure plan, to which it will contribute about 3% of the money. That's what this sale will do. If everything goes according to plan, it will raise about 3% of the money for their infrastructure plan.

The amazing part is that if the province simply kept Hydro One, the asset generates between \$700 million and \$800 million a year in revenue. So in about five and a half years, we'd have all the revenue that we're going to generate from selling this asset. And when you project out from those five and a half years, we retain a revenue stream that can be used to fund even more infrastructure for generations to come. The preliminary problem with selling assets and treating the sale as income is that you can only sell an asset once, and then it's gone. Bye-bye, no more revenue stream.

Of course, if the Financial Accountability Officer was able to look into this and report it to the Legislature, we might hear much the same thing. But that would require an open process, and clearly that isn't the case here. And that is one thing that we most certainly do not have here: is an open process. Given this government's track record



when it comes to releasing documents for the committees, for members of the opposition, for the general public and for the media, it hasn't worked out very well for this government the last 12 years in the past.

1650

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

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm glad to be able to stand and speak to this motion and again have the opportunity to speak against the sell-off of Hydro One. This government's stubborn refusal to consider options or to consider stopping the sell-off of Hydro One has been a terrible thing to watch.

We know this government doesn't like to listen—I take that back. They like to listen to those who praise them and who perhaps are paid handsomely to advise them, but they sure aren't listening to Ontarians. The priority of this government actually is to “beer” Ontario and not to hear Ontario. I'm here today and hopefully they will listen to the voices I'm bringing with me from my riding and hopefully they will hear them.

First, I'd like to share the voice of a group called Keep Hydro Public. Members from this group organized themselves in my riding because this issue is so important. It's a group that came together to bring awareness to their community about the short-sighted sell-off of Hydro One. They said:

“Keep Hydro Public is a group of concerned Oshawa citizens. We are not opposed to transit and infrastructure, and realize that every budget has plums and barbs, but the sell-off of Hydro One is a barb, will raise hydro rates and have a direct impact on manufacturing jobs all across Ontario and we believe it will be difficult to retain the jobs we presently have. Wasteful spending scandals on eHealth, Ornge, gas plants, software glitches etc. could have paid for transit and infrastructure without selling Hydro One.” I thank them for their voice, and hopefully the government heard that.

Now I'd like us to hear from our city council. On June 8, 2015, Oshawa city council passed this resolution. I know that the government already has a copy of it, but I would like to read part of that here today:

“Be it resolved that the city of Oshawa call on the provincial government to:

“—Halt the sale of any part of Hydro One, and maintain Hydro One as a public asset for the benefit of all Ontarians;

“—Strengthen Hydro One by investing in the next generation of workers and upgrading our electricity transmission infrastructure;

“—Respect the autonomy and local decision-making powers of local distribution companies by not forcing these companies into mergers or sales....” It continues, but of course they have a copy.

I would now like to bring the voice of business into this Legislature. This was published in the September newsletter from the Greater Oshawa Chamber of Commerce. The title of the article is “Chamber Calls for Transparency on Sale of Hydro One.”

“Rising electricity prices is a collective concern and have put Ontario businesses at a competitive disadvantage,” said Bob Malcolmson, CEO and general manager of the Greater Oshawa chamber....

“The Ontario chamber network is concerned that the sale of Hydro One could adversely affect the cost of doing business in the province by adding to the rising price of electricity,” said Malcolmson. “As such, we are seeking detailed clarification from the government on how the sale will impact electricity prices.”

So far, I have shared the voices of the community, municipal government and businesses in Oshawa, but there are more voices: charities in our community providing necessary and basic services to those in need—incidentally, there's more and more need in our communities. But pressures on charities are also increasing.

One example that was shared with me is from the YWCA Durham, which is a not-for-profit registered charity serving Durham region's most vulnerable for the past 70 years. They offer a variety of programs focusing on women, families and youth, with a particular focus on women and children who are victims of violence. Over the past three years, all three utilities combined increased by almost \$55,000, and for them, that equates to a 40% increase, which clearly impacts on their ability to deliver service. Breaking it down further, though, hydro rates alone over a three-year period increased by 41%. As you can imagine, that is having a direct impact on their ability to provide the services that we so desperately need in our communities.

While I'm glad to bring the voices and concerns of groups and organizations, it's always my privilege to speak on behalf of individuals who seldom have a chance to be heard and whose voices are sometimes lost in the conversation.

This is from an email that I received from Eric Neshevich, a concerned individual. He says, “I am writing to express my opposition to the Ontario government's proposed privatization of Hydro One and local, publicly operated electricity utilities.

“I have seen no evidence that there will be benefits for Ontario residents. Private, for-profit ownership of hydro will mean higher rates, lower dependability, and an end to public control over this vital service.

“In addition, Hydro One currently provides around \$800 million for the province every single year, revenues that help fund our hospitals, schools, and other public services. The plan to privatize 60% or more of Hydro One will result in most of that revenue disappearing, forever. That's hundreds of millions of dollars going every year into the pockets of private owners, instead of toward the public services that Ontarians need.

“I urge you to take my concerns to the Premier and the Minister of Finance. No one-time sell-off is worth the lasting damage that the privatization of public utilities will cause my community and our province.”

I thank Mr. Neshevich for his email.

Finally, my friend and constituent Susie Boyle shared her concerns with me, her concerns for people struggling

in our community to get by. She said, “One of our older ladies at our church was crying one day because she couldn’t pay her hydro bill. She’s living in the house that she and her husband lived in for 50 years, and she can’t pay the bills. Her hydro is too expensive. Fortunately, our church could help her. But I mean, that’s just one lady. How many more seniors are in that same position? [Do] they have to give up their family home or do they give up paying for their prescription to pay their hydro bills, meaning that their health will suffer? Or do they give up buying food?”

I appreciate her question, and I’m sure that members of this Legislature have been hearing those questions and concerns on a regular basis in their offices.

These voices are from individuals, charities, businesses and municipal leaders. These concerns are echoed across my community and across every community in this province. These concerns are not partisan, but they are professional, they are personal and they are sincere. I think that they’re worth listening to, in fairness, and I don’t know that they should be disregarded, as we’re seeing here again.

Government, I hope you’ve heard these voices today. Please hear them. Listen to people in organizations across the province and turn this ship around. Change course and keep hydro public.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack):** The Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I’m very happy to have the chance to have the opportunity to stand in my place this afternoon and speak strongly in opposition to what I can only term a very bizarre opposition day motion from the relatively newly minted leader of Her Majesty’s opposition, Mr. Brown, of course, the member from Simcoe North.

We’ve heard a lot of discussion this afternoon from the member from Mississauga in our caucus, who spoke very eloquently not that long ago in the chamber and went into great detail about all of the information, whether he was talking about the prospectus or other sources of information, all of the very detailed information that has been put into the public domain that would effectively render this motion redundant.

So when you take a step back and think about perhaps what the motivation is of the Leader of the Opposition with respect to this motion, or what the guiding principle is at the heart, at the very foundation, of what the Leader of the Opposition is putting forward—and listening of course to the questions, day after day, that he poses of the Premier and others in this chamber—one can only presume that there’s a certain degree of, I guess, politics involved, which is not surprising. Of course, we are all politicians in this chamber. As members on all sides of the House will know, I enjoy the cut and thrust of debate here in the Legislature as much as—if not, perhaps, even more than—the next member.

But it’s unfortunate to me that with such an important topic, as has been talked about on all sides of this House, the idea that we need to move the province forward in

terms of building up our crucial infrastructure—we put, as has been mentioned, before the people of Ontario, through the delivery of a budget last year, a second budget, the same budget, after the election campaign itself. We had an election platform that explicitly talked about opportunities to optimize or recycle assets and specifically mentioned some of the assets in the electricity sector.

**1700**

We passed that budget here in this Legislature, with the strong mandate that we received from the people of Ontario last June, a strong mandate that I think was driven not exclusively but in large part because there is a thirst across Ontario—whether you live in the north or you live in rural Ontario or you live in urban or suburban Ontario—for modern infrastructure. It can be roads; it can be bridges; it can be broadband; it can be natural gas extensions; it can be public transit. But people understand that, unfortunately, notwithstanding the billions that our government has invested since 2003 in all forms of infrastructure, we live in an era of what I like to call “catch up and keep up.” “Catch up” is the fact that for generations, at all levels and of all partisan stripes, governments have underinvested chronically in crucial infrastructure, and “keep up,” because whether you’re in the north or the south, rural or urban, people know that there continues to be growth and there continues to be an economic and quality-of-life need to make sure that we continue to invest in infrastructure.

Of course, we went forward to the people with a clear plan that was explicit with respect to which assets we were going to look at. That same explicit notion or sentiment was included in the budget that passed in this Legislature, that was opposed by both opposition parties.

Months after the fact, when I think of my own portfolio and my own responsibility, as we have rolled out tons of new programs, tons of new projects, specifically, I think of members in both opposition caucuses who, I will say, do their job when they talk to me, either in questions in this chamber or offline in conversations in the corridors. They talk to me about the importance of making sure that we continue to invest in their communities.

I understand that the member from Perth–Wellington, I believe it is, in fact has a private member’s bill or motion coming up—I think it’s up for debate next week; I saw a press release on this today—that specifically calls on the government to make more investments in infrastructure. He should say that. His community has needs. All 107 electoral districts represented in this chamber have significant infrastructure needs. It’s why we have made the difficult decisions. It’s why Premier Wynne and the rest of our team have made the tough decision to make sure that we have the resources available and ready to invest in crucial infrastructure.

Whether we’re talking about the re-establishment or the reinstatement of a stand-alone Connecting Links fund that will benefit more than 70 communities across the province of Ontario, which was a much-celebrated

announcement by all of our municipal partners when the Premier and others in our government talked about it at the recent AMO conference; whether we're talking about transit investments that are being made right across the province of Ontario, from Ottawa to Waterloo to the greater Toronto and Hamilton area; whether we're talking about—and I certainly hear about this from colleagues on this side of the House—the importance of making sure that we have funds in place, and that we have the desire and the will to go forward with four-laning crucial highways or portions of crucial highways in northern Ontario—this is all part of that same ambitious plan. We call it the Moving Ontario Forward plan. But at the very heart of it, it goes to that notion that we have to continue to invest, that we have to continue to play that “catch up and keep up.”

I would think that a member, and in this case, I'm referring to the Leader of the Opposition, bringing forward this thinly veiled, politically opportunistic motion here this afternoon—I would think that that member, representing for a decade a community in the federal House of Commons that is a fast-growing community—I'm talking about Barrie, of course. I know he represents a community that abuts Barrie now, here in this Legislature. To think about Barrie, just to the north of my community, so much in need for crucial infrastructure, and to know that for a decade—that particular member wants us to forget today that for a decade, he was not at the table in Ottawa. He was not telling the Prime Minister—he was not telling his cabinet colleagues, his caucus colleagues—that it was important to stand up for the province of Ontario, that it was important to stand up for Barrie. In fact, he was doing the opposite. He was absent, as my friends in the military would say, absent without leave when it comes—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister knows we don't talk about absenteeism. I think he's stretching the personal attack a little bit. So could we get back to the motion, please?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I will. Thank you very much, Speaker.

I'm going to wrap up just by saying I think that all those who have any experience or have witnessed the Leader of the Opposition's political career will notice, whether we're talking about the motion here this afternoon or we're talking about the questions that he asks in this House, he is in fact—and I've said this in the back and forth here in this chamber, Speaker—starting to resemble somewhat of a pretzel as he twists himself into these bizarre positions around what he believes. Now that it's opportunistic and important for him, suddenly he has woken up to the idea that we have to make these crucial investments.

It's a shame, Speaker, because on this side of the House, whether we're talking about two-way all-day GO service to Barrie, whether we're talking about rehabilitating, extending, expanding and building new highways across the GTHA and beyond, the Connecting Links plan, the four-laning, supporting rapid transit in London,

supporting communities, Ottawa, Kitchener, Waterloo and beyond—that's why we are making these tough decisions. It's what the people of Ontario gave us the mandate to do, and we're going to keep working hard to make sure that we build up the province.

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, Speaker, it's interesting listening to the Minister of Transportation talking about pretzels, because my goodness gracious, they've got a whole roster of them over there. In fact, this morning I was worried that the Minister of Energy might throw out his back with the flip-flop he seems to have had to make when it comes to the sale of Hydro One, based on his absolute position on it when he was the mayor of Ottawa, saying that this cannot be done. I mean, you want to talk about the masters of duplicity? They're sitting on the other side of the House.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Oh, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I can do it without your assistance, if I feel it's out of line. Thank you.

We'll remove that one word that starts with a D. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdraw, Speaker.

It shocked the heck out of me that the member from Etobicoke was actually awake. Usually when he's in here, he's snoozing. But anyway, let's get back to the motion today.

So here we are talking about taking two sides on an issue. My God, I was in here speaking last week, and I was in here speaking a few months ago before the House rose, on two different opposition day motions by the third party. I listed quote after quote after quote from Liberals, current and past, about their positions on selling not just Hydro One but public assets. They were absolutely opposed to it. Now, all of a sudden, the Minister of Transportation—he's the guy who builds roads.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** No quotes from me, though.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You weren't here long enough, and nothing that you said was quotable, apparently. But here's the guy who's in charge of infrastructure.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I'm a work in progress, John.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Gentlemen, we do know the new rules. We talk through me—to me, not to each other. Okay? Otherwise the guillotine will be coming down. Okay?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, the minister is the guy who looks after the infrastructure, and here he now subscribes to this belief, in his own words, that this government can't build infrastructure in Ontario unless it sells off public assets. If you want to talk about an admission of failure on the part of this minister and this government, every other Premier before Premier Wynne has been able to fund infrastructure in this province based on managing the financial affairs of the province and investing in infrastructure. All of a sudden now, here they say they can't do it without selling Hydro One. Do you know what they're going to realize out of that, Speaker?

They're going to realize \$4 billion—\$4 billion. They keep going on about a \$130-billion plan. You do the math. When that \$4 billion is gone, what do they attack next? What public assets get sold next?

That's why our leader, Patrick Brown, has put forth this motion, and I will read the motion for the people over there who didn't understand: "That the government provide the House, and therefore the public, with all reports and financial analysis used by them to justify the sale of Hydro One no later than October 8, 2015."

We got the parliamentary assistant from Mississauga over there giving his jaw a workout. He must have had something to eat down at the reception. So here we are. He's going through the prospectus. He's going through the prospectus and—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's all the info you're asking for.

1710

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's none of the—a prospectus is what you put out—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down. The Minister of Transportation is pushing the buttons. The member from the opposition is taking the buttons and throwing out barbs the other way, instead of talking to me. I know it's hard for you. Talk to me. Thank you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, that prospectus is like any other. When you're out to try to get an initial public offering, you're out to promote the sale of a particular asset. You're going out there and saying, "This is what we're offering." That, in no way, shape or form, in spite of what the member from Mississauga—Streetsville or the Minister of Transportation say, satisfies the request for a financial analysis used by them to justify the sale of Hydro One—in no way, shape or form. They are going out to the hopeful shareholders of the new corporation and saying, "This is what we've got to offer. This is what we want you to buy." It does not say anything about justifying the decision to sell.

The average person in the province of Ontario is not going to be buying shares of Hydro One. But you know what? They all pay a hydro bill. They're not going to buy shares in Hydro One. They either can't afford it or they're not interested. But they all pay a hydro bill, and they want to know what discussions took place, what analysis took place, what financial data was considered when those people over there, Speaker, made the decision to sell Hydro One. They're not looking for a fancy sales pitch, because that's what a prospectus is. It's just a very fancy sales pitch. Of course, they just spent a lot of money developing that. Because you know what they do over there very well? They spend a lot of money for little results.

So here we are. We're asking for all of the reports, just like all of the independent legislative officers—signed, sealed, delivered to the government: "Don't sell Hydro One." They will lose the oversight, and the people in the province of Ontario will lose the access to accountability.

That's what they're concerned about. That's why our leader, Patrick Brown, stood in this House today and said, "I want"—to paraphrase—"you to tell me what your business case was for selling Hydro One," not some fancy prospectus full of gobbledygook and fancy numbers. That's not what we're talking about here. Where was the financial analysis that said you had the right to sell that asset? That's what we want to know, and that's what the people of Ontario want to know.

The member from Mississauga likes to go on and on. He loves numbers. Oh, he just loves to quote numbers. Somehow he feels it makes people out there think, "Oh, he must know what he's talking about because look at all the numbers he's blabbing about." But they want to know why, and on what basis, you arrived at the conclusion that Hydro One should be sold, and not on the basis that we all know.

You know, some numbers are simple: the deficit in Ontario, the debt of Ontario. People understand those numbers, and they understand that you people are the ones who got us—those people over there, Speaker, are the ones who got us there. Those people over there, they're the ones who got us there. They're the ones who got us there, and they don't trust them. They don't trust them to sell Hydro One. They wouldn't trust them to run a lemonade stand, and here they are, going to sell off a \$16-billion corporation. This is their hope: They haven't sold the shares yet, but they say that they're going to get \$9 billion for the sale; \$5 billion dollars is going to go to pay off the debt. Well, whoop-de-do. We're chasing \$300 billion in debt in this province because of their mismanagement, and they're going to pay off \$5 billion of it. They're going to put \$4 billion to infrastructure in this province when they keep talking about needing \$130 billion.

We in the opposition, led by Patrick Brown, want to know, where's the business case? You haven't made it. You refuse to make it. Whenever you're asked for a business case, you come up with some other stuff. They try to cloud the issue. It doesn't matter whether it's the business case for Hydro One or trying to cloud the issue surrounding the Sudbury by-election scandal, the bribery scandal. When the Premier's asked a direct question, "Yes or no, did you direct Pat Sorbara or Gerry Lougheed Jr. to offer Andrew Olivier a bribe so that he wouldn't run?"—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order, the member from Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I'm sure the Speaker knows why I have called that point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from the opposition will not talk about that particular incident, as it doesn't apply to the motion. You know, about the Sudbury deal. Okay? We'll stay away from that. You're drifting—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's the Sudbury scandal that you're talking about?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thanks for repeating it. That's the one.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I will not refer to Sudbury or scandals or bribery or anything. I will refer to the motion—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The games are over. Okay? Warned.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** On that note, Mr. Speaker, I believe I've made my point. I will cede the rest of my time here to another member of my caucus who is also eager to talk about the mess that those people over there have created.

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

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm happy to stand here today and speak in support of this motion.

My riding of Niagara Falls is the birthplace of public hydro in this province. It's our falls that gave Sir Adam Beck the inspiration to build a public hydro system and it's those same falls that continue to provide clean energy for a large part of our province.

Now, my riding, the birthplace of public hydro in this province, is going to suffer because of this short-sighted and reckless sell-off of Hydro, this reckless sell-off that is opposed by more than 80%—I want the Liberals to hear this. I know they're not paying attention right now but maybe this will help you: eighty per cent of the residents of the province of Ontario are saying no to selling Hydro.

Just last week another voice in my riding was added to the large and growing number of voices that oppose the sale. On September 21, the council of the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake passed a resolution calling on the government of Ontario to stop the sale of Hydro. This wasn't the first community that did it. That makes 160 municipalities across the province who have stood up and told this government to stop the reckless privatization of Hydro One.

So 160 municipalities and more than 80% of the people of this province oppose this sale, but not our Premier and not this Liberal government. Instead they're moving full steam ahead as if they have blinders on. I'm not sure how else they can ignore the people and the municipalities of Ontario.

The first "whereas" clause in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's resolution says—and I would like the Liberals to listen—"Whereas the transmission and distribution of electricity is a natural monopoly and so needs to be both managed and regulated in a manner that serves the best interests of consumers." That could not be more accurate. It cannot be more obvious that this government seems to have forgotten about those last few words—that our hydro needs to serve the best interests of all consumers. Instead, the Liberal government is moving ahead with this reckless scheme that will serve the best interests of not one consumer.

Let me give you a few examples of consumers who aren't being served by this privatization scheme. There are a lot of seniors who live in all our communities, but who certainly make up my riding, because it's one of the

best places in Ontario to retire. I'm hearing from too many seniors that this sell-off is going to hurt them. The Premier knows full well that seniors in this province are already just getting by with their pensions.

Again, I'd like the Liberals to listen. You want to sell off Hydro One without any regard to the kind of impact it will have on seniors in the province of Ontario. I can tell you that they come into my office on a regular basis and they say to me, particularly the ones that I know really well, "Wayne, what are we going to do? Do we pay our hydro bill and warm our house or do we buy food? Do we pay our hydro bill and go light on my medicine?" So instead of taking two blood pressure pills a day, they may take one, or they may take one every three days. If you think that's not accurate, ask the seniors; they'll tell you.

**1720**

The seniors in my riding and all across this province need to know what's going to happen to the hydro rates. I say to my colleagues the Conservatives and the Liberals—we've asked this question over and over again—Guarantee us that the hydro rates won't go up, so I can tell the seniors that the rates aren't going to go up. You can't do that, and you know why: because you know as soon as they privatize it, it's going up. You know that.

This reckless sell-off is not just going to hurt seniors, Mr. Speaker; far from it—and I'm directing this through the Speaker. It's hurting young couples and their families as well. Young people can't buy their first home, can't move into a community, can't start a family, because they can't be sure what their hydro costs are going to be, because this process has zero transparency. When young couples can't come to our community, it hurts the entire community. We can't grow the economy; businesses don't have new customers; schools don't have new kids coming in. This hurts the entire province. Young couples and their families deserve to know what is going to happen if this government goes through with this reckless scheme.

I want to talk about my area, tourism and what's going to happen down there. Some people may know—some people may have come down to Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie—that this year we had 13 million visitors come to Niagara Falls. They came to the falls and into my riding for a number of reasons. It could have been for the falls. It could have been for the wineries—we have some beautiful wineries down in Niagara—the craft brewers, the Fort Erie Race Track. There are lots of things to do. All of them are being faced with higher hydro rates, which means less money to invest in their businesses and fewer jobs being created. We need a plan to create jobs from this Premier, not a plan that's going to drive people away.

Mr. Speaker, the tourist sector is calling me up—I know them quite well—and they say, "Gatesy, what are we supposed to do when hydro rates go up? Are we going to increase the costs of the rooms for the tourists? That's going to drive business away. Are we going to turn off the air conditioners in the rooms all summer? Or the water parks? What are we going to do? Turn off the

lights in the hallway? Stop using the elevators and make everybody climb the steps?" This is what's going on in the province of Ontario. It will mean fewer tourists are going to visit, and that's going to hurt other parts of the tourist industry even more. It's one big downward spiral for the tourist industry in my riding and across the province with this reckless plan to sell off Hydro One.

And yet, the Premier is so convinced the sell-off is going to benefit consumers. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Liberal government, you prove it to us. Prove it to the tourist industry and the manufacturers. Prove it to the seniors and the young families.

Finally, we come to the biggest group that will be affected by this reckless scheme—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** You want to hear what it is? I hear you heckling over there.

What are the manufacturers going to do when they leave this province because of hydro rates? That's what they're doing over and over again. In Niagara, we're selling hydro to the States, who are then subsidizing the manufacturers in the States. And guess what's happening, Mr. Speaker? Those jobs in Welland, those jobs in Hamilton are leaving our communities because of hydro rates.

So when you're telling us a plan—do you want to see those jobs go? Talk to the people at US Steel. Talk to the people at GM. Talk to the people at Ford and Chrysler. Talk to the small auto parts manufacturing. They're losing their jobs because of hydro rates, and when you privatize it, it's going to be worse. Make no mistake about it.

It's time this government allows the light to shine through. It's time this government pays attention to the seniors of this province and the young families looking to buy their first home. It's time for this government to give some answers to the tourist sector, who give so much to be proud of, and to the manufacturers who for so long made up the base of Ontario's economy.

It's time this government opened its eyes and ears. I'm going to say this again, because I know you're not all listening over there. It's time this government opened its eyes and ears and listened to nearly 160 municipalities who oppose the sale and more than 80% of Ontarians who stand with them. These people deserve answers from the Premier. She needs to come clean and put all the documents on the table.

I'm going to close by saying—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I didn't say that when you spoke, sir.

Here's the issue, and I want you to understand this very clearly: I had the privilege to run in two elections in four months in the province of Ontario. I ran in a by-election, and then I ran in a general election. I had the opportunity to run against two Liberals as well as Conservatives and the Green Party. I had the opportunity to do eight debates—count them, eight debates—against the Liberals. Do you know how many times the candidate

for the Liberals said they were going to sell Hydro, that they were going to put it in their platform? Do you want to hear how many? Somebody help me here. How many times do you think they raised that issue? How many? I want to hear it.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Zero, Mr. Speaker. Zero. Not once did they raise that they were going to sell off Hydro—not once in eight debates. Eight debates and they never once said it.

Guess what else they did? I went to the budget hearings in Fort Erie, because I figured, "Well, I'm going to hear something from the Liberals on anything." I went to the budget hearings. Do you know how many times—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Monte McNaughton):** Order, please.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Do you know how many times they raised it in the budget hearings? Not once.

I'm saying to you, do not stand across there and say you told the residents of Ontario that you were going to sell Hydro. You never told them once. You still haven't told them. And if you feel so confident that people would support selling Hydro, then have hearings right across the province and find out what the 80% of Ontarians want to see right here in the province of Ontario. I'll tell you that it's not to sell Hydro One.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Monte McNaughton):** Further debate?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I appreciate the opportunity to spend a few more minutes talking about the opposition motion, which I find really comes out of—I don't want to say "left field," but a rather bizarre place.

I just don't understand what information is possibly required. I, too, sit on estimates. We've been looking at energy, and I believe it is incumbent on members of the estimates committee to read up on the latest literature that the ministry has produced. I know that the prospectus that has been filed by the government explains and gives an awful lot of information that I think, if read by the Leader of the Opposition, might answer some of his questions.

I know some of the key questions; for example, transmission revenues. When you're looking at selling an asset, someone who wants to buy it will want to know about revenues. They'll want to know about the costs. They'll want to know about the market. They'll want to know about performance measures and targets. I can tell you that transmission revenues are dealt with in depth on page 57 of the prospectus; distribution revenues on page 57 of the prospectus. This should have been read before this bizarre motion was put in front of us.

You want a good market overview to give you a sense of what we're getting into—what potential buyers are getting into? Page 20 and on—it's there.

Performance measures and targets start on page 73. There's lots of really good information about Hydro One, probably the most amount of information you're ever going to find in one book. I would encourage members of

the opposition to pick it up and read it, because I think it would answer most of their questions.

Just to take it back to some of the fundamentals, as announced, our government—and I know this draws howls, but it is the truth—is broadening the ownership of Hydro One. We will retain, the people of Ontario will retain, a controlling interest of 40%. Our approach will generate billions to provide communities with the infrastructure they need.

1730

I can tell you that in my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, when I was knocking on doors in the past as a town councillor and most recently campaigning to be MPP for that fantastic riding, what did I hear at the doors? People asked me what I was going to do as a town councillor, what I was going to do as an MPP to make their lives better. The biggest single issue I heard time and again was about transportation—people having to spend three and four hours a day away from their families, stuck in gridlock, waiting for a GO train, waiting for traffic to clear. It destroys family life. One of the greatest things we can do as a government is to improve their ability to get to work and to get home in a timely manner. It not only improves their family time, it improves community time in all the communities where people commute to Toronto and back, because it gives them more time to spend volunteering in their community when they're not in transportation.

I heard the message loud and clear that we have to improve transportation, we have to improve our transit system. The question remains—and it's been reiterated over and over again—that those funds, those billions of dollars to improve GO train service, to improve transit and roads, have to come from somewhere. The sale, the broadening of ownership of Hydro One, in my belief and the belief of everyone on this side of the House, will provide some of those funds, the key portion of those funds.

A second key point, and it gets back to the request for documents because it's dealt with in the prospectus, is that this broadening of ownership will create an even stronger-performing Hydro One with a new board of directors and a new management team, one that has signalled its dedication to improved performance, improved customer service and improved system reliability. We've heard about problems with Hydro One in the past, and it's my belief that this broadening of ownership will go a long way to dealing with those issues.

I'll leave it there for now. I'll just say that this motion, in my mind, is without merit, and I cannot in good conscience support it.

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

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** Last May, I wrote to the Minister of Energy and asked that he transfer all of Hydro One's customers who reside in the city of Ottawa to Hydro Ottawa. This was one of the conditions of the amalgamation that created the new city of Ottawa in 2001. In the letter, I explained that it was an appropriate

time to fulfill his outstanding commitment, considering that the provincial government is planning on selling part of Hydro One to new owners and the details are murky at best. I further explained that the rural residents and businesses of the city of Ottawa who are served by Hydro One are in general paying significantly more than Hydro Ottawa customers. All Ottawa residents and businesses deserve to be treated equally, as was committed to during the provincially mandated amalgamation that was implemented in 2001.

The Minister of Energy was the mayor of Ottawa at the time, so of course he would be aware of his obligation, which he did not fulfill. The mess that is Hydro One, as documented both by the Auditor General and the Ombudsman, should not be foisted on Ottawa residents any longer. Ottawa residents deserve to be treated fairly. The time to effect this transfer is prior to the sale of Hydro One.

My constituents are tired of being given the runaround by Hydro One, and the lack of details surrounding the sale gives them no comfort that the situation will improve. In fact, the exact opposite is true. My constituents are fearful that the sale will add to their prohibitive and growing electricity bills. We are told by the minister to expect 42% increases in hydro bills over the next few years.

Today we are merely asking for the background information used to justify the sale. It seems to me that if the government is confident in its decision, it should be happy to share this information with the public and let them come to an informed decision. Currently, polls suggest that a majority of people oppose the sale, even when informed that the proceeds are earmarked for transit and infrastructure. Perhaps they realize that we will lose Hydro One but we get to keep the massive debt that was Hydro One. That will be the legacy of the Liberal government.

The provincial government is asking the opposition parties, and therefore Ontarians, to trust them yet again with respect to a major decision on the energy file. This is laughable given the complete mismanagement to date of Ontario's electricity system by this government.

Let's name the glaringly bad choices that this government has made: cancellation and relocation of two gas plants at a cost of \$1.2 billion to the taxpayers of Ontario; the imposition of smart meters at a cost of \$2 billion; Hydro One's disastrously wrongful billing system; the wildly unproductive and expensive Green Energy Act, which could cost as much as a hundred billion dollars over the next 20 years, which could be a pile of health care; and to top it all off, the imposition of a carbon tax.

What are the results? Ridiculously high and rising electricity costs for ratepayers, increased taxes now and into the future to pay off the ever-growing debt, the destruction of large swaths of rural Ontario, the loss of 300,000 well-paying manufacturing jobs and the disenfranchisement of local communities.

When it comes to their management of the electricity file system, the provincial government has lost the trust

of the people, particularly rural Ontario. For example, the Premier promised not to impose industrial wind turbines on unwilling hosts and, right after the last election, denied she was planning to impose a carbon tax. Don't be fooled: A cap-and-trade carbon pricing system is a tax. Saying that it's not a tax is a distinction without a difference.

Industrial wind turbines continue to be imposed on unwilling communities. To add insult to injury, when the Auditor General uncovered Hydro One's smart meter debacle, instead of addressing the substantive issues which she had meticulously and thoroughly documented, the Minister of Energy chose to insult her, implying she was incompetent.

On top of everything else, the Liberal government's alarming compensation packages to Hydro One executives totalling \$24 million is a slap in the face to average Ontario families who cannot afford to pay their hydro bills while making ends meet.

People and businesses are rightly concerned that the fire sale of Hydro One will only add to the currently skyrocketing electricity prices and have little faith in empty promises without substantial background. I'm pretty sure we know the answer. We have seen business, as usual, being terrorized and their bank accounts drained. It seems more than coincidental that after the smart meter and billing system debacle, the ink barely dries on the Ombudsman's report and the provincial government's response is to remove independent oversight of the agency.

It is currently important for all Ontarians to know who is to benefit from the sale of Hydro One, because they have a sneaking suspicion it is not them.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Well, it has certainly been an interesting debate this afternoon. We of course will be speaking in favour of the official opposition's motion.

We don't think that it is asking too much for some accountability and transparency in the sell-off of Hydro One. But it is amazing to me that I heard the Minister of Transportation say that he felt that this ask was equivalent to something called—he said that asking for this motion was bizarre. Transparency is “bizarre.” This is how warped it has got in this place today. And then he went on to say that transparency is redundant. He called this motion redundant.

**1740**

The member from Mississauga–Streetsville, of course, was referring to the prospectus at length because that's all they have. All they have is this prospectus, which does not actually indicate the business rationale for the sell-off of Hydro One. It is reasonable—in fact, it is our fiduciary duty as members of the official opposition—to ask for that rationale. In all research, in all evidence in other jurisdictions across this province, the privatization of a power resource, a public asset like Hydro One, has proven to not be in the best interests of the people of this province.

You can't blame us for actually not trusting you. You can't. You've given us a lot of reason to question some of the decisions that have been made on that side of the House.

There's the usual: from last term, eHealth, Ornge, the gas plants, making companies whole when you didn't have to make them whole, a billion dollars here and a billion dollars here and another \$1.1 billion there, and another OPP investigation just for good measure. Then we have MaRS; we have Ontera, which really is the most recent challenge for this government. This is a deal that was negotiated by Infrastructure Ontario. They paid \$6.5 million in consultants to sell a \$61-million company for \$6 million. The outrage that you hear from people across the entire province and in our own ridings—I mean, they can't believe the audacity.

Then, of course, we have the not-so-smart meters that the Auditor General reported on last fall. We have the children's aid database, which I think is one of those IT glitches that this government has faced with outsourcing and contracting out of IT services, which is actually one of the most heinous. This database to protect children was supposed to be developed by 2015. It will not be done until 2019.

So, again, to the trust issue, as to why the motion is before us and why we are supporting the motion—and then of course you move on to SAMS. It just continues. Even today in the House, another outsourced, contracted-out computer glitch with the used-car sales tax; the government did not collect \$2.4 million. But that's a small error compared to the bigger errors.

Just this week, unbelievably, this government is using tax dollars to challenge and to appeal the MPAC assessments on 19 buildings, including this building. They don't want to pay those taxes to the city of Toronto. Of course, the mayor of Toronto has said that two can play at that game. The government designed the MPAC assessment system and now they're fighting the MPAC tax system. The reporter who broke that story said, “You really can't make this stuff up.” You can't.

You have a long line of issues where people do not have confidence in the business acumen of this government because they have not demonstrated their due diligence around where to save money and where to spend money. I would know this, Mr. Speaker, because I'm the finance critic and the critic for Treasury Board. I get to look at where they're trying to save money and where they're trying to spend money, and they're really, really good at spending money and they're trying to save money in all the wrong places.

I think this long line of what can only be described as scandals warrants our attention; it warrants our concern. That is why; for the official opposition to come to this House and to file their motion asking for documents that pertain to the business decision around the sell-off of Hydro One is completely rational. It really is. They want to see the numbers; we want to see the numbers. Do you know who else wants to see the numbers? The people of this province; they do. They want to see those numbers.



We have tried to get this information. We had to file a freedom-of-information request. For the public that's watching, it should not be so hard for an elected member to get information pertaining to the revenue that's coming into this place and how those revenues are being distributed. As I've already indicated, there's cause for concern.

We did file a freedom-of-information request back in June, and we asked for a listing of the consultant contracts for the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets, and that included the names of the consulting firms. We asked for the value of those contracts and we asked for a description of the services provided for contracts engaged in this period, because the consultants are doing very well—they really are—in this province. We wanted to know what the consultants said to this advisory council and to cabinet which caused this government and some reasonable and rational people on that side of the House who fully understand that selling off a public asset like Hydro One is not in the best interests of the people of this province—I know there must be somebody. Dalton McGuinty—former Premier McGuinty himself—said that Hydro should remain public to protect Ontarians. Premier McGuinty said that. He said, “Deregulation and privatization hasn't worked” and that it's not in the best interests in the province. I never thought I would say this, Mr. Speaker, but I miss that man. I really do. That has to be the smartest thing that Dalton McGuinty ever said, and it's a matter of record right now.

When we filed this FOI, we went on to ask for reports. We asked for slide decks. We asked for correspondence from third-party consultants because we wanted to know who was informing this decision. We also asked for correspondence among the advisory panel members regarding possible recommendations for modernizing government business enterprises, because somebody at that cabinet table must have said, “Wait a second. Just wait a second. Is this really a smart decision? Why does it make sense to sell a public asset which generates \$500 million in revenue a year? Why does that make sense?” That would be a reasonable and rational question. So we tried to get that through the FOI. Then finally, we asked for the evidence. We asked for the research. We said, “studies regarding energy ratepayer impacts of different plans for Hydro One prepared for the council during this period.”

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Advisory Council on Government Assets has been looking at these recommendations with Mr. Clark's panel—Mr. Clark, who, it should be noted, prior to Christmas, last November, was not in favour of selling off a majority of Hydro One. But then something happened. Something happened, and we want to find out what happened. We wanted to get to that correspondence before you guys got to the shredder. We wanted to get to it through the FOI process. We have to do this.

But what came back is really surprising. It said with respect to these items, “partial access to a listing of

consulting contracts has been granted.” So we found out the two consultants, and we found out how much money they made. But we didn't find out what they said. So we have part of the equation, but not the substance. I think that's actually what this motion is trying to get to. Where is the substance? Where are the facts? Where is the evidence?

You have to remember that this advisory council was really working very hard on the beer issue, because this is a priority in the province of Ontario—beer and the sell-off of Hydro One. These are the two things: “Look over here, we're selling beer in grocery stores; don't look over here, we're privatizing hydro.”

But the government came back and said that this is commercially sensitive. They're going to hide behind “commercially sensitive,” just like—this issue actually may end up in the courts. There will be a day when the Premier stands up in this House and says, “It's before the courts.” In fact, the Premier actually has to say that quite a lot.

Then, it goes on to say “access to reports submitted to the council by third party consultants and correspondence ... regarding possible recommendations for modernizing government business enterprises is denied,” because it would “inform and reveal the advice.”

That's what we're trying to get to. We want the advice and we want the information.

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

Pursuant to standing order 43(d), I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Brown has moved opposition day number 2. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will say “nay.”

I believe the nays have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1750 to 1800.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Members, take your seats.

Mr. Brown has moved opposition day number 2. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time.

#### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Gretzky, Lisa	Natyshak, Taras
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Harris, Michael	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Hatfield, Percy	Sattler, Peggy
Brown, Patrick	Hillier, Randy	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
DiNovo, Cheri	MacLaren, Jack	Taylor, Monique
Fedeli, Victor	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fife, Catherine	Martow, Gila	Walker, Bill
Forster, Cindy	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
French, Jennifer K.	McNaughton, Monte	Yakabuski, John
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Norm	Yurek, Jeff

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** All those opposed, please stand one at a time.

**Nays**

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Potts, Arthur
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Rinaldi, Lou
Crack, Grant	Malhi, Harinder	Sandals, Liz
Damerla, Dipika	Mangat, Amrit	Sergio, Mario
Del Duca, Steven	Martins, Cristina	Sousa, Charles
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo

Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Zimmer, David
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**  
The ayes are 39; the nays are 52.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negatived.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** This House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1803.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Miller, Norm (PC) <b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Parry Sound–Muskoka Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton–Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC) <b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	York–Simcoe Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB) <b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Halton Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP) <b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Essex Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC) Potts, Arthur (LIB) Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) <b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b> Sattler, Peggy (NDP) Scott, Laurie (PC)	Perth–Wellington Beaches–East York Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord Northumberland–Quinte West Guelph London West / London-Ouest Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP) Smith, Todd (PC) <b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b> Tabuns, Peter (NDP) Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB) Taylor, Monique (NDP) Thibeault, Glenn (LIB) Thompson, Lisa M. (PC) Vanthof, John (NDP) Vernile, Daiene (LIB) Walker, Bill (PC) Wilson, Jim (PC)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton Prince Edward–Hastings Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud Toronto–Danforth Mississauga–Erindale Hamilton Mountain Sudbury Huron–Bruce Timiskaming–Cochrane Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound Simcoe–Grey	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB) <b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Agincourt Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC) Yurek, Jeff (PC) <b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b> Vacant	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke Elgin–Middlesex–London Willowdale Whitby–Oshawa	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Sophie Kiwala, Todd Smith  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier / Greffière: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Toby Barrett, Victor Fedeli  
Catherine Fife, Ann Hoggarth  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Jim McDonnell, Eleanor McMahon  
Lisa M. Thompson  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Robert Bailey, Vic Dhillon  
John Fraser, Wayne Gates  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Cristina Martins, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Clerk / Greffier: Vacant

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la justice**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Randy Hillier, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri  
Laurie Scott  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jack MacLaren  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Steve Clark  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Monte McNaughton  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Jennifer K. French  
Monte Kwinter, Amrit Mangat  
Kathryn McGarry, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Daiene Vernile, Bill Walker  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffier / Greffière: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Norm Miller  
Jagmeet Singh, Peter Tabuns  
Glenn Thibeault  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Sylvia Jones  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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