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Thursday 5 November 2015

Jeudi 5 novembre 2015

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Deborah Deller

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

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Deborah Deller

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 5 November 2015

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 5 novembre 2015

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MENTAL HEALTH STATUTE LAW
AMENDMENT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS
RELATIVES À LA SANTÉ MENTALE

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

Bill 122, An Act to amend the Mental Health Act and the Health Care Consent Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 122, Loi visant à modifier la Loi sur la santé mentale et la Loi de 1996 sur le consentement aux soins de santé.

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

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I am pleased, today, to share my time with the member from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member for Huron–Bruce, for allowing me to participate in this debate.

Bill 122, of course, is the Mental Health Statute Law Amendment Act. I must say I was quite intrigued when this act first was proposed. I thought that there was an opportunity here because, as many members know, I sat on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. Speaker, I believe you were the Chair of that particular committee.

A select committee is rather unique in its makeup in that every recommendation that comes forward is approved, endorsed and agreed upon by all three parties in the House. We did that with the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. We, in fact, spent 18 months doing that. It was a long journey, as you can imagine, because with mental health issues it is not particularly easy for presenters to share their stories and explain how they have been treated or, in many cases, mistreated as a result of their mental health illness.

I was very much looking forward to seeing what was in Bill 122. I have to say, I really believe there is a missed opportunity here. Bill 122—and I did go to the ministerial briefing, so I know from what I speak; this is not from reading some two-page bill summary—is very specifically related to fixing one issue. I get that. I understand it. When the court imposes deadlines and makes

recommendations, as legislators we must react to that. I understand that. However, we are opening up the Mental Health Act, and there were some very specific recommendations from the all-party committee that I think we should have been bringing forward with Bill 122.

Now, having said that, there is an opportunity for everyone to fix their mistakes, because when Bill 122 gets referred to committee, if we have unanimous consent, we can bring forward some of the amendments and some of the recommendations that are in this select committee report. I would urge government members who sit on whatever committee Bill 122 ultimately gets referred to, that they seriously consider that. Again, I'm going to spend most of my time referring to the recommendations, all-party supported, that were given as a result of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions.

There were a number of recommendations related to justice issues, courts and corrections. One of the things the select committee found out very quickly was that services for court mental health workers—these are some of the recommendations we brought forward and that I would like to see incorporated into Bill 122. Even though I understand this is to solve a very particular fix—I get it—we all understand that there are very few opportunities for us to add to and amend certain legislation. We have that opportunity with Bill 122 right now. I would hate to see after—this report is almost five years old—that we don't take the opportunity to move forward.

Specifically related to justice and the court system, the select committee recommended: “The services of court mental health workers should be made widely available across all regions of Ontario, in order to divert more individuals with a mental illness or addiction out of the justice system and into appropriate mental health and addictions services and supports.”

If you go back to what is the nub of the issue with Bill 122, this recommendation works very well, because it's all about incarcerated individuals who have mental illness and their access to service.

The second recommendation: “Additional mental health, drug treatment, and youth mental health courts should be created across all regions of Ontario, to provide more appropriate services for individuals with a mental illness or addiction.”

Again, Bill 122 is a result of a court order and a court issue related to an individual who is incarcerated, who is in an institution and isn't getting the services they need. So this recommendation does fit very nicely with Bill 122.

“The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services should direct police forces across the province

to provide training for officers who may encounter people suffering from mental illnesses and addictions.” I don’t think we have to look too far in the news to see the value of what that recommendation could and would do.

Probably the most important recommendation that we keep coming back to with this select committee: “The core basket of mental health and addictions services should be available to the incarcerated population, and discharge plans for individuals with a mental illness or addiction should be expanded to include the services of a system navigator and appropriate community services.”

I get that this comes because you have to do something. The court has imposed a deadline; I believe it’s December 23. But we have an opportunity, with those very specific four recommendations, that I believe would actually improve Bill 122 and that are a very appropriate match for what you are trying to accomplish.

Instead of just opening up the legislation and fixing a very specific part of it because you were forced to through litigation, why don’t you actually look at the bigger picture and say, “We actually have some half-decent research that is a result of 18 months of study, 18 months of deputations from court officers, from people with lived experiences, from family members who were part of this discussion”? You could improve what you have already started with Bill 122. As I have said before, I truly believe this is a missed opportunity.

Sometimes we forget that some of the hard work and some of the research have already been done, and I believe that has been done with this report. There are members of cabinet who were on this committee and who know very well what this could mean to the lives and families of individuals who have mental health illnesses. I urge the members of the committee that ultimately will be sitting and reviewing Bill 122, when it gets to committee, that they allow for unanimous consent so that we can go further than what a very limited Bill 122 is offering us right now today. I have no qualms with what is being suggested in Bill 122. I just think we could do a lot more when we have the opportunity and when the legislation is open, which is what is afforded to us right now. I will leave it at that.

0910

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I just want to put on the record that this whole issue in regard to how we deal with our mental health system is something that I think touches many people in this Legislature, as it touches many other lives across this province.

My sister was schizophrenic and dealt with the system for years and years, when it came to making sure she was safe. I’ve got to tell you, having a family that was supportive and a system that was engaged with my sister allowed her to live safely through her entire bout of schizophrenia, which started at about age 20. Unfortunately, she died when she was 60 of breast cancer, but it wasn’t the schizophrenia that got her in the end.

I have to say that it is so, so important that we, first of all, identify what the issues are with the individual so that we can try to at least marshal the types of support that that person needs in order to be able to survive. My sister, in the case of the Canadian Mental Health Association in Timmins, was very well supported by the workers there and by the ACT team, and where the family was not able to provide certain services, they were able to be there and help my sister through a lot of what she had to go through. She ended up living a very productive life. Louise lived on her own in her own apartment for the last five or six years of her life. She was able to manage things quite effectively. We had to put some supports around her in order to make sure she was able to function, but once that was in place, it worked fairly well. The CCAC came in and provided her some basic support that she needed in order to be able to function. The Canadian Mental Health Association was there, and myself, as the only living relative left in Timmins for the last five years of her life, was there, along with my wife and daughter, to assist where we could.

The real point here is that it’s not just the system that has to respond; families also have to respond and be there for their loved ones.

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

Mr. Grant Crack: It’s a pleasure for me this morning to stand in my place here and represent the people of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell. I’d like to thank the member from Dufferin–Caledon for her remarks, as well as the member from Timmins–James Bay. The member from Timmins–James Bay made some great points. There’s no family, I don’t think, in the province of Ontario that hasn’t been affected by someone whom we love who has been affected by a mental health issue or an addiction.

That’s why we as a government, when we took office in 2003, saw it as a priority. Since that time, we’ve invested close to a total of a billion dollars now in mental health and addictions strategies and services. We plan to continue our investments and increase funding by \$220 million over the next three years. That’s our commitment as a government in recognizing the impact that it does have on our communities and the economy of the province of Ontario.

Due to our investments, there are more than 55,000 additional children and youth now receiving the care that they need. Also, we have invested over \$11 million to place 144 mental health nurses in our schools. That’s important, Mr. Speaker, because it’s important that we provide those supports early on in one’s life to give them a good, fresh start in contributing to the great province of Ontario. We have more than 770 mental health workers serving in communities, schools and in court, and more than \$2 million in funding supporting training and professional development for aboriginal mental health and addictions workers that serve our aboriginal youth and children. We’ve created 19 new specialized nurse practitioners specializing in eating disorders, who now help close to 500 children.

There are many more that I could talk about, the investments we made, but I look forward to this getting to committee so that we can have some more debate.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to acknowledge my colleague from Dufferin–Caledon. She always is extremely well-prepared, on this item, in particular. I know she has done a great, great job on the mental health select committee, which our former colleague Christine Elliott also was very involved in. To all members—it was an all-party committee, and I think they did great work.

What I've really heard throughout this debate is how far we have come. That's a great thing. There used to be a lot of stigma associated, and sadly, in some cases there still is, but we've come a long way, where people are willing to actually acknowledge that they are having some challenges. I think it's equally important for other people to step up and be prepared to be there for other people.

In my great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, we have a resource that, sadly, has come about as a result of a young man, Wes Cameron, taking his own life. His mother, Yolanda, and father, Jamie, have come out and established Wes for Youth Online. That's a resource that, certainly, is wonderful in our own backyard, but with the advent, of course, of electronic technology, it's available to anyone across the world that can actually utilize that.

Keystone children services is wonderful, and the Canadian Mental Health Association, again, has great services. We've just had some more money made available so that we have 24/7 access, which is great, but I think we can't stop there. We can't rest, because I believe—and I believe my colleague, Mr. Yurek, from Elgin–Middlesex–London, phrased it in the way that mental health has to be treated the same as physical health problems. We put a lot of emphasis on physical health and the resources into it, but mental health is equally as challenging, in some cases, maybe more. I think we need to ensure that that has equal treatment.

For this year's World Mental Health Day, I think the theme really was focused on dignity in mental health and, again, ensuring that we have the resources and the services there for people when they need them.

I would like to just reach out to everyone who's either listening or watching at home—and all of us can play a role. We can be watching and always just have our ears ready, to open our door for someone who is having challenges and find help—along with them, I'll do my part.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'd like to congratulate the member from Dufferin–Caledon for her remarks. She and I served on the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. Five years later, there has been very, very little done—one half of a recommendation that has been acted upon.

This bill is so, so narrow. It only came here because the court forced us to deal with this. But there is such a

pent-up demand to make changes to the Mental Health Act. You can see it by the broad views that are brought forward by the members of this House. Sadly, Speaker, we will be the only ones who will get to talk about mental health, and for a very limited amount of minutes will we be allowed to do this. Shame on all of us.

The people out there are ready to talk about mental health. They are ready to effect change about mental health. They know that the bill that we have now, the Mental Health Act, does not serve us in 2015 anymore. It was the best we could do 20 years ago, but in 20 years, everything has changed: stigma, treatment, the way that we support people with mental illness. Everything has changed.

Within this bill that is so, so narrow, there are some huge flaws. It cannot go through the way it is. Although it will meet, on paper, what the court has told us had to be done, on the ground, for the people who offer that care, the support is not there. The facilities have not been built. The clinical areas do not exist—a real shame. Those people deserve to have treatment. If they're going to be held, on form, they should have access to treatment. This is not the case, not because of the law, but because of a lack of resources dedicated to mental illness.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thank you for the comments. I very much appreciate it.

I will go back to where I started. There were nine members on that select committee. I'm not going to name names because I've never been very good at matching the person with the riding, but four of those members of the nine-member committee are now in cabinet. We have an opportunity here. If we get unanimous consent at committee, we can incorporate some of the—again, I will say—all-party recommendations that are included in the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions' report. So allow us that opportunity, because, to my colleague's point, we're not going to have a fulsome debate here in this chamber. We need to get that opportunity to add, to expand, to improve Bill 122 when it gets to committee.

0920

I spoke about four recommendations. There are actually another four that, again, directly relate to courts and the justice system. This is not a new issue. We were talking about this. We were bringing forward recommendations five years ago because we saw the challenges then. To fix one very specific, narrow part as a result of a court order and ignore the work that happened in the select committee I think is a terrible injustice to the people who presented, and, quite frankly, I think it's a missed opportunity. We have that opportunity now, today, with the opening, through Bill 122, of the Mental Health Act, and I would urge members to seriously consider allowing that unanimous consent so that we can go beyond the very narrow scope of what Bill 122 is proposing right now.

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

Ms. Cindy Forster: It's always a pleasure to rise in this House to debate important issues like mental health. Each one of us in our own communities and our own families has been touched by mental health issues. Although this bill is a narrow one, it gives us an opportunity to raise awareness about mental health issues, about, still, the lack of resources in the mental health sector, while we're talking about this particular bill.

While New Democrats certainly agree that it's necessary to amend the Mental Health Act to comply with the Court of Appeal ruling from December 2014, which ruled that portions of the act violate section 7 of the charter, we wonder why this is being brought forward only a couple of months before that December deadline. Perhaps it is, as the member from Caledon—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Cindy Forster: —Dufferin–Caledon just spoke about, the fact that this is an opportunity to open up the Mental Health Act that hasn't been looked at in more than 20 years. Maybe it is the government wanting to be able to stifle any other amendments to the act by bringing it forward at this late date.

The court was also very clear that the government cannot escape its duties under the charter simply by saying that psychiatric hospitals are part of hospital corporations and not run by the provincial government directly. We now know that that isn't true. The court basically said that for a government that's intent and keen on privatizing services—the court sent a very clear message: “The province cannot ‘contract out’ of its charter responsibilities by” delegating “statutory powers to a private entity.”

As I said, we're disappointed that the Liberal government waited nine months to bring this forward. Now we're racing against the clock, and I'm sure we'll shortly be having the government say, “We want to time-allocate this bill,” when many of us want to get up and talk about the lack of mental health services in our area and all of the good things that we need to do for clients and patients and their families around the entire mental health issue. The Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions certainly spent I think a couple of years—

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was 18 months.

Ms. Cindy Forster: —18 months working on that, and came up with 20-some recommendations, of which only a half of one recommendation has currently been implemented.

We talked about the ability of perhaps the government allowing us to open up the act entirely and bring forward the recommendations and probably other amendments to the bill. But as we all know, unless that particular section of an act is open, the government normally rules us out of order with our amendments.

The plea that I've heard from many members here is to open up the entire act, regardless of the section that this particular bill deals with, and let's have a fulsome discussion and debate and improve the Mental Health Act for all of those many hundreds of thousands of people who actually suffer with mental health issues in this province.

If the Legislature fails to meet the December 23 deadline, the offending sections would become invalid, and that certainly would or could put public safety at risk for the 330 patients who are currently being held on an indefinite involuntary detention, if they are released. The member from Nickel Belt, when she did her one-hour lead on this issue, talked about many of these patients being the sickest of the sick. Some of them have been held for 20-plus years.

I want to segue into nurses working in mental health facilities, nurses working in hospitals across our province. Just recently—I think it was last Sunday night or Saturday night—Marketplace actually did an exposé on violence in the workplace for nurses across this province. In a five-year period, I believe from 2008 to 2013, 800 nurses in the province of Ontario and 4,000 nurses across Canada have actually been injured in the workplace.

I would hazard a guess that many of these nurses work in psychiatric facilities in our province. We know that there have been nurses murdered in mental health facilities in past years; there have been nurses severely beaten. The problem that came up, though, in this exposé was that although the nurses are reporting these injuries across the province of Ontario and across Canada, and there have been investigations done by the Ministry of Labour, only three charges have been laid in 700 reported incidents.

Nurses are now hesitating to actually report: one, for fear of reprisal, perhaps from their hospitals or employers; and two, because nothing is getting done. How can 700 nurses file complaints with the Ministry of Labour about being assaulted, both verbally and physically, by patients, by families, and the Minister of Labour has only laid three charges? There is something unconscionable about that.

I see a huge pattern here in Ontario and across Canada: Nursing health care is the fourth from the highest of the most dangerous occupations in relation to injuries here in the province of Ontario and across the country. There is something wrong with that because nursing is a caring profession. That's what nurses do; that's why nurses go into nursing training, to actually look after patients, and at the end of the day they should be able to go home without being injured in their workplace.

I also wanted to talk, while I have the opportunity, about a psychiatrist who lived in my area for many years and was involved with doing forensic assessments, not only in long-term-care facilities in the province but in our federal prison systems as well. His name is Dr. Thoppil Abraham, and he is now retired back to India. He worked out of the Niagara Health System for many, many years. He was a great community activist. Even after he retired from the actual hospital system, he volunteered in our community and he volunteered in the Kitchener-Waterloo and London area as well to assist people who were living in poverty and had mental health issues to be able to acquire ODSP or CPP. He would go out to those communities as a volunteer. He didn't need to do it. But he was so compassionate in his care to people living with

mental health issues and all the injustices that they face that he in his retirement years did that. Eventually, about two years ago, he went back to India for a visit and decided that he would retire there.

We are celebrating in my riding our 40th anniversary, and Dr. Abraham will be getting a lifetime achievement award from the NDP riding association in my riding at the end of this month. Unfortunately, he's not going to be here to be able to accept it.

0930

It's funny, we talk about the stigma of mental health. During my time working for the Ontario Nurses' Association and representing nurses who sometimes would have their LTD denied or other benefits denied, I would often have to call upon Thoppil to assist me in providing some medical reports that would assist a nurse to actually get benefits from Great-West Life or Manulife. This is just a little story about that stigma. So I would arrive at his office to actually go and pick up a report. His waiting room would be bursting at the seams with patients waiting to see him, and they would be shocked to see me, because, of course, they knew me. I had been the mayor of their city; I had been a city councillor. It was like, "What's she doing here?" On occasion a patient would say, "Cindy, what are you doing here?" I'd say, "Well, I'm here to see my psychiatrist, what do you think I'm doing here?" There still is this stigma about mental health.

I also wanted to take the opportunity to speak about—the member from Nickel Belt, this morning, in her two-minute hit talked about it—the services that aren't there. Some 40% of the inmates in our provincial jails actually have mental health issues. Many of them are there because of their mental health issue and ended up there when they were arrested at some point in time. There are no programs or services being administered to these inmates.

In fact, when the RNAO was here last year and the year before doing their registered nurses' lobby day with us—that Shelley Martel, the former member from Nickel Belt, actually assists them with—I had the opportunity to meet with some nurses who actually worked in our provincial corrections system. They said that it is very distressing for them that there are all of these inmates sitting in our provincial system—I'm sure some in our federal system as well—and they're not receiving any care, any counselling, any psychotherapy at all, other than their short interaction with the registered nurses of whom there are few. I think it is one nurse to every 130 inmates in the system. You know, prisoners are supposed to be getting rehabilitation while they're in our corrections system, but that isn't happening. So that is problematic as well.

I wanted to also talk about the closure of the psychiatric beds in the province. During that time that I was working for the Ontario Nurses' Association, I was involved in some of those mergers and amalgamations. One that comes to mind was the merger of the Queen Street Mental Health Centre and the former Clarke Institute, which is now the Centre for Addiction and Mental

Health. At that point in time, I think the PCs were in government—correct me if I'm wrong—and a lot of the psychiatric beds across the province were systematically closed.

Unfortunately, the appropriate supports weren't put in place. So, even today, many of the homeless people that you see in urban areas, particularly, are people with mental health issues. It doesn't matter whether you are living in a big city—although I think the supports may be better in urban areas than they certainly are in rural areas in the north or in smaller communities like Niagara—the supportive piece just isn't in place. So many people with mental health issues exist on ODSP, or CPP, if they happened to have a period of working for 10 years in their life. So these are people who are living on \$1,000 a month. They're supposed to be able to get housing and eat and, somehow, get some psychiatric care.

Now, I can tell you, in the Niagara region, for example, where the Liberal government, actually, has closed half of our hospitals and merged all of our psychiatric beds into one site, it's very problematic for people. People who are living on the edge with mental health issues sometimes have burned out their families and their friends, so their only friends are their local community hospitals.

I can tell you, having worked at the Welland hospital on and off for 20 years, that many of our psychiatric patients who would be released from the in-patient unit would hang out at the hospital, and we were their only supports and friends. We'd see them in the cafeteria when they would come in for, perhaps, a group session. We would see them at the snack bar, and we'd sit and talk to them. Today we have one psychiatric unit, at the St. Catharines site of the Niagara Health System. We do not have an adequate transportation system in-site in the Niagara region, so it's very difficult for patients and their families to access the supports that they need.

In my own building, it's called an open-doors concept, at Canal View Homes. It's a 70-unit apartment building over some commercial space. It's where my constituency office is. There are 54 units dedicated to people with mental health situations. When it started out, when it was built 20 years ago, it was a supportive-housing model. They had two support workers in place Monday to Friday, and sometimes on the weekends if they were having special events. They would organize all kinds of—you know, Valentine's parties, and they would take them out to various festivals that were going on in our community.

But about three years ago, that funding support stopped. For \$100,000, all of those activities for 54 tenants in my building stopped. There was one tenant, who still lives there—her name is Mary Jane Huneault, and I've talked about her before here in the Legislature—who cycled in and out of psychiatric units for most of her adult life. But for that 20-year period that there were two support workers in place—probably making about \$40,000 a year each, with benefits—she never had one admission to the in-patient mental health unit.

Since that supportive money has been removed, eight people have had to leave their units, because they could

not function independently without those supports. A number of them have had admissions to the in-patient unit in St. Catharines, where they have no transportation to get them there or for their friends and families to come and meet them.

This whole issue of mental health is not going away. It's probably a much bigger issue than any physical illnesses that we can talk about. A number of members have talked about the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions that came up with 20-plus recommendations and the need to open up this Mental Health Act to get us there.

I hope that the government is intently listening and that they'll give all of the parties the opportunity to table amendments, regardless of whether that section of the bill is open or not. Let's have a fulsome discussion at the committee level about that.

We know that there are over 400 agencies for adult mental health issues, and I think 300-plus agencies for children and youth with mental health issues. The member from London-Fanshawe brought forward a bill—I can't remember the number of the bill, a private member's bill—about a month ago, or two months ago. It talked about the government developing oversight for mental health issues, so that we make sure that all of our resources are being used in the best way and that people in Welland, Nickel Belt, the rural areas of the member from Timmins-James Bay's riding and in aboriginal communities all have the same access to mental health services, and that people in Toronto, Hamilton and London, where there are bigger communities and more resources—that everyone has the opportunity to have those resources available to them as well.

0940

Back to the bill, certainly we will be supporting the bill. We know that we need to move forward with this and make sure that not only are these patients who are detained looked after, assessed and provided the appropriate support that they need in communities—some of them may be released to communities, though, that I talked about, where supports aren't available. We need to make sure that the supports are there for them.

We also need to make sure that as we are moving some increased authority to the Consent and Capacity Board, we also put the resources in place, because, as we've heard from a number of people who talked about this, when the court is the authority and makes the orders, the resources are put in place to make sure that whatever treatment is needed is actually accomplished. We need to make sure the resources are put in place, as the authority increases for the consent board, to make sure that when they order things and make recommendations, the resources are available to those people who continue to be detained or are released to the community to make sure they have what they need.

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

Mr. Glenn Thibeault: I'm pleased to be able to rise and speak to Bill 122 and to thank the member from Welland for her intervention in this debate.

There were a few things that she said that I agree with, in that mental health is becoming a bigger issue. It relates, I think, to the positive of us being able to have a conversation now about mental health. It used to have—I know she also talked about that—a stigma, and for us, being able to talk about mental health is so important.

For 12 years of my life, I worked side by side in conjunction with individuals that she mentioned as well, which is psychiatric nurses. It is a difficult job, and we need to acknowledge the great work that they do.

I'm going to speak a little bit too in my remaining time about the why.

The government is actually looking at amending the Mental Health Act in response to the Ontario Court of Appeal decision. I know a lot has been talked about that. So I think in that time frame, since the court struck down the CCB's inability to tailor some of those conditions, the ministry has discussed the Ontario Court of Appeal decision with the CCB, the Ontario Review Board and the Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office, and asked for their thoughts on this amendment. As well, the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, which includes people with lived experience and family members, was consulted.

We wanted to make sure that these amendments that are now being proposed match what the court struck down and has given us the time to look at and to do.

With that, again, it is always my honour to stand up in this House and speak.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's absolutely a pleasure.

As I have said all the way through this debate, the concern that I think we have all shared is the stigma that still sometimes remains. We have certainly come a long way in opening some doors, but I think we all have to be open to the challenges of mental health and the impact that it has on the person that is suffering from it, but also the family and many of the people around the outside of a person who has that type of challenge.

I want to bring credit to my colleague, our health critic Jeff Yurek from Elgin-Middlesex-London. What Jeff said in his remarks is that mental health is equally important as physical health. It really is something that we have to be paying attention to and we have to put the resources in. This bill is something that I believe my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon, Sylvia Jones, suggests, if we can get it to committee and get unanimous consent—all three parties worked on the select committee—we could move forward very quickly. We could put legislation in place that is truly going to have an impact on the ground.

This year, World Mental Health Day was focused on dignity in mental health. Sadly, people with mental illnesses are often faced with misunderstanding and even blame, as my colleague Mr. Yurek said. The Ontario PC Party believes we have a responsibility to raise awareness of what can be done to ensure people with mental health conditions live with dignity, respect and inclusion.

There are so many people out there, and what we want to do is applaud and commend those organizations, the volunteers, the front-line staff members that work with those people who are struggling with mental health challenges. It's a hugely challenging area.

My oldest son, Zach, is taking college courses right now to be a youth mental health worker. I'm very proud of him to be able to think from that perspective, that he wants to be that, because it's a very challenging career to be out on the front lines every day, dealing with people who struggle with those types of challenges. So I commend him.

Again to the nurses, the front-line staff and the people in volunteer capacities in almost all of our organizations: thank you for what you do. We look forward to better results in the future.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: First of all, I'd like to thank my colleague from Welland, who really didn't touch enough on the fact that she's a nurse and has faced this for a number of years. As we watched, we are now seeing in mental health that one in five will have mental health challenges in the province of Ontario.

When we take a look at this bill—also, my colleague from Welland touched on this—this has nothing to do with parties. This has to do with us getting it right. They need our support; they need our dollars, and how can you do that? Well, take a look around here at the MPPs who are here. We have nurses, both Conservative and NDP. We have doctors. We have the talent right here in this room to have a debate and an honest discussion on how we fix a crisis in the province of Ontario.

When you take a look at my riding of Niagara Falls, what they did in Niagara Falls was closed beds. So we have mental health patients—and most mental health patients, by the way, are living in poverty. Those are some of the problems of mental health. They have marriage split-ups. There are lots of problems. In a lot of cases, they don't have cars. They can't drive 20 minutes to St. Catharines. There isn't bus service to get them there.

Who's now becoming responsible for mental health in Niagara? It made no sense to close beds and pull out the services—absolutely none. But what's happening—I don't know if it's happening in other communities; I'm sure it's happening in rural communities in the province of Ontario, where police officers are now taking care of the mental health. What they do is, they pick them up, drive them to St. Catharines, and then, because of the reporting system that they have, they're sitting in our hospitals for four, five and six hours, or sometimes the entire shift. Is that how we want to treat mental health in the province of Ontario? I say no.

Then when you take a look at nurses' safety—I've only got a few seconds left—that has to be a concern. We have to make sure that our workers, our nurses are going to work and have the tools—that they're not getting injured on the job.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mr. Bob Delaney: I think this morning we're hearing a great degree of concurrence among all sides in the House that we need to move forward on this. I've been very impressed at some of the thoughtful and incisive comments made by my colleagues on all sides. I want to commend them for the thought that is going into this act, not only while it's here in the House, but before it got to the House in the work being done by committee.

My colleague from Niagara Falls very movingly pointed out some of the issues he faces. In an area like Mississauga and Brampton, we actually have some of the opposite issues which, nonetheless, also point to the need for action. In a region like Mississauga and Brampton, every single year the equivalent of the population of the city of St. Marys moves to our two cities. Each and every year, it means we have to do the equivalent of building St. Marys, Ontario.

One of the issues we would face in the fast-growing areas, particularly those around the edge of Toronto in the 905 belt, is the problems of growth. In my own community, where I've campaigned very aggressively for increased funding for autism and health care and for treatment of mental health—in one of the areas in Peel region, we've managed to get something that we've long sought, which is our proportional share of funding for mental health problems. We've now managed to do that in Peel region, where we represent some 9% of the population of Ontario. That's now approximately what we're allocated in funding.

So in areas like Mississauga and Brampton, our problem is galloping growth, and I'm hoping that the provisions in this act will enable us to meet that challenge as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Welland. You have two minutes.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Thank you to all of the members for your comments in this debate.

The one positive thing about this bill is that it has given us the opportunity to debate some other issues related to mental health in this House that we never get the opportunity to speak to.

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I'm sure we all have challenges in our areas, but I think if we didn't silo mental health the way that is—my understanding is that mental health falls under 12 different ministries. Maybe we need to be having a look at each one of those ministries and figuring out how much it is costing us in policing and corrections because we're using the police to deal with mental health issues, as opposed to health care advocates. How much is it costing us in corrections to keep somebody housed in a correctional facility—\$40,000, \$60,000 a year that could be used right in our community to provide those services? How much is it costing us in health care or in our schools?

I think it would be incumbent upon the government to go back and have a look at that, even if they tried a pilot

project and moved some of those resources into mental health to make sure that we're doing the best that we can for every person and every family here in the province of Ontario that deals with these issues on a daily basis.

Even the cost of health care unrelated to mental health—there's a huge cost there as well when people don't have the appropriate resources that they need when they have mental health issues.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak to this.

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

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm pleased to have this opportunity this morning to speak in response to the government's Bill 122, An Act to amend the Mental Health Act and the Health Care Consent Act, 1996, which was introduced by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care as a government bill on Sept. 23, 2015.

While I think there is general agreement in the House that this bill should be supported and will pass at second reading—this is second reading debate—I think it's necessary to point out that this is an example of the government's legislative procrastination. This is something that has been talked about—actually, the court case I believe was last year, and the government has almost left this literally to the eleventh hour in terms of bringing it forward in the Legislature and having the debate. The House is scheduled to rise for the Christmas break in December—December 10, I believe—and we have to get this bill passed before then or we're told there are fairly severe consequences. Really, the government should have brought forward this bill for debate earlier. It should have been introduced earlier, and I think we have to put that on the record.

But at the same time, we recognize that there was a court case. The Ontario Court of Appeal found that certain provisions of the existing Mental Health Act related to the review process for long-term—meaning six months or more—stay in terms of involuntary patients were found to be unconstitutional, which, again, necessitates the government to respond.

I understand that the Court of Appeal found that “by failing to provide the Consent and Capacity Board ... with the powers to ‘ensure that the conditions of a person’s long-term detention are tailored to reflect the person’s actual level of risk, moving towards their ultimate [re]integration,’” the Mental Health Act, as it is currently constituted, “violates the right to life, liberty and security of the person.

“In finding that the” Mental Health Act “framework did not provide sufficient procedural oversight and protections, the Court of Appeal highlighted the” Consent and Capacity Board’s “lack of powers:

“—to determine the security level (both within and outside of a given facility), privileges (including community access), therapy and treatment of long-term involuntary patients; and

“—to craft orders that would ensure an appropriate balance between public safety and patient liberty.

“The Court of Appeal suspended the effect of its judgment for one year (until December 23, 2015) to provide

the Legislature with time to respond to the decision and amend the legislation accordingly.”

I express appreciation to the Ontario hospital board for doing this backgrounder on Bill 122 that I made reference to just now.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario PC caucus recognizes the devastating effects that mental illness and the attached stigma has on the lives of thousands of Ontarians. I think that all of us in this Legislature know of family, friends, individuals in our community who have been challenged and affected by mental health issues. I think, frankly, the issue of stigma is to some degree—we're making progress in that respect. There's a greater degree of understanding in our communities now, given the fact that so many people are affected, perhaps one in five Canadians. We need to do more in terms of the health care system and in terms of our community response to support these families and these individuals and to help them work their way through their mental illnesses.

We know for sure, Mr. Speaker, that there are many very effective treatments for mental health illnesses. We have cognitive behavioural therapies that I think are very effective in many cases, and of course medication is part of the treatment of many people with mental illness. We've made great strides in that direction.

Obviously, we have much, much more to do. We know, as a PC caucus, that mental health is just as important as physical health. We need to treat it that way, and we need to understand it in those terms. Mental illness, as I said, affects Ontarians of every age and demographic. We know that services in many areas of the province and in many situations and circumstances remain inadequate.

Recently, the Health Quality Ontario organization released its annual report. That report highlighted the unfortunate reality that hospital readmission rates for patients with mental illness—or education—have not improved in five years, and suicide rates have not improved in a decade. We need to do better for our vulnerable citizens. We need to work to combat the stigma, as I said earlier. Although I think we've made progress, we need to do more associated with mental health, start talking and provide greater access to treatment.

As I said earlier, the purpose of this bill is to come into compliance with the Ontario Court of Appeal decision that I referred to earlier. Currently, the Mental Health Act allows for repeated renewals of patients' involuntary status: one month after a first certificate of renewal, two months after a second certificate of renewal, and three months for a third or subsequent certificate of renewal. There is no mechanism for civilly detained patients to challenge the conditions of their treatment. The Ontario Court of Appeal ordered that the words “or subsequent” in section 20(4)(b)(iii) of the Mental Health Act be struck out. Technically, that was the ruling of the court, and that's what we have to respond to.

This bill creates a certificate of continuation, which is a new form capable of detaining a patient after the expiry of the third certificate of renewal. The certificate of continuation would allow a patient to be detained for a three-

month period, similar to the third certificate of renewal. Subsequent certificates of continuation would allow a patient to be detained for further three-month periods. When a patient is issued their first certificate of continuation, they are entitled to apply for a hearing with the Consent and Capacity Board—the CCB, as we sometimes call it—to confirm whether the prerequisites for involuntary status are met. This happens approximately at six and a half months.

I could go on and on about the details of the bill. I know that when the bill is passed at second reading—which I anticipate and expect it will be, because it seems to enjoy the support of the House—and goes to committee, I would hope that there will be an opportunity for some public hearings, at least. I realize the clock is ticking, but we have to give people an opportunity to have their say on this bill. We've talked about some of the situations recently where government bills were referred to committee and the initial suggestion of the government has been that they allow deputants as little as four minutes to make their presentations. Clearly, people need to have a greater opportunity than just four minutes to make a presentation to a standing committee of the Legislature to make recommendations for improvement and change.

I would also add that there's an interesting article that I read in *The Economist* magazine this morning, a fairly recent issue of *The Economist*. This is their October 24, 2015, issue. They actually do editorials at the front end of the magazine, Mr. Speaker. You may know; you may read it. It's a magazine that comes out of Great Britain. It is, I think, an authoritative source for news, but it's also a magazine that promotes the ideas of freer trade and greater liberty. They don't always advocate bigger government or higher government spending, but in this editorial they actually do when it comes to mental health.

They say that there is a case to be made for spending more money on mental health by government and by organizations in our communities, and particularly on research into mental health. They talk about the need to expend greater resources on research leading to better solutions. They make some good points that actually talk about not just the situation in Great Britain but worldwide, in particular the OECD.

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I'll read briefly from this editorial. They say: "Mental ill-health costs as much as 4% of GDP in lost productivity, disability benefits and health care bills, according to the OECD, a think tank. Many illnesses afflict the old disproportionately, but mental illness tends to strike the young, undermining productivity. In Sweden three fifths of new disability claims are for mental ill-health. Lives are cut short: seriously mentally ill people die 15 to 20 years younger than the rest of the population. And the economic burden seems to be growing heavier. A few years ago, the World Economic Forum estimated that in the two decades to 2030 the cumulative cost of mental illness could be \$16 trillion

"Yet spending on research into these conditions is paltry. In most wealthy countries there is a big discrep-

ancy between mental health research spending and the total cost of mental illness."

Again, the editorial goes on to make the case for greater expenditure in terms of mental health research. I think that's something that all of us in this House need to ponder and consider in a time when, obviously, the government is still running a big deficit. It committed to balancing the budget by 2017-18, but, of course, we received the Financial Accountability Officer's report earlier this week, which called into question whether or not the government will be able to meet that commitment.

In that fiscal context, where money is tight, we still need to find ways to identify priorities and ensure that the priorities are adequately funded. I think that, certainly, based on the tenor and tone of this debate, there is strong support in this House, from all sides of the House, to ensure that mental health issues are adequately addressed. Again, I would suggest that we need to look into how we're expending money on research and see if we can find ways to stretch those dollars and do a better job.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I support this bill. I think it is going to receive the support of the House. We look forward to further debate and committee hearings as we try to get it right for the people of Ontario.

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

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I was actually looking forward to getting up and being able to contribute to this debate for a little bit more time, but nevertheless, I will happily take these two minutes to weigh in.

One of the things that's been talked about extensively in this debate is the fact that this is a missed opportunity. This bill, needed as it is, is so focused and so specific that it's missing out on all the other challenges that we have when it comes to accessing mental health services in Ontario.

Specifically, what I wanted to talk about is the deficit that actually occurs in the northwest. We have many structural challenges that serve as an impediment to us having a healthy society. I just wanted to draw a picture of what happens and how people can access mental health services in the northwest. It is not uncommon for people in small towns in northwestern Ontario to have access to a psychiatrist who comes to our town once a month. That is, once a month, everybody in that town, if you are lucky, gets to see that psychiatrist for maybe the one or two days they are there. Otherwise, they have to travel 200 kilometres. Some members have talked about the challenge that exists with travelling 20 kilometres. That is a challenge, I'm not denying that, but imagine travelling 200 kilometres.

And then, the other thing that we're not talking about, too, is the very real and tragic situation that we have among our First Nations youth and the tragic level of youth suicides that are literally an epidemic sweeping through our communities, something that we all know about, something that is incumbent upon us to get together and figure out the solutions to and fix this so that we don't see our children and our future being lost. I just

can't stress that enough. This is a terrible missed opportunity. We need to do so much more.

While I applaud the government for finally getting together and taking action on this, we need to expand our scope.

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It's my pleasure to get up today to be able to add a few comments to today's debate. As members in this House know, I have been a nurse for all of my career. Indeed, I have been able to care for many folks with mental health issues throughout my career, both as an emergency and intensive care unit nurse, but also as a care coordinator working in health care and home care, and trying to assist those with mental health issues.

I am very much in support of Bill 122, the amendments to the Mental Health Act. I think that my number one priority continues to be the protection and safety of all Ontarians, but including those who suffer from mental health issues. Certainly, these amendments would, if passed, ensure that the Mental Health Act aligns with the charter, and at the same time enhance the rights of involuntary, long-term patients who have been committed to psychiatric facilities.

I just wanted to say that there's no question that mental health and addictions is a very significant and complex issue that cuts across multiple areas of society and touches the lives of many people. Indeed, work that I've done in trying to find adequate housing for someone who's suffering from mental health illness and looking for those supports has been challenging because of the range of complex issues. You need to be able to balance the needs and the rights of that person who's afflicted with a mental health illness with the safety of the workers and the public, when those people are in the community.

Looking at supportive housing, to be able to move people from the psychiatric facilities into homes, is the best-case scenario. We do need to address that in the future.

I think that this bill will go a long way in being able to review each individual's case regularly.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: I want to commend the member from Wellington-Halton Hills on his comments and his very concise erudition of this bill, the iteration of it.

Our caucus supports this bill at second reading. We want to see some improvements to it, of course. We recognize the devastating effects of mental illness and the attached stigma that it has placed on many Ontarians. Mental health is just as important as physical health, and we need to treat it that way, and we need to put those types of resources towards it.

Just last week, Health Quality Ontario's annual report highlighted the unfortunate reality that hospital readmission rates for patients suffering from mental illness or addiction have not improved in the last five years, and suicide rates have not improved in over a decade. We

need to do better, and we must do better, for the most vulnerable.

The Ontario mental health day: The Ontario PC Party stands in solidarity with those Ontarians and Canadians directly and indirectly affected by mental illness, and their families. As Jeff Yurek said, the mental health day is an opportunity for Ontarians to learn and discuss mental health problems and understand that mental illness can affect anyone: "The Ontario PC Party believes that mental health is just as important as physical health. We need to treat it that way."

As the stats show, and as a number of speakers have already alluded to, for one in five Canadians—20%, Mr. Speaker—mental illness is the leading cause of disability in Canada, costing the economy, let alone those families, a great deal.

I think I read that the number \$51 billion is the estimate in Canada—\$1 billion a week, indirectly or directly, because of mental illness. The lost productivity is expected to be somewhere in the range of \$5.5 billion.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I certainly am pleased to rise on Bill 122. I'm pleased to see that the health minister is here today, because I want to talk to him again—really plead with him, actually, to get involved with CarePartners and the nurses in the seven months they've been on the picket line.

They deal with mental health every day. That means the residents in Niagara, because they serve the entire area of Niagara, not just St. Catharines, under Mr. Bradley, the MPP for St. Catharines. They do the whole area. I'm asking the minister to please take a serious look at this issue and get them back to work. Get our nurses back to work so the residents in Niagara aren't being underserved, including in mental health.

The mental health file that nobody has really talked about this morning is that what we've seen is young people having mental health issues, and how we have to be educated around that. I think even the Minister of Health will probably even realize this: It seems that we're having a lot more of our young people, young people in our schools—mostly in high school, but some in university—taking their own lives. We're not seeing the warning signs.

I said earlier in my speech very clearly, we have lots of talent in this room. With have a doctor in the room and we have nurses in the room—our member is a nurse. We have nurses over here. Let's sit down collectively and do our jobs together, find a solution to the mental health issue and make sure resources are going to mental health.

I already said—the doctor wasn't here at time; the Minister of Health wasn't here at time—that they closed beds in my riding in Niagara Falls, where most of the people who are suffering mental health issues live in poverty. They don't have cars. They don't have ways to go 20 minutes down the road. That makes absolutely no sense. We're using our police officers to take people with mental health issues into communities, and then that area

is underserved. I plead to you: Please take a look at CarePartners.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member from Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I want to express my appreciation to members who responded to my brief remarks this morning.

I return to the report of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, which initiated its work more than five years ago. It was a process that was initiated, really, by our former colleague Christine Elliott, who served with distinction for many years in the Legislature. It became an issue that the government was prepared to respond to in terms of the establishment of a select committee to look at this important issue.

It was a remarkable example of all-party co-operation, I would say—I know the member for St. Catharines would agree—where members set their partisan differences at the door and worked very hard for, I think, 18 months, to listen to people and to develop comprehensive and thoughtful recommendations as to what needed to be done with respect to responding to mental health issues and addictions issues.

The report is still obviously current, in my view, even though the work commenced five years ago and the report was issued three and a half years ago or thereabouts—maybe four years ago. I think the government needs to respond to these recommendations. I think the government would tell us that they are responding to the recommendations and implementing some of the recommendations as policy, bit by bit. But, surely, we can get moving on this, given the fact there was such strong all-party consensus that found its way into the committee process.

I would commend the other members of the committee who worked so diligently for those 18 months: You, Mr. Speaker, the member from Scarborough–Rouge River, were on that committee; I see the member for Nickel Belt; the member for Dufferin–Caledon played a very active role; the member for Guelph, who is now the Minister of Education, was involved; Maria Van Bommel, the former member; the member for Peterborough, now the Minister of Agriculture and Food; and the current Minister of Community and Social Services, as well. They were members of this select committee.

I think we need to get behind these recommendations and get them implemented.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I thank everyone for their comments.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

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

The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There may be a list of a lot of introductions, so I'm going to ask everyone to stay to our format to get it all in in time.

We'll now do introductions of guests.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to welcome the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Steering Committee. I look forward to doing the official introductions later.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I had the privilege of introducing Kyle Preuss's father here yesterday, Brian. Today, I have the privilege of introducing his mother, Mrs. Heather McCoy. Welcome.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I have a good friend here today. Steve Apostolopoulos is the managing partner of Triple Group of Companies, and they're the company behind the major tourism destination in Pickering known as Durham Live. He is here in the east gallery. Welcome.

I'd like to introduce some children as well, a group of grade 5 students from my riding. They're coming in from Cardinal Léger Catholic elementary school, and I look forward to seeing them in the House today.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'd like to introduce the man who takes care of this smile, Dr. Larry Hoffman, and the woman who puts a smile on his face, Carol Hoffman; their nephew Russell, and his children, Jake and Samantha.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'd to welcome the grandparents of page captain Marco Di Laudo, Ron and Marlene Regher, who are here today to take part in today's proceedings. Thank you.

Hon. Mario Sergio: I have the pleasure of having two introductions this morning. The page captain today is Symrin Flora, York West legislative page, from our local Gulfstream Public School, and her father is here with us today, Charanjit Flora. I want to welcome them, and I want to thank Symrin for the service that she does in this House. I hope that she will enjoy her stay here.

The second introduction, Speaker—and if you wonder about the weather, I have to say it comes from the wonderful island of Sicily. We have a delegation composed of the mayor of Vita—a wonderful dottoressa—doctor—Ms. Fina Galifi, and her husband, Giuseppe Mezzapelle. They are here in the audience. With the delegation we have Dominic Renda, the president of ATEM; Mr. Vince Abate, past president; Maria Abate; Sam Curia; and Enza Curia. I want to welcome them and thank them for the wonderful weather they brought from Sicily.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to welcome James McIntosh, CEO of the Duxbury Cider Co., and Bryan Watts, VP of marketing for the Thornbury Beverage Co.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I'd like to welcome the federal candidate in the riding of Simcoe North, Liz Riley, and thank her for all the hard work she does in her riding.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm very pleased to welcome to the Legislature this morning Kathleen Millar and Daniel Millar, who are the parents of our fine page from Wellington–Halton Hills, John Millar.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On behalf of the member from Thornhill, I'd like to welcome the mother of page Nicole Haim, here this morning: Karine Benzacar. She is in the members' gallery, joining us this morning.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to introduce three members of the Niagara Injured Workers: Julia Lucas, Chester Marczewski and Willy Noiles.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Just making their way into the gallery in a few minutes, I believe, are the children from the grade 5 class at St. Clement Catholic School. I wanted to welcome them here to the Legislature.

Mr. John Yakabuski: On behalf of the member from Oxford, I'd like to introduce the mother of page Abby Moreside, Kathy Moreside, and also her aunt, Theresa Moreside. They will be in the members' gallery joining us this morning.

M^{me} France Gélinas: They are making their way into the chamber, but Dr. Keith Klassen and Dr. Ed Bassis are both from Sudbury, and they offer rehab psychology. They are here to talk about the poor treatment of WSIB for their clients.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm delighted to welcome to Queen's Park a constituent of mine, Matthew Farwell, and his friend Alexander Horn from Toronto. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Further to my earlier introduction, I just wanted to welcome—they're coming into the gallery now—the children from St. Clement Catholic School, teachers Giovanna Di Tomaso and Jaclyn Cashley, and their chaperone, Kira Houchen. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Would the members please join me in welcoming a group of women parliamentarians from across Canada who, along with Ontario's CWP representative, the member from Huron-Bruce, Lisa Thompson, are attending the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians' outreach session in Toronto.

Seated in the Speaker's gallery are Patricia Arab from Nova Scotia, Julie Boulet from Quebec, Lisa Harris from New Brunswick, Debbie Jabbour from Alberta, Martina Mundy from Prince Edward Island, Laura Ross from Saskatchewan and Jackie Tegart from British Columbia. They are accompanied by Elizabeth Kingston, the CWP executive secretary.

Welcome, ladies. We're glad you're here with us.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Members will be aware that there appear on today's Orders and Notices paper two notices of opposition days to be debated in the week following the constituency week. Under standing order 43(c), the Speaker is required to select one of these notices for consideration. I'd like to advise the members that the motion by Ms. Horwath is the one that will be selected for debate on Wednesday, November 18.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Oh, no. I thought ours was better.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Don't worry. We know how to make it balanced.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

JOUR DU SOUVENIR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I will now receive a point of order from the deputy House leader.

Hon. James J. Bradley: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to mark Remembrance Day, with a representative from each caucus speaking for up to five minutes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The deputy House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice, and we now know what that notice is. Do we agree to the motion? Agreed? Agreed.

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thank you, Speaker. I will be sharing my time with the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

November 11 is Remembrance Day. Tributes are offered throughout the country and in this chamber. We recognize veterans' sacrifices.

We talk about defending freedom, and those are noble ideals, but on another level, sometimes I think we forget to ask ourselves the very important question: What did their sacrifices actually mean in terms of the individuals, their families and their friends?

I think there is an obligation on us to try to understand their sacrifice in these very personal ways: what it meant to them, what it meant in their minds and what it meant in their hearts. I think we have an obligation to try and feel the pain and the grief of their mothers, their fathers, their siblings and their friends.

Speaker, it is impossible to comprehend, in the safety of our homes, in the safety of our careers, in the safety of this chamber, exactly what that meant. How are we to understand what it must have felt like to be shot at and bombed, to suffer grievous wounds, to die from grievous wounds or to be maimed? But this is the visceral reality of what it is like to serve in defence of these noble virtues of democracy and freedom.

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All of their names are chiseled on the various cenotaphs throughout the province of Ontario: in small-town Ontario, villages, big cities, rural communities and high school remembrance plaques, all over the province. But how many of us, Speaker, passing a cenotaph, passing one of these high school plaques, take a moment to pause and just look at the names on those plaques and ask ourselves: "What did it mean to them and their families at the very personal level?"

I think that our obligation on this Remembrance Day is to try to feel that reality, that danger, that fear. Each of those individuals faced horror, fear, danger, and then all of those emotions must have also been felt by their parents, their siblings and their friends. Our obligation is to understand the magnitude of their risk and their sacrifices, and to respect them for that.

Let me tell you a very human story to drive this point home. Mrs. C.S. Woods of Winnipeg, Manitoba was invited by the Canadian government to the national Vimy monument unveiling in the late 1920s. There's a picture of her in a magazine of the day that covered it. She is standing there quietly, saluting in a very frail, dignified, but brave manner.

This is what the caption under the photograph says: "Among the Canadian pilgrims who attended the un-

veiling of the Vimy ... memorial was Silver Cross Mother Mrs. C.S. Woods of Winnipeg, who lost eight sons in the war.” That day she wore all their medals on her jacket. Just let that thought sink in: a mother, a father, a family—eight sons.

I did a little bit of research into the background of Mrs. Woods. She had 12 children, 11 sons, all of whom enlisted; two were underage, and eight never came home. Need I say more? I think we have an obligation to ask ourselves how we comprehend that sacrifice of her sons, and of her mother and of her siblings. How do we honour it? How do we remember it? That’s our challenge. That’s our responsibility on this day of remembrance.

Hon. Ted McMeekin: My dad was a navy veteran. He couldn’t swim. His ship was torpedoed twice. He was a brave man. “Son,” he used to say to me, “you haven’t paid your debt to the past until you have left a future indebted to yourself.” It’s during times like this, where as a grateful nation and province we acknowledge the debt paid on our behalf by the brave men and women who fought for our future, that my father’s words echo within my conscience.

I am reminded—as I know we all are—that it is our duty to gather together, heads bowed, in sombre and solemn remembrance, to honour the sacrifices Canadian soldiers have made in the two great wars, in Korea, in Afghanistan and in numerous peacekeeping missions.

As the sound of the Last Post touches our ears, and the familiar words of Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae’s memorial poem *In Flanders Fields* once again touch our hearts, our thoughts are filled with sorrow for those lost on foreign battlefields, be it on the land, in the air or at sea.

The contributions Canadians have made in these historic conflicts solidified our reputation as a nation that doesn’t go looking for fights, but will not shirk from them. Those who answered the call to serve defined our Canada, known across the globe as a strong, peaceful and multicultural country. Our Canada, that stands tall as a free nation: Let us never forget that that is a privilege earned by the soldier and donated to us all.

It is our duty to remember how they died and the sacrifices they made, but it is equally important to remember how they lived: with duty, selflessness and honour.

At this time of remembrance, let’s us also reflect on those who came home, our glorious veterans. Let us pay tribute to how they went on living and the values they represented, values forged in the despair of war, learned on battlefields and brought home to build this great province and this great country.

Reflecting on how they lived is truly the essence of Remembrance Day, because it is our duty to celebrate rich lives lost or forever changed in the defence of freedoms and the ideals we cherish. There simply is no greater sacrifice. They believed in a cause worth fighting for. They believed in a greater good and that their endeavours, rife with great peril, had a purpose for future generations. What a great lesson for us all who have been granted the privilege to live in this great country.

To make lives better for future generations, we must always stand strong and united in the face of adversity and emulate the hard-won values our soldiers forged for us to follow. We are indeed indebted to those who served, both living and dead, and it is our duty, as Lieutenant Colonel McCrae reminds us: “To you from failing hands we throw / The torch; be yours to hold it high.”

Thank you.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, I’m pleased to rise in the House today to recognize the upcoming observance of Remembrance Day. Wednesday marks the armistice that arrived at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month. Remembrance Day is a time to mourn, but it’s also a time to celebrate the proud military traditions of our great country. Canada has always answered the call to stand up for freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Ninety-seven years ago, the First World War ended. Le Canada a toujours répondu à l’appel pour défendre la liberté, la démocratie, les droits de l’homme et la règle du droit. Il y a 97 ans, la Première Guerre mondiale a pris fin.

On November 11, we remember all those who placed themselves in harm’s way and all those who still risk themselves for the values of our great province and our country today. Regardless of their political allegiances or philosophical beliefs, Canadians all share a common admiration and deep respect for Canadian veterans. They are the tie that binds the citizens of our great country together.

On November 11, I’m always reminded, on a more personal level, of my great-uncle Frankie, who was the president of the Barrie Legion for years. As a child, he would take me to the Barrie Legion. My grandfather brought them to Simcoe county. They were trained at Base Borden. My uncle Frankie served overseas. He always told me that that Canadian flag means so much when you travel abroad. I remember once as a student going over to Holland and seeing that appreciation for the Canadian maple leaf. It really is an incredible honour, what so many of our veterans did in that moment that will never be forgotten in history.

Mr. Speaker, we think of all our brave men and women who never came home, all the grieving families, all the soldiers who have been wounded in body and spirit, something we all talk about all too seldom.

Monsieur le Président, nous pensons à tous les braves hommes et femmes qui ne sont jamais revenus, toutes les familles en peine, tous les soldats qui ont été blessés en corps et en esprit, quelque chose dont nous parlons trop rarement.

They paid the ultimate sacrifice, and that is why on Remembrance Day, in communities across Canada, thousands of families will stand before memorials and cenotaphs for those who made the ultimate sacrifice for Canada. With bravery and unwavering determination, our veterans have defended our home, our security and our

freedom. They stood up for our values in the face of grave danger, and we owe them a debt of endless gratitude, especially those currently serving overseas. The Canadian Forces continue to make a sacrifice that we can't even fathom.

I encourage young people to reach out to a veteran and learn their story and share it with your friends. Maybe write a letter to a member of the Canadian Forces who is posted overseas or to a local base commander, or spend time at a local retirement home with those who have lived through the experience of wartime—*passer quelque temps à une maison de retraite locale avec ceux qui ont vécu l'expérience de la guerre.*

Mr. Speaker, there are many honourable ways to thank the men and women who have served Canada in times of war for their incredible sacrifice. May we always remember the fallen who went far from home to answer the call of peace.

Lest we forget.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: On behalf of New Democrats, I'm honoured to rise to share a few remarks about next week's Remembrance Day ceremonies.

Next week, our nation observes Remembrance Day. As that happens, Canadians will be taking part in ceremonies at local war memorials, Legion halls, cenotaphs. Rain or shine, our country will come together to recognize the contributions and sacrifices that our veterans and all of our servicewomen and men have made in the defence of our country and in defence of our shared values and freedoms.

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Some of our veterans will march, others will be assisted by former comrades or family members, but as the clock reaches the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month, they will all be at attention as the Last Post is played. As those familiar notes sound in all corners of our province and our country, we will all turn our minds back to a time that is barely imaginable for us today. This was a time when young women and men were sent to places that they had never heard of or even imagined—places that now stand in infamy with names that are seared into our national memory: Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele, Juno Beach, Ortona, Korea and, more recently, Afghanistan. There are peacekeeping missions as well, missions like Bosnia and Rwanda.

This was a time when young men and women, and sometimes children, left their families behind, abandoned their textbooks or postponed their careers, and went off to fight and often to die in the service of our country. When confronted with the enormity of what was demanded of these soldiers and the harrowing price that so many paid, the scale of their sacrifice is truly humbling. Often, the depictions of war and peacekeeping missions alike show images of acts of incredible courage. But what we don't see are the invisible scars—the psychological wounds that our veterans will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

War is not glamorous. It leaves behind great human devastation. Men, women and children are its victims. It

is our responsibility, each and every time we send servicemen and women into active duty, to support them every step of the way, especially when they return home. Our words in remembrance of our fallen soldiers and those who have returned home from the horrors of war are weak and empty if they are not accompanied by the will to ensure that their sacrifices are remembered through our actions and our deeds.

In the last stanza of the famous poem *In Flanders Fields*—which, in fact, celebrated its 100-year anniversary this year—John McCrae calls on the reader not to break faith with those who died, and he passes the torch to future generations to continue the struggle. This is the struggle to build a better world for our children and our grandchildren. It rests on all of us, all Canadians, not to break faith with that commitment.

Thanks to Canada's veterans, so many of us and our children will never have to live through the scourge of war. We owe them so very much. We can never actually repay that debt. We can only hope to be equal to their sacrifice, both in life and in death. On November 11, New Democrats commit ourselves to remembering—remembering those who have served in our past and remembering those who serve today. We honour them all. We will remember them.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their heartfelt, sincere and supportive comments. I am going to take a step beyond the motion and request that we all stand for a moment's silence as a group together.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We will remember them.

It is now time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Patrick Brown: For the Acting Premier: Today's the day—the day the Liberals can't turn back from. They're going to give away an asset that produces \$700 million in revenue for the people of Ontario, all of which will amount to just two years of revenue from Hydro One. In the end, the Liberals will get as little as \$1.4 billion of new cash from the Hydro One sale, an amount that won't even cover the cost of one new, significant transit project.

Mr. Speaker, why has the Liberal government mortgaged Ontario's future for such a short-sighted and short-term gain?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I appreciate the question on this day. Indeed, Ontario is generating significant returns from broadening the ownership of Hydro One. We do remain on track to realize our budget target of \$9 billion from this, generated through the IPO. That's \$4 billion for infrastructure and \$5 billion for debt.

This move supports the single largest investment in transit and transportation infrastructure in the province's history. The IPO has now closed for Hydro One common shares and has begun trading today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Acting Premier: I'm surprised the Acting Premier demonstrates no remorse, no regret. I'm certain that will come later.

Nearly 80% of the people of Ontario oppose the sale. The FAO has confirmed that that 80% knows what we've said all along: This is a bad deal for Ontario. The sale will raise the cost of hydro and make life even more unaffordable for Ontario's residents.

I know that every member on the government side is sharing the same concerns from your constituents that we're hearing. They're scared of what this deal is going to mean for Ontario.

My question for the Acting Premier is this: Real leadership is recognizing when you've made a mistake, to correct course. After hearing everything, will you do the right thing? Will you reverse course and stop this bad deal for Ontario?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before we start, the member from Newmarket–Aurora, come to order.

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think real leadership means giving accurate information to the people of this province.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): If you haven't caught the message, I'm going to be jumping on this. The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, come to order.

Carry on.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, the member opposite—in fact, the members opposite continue to perpetuate the inaccurate sense that hydro rates are somehow going to be impacted by broadening the ownership of Hydro One. That is absolutely false. The member opposite knows that the Ontario Energy Board regulates rates today and will regulate rates in the future. To make the link between this move and increasing rates is simply intended to frighten people—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order.

Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Acting Premier: You want to talk about accurate information? Read the Financial Accountability Officer's report on this disastrous sale of Hydro One. That report confirmed what we've been saying all along: that the government's mythical infrastructure plans from the proceeds of Hydro One won't amount to any new money for infrastructure. The infrastructure plan stood at \$130 billion for 10 years before the sale; now it's \$130 billion post sale. You're not putting any money into infrastructure.

At best, it's \$1.4 billion. With the 2015 budget, you've made no correction for infrastructure. So don't say it's about infrastructure when everyone sees that it's not.

As little as \$1.4 billion—you're mortgaging our future. It's not in the best interests of Ontario.

My question to the Acting Premier is: Hearing all the evidence, will you do the right thing finally and say, "Enough is enough. This is a bad deal for Ontario"?

Interjections.

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

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, this is an absolutely ludicrous question. We have put in our budget the \$130 billion for infrastructure investment, and we have laid out a plan on how we're going to pay for that. Paying for the infrastructure includes maximizing the value of our assets. That's what we're doing because this province needs those investments in infrastructure. If you think you want to cancel those the way you cancelled the Eglinton Crosstown—I'll tell you, the people of Ontario are looking to leadership, looking to government to build the infrastructure that our economy needs and that our people need.

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RING OF FIRE

Mr. Patrick Brown: To the Acting Premier: I've always said that when the government acts in the best interests of Ontario, we'll be the first to applaud them. When the government committed \$1 billion to develop the economic potential of the Ring of Fire, I acknowledged that that was a great announcement. But what I'm concerned about is that there are no timelines for getting shovels in the ground. This Liberal promise appears like many before: It's all about election time and not about an actual implementation of that idea; it's about photo ops. And because this government is dithering, investors in the Ring of Fire, like Noront Resources, are left waiting.

Mr. Speaker, will this Liberal government today give Noront and the people of northern Ontario a firm timeline for its promised commitment to the Ring of Fire?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I'm glad to have an opportunity to respond to that question. I think the Leader of the Opposition knows that Noront Resources made it very clear that they remain committed to the project, and we're working very closely with them. In fact, they announced that they are moving forward on an exploration project within the Ring of Fire area themselves.

As a government, we remain absolutely committed to the project. We have our commitment of \$1 billion for the transportation infrastructure corridor locked in, thanks to the Minister of Finance. We are looking forward to an opportunity to have a discussion with the new federal government to engage in the process that was not very successful in the past with the previous government.

We are engaged in a regional framework discussion with Matawa First Nations, and we have set up a

development corporation to move that forward. So we are indeed making very positive progress.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the Acting Premier: The time for talk is over. It's time for action in the north. Northerners and investors are tired of this government's wait-and-see attitude toward the development of the Ring of Fire.

As noted in yesterday's National Post, this government's lack of action on its billion-dollar infrastructure promise to the Ring of Fire leaves investors worried and frustrated. Platitudes and photo ops don't get shovels in the ground; they don't get people working. Only a firm timeline for construction of a transportation corridor in the Ring of Fire will give investors the confidence they need.

Mr. Speaker, will the government do the right thing? Will they give us a timeline and give the people of northern Ontario the confidence that they're actually going to honour this election commitment?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: I would certainly invite the leader of the official opposition and other members of his party to have a conversation with Mr. Coutts of Noront Resources, who is obviously very keen to move forward. We are all very keen to move the project forward, and within the last year and a half a number of significant measures have taken place. We had the historic, precedent-setting regional framework agreement signed with the Matawa First Nations, something that others will say we need to focus on, and indeed we do.

We recognize that in order for this project to move forward, it needs to be embraced by the First Nations and there needs to be an assurance that they will be seeing benefits from this major resource development project, a project that I think the Leader of the Opposition probably needs to be reminded is in a remote part of the province that has never seen development before. That's why our recognition that indeed we need to—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Michael Gravelle: —\$1-billion commitment was so crucial.

Mr. Speaker, we're working closely with the companies and First Nations, and looking forward to a much better—

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

Final supplementary.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again for the Acting Premier: I'm tired of these excuses. It's been eight years since the Ring of Fire—

Interjections.

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

Please, finish.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, it's been eight years to do nothing. It's been five years since the government created the Ring of Fire Secretariat, and we haven't

seen a shovel in the ground. In fact, the government can't even commit to a start date for the development.

What we've seen described as Ontario's own oil sands is estimated to create a \$9.4-billion economic boom for all of Ontario at the least—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Let's start the clock.

Finish, please.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, I guess we've hit a nerve with their record of all talk and no action. The reality is that they've spent eight years blaming other people: blaming the federal government, blaming previous governments. There is no one for you to blame now.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Mr. Patrick Brown: The reality is, these are thousands and thousands of dollars—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. I'd already said "answer."

Minister.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I truly do not mean to be impolite, but I do think the Leader of the Opposition is betraying a true lack of understanding of how the mining process works in the province. This is a project that, again I will remind him, is a huge resource development opportunity; yes, a remarkable opportunity in a remote part of the province that requires us, for all the right reasons, to work very, very closely—

Interjections.

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

Finish, please.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: The progress and the commitments that we made related to this major resource development project are unprecedented. The work that we're doing with the Matawa First Nations, the regional framework agreement, you would acknowledge is an important part of the process. We're going to continue to work closely with them relating to regional infrastructure, resource revenue-sharing—all of those aspects that are so important to ensure the First Nations do better. Our \$1-billion—

Interjections.

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

Two things are happening here that I suspect are rather frustrating for the majority. We've got comments going back and forth that raise the ire of each side, and then individuals decide that they can jump in and make comments that are not what we consider here to be appropriate in terms of names and elevating the debate, and the heat of the debate. All of the other processes that are in place are rational. They make sense. You address the Chair in your question and you address the Chair in your answer. It helps to lower the temperature, not raise it.

Whether or not anyone wants to make a comment about what I'm saying, if they say it, I'll let you go.

Let's just finish with a wrap-up, please, and we'll move on to the next question.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Our \$1-billion, locked-in commitment to the transportation infrastructure is extraordinarily significant, and we look forward to—

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

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is for the Acting Premier. On Tuesday, the Acting Premier told this House, "We are looking at other assets." Is the Liberal government going to sell more revenue-generating assets?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: It's appropriate for us to look at all of the opportunities that are available to the province of Ontario to create opportunities and to seize upon them. At this point in time, we made it clear in our budget that we are looking at our real estate and a number of our agencies. We determined that Hydro One was one of those organizations that could be improved upon. Hence, we've taken the steps necessary to broaden its ownership and make it a much more effective customer service organization, for the benefit of all Ontarians, and to get to reinvest some of that money into new projects.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Liberals like to tell a story about how they campaigned on selling Hydro One. Of course, selling off Hydro One wasn't anywhere in their platform. Instead, they talked about asset optimization, and then they act shocked that Ontarians didn't think it was obvious that this actually meant selling off Hydro One.

On Tuesday, the Acting Premier told this House, "We are looking at other assets." I'm hoping that the Acting Premier can clarify exactly what she meant this time for the people of Ontario. Is "looking at other assets" Liberal code for putting even more revenue-generating assets on the auction block in the future?

Hon. Charles Sousa: I remind the member opposite that we put in our budget a paragraph around asset optimization. Our plan was clearly stated in our 2014 budget and in our election platform, and it was supported, ultimately, by a majority mandate. In it, we talk about our four-pillar economic plan, including unlocking the value of our assets to optimize the necessity to enable us to reinvest money to make even more opportunity for the province of Ontario by investing it in the Trillium Trust.

The NDP made a claim that they would have done exactly the same thing. They did that in their nine-page platform. They talked about how they were going to make the cuts necessary to balance the books and they were going to invest all this money with the very same assumption that we made in ours. The member opposite actually talked about it during that election campaign, and it's no secret.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The bottom line is that the Premier did not run on selling off Hydro One, but here we are. The Premier didn't run on selling other revenue-generating assets, but earlier this week the Deputy Premier, the second most senior minister in the Liberal government, said that more public assets could be going on the auction block. Maybe that's our nuclear reactors and the rest of the OPG; maybe that's the LCBO; it could be the OLG. These assets bring in significant revenues which help us invest in health care, education, transit, poverty reduction, our environment—you name it.

Will the Liberals do the right thing, stop any further sale of Hydro One and commit that they will not sell off any more of our revenue-generating assets here in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Charles Sousa: The government will do the right thing. We will do everything necessary to maximize the potential of our assets, ensure that we create greater value for the consumers, ratepayers and taxpayers, and ensure that we reinvest it into new assets to make more opportunity so that we can reinvest and create a more competitive province.

The member opposite recognizes that assets were identified in the budget very clearly; we named them. We actually said what assets we were looking at, and we ultimately saw a greater opportunity to maximize value for Hydro One, a component of the electricity system that is in a competitive environment with others. It's trading today, and I look forward to the market reaction as we proceed forward.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Acting Premier. Hydro One shares are trading on the TSX today, and it's funny, because I don't recall the Premier running on a plan to sell off Hydro One. Ontario's Financial Accountability Officer confirmed that selling Hydro One will mean Ontario's financial situation will be "worse than it would have been without the sale."

Will this government do the right thing, come to its senses and hit the brakes on selling off any more of Hydro One?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think we need to remind ourselves why we are doing this. We're doing it so we can build the transit, the transportation, the schools, the highways that this province needs.

The member opposite might think we can do that without taking any action, but the reality is that we need to pay for that infrastructure. Broadening the ownership of Hydro One allows us to make those infrastructure investments now, when they are needed.

There are experts who have argued that we're actually not spending enough on infrastructure. We need to create those jobs, we need to keep up with population growth,

we need to maintain the infrastructure we have. Experts have called for us to increase our infrastructure investment up to 5% of our GDP, up from 3.5%. Broadening the ownership of Hydro One helps us get there.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Financial Accountability Officer, an independent officer of this Legislature, told this government that the sell-off of Hydro One is the absolute worst way to fund infrastructure investments. The Liberal government made the wrong decision when it chose to sell off a part of Hydro One. Now the first block of shares have been sold on the markets, but it is not too late to stop the next block of shares from going to market. Selling 15% is bad, but selling 60% is a disaster. Will the Liberals listen to the facts put forward by the FAO, come to their senses and stop the further selling off of Hydro One?

Interjections.

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

Deputy Premier.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Instead of putting words in the mouth of the Financial Accountability Officer, let me read what he actually wrote in his report, which I have read. On page 9, he says, "This report does not seek to assess the merits of the decision to sell Hydro One...." Let me repeat that: "This report does not seek to assess the merits of the decision to sell Hydro One...."

He goes on to say that there are conditions around his report. The fact is that he looked at one part of this decision. He did not look at the benefits of actually investing in infrastructure.

We're talking about 110,000 jobs to build the infrastructure that we need. Now is the time to build infrastructure, and we have to use the resources we have, to be able to do that now.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: As a public asset, Hydro One had 13 million owners. Today, that ownership is getting smaller. The government isn't broadening ownership. It's handing the ownership to a small group of private shareholders.

These are the facts: The FAO report proved that this will mean less money in the long term for transit and other services; 185 municipalities, and counting, have told the Premier to keep Hydro public; the Premier shut First Nations out of the process; and eight out of 10 Ontarians want to keep Hydro One public.

Will the Liberals hit the brakes before even more of Hydro One ends up helping the Premier's powerful friends instead of helping Ontarians?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The member's question underlines her lack of understanding of what this deal is. Ontarians, all 13.5 million of us, still own 85% of Hydro One. When this is complete, we will still be able to make the big decisions that are important to the public interest. We are protecting the public interest as we generate the revenue that is necessary to build infrastructure.

Speaker, more people own Hydro One today than did this morning because we are broadening the ownership. But rest assured, every person in this province will continue to have significant ownership in Hydro One.

RING OF FIRE

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Minister of Finance. When De Beers was well under way building Ontario's only diamond mine, the Liberal government introduced a diamond royalty. This new tax shocked the owners of the Victor mine, as they had already spent over \$1 billion in development. They were literally in too deep to cancel their project.

Last year, Cliffs Natural Resources, one of the senior mining companies exploring in the Ring of Fire, did cancel their project. In fact, not only did they sell off their Ring of Fire property; they actually left Ontario.

Speaker, I ask the minister, did the Liberal government ever propose a chromite royalty? Is that why Cliffs left Ontario?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Thank you very much for the question. I thank the member for the question. The reality is, of course, that we have an extraordinarily positive working relationship with De Beers. One of the great opportunities we have in the province was the Victor diamond mine, which opened up in 2008. I know that De Beers has continued to look at how they can operate it and find another extension of their property, so that's going to be good news in the future, and we're going to keep working with them.

As for the work that we're doing right now on the Ring of Fire, the member knows well—and it would be certainly helpful if, rather than always trying to talk down the great economic opportunity we have in the Ring of Fire, they worked with us to support the work that we're doing, which includes the work that Noront Resources is doing and includes the extraordinarily real effort we're making with the First Nations to bring everyone together so we can see real partnership on this great resource development opportunity for all of the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Again to the minister: It's interesting that he avoided the answer about the chromite tax. But also, an interesting by-product of the gas plants scandal hearings were the documents the government had to release.

Here's page 2,156 under the heading "Confidential—Commercially Sensitive Material."

The section on Cliffs reads: "The province created the chromite royalty.

"Expected revenues from the new chromite royalty, which was created for this Ring of Fire project ... range from \$6.6 million to \$34.4 million per year."

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A major mining discovery is made, and the very first thing this Liberal government thought of was, "How can

we tax them more?" Well, they taxed them right out of Ontario. Speaker, will the minister now admit that their failed policies and new tax meant that thousands of people aren't working in the Ring of Fire today?

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

Interjection: Oh, seriously.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Yeah, right.

Answer, please.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: One thing that we've been very clear about—and I think it's shared by everyone who wants to see this project move forward—is that it's absolutely vital that we do this right. That is why we have engaged so closely, obviously, with industry to make sure that they are partners with us in moving forward on the project.

The member knows full well that in many ways the markets will also be a very real factor in terms of making that decision. We are actually in an era of very difficult commodity pricing as well. But that doesn't change the fact that this extraordinary \$60-billion deposit—obviously, chromite being one of the exciting metals that's up there—is going to move forward.

But we need to make sure that we do it right. Again, I'm sure that everyone would agree that one of the things we need to do is to work with the communities most directly impacted by this potential development, communities that have never seen any resource development before, which is why we are working so closely on the regional framework agreement and the regional process. That's the work to—

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

INJURED WORKERS

Ms. Cindy Forster: My question is to the Minister of Labour. Today we're joined by a number of doctors who have come to Queen's Park to support injured workers and a report called Prescription Over-Ruled, which highlights that the WSIB is intentionally and systemically ignoring the advice of medical professionals. They're here today to question WSIB practices and policies that are a systemic interference with the claims of injured workers.

Will the minister launch an investigation immediately into WSIB practices for injured workers' claims?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I thank the honourable member for the question—a very, very important question, something we take very, very seriously. I am aware that the report was released this morning. I have a copy of it myself. I think my staff are meeting with the authors of the report, as well as some of the people associated with the report, as we speak. I continue to meet with injured workers.

I want to thank the OFL for this report, because we know it's critical for people who suffer from injuries to

receive the help they need in a timely manner, as quickly as possible. I think we've been able to, for the most part, address the issues that are physical in nature. What the report today is outlining—the allegations that are being made—is that often there's a psychological connection to that. I think we as a society, this House, this government, previous governments and institutions are starting to come to grips with the importance of the psychological aspect of this.

I look forward to examining this report, Speaker, and making sure that I understand it properly.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Cindy Forster: Unfortunately, "timely" means three to five years in Ontario.

Speaker, these WSIB denials are now the subject of a whistle-blower report by the OFL and Ontario injured workers. The doctors are here today to sound the alarm bells and to ensure that necessary steps are taken by the WSIB to stop the re-victimization of injured workers. It's unconscionable where medical advice of doctors and clinical psychologists is being ignored so that the WSIB can ensure that their claims numbers look good. To be clear, the WSIB is re-victimizing the very workers that it was mandated to help.

Will the minister commit to reviewing the report recommendations, to launching an investigation and to ensuring that the WSIB accepts the independent professional opinions of Ontario's medical experts?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you once again to the member for that question. I thought I was clear the first time around; that, absolutely, I will review this report. Every member of this House should review this report. It's a report that's being brought forward by an organization that I think a lot of people look to to receive advice when it comes to how things can impact upon working people in the province of Ontario. It's a report we take very, very seriously.

Whether an inquiry should come as a result of that, Speaker, I think would be pre-judging what is in the report. But I can tell you that I go out of my way to meet with injured workers in this province. I connect with the OFL. I don't always agree with the OFL, but they understand that; we have an open-door policy.

I look forward to receiving the information that's in this report and doing the best thing so that injured workers in this province receive the care and the health care that they deserve.

CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE

CLIMATE CHANGE

M. John Fraser: Ma question est pour le ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique.

Comme de nombreux Ontariens, les membres de ma communauté sont préoccupés par le changement climatique et par la pollution de gaz à effet de serre. Ils s'inquiètent de la condition du monde dans lequel nos enfants et nos

petits-enfants vont grandir si nous ne prenons pas une action forte sur le changement climatique.

Due to a lack of leadership from the previous federal government in this critical challenge, other levels of government in Canada have had to step up to fill this void. More specifically, there has been an unprecedented level of co-operation and collaboration between our government and the government of Quebec.

Can the minister please advise on the status of the co-operation that came out of the joint cabinet meeting in September?

L'hon. Glen R. Murray: Merci à mon collègue d'Ottawa-Sud. Nous travaillons très fort avec le Québec, un partenariat très important pour nous—probablement la plus importante relation dans la fédération pour nous autres. C'est très important parce que nous avons la même économie. L'économie du Québec et l'économie de l'Ontario, ce sont les mêmes affaires, les mêmes secteurs, les mêmes régions bio: le forêt boréale, le fleuve Saint-Laurent, les Grands Lacs. L'impact du changement climatique sur les Québécois et Québécoises est le même que sur les Ontariens et Ontariennes. Pendant le Cabinet conjoint, nous avons établi ensemble et nous avons discuté notre cible pour 2030. C'est une petite compétition : nous avons une cible de 37 % moins d'émissions qu'en 1990, et le Québec, maintenant, a 37,5 %—

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Merci. Question?

M. John Fraser: Encore une fois, ma question est pour le ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique.

Le ministre a souligné dans sa réponse qu'un aspect essentiel pour avancer sur la lutte contre le changement climatique est l'augmentation de la sensibilisation du public.

I know the minister has been very active in bringing attention to the challenge of climate change and the need for collaboration among all levels of government. With any issue, proper awareness of the challenge is as key as the solution. Climate change is no different.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please inform the House on the public awareness component of the MOU and what is being done to raise awareness of this important challenge?

L'hon. Glen R. Murray: Le projet de communication est très important parce que c'est un grand défi. Le marché du carbone est très compliqué. Le Québec est plus en avance que nous parce qu'il y a un échange qui a été établi quelques années passées. Mais nous travaillons, en français et en anglais, pour engager nos citoyens et pour faire des communications conjointes. Mais, aussi, c'est très important parce que l'Ontario a fermé les usines de charbon, et maintenant, nous avons le même défi que le Québec. C'est que dans les secteurs d'immeubles et de transportation, c'est plus de 50 % des émissions de gaz à effet de serre ici et au Québec. Alors, ce partenariat est plus important maintenant parce que nous avons maintenant le même défi.

Merci au membre, parce que la collaboration dans notre système fédéral est très importante.

LAYOFFS

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: My question is for the Deputy Premier. The Kraft Heinz plant in St. Marys has been a major employer in that community for decades, but yesterday afternoon, we learned the company will close its doors. For the 214 employees who will lose their jobs, this news is absolutely devastating.

My question is this: What will the government do to help them and the people of St. Marys in the days ahead?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This was indeed very disappointing news that came out of St. Marys yesterday. As the member opposite knows, St. Marys is very close to my home in London, and I expect that many of the people who were laid off are in fact constituents of mine. Our first concern is for these workers, for their families affected by the layoffs.

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The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities will be providing training programs to help support workers through these very difficult times. We are monitoring the situation. We will continue working with other levels of government to ensure coordinated service.

I tell you, Speaker, we in the southwest know too well that it is very difficult for communities when things like this happen, and we must be there to support those workers as they transition to jobs of the future.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Speaker, we appreciate the Deputy Premier's interest and sympathy, but there are a few things we need even more. First, we need an immediate commitment to open an action centre in St. Marys to help the affected employees. That's what the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has done in similar situations.

Second, we need the government to work co-operatively with the town to attract and retain new employers for the area.

Third, we desperately need an effective manufacturing strategy to restore Ontario's competitiveness and restore hope for those in the sector.

When will the government do these things?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Reza Moridi: I want to thank the member for bringing this question forward. When something like this happens, our hearts go out to the hard-working employees who have been working very hard. They're committed to supporting not only their families, but also supporting our economy.

When something like this happens, when layoffs happen, my ministry acts very quickly, through rapid re-employment and training services. In this particular case, again, my ministry—the office manager at the St. Marys plant was informed about the possibilities, and also the facilities which the ministry offers to laid-off workers. We will continue to support the laid-off workers at the St. Marys plant.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Two days ago, the government announced a 30-year deal with a private consortium to maintain the Eglinton Crosstown LRT. The value of the privatized maintenance deal is \$3.8 billion, almost as much as the cost of building the line itself.

Even though Infrastructure Ontario released several self-promoting press releases on Tuesday, it still refuses to release details that would explain exactly how much control over transit the government has handed over to the private sector for the next three decades.

The private bidders have had this information for almost two years. Why is the minister keeping it from the public?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member from Parkdale–High Park for the question. It always delights me to have the opportunity to talk about how transformational the Eglinton Crosstown project will be: 19 kilometres of LRT, 25 stops connecting Weston all the way to Scarborough here in the GTHA. It's a fantastic project.

In fact, what the member opposite is referring to is that just a couple of days ago, this government—through Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx, partnering with the successful project consortium for this landmark infrastructure project, a consortium known as Crosslinx—announced publicly \$9.1 billion for a 30-year contract to design, build, finance and maintain. That is a project that came in at \$2 billion less than originally anticipated by this government.

That speaks exactly to why it's so important for us to continue to leverage the innovation and creativity of the private sector. I look forward to having a chance to follow up.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Ms. Cheri DiNovo: We have asked the government for the full RFP document for the Eglinton Crosstown that was given to private bidders almost two years ago. The government won't release it.

We asked for documents concerning the government's plans a few years ago to fully privatize the Eglinton Crosstown. All we got back was 2,500 blank pages.

The private corporations controlling the Eglinton Crosstown will need to work with the TTC and the city of Toronto to ensure the new LRT interacts properly with local transit. We have no idea how this will even work.

When will the minister finally release all the documents showing what control over transit he has given away to private interests?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I thank the member for the supplementary question. I find it curious, Speaker. Not that many months ago here in this Legislature, this exact same member, on this exact same topic, stood in the House and asked me a question about the Eglinton Crosstown. In her question that day, she suggested that because there were only two bidders for this particular project, inevitably the taxpayers would pay more because there wasn't enough competition.

As I mentioned in my original answer, just earlier this week we were able to go out and say that the Crosslinx project team has now—we've done the financial close—a 30-year contract to design, build, finance and maintain this, at a cost that is \$2 billion less than was originally anticipated, contrary to what that member and the NDP caucus seem to believe in their fictional world when it comes to not building infrastructure in their case. Instead, we are getting the job done.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Todd Smith: My question this morning is for the Minister of Finance. Today, the crown jewel of Ontario's electricity system is on the market, but if you believe the Premier's man behind the curtain, Mr. Speaker, the company stopped being 100% publicly owned last week. In an interview he gave to BNN, Ed Clark bragged about Hydro One being the "perfect flavour" for the market and said, "We got the big players that we wanted," confirming what we've long said on this side of the House: that the Hydro One sale is just a way for Liberals to give a big payout to their well-heeled friends. They don't even care about the \$500-million hole in their plan to balance the budget.

Speaker, is the Minister of Finance really content to keep up the Wizard of Oz routine here in the House while the man behind the curtain sells off Hydro One for the Premier?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting question. I appreciate the theatrics, but I think what's really important here is the result of this transaction. Today, the market will give you exactly the result of what we are doing.

Mr. Clark—I give him a lot of credit for enabling the ability to do a transaction at a much lower cost than has otherwise been done in the past.

I also recognize that the work that is being done is only a staged approach that's being taken very carefully to mitigate the risks of what happened in the previous transaction done by the opposition. The member opposite may recall that they hid a deficit of \$5.6 billion and still they sold one of our precious assets, and gave us the "0" in 407, Mr. Speaker. We are not allowing that to happen. We are going to reinvest it dollar for dollar in our—

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

Interjections.

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

Supplementary.

Mr. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, he's fine playing the Wizard of Oz, apparently.

Smokey Thomas has told committee that every single Liberal MPP that he has talked to is against the sale of Hydro One.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Todd Smith: Every single backbencher over there is against the sale of Hydro One privately, but they're all taking their instructions from the corner office.

The FAO pointed out last week that it's a bad deal for Ontarians. He pointed out that it's simply holding onto Hydro One for a couple of years and—

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, every member on that side, I think, is supportive because they wanted to sell off 100%. They put it in some of their platforms.

Let me take this opportunity now to state the following: I'm pleased to see that it is being well received in the marketplace. Every uptick on the mark is an indication that the future offerings will net even greater proceeds benefiting all Ontarians. It will mean, Mr. Speaker, billions of dollars being reinvested into our economy, into building new assets, into producing greater revenues, for the net benefit for all of us concerned, at the same time transforming this corporation to be a better performer for the consumer and for the customer.

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All we're doing is maximizing its potential, seizing on that opportunity and enabling all of us to continue owning a better proportion and amount of Hydro One and future assets.

RING OF FIRE

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. Minister, we attended Meet the Miners Day, and you boasted your government's commitment to mining in Ontario.

Last year, mining giant Cliffs, who spent \$550 million in the Ring of Fire, said they can no longer do business with this Liberal government and sold their claims at a massive loss to Noront for \$20 million. Cliffs said they had "zero hope" for the Ring of Fire, that the project was "beyond the point of no return" and that every investment made here was a "disaster".

Sources inside Noront have now threatened to suspend work in the Ring of Fire due to the lack of government leadership.

Minister, how can you still sit there and watch as the remaining few companies threaten to leave, taking good jobs with them?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I certainly was at Meet the Miners Day with my colleague from the New Democratic Party. Indeed, he was there when we were having good conversations with representatives from Noront Resources, who remain committed to this project in a very, very significant and real way.

Certainly, the way he characterizes the history, we all know, may I say, that Cliffs Natural Resources, as a company, had some other significant challenges. What is important is that we now have a company, Noront Resources, working very closely with First Nations, working very much on new assets that they've been able to acquire, with the commitment of moving this project forward.

Once again—and I find myself doing this with some frequency with the member—I say that we need to work

together in a positive fashion, as opposed to seeing the actual challenges being insurmountable. The bottom line is that we're moving forward on the project, we're working closely with industry and with First Nations, and we're looking forward to working with our federal government as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Noront is expected to halt spending by year's end, if it doesn't see any progress, causing them to lay off most of their workers. You had eight years, Minister. You failed to come up with a plan that will create good jobs, build infrastructure, reduce the high price of electricity and work with First Nations.

Noront and its investors are increasingly frustrated with the lack of movement on your government infrastructure commitment and First Nations agreements. Cliffs warned you, you did not listen and they're gone. Now Noront is warning you.

Minister, will your government take action now? Will you listen before Noront investors bail and you are responsible for killing a \$60-billion project in this province?

Hon. Michael Gravelle: It's a little rich to be listening to a representative of a party that allocated zero dollars to the Ring of Fire—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Michael Gravelle: —let alone the official opposition, I should have mentioned earlier, who actually voted against our—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Prince Edward–Hastings, second time.

Finish, please.

Hon. Michael Gravelle: Let alone the official opposition, who get up and ask questions instead of working with us, and a party that actually voted against the \$1-billion commitment that our government made toward transportation infrastructure.

The long and short is that we have an extremely positive working relationship, certainly with Noront Resources and with many other companies in the Ring of Fire. We're working—we're very engaged in working—with the First Nations in order to make sure they see the benefits—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. It would be helpful to address the Chair.

New question.

HOMELESSNESS

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: My question is for the minister responsible for poverty reduction. As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the minister set a bold goal to end homelessness in Ontario. Earlier this year, this minister and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing established the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness.

As a former nurse, I knew several chronically homeless people who made frequent visits to the emergency room, often stating that they had nowhere else to go. They were sometimes not eligible for community health-related services, as they had no fixed address, and would return to the emergency room for care and shelter in the cold weather.

Adequate housing is one of the most fundamental determinants of health, due largely to its role in creating a stable living environment. Research has shown that people who are adequately housed require fewer and less expensive medical interventions.

Speaker, could the minister please give us an update on the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you to the member from Cambridge for a very important question.

Speaker, when we released our Poverty Reduction Strategy last fall, we did set an ambitious and an aspirational goal to end homelessness in Ontario. We set that goal because it's the right thing to do. There simply is no excuse in a province as rich as Ontario that anyone goes without a home. And we set that target because it's the smart thing to do. Homelessness is, in fact, very expensive, as we heard from the member from Cambridge.

We did establish an expert panel, co-chaired by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and myself, to get advice on how to move from that aspirational goal to the more concrete goal of actually ending homelessness. We heard from people living much of their lives with undiagnosed mental health issues. We heard from young people who had no place to call home. We heard from survivors. We heard—

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Speaker, it sounds like the expert panel on homelessness has done some excellent work making sure that the voices of some of the most vulnerable people in our society are heard. Studies have shown that homeless people experience a much greater rate of physical and mental health issues than the general population.

Several years ago, the citizens of my community of Cambridge built The Bridges, a shelter that houses men, women and families experiencing homelessness. It provides a range of programs designed to assist in making a smooth transition back into the community.

Having a safe and secure place to live has been found to be a significant part of recovering from mental illness and addiction, in gaining employment, food security, access to social services and access to health care.

Speaker, through you to the minister, I'd like to hear more about the panel's final report and how our government is planning to tackle homelessness.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I was pleased yesterday to be the keynote speaker at the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference in Montreal, where I updated those people from across the country on our plan to move forward. Speaker, for too long, we haven't challenged ourselves to address this problem. We can't turn a blind

eye anymore, and we're not going to. Here are the things that we are moving on.

We're adopting the panel's definition of homelessness. We're adopting the four priority areas that the panel identified: aboriginal homelessness, youth homelessness, people transitioning from provincially funded institutions and programs, and chronic homelessness. The third thing we're doing is we're acting on the panel's advice and we're setting an aggressive but achievable target to end chronic homelessness in 10 years. We're requiring municipalities to enumerate homelessness in their communities and develop plans to end it. And we're setting aside \$10 million—

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

MUNICIPALITIES

Mr. Randy Hillier: My question is to the Attorney General. With four OPP investigations regarding Liberal misconduct; plus a multi-million dollar lawsuit by T. Boone Pickens against the IESO; and the US justice department investigation under the corrupt business practices act regarding NextEra, it appears your seatmate, the energy minister, is complicit in many of these cases. The minister knows that the US justice department is investigating US companies that are promising Ontario municipalities money in exchange for municipal support which financially benefits these very same companies. It appears that the Attorney General's seatmate is facilitating and encouraging this financial impropriety under the Green Energy Act between foreign businesses and our municipal partners.

Speaker, does the Attorney General condone foreign businesses offering bribes on condition that the municipal government passes a resolution to support and promote those businesses?

Hon. Madeleine Meilleur: Minister of Energy.

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member will know that in different sectors in Ontario—for example, in the municipal sector, in the development industry—municipalities, in fact, can obtain benefits from developers who are building subdivisions, apartment buildings etc. There are provisions in the Municipal Act that enable that to happen. They work extremely well.

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In this particular case, for a party that has been complaining that they were being ignored in the renewable energy sector, we have created a process that gives them tremendous say in whether they go forward or not. We do have a point system that enables our proponents to negotiate with the municipality for particular benefits. It's working extremely well, and in that—

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'll do it in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm sure you certainly will.

Before we progress, I'd like to caution the member not to get too close to making an accusation that he knows would be unparliamentary. Carry on.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Speaker, again to the Attorney General: Although the energy minister may condone this—this I'm asking to the Attorney General—in my riding, Addington Highlands has been offered millions of dollars if they help Liberal-friendly NextEra score hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts from the IESO. The deal requires the municipality to act in a manner contrary to the expressed public interest and allows foreign-owned NextEra to squeeze more money out of taxpayers.

These aren't typical community vibrancy funds. They coerced municipal governments to enact resolutions that promote foreign-owned companies.

Speaker, why does the Attorney General, Ontario's chief law officer, allow and permit her seatmate to tarnish Ontario's reputation and bring the administration of law into disrepute? Will the Attorney General initiate an investigation into these corrupt practices?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Mr. Speaker, the member is so disrespecting rural municipalities, it's beyond belief. What he is saying, and I challenge him to identify the councils and the councillors that are being bribed in the province of Ontario—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I challenge the member to identify the councils and the councillors, who have passed unanimous resolutions, that are being bribed. He is showing so much disrespect for municipal councils in rural Ontario, it's beyond belief. He should be apologizing to every single rural municipality in the province of Ontario.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Acting Premier. Londoners should be able to trust that they can access the care they need every step of the way. But, as the Auditor General found, this province still doesn't have an integrated palliative care system.

In London, families and front-line nurses are worried about the transfer of acute palliative care beds out of Victoria Hospital and the loss of thousands of nursing care hours. St. Joseph's Health Care agrees that there are gaps in palliative care services in London and that "a more comprehensive, government-supported approach is needed."

When will this Liberal government step up, stop further cuts to acute care and increase the palliative care supports that Londoners and patients deserve?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Health.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: First of all, it's important to clarify that we aren't making any cuts to acute care, as the member opposite has alleged. In fact, our budget in health care continues to increase year after year, and we're making important investments across the health care spectrum. Palliative care, of course, is a critical element of that.

I know that the new hospice in London is going to be an important addition as well. My parliamentary assistant, John Fraser, has taken on the task ably, with confidence, to actually follow through on the government's commitment to fund 20 more hospices around this province. In Ontario, we were the first government to ever fund our hospices. We're proud of that fact. We're proud of the commitment that we've made to extend that funding.

I'd be happy to talk more about palliative care in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, back to the Acting Premier: The need for palliative care is growing across this province, but across the province, palliative care services are a patchwork at best. Seniors and front-line nurses in London are worried that acute palliative care services are being cut in hospitals, which are already grappling with four-year frozen budgets under the Liberal government.

Why won't the Acting Premier admit that London needs more palliative care beds and more support for families, not just a shuffling of the beds at the expense of acute care in hospitals?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm sure that the member opposite would agree with me when I say that for the provision of palliative care, it's important that we provide that care where it is as close to the patient as possible. Often that's in the community, often it's in a hospice environment; sometimes it's in a hospital environment. But what we need to do is work to make sure that care is of the highest quality. In fact, despite the fact that—when the NDP were government, they had no end-of-life strategy. We were the first government in Ontario's history to develop, several years ago, an end-of-life strategy for Ontarians.

Again, I've tasked the parliamentary assistant for my ministry, John Fraser—what he's doing is entertaining consultations across this province to update our end-of-life strategy, to develop a specific palliative care strategy, as well, that includes additional funding for hospitals; it includes making sure that we're providing the best quality of care for Ontarians.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Harinder Malhi: My question is to the Minister of Transportation. As the member for Brampton-Springdale, I know how important transit and transportation are for those living in my community. Time and time again, I have constituents tell me that we need to continue to invest in critical infrastructure projects that will keep Ontario moving.

My constituents want to know that their government is making those investments that truly count. Can the minister please tell members of this House what our government is doing to invest in transit and transportation infrastructure across the province?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to thank the member from Brampton for that wonderful question, and I want to thank her for her advocacy on behalf of her constituents.

Of course, our government is making the single largest infrastructure investment in Ontario's history. We are moving forward with our plan to unlock the value of certain public assets, as we committed to, and use the proceeds of these to help support investments in transit and transportation infrastructure projects through the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

These kinds of projects will include, inside the GTHA, making service enhancements to the GO Transit network and laying the foundation for regional express rail and providing funding for projects like Hamilton's LRT. Outside the GTHA, these funds will allow the province to launch a new Connecting Links program, which will provide funding for northern and rural municipalities, along with a wide range of other crucial public infrastructure projects.

VISITOR

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before I entertain points of order, I do have two quick announcements.

In the west members' gallery, a former member from Riverdale in the 35th and 36th, Broadview–Greenwood in the 37th, Toronto–Danforth in the 37th and 38th, and the first female Deputy Speaker in Ontario's history: Marilyn Churley.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): My friends, before we're dismissed, I have sad news. Our pages are finished today. I do know that we want to show our appreciation to these wonderful, hard-working students.

Applause.

JOHN ROBERT GALLAGHER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I do have some points of order. The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Speaker, yesterday we found out that another Canadian has fallen in combat.

John Robert Gallagher grew up in rural Ontario, in Wheatley, Essex county. He grew up to be a man of courage and conviction. He was a former member of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He left the safety and security of Canada and volunteered to help defend women and children in Syria and Iraq from the tyranny of IS.

I would like to recognize, and I'm sure this House would like to recognize, both his courage and his virtue and express our condolences to John Gallagher's family.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from London–Fanshawe, on a point of order.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My guests were here early, but I just want to say that I'm very delighted to welcome to Queen's Park students from the École

secondaire Gabriel-Dumont, a French school in my riding of London–Fanshawe, and their teacher Pierre Ozorak.

MEMBERS' BIRTHDAYS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Davenport, on a point of order.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: It gives me great pleasure to stand on this point of order to wish my great colleagues a happy birthday. Two wonderful ministers are celebrating birthdays today, Minister Jaczek and Minister Matthews; and Minister Oraziotti will be celebrating a birthday next week. Happy birthday to them.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I believe we have everyone covered.

DEFERRED VOTES

ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LES LIMITES DES CIRCONSCRIPTIONS ÉLECTORALES

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 115, An Act to enact the Representation Act, 2015, repeal the Representation Act, 2005 and amend the Election Act, the Election Finances Act and the Legislative Assembly Act / Projet de loi 115, Loi édictant la Loi de 2015 sur la représentation électorale, abrogeant la Loi de 2005 sur la représentation électorale et modifiant la Loi électorale, la Loi sur le financement des élections et la Loi sur l'Assemblée législative.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1201 to 1206.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All members please take their seats.

On September 28, 2015, Madame Meilleur moved second reading of Bill 115. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Norm
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Moridi, Reza
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Michael	Munro, Julia
Baker, Yvan	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hillier, Randy	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Natyshak, Taras
Barrett, Toby	Horwath, Andrea	Nicholls, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hudak, Tim	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzi	Potts, Arthur
Brown, Patrick	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Campbell, Sarah	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Clark, Steve	Kwintar, Monte	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Smith, Todd
Damerla, Dipika	MacLaren, Jack	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Malhi, Harinder	Takhar, Harinder S.

Dhillon, Vic	Mangat, Amrit	Taylor, Monique
Dickson, Joe	Mantha, Michael	Thibeault, Glenn
DiNovo, Cheri	Martins, Cristina	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Matthews, Deborah	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Forster, Cindy	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Fraser, John	McMahon, Eleanor	Yakubuski, John
French, Jennifer K.	McMeekin, Ted	Yurek, Jeff
Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte	Zimmer, David
Gélinas, France	Meilleur, Madeleine	

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller): The ayes are 95; the nays are 0.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 3, 2015, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

There being no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p. m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1209 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, I'd like to welcome Mr. Grzegorz Morawski, consul general of the Republic of Poland, who's with us today. Welcome.

I have one more. I don't know if he's lurking in here yet, but I saw him in the hallways. You may have felt the building shake. Former MPP Steve Peters, my predecessor, is here. You can't introduce him—he's not in the House. I'd welcome him to the Legislature.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): That's one way around it.

Further introductions of guests? The member from Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I would never suggest that anybody should introduce Steve Peters.

However, I would like to introduce Brett Schuyler from the Ontario Apple Growers and Tom Wilson from Spirit Tree Estate Cidery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

On a personal note, I can't help but notice that there are some guests in the gallery who are wearing medals. That indicates to me that they are veterans. I won't define them definitively—who they are veterans from—but I do want to say to them, thank you and welcome to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

POLISH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Mr. Speaker, on November 11, next week, Canadians and Ontarians will be reflecting on the many sacrifices made by men and women that ensured

Canada's freedoms and values. On this day, Polish Canadians will also be reflecting on their own history of fighting for the protection of the same values.

November 11, 1918, is a powerful and historic date for the Polish nation. It is the day on which Poland regained its independence following 123 years of partitions, occupations and basically being wiped off the map of Europe. Following the partitions perpetuated by Austria, Prussia and Russia and many uprisings and struggles, Poles managed to win back their freedom and rightful sovereignty, owing largely to their patriotism and heroism.

This year marks the 97th anniversary since Poland re-established itself as an important European democracy.

Polish Independence Day is the most important national holiday in Poland.

Today, I am pleased to welcome Mr. Grzegorz Morawski, consul general of the Republic of Poland, to the Legislature.

For Poles around the world, this day celebrates the strength, bravery and resilience of their people, who, for centuries, fought to maintain their national sovereignty against many perpetrators who have tried to make an affront.

Here in Ontario, we are proud of the contributions Polish Canadians have made to our province since first settling here more than 155 years ago.

I have been very pleased to meet many Polish Canadians over the last few months and to attend various community events.

Earlier this year, I had the honour to pay tribute to the all-volunteer Polish Blue Army and lay a wreath at the annual Niagara-on-the-Lake pilgrimage organized by the Canadian Polish Congress.

Today, I'd like to extend my warmest wishes to all Polish Canadians celebrating Polish Independence Day.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'm proud to dedicate my statement today to the members of OPSEU Local 294, who, after two years, are still without a first contract with their employer, CarePartners. The community nurses have been on strike for over six months. Meanwhile, this government has done nothing for the nurses and their patients, nor has it taken any steps to stop the continued trend of privatization of our home care services.

For over six months, over 1,400 affected patients in my region have gone without consistent complex nursing care. These are patients who depend on community nurses for cancer care, dialysis and wound treatment.

With the holiday season around the corner, members of Local 294 in the region are starting an "Adopt a Striker" campaign to support striking nurses and their families, who will no doubt suffer the most during the holiday season.

It's unacceptable that our nurses have to go to these extremes to ensure that the patients who depend on them are getting the services they need.

Sadly, the CarePartners CEO—a for-profit—is too concerned about letting her own salary and perks balloon to more than \$700,000 than putting patients and respect for our nurses first. I'd like to thank OPSEU Local 294 for starting "Adopt a Striker"—particularly at Christmas—and for their incredible support for ensuring that striking nurses will be able to enjoy and celebrate the holiday season accordingly.

ONTARIO FOOD TERMINAL

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Recently, I was very pleased to tour the Ontario Food Terminal in Etobicoke–Lakeshore and meet with their general manager, Bruce Nicholas, and his wonderful management team.

I am very proud to have the terminal in my riding. This is the largest wholesale fruit and produce distribution centre in Canada and the third-largest in North America. The terminal distributes over two billion pounds of produce annually—an average of 5.5 million pounds per day. Located on 40 acres of land, it was established in 1954 to provide a convenient, efficient and low-cost receiving and shipping facility for wholesalers of fruit and produce, and now serves all of eastern Canada and some of the northern United States.

The Ontario Food Terminal acts as a stock exchange for fruits and vegetables, where prices are determined by supply and demand and can change daily. Owned and operated by the Ontario Food Terminal Board, an enterprise operating under the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, no public monies are used in the operation of this unique facility. It's entirely self-funded from fees charged to the users of the facility. They also have a wonderful farmers' market for over 400 tenants who sell local Ontario produce.

The terminal supports Ontario farmers, local fruit and vegetable stores, and independent supermarkets. I'm very proud that the terminal is making a number of renovations and improvements to maintain its place as the premier fresh-food distribution market in Canada. The modernization of the food terminal will guarantee its role in our food distribution system for decades to come.

DIWALI

Ms. Sylvia Jones: At this special time of year, people of East Indian heritage across the world are celebrating the Festival of Lights. Diwali signifies the victory of light over darkness. This November, thousands of our East Indian friends in Ontario will light candles during Diwali as a reminder that light always prevails over darkness.

Our leader, Patrick Brown, has attended Diwali celebrations in the past few weeks and will be attending many more in the weeks to come, with our caucus. I look forward to attending a Diwali party in Brampton tomorrow evening, where I'll have an opportunity to reconnect with friends and indulge in the rich Indian culture.

At each event we attend, we are grateful to be welcomed by members of the community with warmth and openness. This is a testament to how Indian cultures

contribute to Ontario's multicultural mosaic. We have the great privilege in this province of experiencing the best of many different heritages. This is what makes Ontario the best place in the world to live and something we should never take for granted.

Mr. Speaker, the Indo-Canadian community in Ontario, consisting of almost 700,000 people, is vital to the economic, social and cultural complexion of our province. Since the early part of the 20th century, Indo-Canadians have played an important contribution in Ontario's growth and success.

On behalf of Patrick Brown and the official opposition, I wish all our friends light and happiness during Diwali.

THE SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's never too early to start thinking about Christmas. Some of us these days need a little inspiration and motivation. To that end, Knox Waterloo is hosting a musical celebration, The Sounds of Christmas, in support of KidsAbility. KidsAbility is the recognized leader in Waterloo and Guelph-Wellington for empowering children and youth with a wide range of complex special needs to realize their potential.

This year's musical organizer, Nicole Guse, spoke passionately about this event. For her, it is a way to pay it forward and express her gratitude, as her family was fortunate enough to access support through KidsAbility.

This fundraiser also highlights the musical talent in our community, and, finally, it represents a wonderful opportunity to come together in celebration, really of generosity but also of community and compassion. It reminds me of something that spiritual leader Henri Nouwen wrote: "Every human being has a great, yet often unknown, gift to care, to be compassionate, to become present to the other, to listen, to hear and to receive. If that gift would be set free and made available, miracles could take place."

Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker: Families that find the support and compassionate education at KidsAbility often express their wonder at this miracle of accessing this unique and special place where every child has the opportunity to reach their potential. For parents and children, it is a place of hope.

I hope that, if you are in the region, you will join us at Knox Waterloo for the musical The Sounds of Christmas in support of KidsAbility. More information can be found on the Knox Waterloo website.

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JUSTICE RYAN

Mr. Arthur Potts: I'm delighted today to tell the House about Justice Ryan, who is a resident of Beaches–East York and a grade 12 student at Malvern Collegiate. Now, Ms. Ryan was recently awarded one of six James Bartleman Aboriginal Youth Creative Writing Awards. This prestigious award, which was created by our 27th Lieutenant Governor, celebrates aboriginal youth writing

and was presented in recognition of Ms. Ryan's courageous and innovative comic strip called *The Escape*.

The *Escape* tells the story of a young girl who flees from a residential school, only to be caught and forced to endure horrendous abuse. But along the way the story's hero learns not to judge people by their looks, and to take strength in her aboriginal heritage. In an interview with the *Beach Mirror*, a community newspaper, Ms. Ryan recounts that her goal was to not only promote awareness about residential schools and the terrible abuses that happened there, but also to share a story of courage.

Mr. Speaker, for a grade 12 student to tackle such an important subject and for that work to be presented and recognized at the highest levels by the province of Ontario is itself a story of courage. I had the pleasure of meeting Miss Ryan on October 26 here at Queen's Park, when she received her award, with Mr. Bartleman; the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade; and the current Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

On behalf of the House and the constituents of Beaches-East York, I congratulate Justice Ryan on her achievements and I commend her for celebrating her aboriginal heritage.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I am pleased to rise today to read to you in the Legislature a poem written by Comrade Lionel Murphy, a 90-year-old veteran with Legion Branch 23 in the city of North Bay. It's called "On This Great Day."

I wandered through the fields today
A field of marble stone
So many young men laying there
Some stones are marked unknown

They gave their lives that we might live
The life we live today
Make sure the life they gave for us
Was not just thrown away

So many that have fallen
In battle lost and won
So many young lives taken
Before their lives began

No loving wives to bear a family
Just kith and kin to mourn
They fought for love
Not for fame
For love of country
They lit the flame

They died alone
Or in a crowd
For those that did so
Let's be proud

The sacrifice they made was real
And now they lay in far-off fields
Their duty done, the torch is passed
We must not let their memory lapse
And take the torch that they have passed

For if we fail to carry on
Our liberty may soon be gone
And many young lives will bear the cross
Of liberty that we have lost

I say thank you to Lionel Murphy in North Bay.
Applause.

COMMUNITY LIVING BURLINGTON

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's my pleasure to rise in the House to acknowledge a wonderful organization in my riding, Community Living Burlington, on the occasion of their 60th anniversary open house, which I had the privilege of attending on October 25.

This open house was a celebration of 60 years of service to the community of Burlington and a reflection of Community Living's humble beginnings, where, in 1955, a group of parents met to discuss educational opportunities for their children. A grassroots organization was formed to care for children with developmental disabilities since, as was the practice then, they were sent to large institutions away from their families. Very sadly, their parents thought this was their only option. As executive director Judy Pryde said, "Parents were told by medical professionals that they should not, and could not, take care of their children."

Today, thanks to the love and determination of those parents, Community Living Burlington has grown to an organization that provides support to more than 400 people with a developmental disability and their families, thanks to an exceptional staff team of over 300 employees. These services include children's inclusion services, residential supports, employment services and day programs. These programs assist their clients in developing independence, building social, emotional and community participation skills, while encouraging learning and professional development. And they provide important respite to parents and caregivers, too.

I am deeply grateful I had the opportunity to celebrate 60 wonderful years with Community Living. I want to thank them for inviting me to their wonderful celebration. On behalf of all of Burlington, I would like to thank them for their continued selfless service to our community.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT REPRÉSENTATION DES FEMMES AU PARLEMENT

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I know all of us were interested to see the results of the election on October 19,

but the results are important in ways that go far beyond party lines.

J'étais fière de voir qu'il y avait un résultat pour les femmes dans cette élection qui bat tous les records. Dans le 42^e Parlement on a élu 88 femmes qui représentent les circonscriptions à travers le Canada.

These women represent 26% of the seats in the House of Commons, 13 more women than before. I'm happy that the Prime Minister has fulfilled a promise made to appoint a cabinet with gender parity, with women for the first time making up half of the federal cabinet.

I'm also proud, actually, to be elected as part of a group of 38 women elected to the Ontario Legislature, and I value and appreciate the unique voice my fellow MPPs bring to the Legislature. I look forward to seeing this trend continue in Parliament.

I encourage every single young woman to consider politics as a career. Merci.

Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac): Merci beaucoup. I thank all members for their statements.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FAMILY CAREGIVER DAY ACT, 2015 LOI DE 2015 SUR LES AIDANTS NATURELS

M^{me} Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:
Bill 138, An Act to proclaim Family Caregiver Day /
Projet de loi 138, Loi proclamant le Jour des aidants
naturels.

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.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker. I would like to thank people in the gallery who came and who were the inspiration for that bill, starting with Lisa Levin, who is the chair of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition; Joanne Bertrand; Laura Pettinger; Delia Sinclair Frigault; and Robert TerSteege. They are people who are part of the Ontario Caregiver Coalition and who wanted this bill brought forward.

The bill is very simple. It proclaims the first Tuesday in April of each year as Family Caregiver Day, and it will be a day to support the 2.6 million caregivers in Ontario.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Children and Youth Services is requesting permission to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Minister?

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Thank you. I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 4 and 5 be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister moves that, notwithstanding standing order 98(g), notice for ballot items 4 and 5 be waived.

Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH MOIS DE LA SENSIBILISATION À L'ADOPTION

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: As many of us know, November is Adoption Awareness Month.

Il s'agit d'un mois important pour mon ministère et pour de nombreux Ontariens et Ontariennes.

Adoption Awareness Month gives us the opportunity to increase outreach and education efforts about adoption, the children and youth who need a permanent home, the benefits of adopting, and the financial and other resources available to adoptive families.

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Children and youth in the care of our child welfare system come to us from a variety of circumstances. While they're in our care, dedicated staff and professionals nurture, guide and serve these very vulnerable young people. Our goal is to increase the number of kids in care who are adopted, giving them the same loving families and opportunities as children in permanent families have.

C'est pourquoi, en septembre, j'ai annoncé plusieurs changements positifs apportés à notre système d'adoption provincial.

We are expanding the age of eligibility for adoptive parents to receive targeted subsidies. We're investing in a province-wide post-adoption family support program to help new families settle in with each other. We are also partnering with Wendy's Wonderful Kids to find adoptive families for historically harder-to-place children. These initiatives will help us find permanent homes with loving families for these young people. We know that growing up in a stable family significantly strengthens and improves outcomes for children. It supports their health, their education and their participation in the workforce on a long-term basis.

Nous avons déjà accompli des progrès considérables en matière de soutien aux familles adoptives.

We provide financial subsidies for eligible parents who adopt or take legal custody of crown wards who are

eight years or older, or sibling groups. These subsidies make a real difference in supporting families to meet the child's needs without undue financial hardship.

We also remove legal barriers so that more children in care can be adopted through the Building Families and Supporting Youth to be Successful Act. We fund the Adoption Council of Ontario to manage the Adopt-Ontario program, a website to help children's aid societies match children with families in Ontario who are prepared to adopt. With partners in the child welfare sector, we expanded the Adoption Resource Exchange event from twice each year to at least six times every year across the province. These events help match prospective parents with children in need of a forever home.

In Ontario, approximately 1,000 adoptions are completed each year through our children's aid societies.

Je suis heureuse de déclarer que, compte tenu des améliorations que j'ai annoncées en septembre, nous nous attendons à ce que ce chiffre augmente.

As I mentioned, to help more children and youth find permanent, nurturing families, we are funding 15 adoption recruiters in partnership with Wendy's Wonderful Kids. The Wendy's Wonderful Kids program focuses on finding homes for historically hard-to-place children, primarily those who are older or who have special needs. It works. With our addition of 15 adoption recruiters and Wendy's Wonderful Kids, their commitment has resulted in an offer to hire four more recruiters in Ontario, which will increase the capacity to match families with children more than fivefold in the next year.

There's more. We are requiring children's aid societies to profile children in the care of the children's aid society who are available for adoption on the Adopt-Ontario website. We're also developing service standards to improve the adoption experience for prospective families and children and youth. And we are working with the Adoption Council of Ontario and Adopt4Life to establish a post-adoption support program to support families well after the adoption process has been finalized.

We're also further helping adoptive families to care for their children by extending the age range for eligibility for targeted subsidies to ages 18 to 21 and increasing the income threshold and monthly subsidy amount. Finally, we'll be requiring greater use of culturally appropriate placement options for First Nations children and youth.

Nous prenons, chaque année, d'autres mesures pour les enfants et les jeunes pris en charge, et nous continuerons à faire davantage pour ces enfants.

We all share the same goal: to help these children and youth reach their full potential in a safe and loving family.

SOLDIERS' AID COMMISSION

Hon. Helena Jaczek: I'm proud to rise today to mark the 100th anniversary of Ontario's Soldiers' Aid Com-

mission. Joining us in the Legislature today in both members' galleries are the commission chair, Colin R. Rowe; vice-chair John Stapleton; and commissioners Homer R. Brooks, Alfred H.L. Harris and William Earle Thomas. I'm also pleased to welcome two commissioners who have been newly appointed to the commission: Rosemarie McGuire and my constituent Susan Beharriell.

On November 10, 1915, a group of dedicated Ontarians, with the support of the provincial government, came together to meet a growing need. Thousands of soldiers were returning home from the front lines of the First World War. They were returning with physical and psychological injuries, and there were not sufficient support services to help them. Many did not return, and their families were coping with the devastation of war with little or no support.

The Ontario Soldiers' Aid Commission came into being, with its first offices here in the Legislative Building. In the ensuing years, the work of the commission expanded to meet the growing needs of soldiers and their families. By 1916, 37 commission branches were operating in communities throughout Ontario, assisting soldiers by finding work and housing for returning soldiers; arranging training; advocating for fair wages and pensions; reaching out to soldiers' families who needed help; and, in 1920, being given all the powers of a children's aid society to serve as the ward for hundreds of Ontario children whose families were impacted by the war.

In fact, the Soldiers' Aid Commission was one of the first examples of social services in Ontario. It preceded the formation of Veterans Affairs by 29 years. Later, as Canadians fought in the Second World War and the Korean War, the commission again rose to meet the needs of Ontario's returning soldiers and families left behind.

On Remembrance Day, we as a society stop to reflect on the sacrifices of our veterans. The Soldiers' Aid Commission thinks of those sacrifices every day and continues to provide assistance to Ontario's veterans and their families. To help celebrate this milestone anniversary, later today commissioners will join the Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, for a formal reception in the Lieutenant Governor's suite.

To share their important history with Ontarians, the commission has produced a commemorative book entitled Ontario Soldiers' Aid Commission: 100 Years of Assistance to Veterans in Need, 1915-2015. It chronicles the commission's century of groundbreaking support and advocacy on behalf of veterans. They fought successfully for services to help veterans return to the workforce and for pensions for veterans and their families.

Next week, when we pause on Remembrance Day to recall the sacrifices made by Canada's courageous women and men, I invite all honourable members to also recognize the enormous contributions that the Soldiers' Aid Commission has made to the lives of Ontario veterans and their families over the past 100 years.

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

ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to rise on behalf of the PC caucus and my leader, Patrick Brown, to respond to the minister's statement on Adoption Awareness Month. I have to say that a lot has been done in 10, 20 years.

But I was struck, because I attended a Canadian Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians luncheon just prior to coming to the House—and Marilyn Churley was there. For anyone who has a love of Ontario history, Marilyn Churley was a minister of the crown under the Bob Rae government, but what I remember Marilyn Churley for more than anything else was her advocacy and her initiatives related to open adoptions.

I think all of us in the chamber would agree that the fact that we can look at and support open adoptions has made a huge difference in young people being able to find their forever homes, so I just want to give a shout-out to Marilyn. I think that what she did then and what she did in her post-parliamentary life with her book made a great deal of difference to how people approached adoptions and how people were willing to look at different ways of putting together a family, and quite frankly, I'm sure has made a difference in literally hundreds of young people's lives. So to Marilyn: Thank you for that. It was just one of those passing things that when I saw her, it was like, "Yes, adoption."

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Anyway, the action towards more types of adoptions, more abilities for kin care, for people to take on those responsibilities—particularly with young people with challenges—is something that we on this side obviously support and endorse.

As I say, I'm pleased to see that we continue to raise awareness and encourage people to look at adoption as a wonderful way to expand your family.

SOLDIERS' AID COMMISSION

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm pleased to rise today in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Soldiers' Aid Commission.

The Soldiers' Aid Commission was first established in 1915, with a mandate to take care of, and to find employment for, members of the Canadian Forces who returned to Canada during the period of war. It was continued in 1960, and now provides emergency aid to veterans of the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War.

I believe that all of our returned soldiers and veterans deserve our gratitude and assistance.

While veterans' services are, largely, a responsibility of the federal government, I'm glad to know that our veterans in need can receive support from the province.

In celebration of the 100th anniversary, members of the Soldiers' Aid Commission have come together to write a book about its history. As someone with a long-held interest in history, I am very much looking forward

to seeing the book tonight at the reception being held in the Lieutenant Governor's suite.

Many of us will be heading back to our ridings next week to partake in our local Remembrance Day celebrations.

In Perth–Wellington, I'm looking forward to attending a Remembrance Day assembly at Stratford Northwestern Secondary School, and I will be attending as many ceremonies as I can throughout the week.

It's important for us to all come together to remember the sacrifices of those who have fought for our peace and freedom. We must also thank those who currently serve our country across the world and at home. They and their families continue to make sacrifices to protect Canada.

I would encourage everyone to support their local veterans' associations and to wear a poppy in remembrance of our servicemen and servicewomen.

On November 11, please take the time to attend a Remembrance Day ceremony and pay your respects.

I would like to congratulate the Soldiers' Aid Commission on its 100th anniversary and thank its members for their commitment to our veterans. I look forward to meeting with you all this afternoon at your reception.

Lest we forget.

ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH

Miss Monique Taylor: As the NDP critic for children and youth services, it is my pleasure to speak today in recognition of Adoption Awareness Month.

Everyone deserves a family. We need people close to us who can be proud of our successes, who can nurse us through ill health, who can lighten the load of whatever might burden us, who can correct us when we're wrong. We all make mistakes. Sometimes we really mess things up, and when we do, we need support and help from those around us—the type of support that comes from the unconditional love of a family. We rely on that support not just as children, but throughout our lives. Everyone deserves that, but not everyone has it.

When adoption is mentioned or when it is portrayed in books or on the screen, we usually think of babies, because adoptees are usually younger children. The fact is that 60% of children and youth available for adoption are over the age of 13, yet only 5% of those adopted are between the ages of 13 and 18. Far too many age out of care, with no support and no idea where to go from there. These youth want, need and deserve a family.

I think back again to the My Real Life Book report from the Youth Leaving Care Hearings and one particular quote: "Children's aid saved my life, but at this moment I felt betrayed and abandoned. I was not ready to leave care! I felt their love, guidance and support was unconditional—until I turned 21 and then it became conditional."

The very sad reality is that youth who age out of care, those who don't have a lifelong family, have a hard time as adults. Fewer than 3% will earn a college or university degree. Within the first two years of leaving care, 25% of

them will become homeless and 25% will be incarcerated. Some 60% of young women leaving care will have had a child within four years, and that child is twice as likely to end up in care. Like its mother and others gone before, that child will enter the child welfare system through no fault of its own. In many ways, it's like we have a system that feeds itself in what seems like a never-ending cycle. But by providing a family for life, adoption can make the crucial difference for so many.

SOLDIERS' AID COMMISSION

Miss Monique Taylor: I would also like to welcome the many folks here from the Soldiers' Aid Commission and the World War II veterans that we have with us today. How absolutely special it is for this date of ceremony. It is nice to have you here.

As we approach Remembrance Day, I feel honoured to speak about the 100th anniversary of the Soldiers' Aid Commission of Ontario. On November 10, 1915, the Soldiers' Aid Commission was established to take care of and to find employment for members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force who returned to Canada during the war. One hundred years later, it's hard for us to appreciate just what those times were like, but it is important for us always to remember what those young men, many of them in fact no more than boys, were put through in the service of their country.

The Canadian Expeditionary Force was the field force created by Canada to serve overseas in the First World War. It was, at the time the Soldiers' Aid Commission was established, entirely comprised of volunteers, as it was for most of the war. Over 600,000 were enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force during its existence from 1914 to 1920. This was at a time when the population of the entire country was about one quarter of what it is today.

An extraordinary percentage of Canada's population, the vast majority of them young men, served in the force. They witnessed horrific events and scenes that should be part of no person's life: the mud, the cold, the rats, the incessant bombs, the sniper's bullets and the unimaginable carnage that they caused. Many perished on those far-off fields. Those who made it home brought with them physical and emotional scars that would stay with them for the rest of their lives.

And so the Soldiers' Aid Commission was established. In the years that followed, eligibility was extended to any person who served in the Canadian Armed Forces and who served overseas or served with the Armed Forces in Canada during the First or Second World Wars or the Korean War and is in financial need. Veterans who served in the merchant navy during World War II are also eligible for assistance.

In the present day, the Soldiers' Aid Commission provides funds for hearing aids, glasses and dental needs. They can help with rent, home repairs or moving costs, as well as specialized equipment such as assistive devices, wheelchairs and prosthetics.

I want to congratulate the Soldiers' Aid Commission on behalf of New Democrats on the occasion of their 100th anniversary and in doing so, thank the seven current appointees to the board as well as those who have served in those positions over the years.

PETITIONS

ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

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

"Whereas the Ontario government's proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) is a mandatory pension plan which would target small businesses and their employees; and

"Whereas there has been little to no discussion on what the costs would be, or who would pay them; and

"Whereas affected businesses would be hit with up to \$1,643 per employee, per year in new payroll taxes starting in 2017; and

"Whereas affected employees would have up to \$1,643 per year extra deducted from their paycheques, and it would take 40 years for them to see the full pension benefits; and

"Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business predicts the unemployment rate in Ontario would rise by 0.5%, and there would be a reduction in wages over the longer term; and

"Whereas all of these costs would be shouldered exclusively by small businesses and their employees; and

"Whereas public sector and big business employees who already have a pension plan will not be asked to pay into the plan;

"We, the undersigned, do not support implementation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and petition the government of Ontario to axe the pension tax."

I fully support this, will sign it and send it with page Cameron.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Michael Mantha: "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

1340

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Julia to bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Laurie Scott: “Stop the Sale of Hydro One.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the decision to sell Hydro One has been made without public input and the sale will be conducted in complete secrecy; and

“Whereas if the people of Ontario lose majority ownership in Hydro One, ratepayers will be forced to accept whatever changes the new owners decide, including higher rates; and

“Whereas Ontario’s Financial Accountability Officer has warned the sale of Hydro One would be detrimental to Ontario’s financial situation; and

“Whereas the Liberal government has removed independent oversight of Hydro One, including the Auditor General and the Ombudsman.

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

“That the government of Ontario immediately stop the sale of Hydro One.”

I’ll affix my signature to that and give it to page Nicole.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario entitled “Hydro One Not for Sale! Say No to Privatization,” and it is signed by hundreds of residents of my riding of London West. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the provincial government is creating a privatization scheme that will lead to higher hydro rates, lower reliability, and hundreds of millions” of dollars “less for our schools, roads, and hospitals; and

“Whereas the privatization scheme will be particularly harmful to northern and First Nations communities; and

“Whereas the provincial government is creating this privatization scheme under a veil of secrecy that means Ontarians don’t have a say on a change that will affect their lives dramatically; and

“Whereas it is not too late to cancel the scheme;

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

“That the province of Ontario immediately cancel its scheme to privatize Ontario’s Hydro One.”

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

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: This is a petition to lower hydro rates.

“Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government’s mismanagement of the energy sector;

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

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

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

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

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

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

I will send this with page Samuel.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition that comes from all over the northeast and with Sirpa Luolaja, who is from Azilda in my riding. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the Ontario government is making ... PET scanning a publicly insured health service available to cancer and cardiac patients....; and

“Whereas by October 2009, insured PET scans are performed in Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton and Thunder Bay; and

“Whereas the city of Greater Sudbury is a hub for health care in northeastern Ontario, with the Sudbury Regional Hospital, its regional cancer program and the Northern Ontario School of Medicine;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to make PET scans available through Health Sciences North, thereby serving and providing equitable access to the citizens of northeastern Ontario.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and my good page Vanessa, from Nickel Belt, will bring it to the Clerk.

WATER FLUORIDATION

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: “Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water.

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

“Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of

community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

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

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

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

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

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

I agree with this, affix my name to it and send it with page Marco.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mrs. Julia Munro: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

“Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made an almost 7% unilateral cut to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

“Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients’ access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

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

“The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario’s doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario’s families deserve.”

I affix my signature to this.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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

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

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

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

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

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

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Julia once again to bring it down to the table of four Clerks.

LUNG HEALTH

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I have a petition to present to this Legislature.

“Whereas lung disease affects more than 2.4 million people in the province of Ontario, more than 570,000 of whom are children;

1350

“Of the four chronic diseases responsible for 79% of deaths (cancers, cardiovascular diseases, lung disease and diabetes) lung disease is the only one without a dedicated province-wide strategy;

“In the Ontario Lung Association report, *Your Lungs, Your Life*, it is estimated that lung disease currently costs the Ontario taxpayers more than \$4 billion a year in direct and indirect health care costs, and that this figure is estimated to rise to more than \$80 billion seven short years from now;

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

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

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

I agree with this petition, and I hand it to page Irene.

ONTARIO COLLEGE OF TRADES

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s tradespeople are subject to stifling regulation and are compelled to pay membership fees to the unaccountable College of Trades; and

“Whereas these fees are a tax grab that drives down the wages of skilled tradespeople; and

“Whereas Ontario desperately needs a plan to solve our critical shortage of skilled tradespeople by encouraging our youth to enter the trades and attracting new tradespeople; and

“Whereas the latest policies from the” previous “McGuinty-Wynne” Liberal “government only aggravate the looming skilled trades shortage in Ontario;

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

“To immediately disband the College of Trades, cease imposing needless membership fees and enact policies to attract young Ontarians into skilled trade careers.”

I agree with this petition and I’m going to send it down with Abby.

FINANCEMENT DES HÔPITAUX

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from all around Sudbury and the northeast and was signed by Monsieur et Madame Perrier. It reads as follows:

« Attendu que Horizon Santé-Nord fait face à des défis budgétaires importants qui ont donné lieu à une réduction de 87 000 heures de soins infirmiers en psychiatrie, chirurgie d’un jour, l’unité chirurgicale, en obstétrique, aux services de santé mentale, l’oncologie, les soins intensifs et le département d’urgence ... ; et

« Attendu que le gouvernement provincial de l’Ontario a réduit le financement des hôpitaux en termes réels en dollars pour les huit dernières années; et

« Attendu que ces réductions risqueront des taux plus élevés d’accidents médicaux car les heures de soins infirmiers aux patients seront considérablement réduites dans tout hôpital; »

Ils demandent à l’Assemblée législative d’arrêter les réductions proposées à Horizon Santé-Nord, de protéger les lits et les services et d’augmenter le financement des hôpitaux de l’Ontario avec un plan pour augmenter le financement au moins à la moyenne des autres provinces.

Je suis d’accord avec cette pétition. Je vais la signer et je demande à la page Jade to bring it to the Clerk.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That unfortunately concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION TAX ABOLITION ACT, 2015 LOI DE 2015 ABOLISSANT L’IMPÔT SUR L’ADMINISTRATION DES SUCCESSIONS

Mr. Brown moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 136, An Act to abolish the estate administration tax and provide for related matters / Projet de loi 136, Loi visant à abolir l’impôt sur l’administration des successions et traitant de questions connexes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Patrick Brown: When the ballot draw was made for private members’ business shortly after I was sworn in as the MPP for Simcoe North, I was given the date of November 5, and I thought, “What would be more appropriate for a private member’s bill than tax relief, in the case of a bill and a change that would help Ontarians?”

As I said during my press conference on Monday, throughout the PC leadership campaign and since I became leader last May, all across the province, people have been telling me again and again that life under the Liberals is more unaffordable. When you go through the list of taxes, government fees and levies that the average resident in Ontario pays each day, each month and every year, the numbers become staggering.

Quand vous passez par la liste des taxes, des frais gouvernementaux et des impôts que les personnes moyennes en Ontario payent chaque jour, chaque mois et chaque année, les chiffres deviennent étonnants.

It begins with the \$25 fee for a birth certificate for a newborn. Throughout childhood, HST is paid every day on products and services parents buy to raise their child. At the age of 16, they pay \$150 to get their G1, \$88 for their G licence, and every five years, it’s another \$81 to renew their licence. They pay taxes on the purchase of their first car, even if it’s used. Ils payent des impôts sur l’achat de leur première voiture, même si c’est une voiture d’occasion. Their vehicle licence tag costs them an extra \$108 each year, and each time they gas up the vehicle, they pay a fuel tax.

When they buy their first home, they pay thousands in a land transfer tax, and if this government gets their way, homebuyers will soon be paying additional thousands of dollars for a municipal land transfer tax. I’m hoping that the member for Leeds–Grenville is successful in his fight against this additional tax grab.

They pay property taxes on their homes and cottages. They pay tax to furnish and renovate their homes, and eco fees on electronics. They pay taxes on insurance premiums for their home and vehicles. They pay taxes on the fees to financial planners who help them manage and grow their savings. They pay capital tax gains when they sell their investments and taxes on interest and dividends from what they earn on those investments. They pay payroll taxes for the employees who help them run the family business or family farm. And this government now plans to bring a giant new payroll tax in the form of the ORPP. I am very thankful that the great member for York–Simcoe continues to wage the campaign against that tax increase.

They pay a health tax every year even while this government cuts front-line health care services delivered by doctors, nurses and personal support workers. In their senior years, they pay taxes on the money they draw from their investments, and at the end of their lives, taxes are paid on funeral and burial services. À la fin de leur vie, des impôts sont payés sur les services funéraires et les

enterrements. And because you are deemed to have sold all of your property at your death, they pay capital gains taxes on the value of most of their assets on their death. Finally, the government charges \$15 for that death certificate.

If you're getting a common theme here, we pay a lot of tax in Ontario. They tax us from birth to death, and that's what this private member's bill is about. It's to highlight, in a brief summary, the wide variety of taxes throughout our lives in Ontario. That's why, when I learned of the date for my ballot item, I thought a perfect example for tax relief would be to end the death tax.

The graduated tax levied on the value of people's assets on their death is the highest of any province in Canada. Cet impôt est le plus haut dans tout le Canada, de toutes les provinces. C'est seulement 65 \$ au Québec, mais en Ontario, c'est plus de 7 000 \$ pour un exemple moyen. An estate in Ontario valued at \$500,000 would pay \$7,250 in tax, whereas the same estate would pay \$65 in Quebec. Talk about a contrast—\$400 in Alberta, \$2,500 in New Brunswick and \$3,500 in Saskatchewan.

I want to praise the MPP for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex who raised this issue earlier this year when he debated a bill to cap the tax and exempt tax charitable donations made in a will. Despite the overwhelming support that the MPP for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex got for his bill across the province in newspapers and emails and phone calls, the members opposite voted it down on second reading.

I'm taking the fight for affordability one step further and call for this tax to be eliminated. Donc, je prends la lutte pour l'accessibilité un peu plus loin, et je demande que la taxe soit éliminée.

1400

This bill would allow for a probate fee, of about \$180, to continue to be charged to file the necessary court documents to administer the estate. There would be no cost for government; this would cover all the expenses.

The members opposite are going to stand up and say that the estate administration tax was a PC initiative; we've heard their talking points. They're actually wrong. It was the Bob Rae government that, in 1992, took the modest probate fee and, by regulation, tripled the fee by calculating it on the value of a deceased person's assets. The move was challenged in court, and what ended up happening in 1998 is that, based on the court decision, it was required that government put it into law; and it was passed in legislation in 1998.

So why am I calling for an end to the death tax, when it was actually put into legislation by the PC government in 1998? Well, let's look at what has happened in the last 20 years in Ontario. In response, I would ask all members of the House to consider the burden that families faced in 1998, compared to the burden we face today.

In 1998, there was no health tax, no eco fees, no municipal land transfer tax. Sales tax was not payable on as many goods and services as it is today; and on top of that, hydro costs were a lot more affordable. These Liberal taxes add thousands of dollars to the cost of

living in Ontario. By the time someone dies, millions in taxes and fees have been paid on savings, purchases and investments. So my bill provides some much-needed relief and acknowledges to the people of Ontario that they pay enough. They pay enough in this province. You are taxed far too much in Ontario.

Every single one of us in this House can rhyme off the names of constituents we know who have worked hard all their lives to build a business or to see the family farm thrive. When those folks pass away, their families are faced with a whopping bill, with the death taxes payable on the net value of those hard-earned assets. Because all the equity is tied up in hard assets like real estate and equipment, families are often faced with the prospect of selling those hard-earned assets just to pay those death taxes. That just doesn't make good business sense. Not being able to continue running the family business or the family farm just to pay death taxes is bad for Ontario's economy. It's bad for the thousands of people those businesses and farms employ.

We haven't seen many good decisions coming from the government benches lately, so we're hoping that this idea is one that you can rally around. If the government members support this bill today, I'll be the first to applaud them for showing an example of non-partisanship.

What I'd ask you to consider is, if you're talking to your constituents, try to imagine a single constituent in your riding who would say this would be the wrong step for Ontario. You will find universally that your constituents fundamentally believe we are overtaxed in this province, and this is a gesture of fairness. So for those government members here today, and voting later today, consider that. Please do the right thing. Support this bill. You'll have a great opportunity to do the right thing.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: I would concur with the member: This is an important debate to be having in the province of Ontario. I'm pleased to lend some of the feedback that I've received from my constituency of Kitchener–Waterloo, but also to relay that over the last year, as our family has moved through the grieving process of losing both in-laws in the space of a year and actually going through this process, that's when we first learned about when the changes to the estate administration tax came into effect, and how little communication had been shared about those changes. It was an eye-opening experience.

There is context and there is history, and the member from Simcoe also referenced the backstory as to how we got to this place in history in the province of Ontario. I'm going to address that as well.

I think it's important for those people who are at home to understand that as parties we don't always see these issues the same way. As it relates to Bill 136, the Estate Administration Tax Abolition Act, 2015, this PMB is proposing that Ontario entirely get rid of the estate administration tax altogether, which is not done anywhere

else in the country. Nowhere else—no other jurisdiction—has abolished and gotten rid of the estate administration tax.

This act essentially widens existing income inequality between the generations, and I'll touch on that in a few minutes. It also incentivizes wealthy individuals to amass their fortunes instead of spending them, and pass them on to future generations. Neither abolishing nor capping the estate administration tax at the high end is progressive. New Democrats, however, are open to reviewing the rates of taxation, recognizing that Ontarians pay the highest estate tax rate in the country. This is where we have to have a conversation about how we got to this place and some of the changes that are actually taking place around estate administration taxation as proposed by the Liberals.

We of course have serious concerns about Bill 136. We also have immense concerns about how the changes to the estate administration tax came into play in Ontario. We do not support the Liberals' regulatory changes that came into force in January 2015 with little warning, and it's disappointing to know that this government has introduced tight deadlines within which an individual must file a detailed description of the deceased's assets, and sanctions for failure to comply with these regulations. Those sanctions could include jail time, Mr. Speaker, if you can imagine that. They have only managed to create a more onerous and expensive estate administration process and for no good reason at all.

We do, however, believe that the government's new tight deadlines were introduced under the radar. There was a regulatory change as of January this past year, with little warning, that has only managed to make the process more expensive and somewhat painful. The 90-day window to file a detailed description of the deceased's assets and the sanctions for failure to comply with this tight timeline have only made what is a very challenging experience more challenging.

I reference the fact that we have lost both of our in-laws this year—this is not uncommon. My in-laws, Walter and Shirley Fife, were married for 60 years. My father-in-law passed away during the election, and within the year, Shirley Fife passed away as well. There are nine children, and this was one house for 60 years. So they had 60 years of stuff in that house. It has been a process. It's really interesting, because the stuff means nothing once your loved one passes away; it really doesn't.

Walter Fife was very fond of saying, "You can't take it with you so share it with the people in your life." And in good, Scottish spirit, he also didn't believe in throwing too much out. He was a big recycler—the new-age, or old-age, recycler—so as a family, we have been going through this house just outside of Peterborough. It was a life well lived, but the process of grieving and going through this process of listing this estate and these material goods has only added an entirely new layer of grief, I have to tell you. There is so much at play.

The confusion about what our legal liabilities—of course, of those nine children one of them has to be the

executor; in this instance, it's the baby because that's the most responsible one. But the process has been—quite honestly, the liability that the executor has going through this situation will dissuade other people from being executors, because there is liability and risk. Now the Liberals have introduced the threat of jail time if compliance is not followed through on.

When the member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex brought up his issue, I thanked him for raising it, because we need to be talking about this estate administration tax. I didn't agree with the caps they set; I didn't agree with the process. But I did thank them for raising this. We see the commercials on TV that the government has put out right now on the ORPP and on the new sex education curriculum; you haven't seen anything right now on significant changes to the estate administration tax. All of us throughout the summer and into the fall have been hearing from constituents. I must say, there's a great deal of concern and confusion.

1410

It is unfortunate, though, that some of that confusion, I think, and I'm not sure if the member from Simcoe really realizes this—they're sort of playing on this one fear about the changes that had come in. So, aside from the 90-day window, there is this misunderstanding and a little bit of fearful playfulness, if you will, that somehow assets held before death but not at the time of death—such as insurance payable to a named beneficiary, assets where there is joint ownership with right of survivorship, and real estate outside of Ontario—are not included in the value of the estate. The insurance is not part of this, Mr. Speaker. I think that prior to the changes it was permissible to provide a total valuation of the deceased's estate. The process must be simplified. It must be simplified. The 90-day deadline is really quite something.

The member from Simcoe referenced the issue of how we got here. It is ironic in many respects that the Conservative party continue to put forward private member bills on this issue. To go back in time, back to 1998, after the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that disguising probate fees as a tax was unconstitutional in Ontario, then-Premier Mike Harris had the opportunity to get rid of the probate fees, just get rid of them if they had an issue with them. He, however, decided to reintroduce it as an estate administration tax in order to continue to collect the revenue. This is part of our history as a province.

It is true, though, at the time, Bob Rae—you know Bob Rae, who now identifies as a Liberal—did increase the rates, Mr. Speaker; Bob Rae did. What can I say? He just keeps on giving and giving. Here we are. That's the history of the estate administration tax, how it came to be in this place.

This bill will seek to abolish it and it will cap the fees for filing an estate certification with the court. They are proposing a couple of amendments, which we can't support. For us, this bill doesn't get to the heart of the issue of how the Liberals have moved forward with the estate administration tax, how the timelines came into

play, why there was no consultation and the sanctions that are attached to the administration part of that tax.

What we've heard mostly from our constituents is that there was so little notice. Until you find yourself in this untenable position of dealing, usually in a crisis and, as I said, going through the grieving process—you don't fully realize how onerous this situation is. As I mentioned, we are open to looking at the taxation rates, but this bill, Bill 136, does not get to the heart of the issue that people are feeling in the province of Ontario. Just abolishing the estate administration tax is not the answer.

I do want to make sure that people fully understand this, that the government's new, tight deadlines, which came into effect just this January—this 90-day window to file a detailed description of the deceased's assets, and sanctions for failure to comply with this tight timeline—have only made this process more difficult. Bill 136 does not address the key issue of this. You must be hearing it. The concerns of constituents don't stop halfway through this Legislature.

I just want to leave the Legislature with this one thing. According to a 2012 Ontario Common Front report, Ontario experienced the largest change in income inequality of any province in Canada over the last generation. This is from 1981 to 2010. The fact is that if you were born after 1981, you have lived every year of your life in a society that is becoming more unequal. Progressive tax measures are therefore important. As Walter Fife used to say—he didn't mind paying taxes, as long as those taxes were put to good use, like education, like health care, and as long as they weren't wasted.

I must say, there's a fair amount of waste. As I try to follow the money in this place, it becomes more and more convoluted. Even when financial accountability officers report economic modelling to this government, this government refuses to acknowledge that that independent fiscal analysis has some credibility and is valuable to them and, more importantly, to the people of this province.

I thank the member from Simcoe North for raising the issue of the estate administration tax, but New Democrats cannot support a taxation change that is not progressive.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's a great privilege, this afternoon, to provide a few remarks on Bill 136, which has been brought forward by my good friend the Leader of the Opposition and the member from Simcoe North.

I was quite delighted to hear the remarks of the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, talking about the Fife family. I believe she knows that the lineage of the Fife family, of course, goes right back to David Fife, who was the discoverer, in Peterborough county, of Red Fife wheat, which was a great variety of wheat that would withstand rust. It was grown exclusively throughout Ontario. During the Laurier days, it was transported to western Canada, and Red Fife wheat became the staple of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. The member from Kitchener–Waterloo should take great pride in the legacy of her family, the Fife family.

It's very interesting today. I'm always interested when we want to roll back the hands of time. I believe that this original piece of taxation was brought in in 1998, when Michael Harris was the Premier of the province of Ontario. Normally, I'm a person who wouldn't want to undo the great legacy of one Michael Harris, the wonderful member from Nipissing.

I do want to talk about a little history here. Back in 1963, when Lester Pearson, who spent some time in the great riding of Peterborough as a student, became Prime Minister of Canada, part of his platform was to establish the Carter commission on progressive taxation. The late Walter Gordon, of course, was his finance minister. The first Gordon budget was to initiate the Carter commission, the Royal Commission on Taxation, because there generally was a feeling that taxation in Canada lacked a number of progressive measures.

For those members in the House, they should take the time to go to the legislative library—the volumes of the Carter commission are there; they make great nighttime reading—to look at the exact details of taxation in Canada.

When Mr. Carter started his commission, he started it from this premise: He said, "A buck is a buck is a buck," and that things should be taxed from that principle—so every buck that's earned through income and other ways should be taxed in a very progressive measure.

Mr. Speaker, you wouldn't expect me to say that Mr. Harris may have brought in something very progressive in 1998. I certainly don't know his thinking back in 1998, because I never got the privilege to be here until 2003. But I know you were a Harris insider in those days, as a member of the caucus, so I know you know exactly what Mr. Harris was thinking back in 1998. You and Gary Carr and others were there together, contributing input during that government, I'm sure. I don't want to quote you, but I'm quite sure you and Mr. Carr and others were saying to the Premier of the day, "This is a pretty progressive idea that we want to bring forward in 1998," in terms of putting a level of taxation on estates in Ontario to reflect what has always been the principle, whether it's taxation across Canada or taxation at the provincial level, going back to the Carter commission that "a buck is a buck is a buck"; and that should always be the principle of applying taxes not only in the provinces but indeed throughout Canada.

So I look at this bill today. The member from Kitchener–Waterloo raised some very good points. I do have my speaking points now; I better get back to the speaking points to keep the people in the whips' office happy. I've got to get back to the speaking points.

During the development of the regulation, consultations were held with the Ontario Bar Association, the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee of the province of Ontario, and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners. This regulation was modified in response to some feedback that was received.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're a very fair individual. You would know that if you were consulting on such an issue

in terms of estate taxation, you would consult with the Ontario Bar Association, representing all the very distinguished lawyers in the province of Ontario. You would also consult with the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee and you would also consult with the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners. That is very important.

I can see them now, the good folks in Peterborough riding; they're clicking on their Cogeco clicker, station 95, to watch what is going on here this afternoon. So I want to say hello to all those good folks from Peterborough who have just tuned in.

We want to make sure that the new regulation in place is equally applied across the board, that people know about that. To be fair, I have received emails on this particular issue and I wanted to reply back that we're not introducing a new tax to the province of Ontario. And why would I ever want to undo the great legacy of one Michael Harris?

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

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I'm very pleased today to speak to the Estate Administration Tax Abolition Act. I'm very proud of our PC leader for bringing forward this bill so that we can give families, farmers and small businesses some tax relief in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, the death tax is a cruel tax inflicted on families at a terrible time and, frankly, the people of Ontario absolutely despise this tax. I know that's a message that our leader heard clearly as soon as he got here, and I congratulate him on bringing forward this decisive bill to finally deal with this issue.

As this Legislature knows, it's an issue that I've been speaking about now for a while. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who signed petitions and came forward with stories of how the death tax in Ontario affected them; and also a thank you to Barry Corbin, who has been working very hard on this issue to bring the light how unfair and punishing this tax actually is.

The fact is this, Mr. Speaker: Taxes in Ontario are too high. This government isn't spending the people's money well, but they think that if they can just get their hands on more of it, then their problems will simply go away. So they bring new taxes and fees or create new expensive audit and verification bureaucracies to make sure every penny of tax is collected, but the truth is this: This strategy is only making things worse in Ontario.

When taxes are lower, economic growth follows. History has shown us that tax cuts create jobs. Letting people keep more money of their own money gives them more choice. It opens up new possibilities. It allows them to invest in their education, start a small business, buy a home or give their children better opportunities. This money flows back into the economy and lifts other people higher up the economic ladder. Lowering taxes also keeps governments accountable by compelling them to spend smarter and actually set priorities. That's exactly what we need in the province of Ontario.

The death tax is a perfect example of overtaxing. It's a tax on assets that the government has already collected a

lifetime of taxes on. Right now, Ontario takes a bigger cut of its people's estates than any other province in Canada. Because of changes made by this Liberal government, grieving families trying to settle the affairs of their loved ones have new, harsh deadlines and the threat of jail time and steep fines hanging over their heads. This crackdown is extremely onerous for grieving families, and it's the wrong direction to be heading in.

This is a deeply unfair tax. The Liberals like to pretend that getting rid of the death tax only helps the rich, but the truth is just the opposite. This is a tax that applies to anyone who has assets worth over \$1,000. The wealthy, who can afford good legal advice, are easily able to avoid this tax. This economic and emotional burden falls disproportionately on the shoulders of the middle- and lower-income classes. It amounts to a tax on a lifetime of hard work and sacrifice. It punishes people who have worked hard for their entire lives to build something from the ground up, whether it's a home, a small business or the family farm.

A person's assets should be kept in the family for their children and their spouse, or for charitable causes that they hold dear. They should not be taxed and then re-taxed by a government that, quite frankly, squanders its revenue.

I hope everyone in the Legislature today will join our PC caucus in supporting our leader's bill, this important piece of legislation to end estate taxes in the province of Ontario once and for all.

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

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I appreciate the opportunity to rise today in debate, not only to abolish the estate tax, but to congratulate our new leader, Patrick Brown, on his first private member's bill in this assembly, and pick up where my colleague, Mr. McNaughton, the previous speaker, left off, in terms of fighting for fairness for Ontario seniors, small business owners, farmers and families.

Earlier, the member from Peterborough, who is the Minister of Agriculture, tried to blame this tax on a previous Conservative government from the last millennium. That happens from time to time in this place; this is a Liberal government that doesn't want to take any responsibility for its actions.

The government of Mike Harris was forced to bring in a piece of legislation to comply with a previous tax that was brought in by an even earlier government led by Bob Rae, so it became, effectively, an administrative tax. But let me say this, in terms of the estate tax: The first time we actually started talking about a death tax in this chamber was when the Liberal government rushed through, in unprecedented form, the HST. Funeral directors and others were going to have to bring in a new tax that was going to burden those whose family members were recently deceased or were going to be.

Throughout this period of time, we've seen a Liberal government that has not only brought in the single largest sales tax increase in Ontario's history with the HST, but

they brought in the single largest income tax increase in Ontario's history, as well, with a health tax. Now that we have those two taxes, the Liberal government is talking about a land transfer tax, a fuel tax; they're talking about a payroll tax. This is a government that can't get enough taxes. They actually snuck in an eco tax on Canada Day a few years ago. But none is more unfair and insensitive as an increase of the estate tax.

What I found compelling when my leader spoke earlier today were the comparisons with other jurisdictions. In my time, I'd just like to point out that in Ontario an estate valued at \$500,000 would have to pay \$7,250 in tax. If you're in Quebec, that number is \$65. Now, I don't have to tell members here that I come from the nation's capital. Across the river is Quebec, and there is a massive inequity if you're from the city of Ottawa, where I live, compared to the city of Gatineau, which is just across the water.

With that in mind, I encourage all colleagues in this assembly to support PC leader Patrick Brown's bill, and I congratulate him for taking such a strong stand.

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

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: It gives me pleasure to rise today on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge and add some comments to the debate about the Leader of the Opposition's first private member's bill. It's interesting to note that we have been hearing about some of the history today in debate about the member from Kitchener-Waterloo's family and about the Red Fife wheat.

1430

What is interesting about this bill is that it seeks to scrap legislation brought in 1998 by the party that the Leader of the Opposition now leads. So I just wanted to bring up that historical point of view. Normally, I wouldn't want to stand in the way of someone who wants to undo the Mike Harris legacy. But one thing that really surprises me about this is that it's the Leader of the Opposition's first bill, and I'm wondering why he chose to make this issue his very top priority. I would have thought that there were other important bills that he may have wanted to make his top priority and leave this down on the list.

We've got a lot of issues on the table right now. A lot of people are looking for projects for infrastructure. A lot of people are looking for support on other important pieces of legislation today, so that was just a comment that I wanted to make. I know that we're also looking for pension security, and tackling climate change, so I'm just a little surprised that this would be his top priority.

Ultimately, I know that the constituents in my riding are a little worried that rich heirs and heiresses are the ones who pay most of this tax, but I know that the constituents in my riding are also wanting to make sure that those who are the wealthiest among us don't pay the least amount of tax. They are hoping that they can pay their fair share, and I think that is very important.

Leaving aside some of the discussion of priorities, what I find most telling about the private member's bill

that the Leader of the Opposition has brought forward is that he is gung-ho to forgo the over \$150 million in revenues that is generated by this measure, but he has absolutely no idea how he would offset that revenue loss. This is real money. This is a program whose funds are making a real difference in Ontarians' lives.

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

Mr. Victor Fedeli: I'm pleased to share my voice on this important private member's bill as well. As our leader, Patrick Brown, said, life under the Liberals has become more and more unaffordable. He detailed how hard-working Ontarians pay a wide variety of taxes throughout their lives. This bill will provide some relief by eliminating the death tax on their assets when they die. I use the expression, Speaker, that in Ontario, we're literally taxed to death.

Mr. John Yakabuski: And after.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: And now we're taxed after death. Thank you for stepping on my line. I appreciate that.

Mr. John Yakabuski: You're welcome.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Our leader, Patrick Brown, has chosen this topic because we believe that lower taxes are what Ontarians need; that lower taxes create jobs. You heard the deputy leader of the Liberal Party a week ago say to us in the W5 television show, "We're out of money," so we know why the Liberals want to continue to tax us, whether it's property taxes, this new land transfer tax—all of these taxes that our leader shared earlier.

It's all about the fact that, quite frankly, through the scandals—the gas plants scandal, the Ornge scandal, the smart meter scandal—all of those things cost money. And it's not just chump change; these are all billion-dollar scandals. They are out of money. They need every penny they can get. They shake the couches looking for nickels and dimes, and now they're shaking the coffins as well.

On January 1 of this year, changes to Ontario's estate administration tax quietly came into force. I know the other critic has mentioned that as well. It really was done quietly. It was done by regulation. It was done surreptitiously, hoping nobody would notice it. We have noticed it. For about a one-month period, it was the most popular email that I was receiving in my office—people asking about how dare they do this. The "this" that we're talking about is not a tax, as some have erroneously even suggested, that had anything to do with a Conservative government in the past. The Conservative government specifically changed the name of it. The dollar value never changed under the Conservative government, and I defy anybody to look at the Hansard and prove any differently than that.

Quite frankly, I get tired of that. I get tired of digging up material from 20 years ago and trying to blame everything on it. They're out of money. They want to tax you through death now. This is the fact. Our leader, Patrick Brown, has brought a proposal to the table, which I hope receives due consideration today, that says, "Enough is

enough.” We’ll charge a modest amount to cover the costs, and no more, but not this thousands of dollars that families are going to have to put together to pay this death tax. And they’d better darn well put it together fast because, as you also heard from the NDP critic, you can go to jail if you don’t—just what a family needs at a time of grieving.

Earlier today, we proved to this Legislature, through newly revealed documents, yet another tax, this chromite tax. It’s all about taxing minerals. This government cannot find enough money to satisfy their hunger to spend. It’s tax and spend, tax and spend, and now they’re taxing you after you’re dead. We encourage everybody in this Legislature to stand up for people in Ontario today and support our leader Patrick Brown’s bill.

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

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Apparently we’re debating who is responsible for this tax. This is a joke, Mr. Speaker, because we know they introduced it, but let’s just go with the Tory fiction line. So they renamed it; they were in power for a decade and this was such a crushing issue, the only thing they could do was rename it.

We built an amazing province in Ontario. This country is the most remarkable place—

Interjections.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: To the selfish partisan folks over there, when I said “we,” I meant that all of us, for generations in Ontario, have built an amazing province.

We raised a lot of taxes in the 1930s and 1940s. The reason that we did is that we had to fight a world war. Tax levels, from 1939 through the 1940s, went way up. Income tax came in. We fought a war. Because people here built hospitals, paid for a war machine, built almost all of our subways, all of our highways, in the vast majority—about 80% of our infrastructure was built in this country on the repurposing of taxes that were raised to fight the Second World War. If you go through most of our public buildings and assets, you will see they were built in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

From the 1970s on, we took infrastructure budgets that were the equivalent in today’s dollars of about \$15 billion and dropped them to \$1 billion. The previous government downloaded health and social services onto mayors and councillors. I know, because I was the mayor of Winnipeg at the time, and we had just done the gas tax deal with the federal government, which amounted to nada in Ontario, because my friend Bob Chiarelli and my friend Mel Lastman were burying the multi-hundred-million-dollar budgets—one download to the city of Toronto health and social services would have been a 10% tax increase. They eviscerated that.

I did my mom’s taxes. I do them; she’s 87 years old. She keeps my father’s taxes from the 1960s, just when health care came on. You should go back and do that. Go back and look at that. Do you know we make a good living in this country? We don’t need to raise taxes anymore; we really don’t. But my generation inherited this

country from people who went and died by the millions in Europe for our freedom, and people at home raised taxes in force.

The Tories today constantly lose elections because they think everybody in this country is a taxpayer. They have forgotten that they were citizens, soldiers, doctors and nurses, and the hospitals that your mother and your grandmother paid for are the reason you’ve got good health care.

1440

As my baba used to say to me, Mr. Speaker, “Living in this country, where you have courts, a democracy and a fair tax system is what we came here for: civil liberties and freedom.”

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask the member from Nipissing and the Minister of the Environment to please come to order.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I would ask the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to please come to order.

The member for Simcoe North has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Patrick Brown: I appreciate all the debate on this bill.

First of all, I’d like to ask all members in the House: Don’t simply vote based on what your whip may have said or what political party this idea comes from. Think about your constituents. Think about fairness. There is no monopoly on a good idea, and it is a good idea to make sure we don’t tax people at their death. It is a good idea to make sure Ontario doesn’t have the highest death taxes in Canada.

The member for Toronto Centre was talking about how taxes are good, and I appreciated his passionate speech for why we need more taxes, but I know he comes from Manitoba. If you live in Manitoba, you actually have affordable death taxes. What I don’t think is appropriate is that it’s night and day, the difference on taxation at death in Ontario as compared to every other province.

When I launched this private member’s bill, I had a website, stopdeathtax.ca to build public support. I can tell you, thousands and thousands of people signed at stopdeathtax.ca, because they’re frustrated. Every MPP’s inbox is filled with complaints about this death tax. So this is an opportunity to do the right thing.

Despite Liberal philosophy that taxes are the solution to all problems, there actually is a belief that is growing in support across this province that we can have tax relief. It’s a concept that’s difficult to understand for the government benches, but people aspire to tax relief. Given hydro rates that are the highest in the province, given their support for this new pension tax, given their history of 12 years of new taxes every single year, maybe just once you can do the right thing and provide tax relief for people when they die. As the MPP from Nipissing so ably put it, don’t shake down people in their coffins.

I appreciate your consideration.

MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL
SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT
(PAROLE), 2015

LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LE MINISTÈRE
DES SERVICES CORRECTIONNELS
(LIBÉRATIONS CONDITIONNELLES)

Mr. Yakabuski moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 130, An Act to amend the Ministry of Correctional Services Act in respect of parole / Projet de loi 130, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le ministère des Services correctionnels en ce qui concerne les libérations conditionnelles.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order number 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I wish that I wasn't here today under these circumstances. I would rather not be doing this. I am only doing it as a result of a tragedy that took place, mostly in my riding, on September 22.

September 22 started out as a beautiful day. We were all down—or up, whatever you want to say—at the International Plowing Match in Finch when the news broke that a body had been discovered in my riding: A woman had been murdered.

As the day went on, the news became much, much worse. As the final news was in, we were made aware that three women had been murdered in my riding on that terrible day, September 22.

We found out that Anastasia Kuzyk, aged 36; Nathalie Warmerdam, aged 48; and Carol Culleton, aged 66, were all murdered, allegedly, by Basil Borutski. The news filled the air over the next several days, as did people's feelings about how this could happen. How could this happen here in Renfrew county, where we believe sometimes that we're immune to these kinds of events?

What we learned afterwards is what makes us question, perhaps, how well the system works. That is what in many ways has precipitated my bringing forth this private member's bill today. What we learned in the aftermath was that Mr. Borutski had a history of violence, not only with at least two of these women, but with his ex-wife, as well. He had been in brushes with the law due to domestic violence since the mid-1990s; and on more than one occasion, as part of those proceedings through the court system, some of those charges were bargained away as if they didn't really happen; they were stayed, so the convictions were of a less egregious nature than they might have otherwise been, if the full record had been clearly delineated.

That Friday night, my wife and I attended a vigil in Wilno, which would be closest to the home of Anastasia Kuzyk, who was also a real estate agent, like my wife. They'd had dealings on a periodic basis over the years, as normally you would have, one real estate agent to another. Of course, Anastasia was tremendously well respected in that field. She also worked part-time as a

server at the Wilno Tavern, and was extremely popular there as well.

Right across the road from the Wilno tavern, at Wilno Heritage Park, was where the vigil was held. I would say, Speaker, that there were about 700 people in attendance that night. It was a wonderfully done ceremony, tremendously emotional, and not done with an emotion of revenge or anything else; it was about supporting the families of the victims, but also each one of us examining ourselves as to what we could do to make victims of domestic violence safer in their own homes at a time when the perpetrator would be released.

That is something that came back to me over and over again in the riding as I would speak to people over the next several weekends. We were sitting, so when I would go home on the weekends, I would hear about that an awful lot. There was a tremendous amount of news coverage—not only in the local papers, but in major papers like the Ottawa Citizen and the Ottawa Sun, as well—because this was a shocking event for people in my riding.

What I decided I could do—and I don't pretend for a minute, Speaker, to be able to solve this problem, or to fix the problem, or to prevent things from ever happening again, but I did ask myself: What would be a reasonable first step? I want to be very clear: This is not an indictment of the government. This is not an indictment of members of the cabinet. It is simply an opportunity for us to all ask ourselves if there is something we could do that would actually make this province safer for victims of domestic violence.

I'm not going to go into the long history of Mr. Borutski too greatly, because I don't have that much time, but as I said, it was extensive. That in itself goes back to his ex-wife; the first time there were breaches was in the mid-1990s. That history continued until, obviously, September 22. But he had recently been released. And here is the nub of the matter: When he was released, Mr. Borutski refused to sign the parole order that is presented to every person who is eligible for parole, that they're expected to sign. He refused to sign it. Critics will say that the terms of the order are valid whether the parolee signs it or not. But like a lot of people, I believe that if you accept that you have wronged, if you believe that you have paid part of that debt but that you accept that you breached the law and you injured someone else and did harm to them, then you would have no problem signing those papers. That is part of the rehabilitation process, and maybe the first part other than the incarceration. When he chose not to sign those, that in itself was a statement that he did not feel the remorse and did not feel the guilt he should have felt. That should have raised a red flag. I know critics will say, "That's not a big deal." Well, maybe it should be a big deal. That's part of what this bill is all about: If a person eligible for parole, upon their release, will not sign those papers, they will not be released. As I said, this is not a cure-all, but it is a step in the right direction.

1450

There's one other component to this bill, and I'll get to that.

The other issue—and I know some of my colleagues and hopefully people in the other parties here today will speak to it as well: As I say, there are many, many facets about how we can make victims of domestic violence or sexual domestic violence safer. I'm only going to address some of them today. There are issues that we do need to talk about.

The probation officers in Renfrew county—to our knowledge, there is one. That's insufficient. With the workload they have, they cannot spend enough time monitoring the offenders who should be monitored the most.

I think we need a graduated system where, if someone is released and there's a determination that they are a very, very low risk, they shouldn't see their parole officer very often; but if someone has a record that goes back 20 years, then they should be seeing that parole officer on a much more frequent basis. If nothing else, it is a statement to that parolee: "We are monitoring you. We are watching you. We are interacting with you. We need feedback from you on how you're reintegrating back into society and how it's affecting you."

A well-trained probation officer can read between the lines and can see in a person's eyes—if they have those personal, face-to-face interactions, they have a better sense of how that person is dealing with the challenges of reintegrating into society. So we need to address that. My bill does not address that. But those are all part of the things that we're hoping that—as a result of this, we as a unit here, as a group, begin to talk, begin to sit down and say, "Are there some things we could do as a government?"

I've had some feedback, as well, that we lack enough proper supports to support women who are in abusive relationships, to allow them to exit them with a feeling of comfort and safety, knowing there's a place to go before it goes too far. I'm not here to judge. I'm not the jury. But in the case of Mr. Borutski's first wife, Mary Ann, if she had had the proper supports or felt she did have the supports earlier, we may have seen this pattern from Mr. Borutski a lot earlier and maybe more could have been done about it.

I can't speak to the past. I'm only talking about what we can do in the future.

The other component of my bill is that upon a person's release, if they've been deemed a violent offender in a case of domestic violence or sexual domestic violence, unless the board feels that this person is no longer a risk, does not pose a risk to their victim—unless they make that determination, then that person will be subject to electronic surveillance as well. I do not prescribe in the bill the details of that. That's not my job. We have bureaucrats that can do that. We leave that to the government to do as regulation for the length of time, and that's where I think all of those things, through regulation and through the parole system, can be determined much

better than I can do it by defining it in a piece of legislation.

But these two steps, I believe, will help to ensure that we will not see, hopefully, a repeat of the deaths of Anastasia, Nathalie and Carol. I cannot say that I guarantee that, but what I hope is—if my bill passes today, I'll be very thankful of that, but at the very least, if it encourages this government to act upon its own—I believe they are more capable of acting in a comprehensive way and taking into consideration everything that needs to be considered. They will do a better job than I can of drafting a piece of legislation. I understand that; I accept that. I would be more than happy to support any piece of legislation that accomplishes what we're trying to do here today and makes victims of domestic violence safer upon the release of the perpetrator of that crime.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Miss Monique Taylor: I want to thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for bringing this bill forward. It has been motivated by a concern for the continuing problem of violence against women—a very real problem in our communities—and I'm grateful for the opportunity to speak to this bill.

The bill does two things: It requires an inmate to sign their certificate of parole as a condition of their release, and it provides for the use of electronic monitoring of a person on parole who committed sexual or domestic violence, unless they do not pose a threat to their victim.

I do not want to diminish in any way what the member has brought forward because any opportunity that we have to do something—anything—to tackle the horrendous problems too many women face, we should grasp onto with both hands. Any forum we can use to talk about this should be exploited.

I know that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke appreciates that violence against women is a complicated, ongoing problem in our society that requires much more thought, debate, consultation and action than can be accomplished in a single private member's bill, just as the member has actually said. Violence against women and girls is seen in all continents, countries and cultures. It happens at every age and in every income group. No group is safe, and the prevalence of it requires constant inquiry, education and action.

Half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence. Every six days, a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner. Each year, even though 80% of incidents go unreported to police, there are still over 40,000 arrests made relating to domestic violence.

I'm sure, as MPPs, we are all aware of the pressures on shelters for abused women in our communities due to underfunding. Just this week, I attended a fundraiser for the Good Shepherd's Mary's Place, one of Hamilton's shelters. I heard over and over about the number of women who had to be turned away due to the lack of beds. That's a problem we hear from every corner of this province.

As I noted earlier, women in all societal groups are victims of violence at alarming rates, but there are some groups who are at particular risk; for example, aboriginal women in Canada are five times more likely than other women of the same age to die as a result of violence.

The majority of voters in this last recent federal election voted for parties that supported an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women. I hope we can count on our provincial government to make sure that their friends in Ottawa fulfill that commitment to do that. Meanwhile, in Hamilton, Honouring the Circle, operated by the Native Women's Centre to offer transitional housing and support based on aboriginal principles, has closed its doors due to the lack of funding.

As I said at the start, I welcome the opportunity to speak about this and highlight the issue whenever possible.

For the bill itself, I would like to see it at committee for more input and possible amendments. I see no issues with a requirement that an inmate sign their certificate of parole, but I would like to hear more discussion about how best to monitor people on parole who pose a threat. While electronic monitoring is a useful tool, parole officers have, for some time, called for more resources for front-line and on-site inspections.

1500

So this bill is supportable, as far as it goes. Again, I would like to thank the member for bringing it forward. But this government really needs to take some serious steps. We need to increase our commitment to prevention, we must adequately fund education and counselling programs that ensure that men are held accountable for changing their behaviour, and we need to ensure that the availability of support services for women experiencing violence are there for them.

I appreciate the time to add my two cents to this bill and congratulate the member for it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I appreciate the opportunity to rise today and speak about Bill 130, An Act to amend the Ministry of Correctional Services Act in respect of parole. In doing so, I want to thank the MPP for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for tabling his private member's bill on this very important issue. I share his concerns and support the general intent of Bill 130.

On a personal note, as a former resident of the Ottawa Valley, my late husband was an OPP officer in the Killaloe detachment. Having spoken to some of them, subsequent to September 22, on that terrible day, I send my condolences not only to the family and friends of the family members but also to the officers who were involved. I know, as the member opposite understands, how difficult this has been for them too. They live in the Valley. They know and protect the people who live there. They are neighbours. So my thoughts are with them as well.

One of the most important priorities of our government is the safety and security of Ontarians. That is why

we appreciate the member opposite making these suggestions, and we're always interested in discussing ways in which we can build stronger and safer communities across Ontario. As members of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, as a matter of fact, members on all sides of this House are doing exactly that.

Because everyone has the right to feel safe in their homes and communities, we take the supervision of offenders in the community very seriously. When it comes to supervising offenders in the community, our priority is to assure that we have the appropriate level of supervision to support rehabilitation and, above all, to ensure that our communities are safe. That is why our probation and parole officers, who are among the finest in the world, work hard every day to supervise offenders and hold them accountable.

Indeed, the safety of our communities is paramount when making supervision decisions. Over the past couple of years, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has made important progress on a number of areas related to community corrections. This includes things like focusing offender programs and resources on medium- to high-risk offenders and increasing training for probation and parole officers, with a specific focus on domestic violence and sexual offender supervision. But we recognize that there is always more progress that can be made, in terms of keeping our communities safe.

If you'll permit me, two important points in closing: Specifically related to the bill before us today, to address the members' proposals to make greater use of electronic supervision technology, the Ontario Parole Board already possesses the discretion to order electronic monitoring as a condition of parole, based on an assessment of the offender's risk profile. And importantly, there already exists a legislative requirement that an inmate can be required to sign a certificate of parole unless there are compelling or exceptional circumstances, such as a disability, that can prevent their signing.

In closing, more work needs to be done to better understand how Bill 130 can improve the safety and security of our community. Still, I welcome the opportunity to debate it. I thank the member again for raising this important issue, and I look forward to the continued debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I'm pleased to rise in the House today to add my support to Bill 130, brought forward by my colleague the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. We all saw how much he cares about this issue during his opening remarks. This is an incredibly emotional issue for all of his constituents, for all of us here in Legislature and throughout the province.

As a husband, a father and a grandfather, the tragic news out of Wilno struck me deeply. I cannot begin to imagine what the families and friends of those victims are actually going through. The entire ordeal has raised many questions about whether gaps in the system contributed to this tragedy, if it could have been avoided,

and how the justice system could have done a better job to protect these three women. The fact that the suspect in the Wilno murders was known to women's shelters and police, coupled with his long history of domestic violence, has led many to ask why red flags weren't noticed.

Carl Bromwich, chair of the community policing advisory committee for the five townships in Renfrew region, argued that the single probation officer who visits the area weekly is overworked. Additionally, he believes that other services that are aimed at preventing such violence are underfunded. As the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke noted, rehabilitation is the ultimate goal. That is why the province's underfunding of mental health services and understaffing of parole offices is so tragic.

While it may not be possible to completely eradicate domestic violence and other despicable acts, any efforts that can increase the safety of the public should be, in fact, supported. We firmly believe that parolees must demonstrate that they are willing to reintegrate into society after they have served their time. They must agree to follow the law before they're released back into our communities.

As it stands today, inmates can actually be released and granted parole even if he or she has refused to sign their certificate of parole. This was the case for the suspect in the Wilno murders. He refused to sign an order to stay away from and not communicate with one of his victims before he was released from a 19-month sentence for assaulting her. Many Ontarians are, in fact, shocked to learn of this gap in the system. It is simply common sense to require parolees to sign these certificates.

This bill will give peace of mind to victims when their attacker is released on parole. Victims of sexual or domestic violence often serve a sentence much longer than their attackers, and their sense of security can be taken away from them for the rest of their lives. They have a right to feel safe. Electronic monitoring will help give them peace of mind, and that is incredibly important. Additionally, it will help the province determine whether or not parolees are observing the terms of their release.

This bill serves to continue the conversation about how best to protect the public from these extreme acts of violence. This is what the bill serves to do. This issue requires a lot more discussion than one afternoon in the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, but this is certainly a start. This bill will make a difference, and that is worth supporting.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): The member from London West.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It's my pleasure to rise as women's issues critic for the NDP caucus to offer some thoughts on Bill 130, the private member's bill brought forward by the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. First off, I want to commend the member for his obvious concern and his commitment to this issue. I think we all heard the pain that he expressed and his grief at the horrific murders last month of Anastasia Kuzyk, Nathalie Warmerdam and Carol Culleton. These

homicides occurred in his riding and have motivated him to bring this bill forward.

I also want to acknowledge that in May of this year, the member attended the Ottawa meeting of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, and there he, along with the other members of the committee, heard directly from the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County about some of the unique barriers and challenges that face women in small and rural communities. We heard about the geographical remoteness in an area that's as large as PEI that makes violence and abuse more easily hidden. We heard about community norms that make it even more difficult for rural women to come forward and seek help. We heard about lack of access to transportation, fewer opportunities for employment, lack of child care, and high levels of poverty, all of which force women to stay in abusive relationships. Finally, we heard about access to weapons, as well as numerous situations where the judiciary allows the return of weapons to offenders because it is hunting season.

I know that this legislation comes from a good place, and it is attempting to address one of the most pernicious public policy problems plaguing governments worldwide, and that is how to end men's violence against women and keep women safe. Unfortunately, however, it is uncertain whether the provisions set out in Bill 130 could have prevented the murders in Renfrew county. It is also questionable how much impact they will have in ensuring the safety of women and children in the future.

Bill 130 amends the Ministry of Correctional Services Act to allow for the electronic monitoring of sexual violence and domestic violence offenders as a condition of parole when they are considered to pose a safety risk to the victims. It also requires offenders to sign a certificate of parole acknowledging the conditions under which the parole is granted.

1510

The first amendment certainly is consistent with a recommendation that we heard from the Hadley inquest, the inquest that was established to review the domestic homicide of Gillian Hadley. In that recommendation brought forward in the 2002 report of the inquest, it was specified that electronic monitoring technology be used both for parole and also for bail, and that it involve a GPS system to best capture the whereabouts of the offender.

What we know from parole officers is that electronic monitoring in and of itself is not enough. There is also information that needs to be understood and released to parole officers related to the circumstances of the parole.

We also know that there is a need for more resources for front-line, on-site inspections so that parole officers can regularly check in to monitor the whereabouts the parolee. JoAnne Brooks, the director of the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County, has pointed to the fact that Renfrew needs better funding so that probation officers can meet with offenders on a regular, if not daily, basis during their reintegration into the community.

Ms. Brooks also pointed out the difficulty of implementing a monitoring program when you have such a

very large rural area as Renfrew county, which is under-resourced in both policing and in community services.

Earlier this year, we learned that the local OPP domestic violence program is being phased out in Renfrew and other areas of the province, which has raised very real concerns about the impact of this phase-out on coordination across the county and on survivors. There is concern among violence-against-women advocates that this may be part of a larger trend.

I want to read from the 2015 summer newsletter of Building a Bigger Wave, a provincial network of violence against women coordinating committees. They say that at the southwest region table, a discussion took place in light of the Renfrew OPP situation. Disturbingly, a few months ago, a Toronto Ministry of the Attorney General corporate manager who oversaw domestic-violence-related programs said in a meeting with transfer payment agencies that they should prepare themselves for program and funding changes, as domestic violence is no longer the shiny object for this government.

If this is true and there is a decreased political commitment to ending domestic violence, then we are unlikely to see the implementation of evidence-based measures that could actually make a difference. What those measures are are effective systems for threat assessment and risk management.

The 2009 report of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council describes in detail what is necessary to be included in an effective risk management and threat assessment system. These kinds of measures have been recommended in every single Domestic Violence Death Review Committee report since that committee was first established in 2003. About a third of the hundreds of recommendations that have been made by the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee are specific to threat assessment and risk management.

The 2009 report indicates that the initiatives that have been introduced around threat assessment and risk management have been isolated, fragmented and inconsistent. This is a real concern when we're looking at ending violence against women and keeping women safe.

One of the benefits of threat assessment is that it can lead to better risk management. It can assist in developing more realistic safety plans, it can identify appropriate perpetrator treatment programs, and it can help the criminal justice system identify which offenders need closer supervision. Instead of a systematic, coordinated approach to risk management and perpetrator treatment, we have seen from this government a one-size-fits-all intervention model that does not differentiate between high-risk offenders and low- to moderate-risk offenders. It does not provide treatment for men who voluntarily want to change.

Without this coordinated system of threat assessment and risk measurement, the measures set out in Bill 130 will have only minimal impact. I encourage the government to look at the 2009 report and to look at these measures in Bill 130 in terms of that larger context.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): I now recognize the Minister of Children and Youth Services and the minister responsible for women's issues.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: We usually say we're pleased to talk about a bill, and I am, but I guess what I want to do first is thank the member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke for bringing this forward. I really appreciate, too, how he's brought this forward in a very non-partisan way with respect to a very serious issue. I think the more we can talk in this House about domestic violence and sexual violence, the better we are and the better Ontarians we'll be.

I think it's also important to acknowledge that both of my critics on the women's file are here today—thank you for being here—and a number of members from the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment are here. While I know their mandated focus is sexual violence, I also know that they've heard first-hand from many deputants and others about domestic violence. We all know, Speaker, that sexual violence and domestic violence are often intertwined.

I want to use my time to talk a little bit about what has been going on in Ontario with respect to supporting victims of domestic violence, who are usually women, but sometimes they're men as well. Some of those initiatives include programs like the Neighbours, Friends and Families public education campaign, which is reaching out to communities across the province, including francophones, aboriginals, immigrants and refugee communities.

There's also training for more than 34,000 front-line professionals and service providers to recognize signs of domestic violence and to learn how to support victims effectively. The member talked about that in the opening remarks for this bill. I think helping to support victims is a very important piece of this complicated puzzle.

I also want to mention the Employment Training for Abused/At-Risk Women Program, which provides women with specialized supports and services to help increase employability and income earning.

We also have a Language Interpreter Services Program, which helps victims of violence, including human trafficking, who face language barriers or who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to allow them to access services. We're investing over \$9 million in this program over the next three years so that all women, regardless of the language they speak, are able to access supportive services without facing barriers.

I've talked at length in this House about our sexual violence and harassment action plan. We established earlier this year a permanent Roundtable on Violence Against Women. It's not just sexual violence; it's all forms of violence against women. There are many experts on that panel giving us advice on our violence-against-women programming to support the work to combat sexual violence, harassment and domestic violence. This is, of course, very valuable feedback to us and actually informed the legislation that I introduced just last week coming out of the action plan.

A couple of things in terms of support for victims: I want to mention that the sexual violence and harassment action plan, if passed, would amend the Limitations Act and the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act. What is proposed there is the elimination of the limitations period for all sexual assault actions to encourage more survivors of sexual assault to come forward with their cases, regardless of how long it's been since that incident occurred.

We're also proposing changes to the Compensation for Victims of Crime Act to eliminate the current two-year limitation period for victims of sexual or domestic violence to be able to apply for compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

These are very important changes, because we know that, sometimes, survivors don't feel comfortable coming forward about assaults immediately, so allowing more time, I believe, is the right thing to do. If passed, that will allow civil processes to move forward quickly.

I would say that this is a very important conversation that we're having here today. We're having important conversations at the all-party select committee looking at sexual violence and harassment—and, I would suggest, domestic violence.

1520

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is doing something very important here, bringing this discussion forward. I don't know if he knows that I am also responsible for youth justice in this province. As the Minister of Children and Youth Services, all the youth justice facilities fall under my ministry, as well. In fact, that probably takes up about half of my budget. So I'm looking at the bill he's bringing forward and what else we can do, not just on the correctional ministry side, but on the youth justice side. We obviously want young people who are incarcerated to have productive lives when they come out of the system, and to make sure that they get the right kind of supports and become responsible adults as they move through the system.

Again, I thank the member for bringing this very important PMB forward, and I look forward to the continuing discussion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke in support of his private member's bill. There's little doubt that there is not an easy fix for this issue. We all have terrible stories that come out of our own ridings, our own communities. I really applaud the member because he has taken a terribly tragic event and he's trying to bring forward a very detailed, specific idea that we can all embrace. So I give him a lot of credit for that. We've talked a lot in this Legislature about electronic monitoring, and there are always the "yes-buts" that come with it: "Yes, but the cause." "Yes, but how do we ensure, depending on where people move throughout the province?" The fact is that he has brought it forward and said, "Let's study it. Let's get this idea on

the table so that we can look at how to make lives better, primarily for women who are being targeted, abused and, ultimately, in this case, tragically killed by individuals who feel they have some sort of power over them."

There are two very specific ideas that he has brought forward. The electronic monitoring: In this day and age of digitalizing and opportunities—I think we can do a better job. The other is signing the certificate of parole. When news came out that to be eligible for parole, you did not have to sign off on the statements of what you would maintain under your parole; when it came forward that you in fact did not have to sign that certificate, I was shocked and appalled, like many people I spoke to in my community.

When you put your name to a document, you are in effect saying, "I understand my roles and responsibilities, and I will adhere to it." The mere fact that this individual did not sign his parole certificate—none of us were in the room, but some of the anecdotal information was that he was quite agitated when that parole certificate was put in front of him and made it quite clear that he had no intention of signing it. I think the fact that we didn't know, as individual Ontario residents, that you don't have to sign it in order to get to the other side of the gate, so to speak, speaks to the transparency that we could do a better job of.

I just want to say that these are two very basic, very easy fixes. We're not going to fix the world with this amendment. It's not going to change the world, but it will be an acknowledgement that we understand that we can do better. I can't imagine that there is anyone in this chamber who doesn't believe that we can't do a better job in the protection of vulnerable citizens, particularly ones who are being targeted by former spouses or individuals they had relationships with.

Again, I just want to congratulate you. Well done, and really very easily understandable suggestions. The closer we get to December 6 and the national day of remembrance, I think this is an opportunity where we can actually bring forward and say that as legislators, as MPPs, we're not just going to those ceremonies and taking part in the remembrance; we're participating in how to make it better. So, kudos to you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: I appreciate the opportunity to rise, on behalf of the constituents in Cambridge, to add a few comments to today's debate on Bill 130, An Act to amend the Ministry of Correctional Services Act in respect of parole.

Speaker, before I get started, I really wanted to express my condolences to the family, friends and communities where the terrible events took place. It's important to note that I'm unable to speak about any specific incidents or cases, and my remarks should not be taken as such.

I know that we on this side of the House, and indeed all of us in the House, feel that one of the most important priorities of our government is the safety and security of

every Ontarian. I for one, and I know many in this House, welcome the member's suggestions. I thank the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for his suggestions and the bill he has brought forward today.

We also recognize that there is more that we can be doing, more progress that can be made to keep our communities safe. That's why our Premier has championed a sexual violence and harassment action plan. As you well know, this is a package of initiatives to raise awareness of sexual violence and harassment; enhance prevention initiatives to combat sexual discrimination, harassment and violence; and strengthen services and supports for victims.

In fact, we in this House who are sitting as members of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment are working very hard right now on our final report writing. We're hoping to deliver that report to add some more recommendations on this very important subject before the end of this legislative sitting.

I did want to point out that there already exists a legislated requirement that an inmate be required to sign the certificate of parole unless there are compelling or exceptional circumstances, such as a disability, that could prevent their signing. Indeed, it's also really important—and I really underscore this point—to note that both probation orders and parole conditions are enforceable, regardless of whether they've been signed or not. I want to repeat that: It's important to note that both probation orders and parole conditions are enforceable, regardless of whether they've been signed or not.

But I also agree that more needs to be done to better understand how this bill can improve the safety and security of our communities. I just want to close by saying that I support this bill moving forward, getting it into committee and trying to ensure that all Ontarians are safe in our communities.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate? The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You did a fine job on that.

I am happy to rise in the House today to speak to Bill 130, brought forward by my colleague the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. He made a very emotional presentation on the tragedy that happened in his riding and his actions, being this bill, toward hopefully being taken in by the government and changes made to protect any vulnerable women, not just in his riding but of course across the province of Ontario.

I've spoken many times in the Legislature on this specific tragedy that happened in Renfrew county, and I've actually questioned the government and made recommendations on some changes that we think need to happen to protect victims of domestic and sexual violence. This bill does make some more recommendations that we'd like to see brought in to protect the victims, and hopefully survivors, of some of the abuse that does go on out there.

Ensuring that offenders sign their parole certifications and enhanced monitoring of offenders will protect the most vulnerable among us. In cases of sexual violence or domestic violence where the victims are often members of the most vulnerable groups of people, it is necessary that the victims feel safe in their own communities. I often say that no one should fear staying in their own homes. That's a terrible way to live.

1530

In rural ridings, we are especially vulnerable because of the geographic distance of not only the homes around us, but police forces and the time of reaction to such instances.

The case of Mr. Borutski I have spoken to many times in the Legislature—and the tragedies of the women. Unfortunately, he's not the only case that reveals the need for closer monitoring of offenders in incidences such as what occurred. In 1996, we had Arlene May's incident, where the offender had a history of criminal convictions that ranged from breach of probation to weapons offence. It was proved that Mr. Iles was a dangerous man. He was released on condition that he leave the jurisdiction within which the victim, Arlene, was residing at that time. Yet the coordinated services didn't work—record-sharing between police, lack of monitoring. He travelled across the jurisdictions freely and murdered Arlene May.

These cases have been going on, unfortunately, and we should not tolerate this any further. We need to properly monitor these offenders, especially the high-risk offenders. I've mentioned many times in the Legislature about the use of high-risk tools so these people are not released, for example, without signing the conditions of parole or probation. Red flags should go off everywhere. I asked most recently that a system be in place where crown attorneys are notified if a person does not sign those conditions on their release. This has been brought up in Auditors General reports many, many times. The rate of recidivism for high-risk offenders is so high, at 42% to 60%, that we should not be surprised at these numbers.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has brought forward a bill that, from the sound of it, the government is supporting or will at least look into it and go to committee. There are many more recommendations that we have heard both in our select committee—I'm a member of the select committee—and from our own communities and the service providers that are out there.

I'm very honoured to be able to take part and certainly positively recommend that the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke's bill come forward and be passed in the Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Thanks to all members who participated in the debate.

The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke has two minutes for his response.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I won't name all the members—there are many—but I do want to thank them for their contributions today.

I want to address a couple of the things that were brought forth by some of the members. I agree: This is not a fix-all. It was never intended to be. There is so much more work to be done and it would have to be done in a more comprehensive way.

The one that we all agree on is that domestic violence is wrong all the time. Whether we agree on every part of this bill or not, violence is wrong all the time. We have a lot of work to do about how we go about fixing that.

The scope—and I want to address the government members—there are some things that are in legislation. This bill will make them stronger and more enforceable.

As I say, I want to remind you that the scope of this legislation is fairly narrow. We are not trying to fix everything, but I do say to the comments, “Would this have prevented those crimes?”, we don’t know that. I agree; we don’t know that. But if Mr. Borutski had been monitored, there would have been a much better chance that police would have known about his whereabouts much sooner. They would have been able to respond not in a reactive way, but hopefully in a proactive way, if he had gone where he was forbidden to go.

We don’t know that because we cannot turn back the clock. But had he been monitored, I do believe that there would have been a better chance that we would not have lost these three ladies that day.

As I said, this is a start. This is a beginning. I hope it serves as a catalyst for the government, on their side, in their deliberations, to come up with a more comprehensive piece of legislation that, in a more detailed and significant way, protects not only women from suffering violence, but also, when they do, if their perpetrator is released, prevents them from being revictimized.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

GROWING ONTARIO’S CRAFT CIDER INDUSTRY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA CROISSANCE DE L’INDUSTRIE DU CIDRE ARTISANAL DE L’ONTARIO

Ms. Jones moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill 110, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act /
Projet de loi 110, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les alcools.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 110, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It’s an honour to rise today to debate my private member’s bill, Bill 110, the Growing Ontario’s Craft Cider Industry Act.

I want to start off by thanking the member from Beaches–East York for co-sponsoring this important piece of legislation, and I will be sharing my time with him. When there is a good idea that helps Ontarians and

grows businesses, we can come together and work together on issues. So I do want to thank the member for co-sponsoring this private member’s bill that will help Ontario craft ciders and apple growers across Ontario.

I also want to welcome the members of the Ontario Craft Cider Association and the Ontario Apple Growers. I’m going to do a list, but I’m going to do your business, because I think that will help you more: Brickworks Ciderhouse, Coffin Ridge cider, County Cider, Duxbury Cider Co., KW Craft Cider, Ontario Apple Growers, Pommies Cider Co., Revel Cider, Shiny Apple Cider, Spirit Tree cidery, Sunnybrook Farm Winery, Thornbury premium cidery, West Avenue Cider, and, from Ontario Restaurant News, Kristen Smith. Thank you for joining us.

Many of us have used that phrase, “All politics is local.” The idea for Bill 110 was as a result of meetings that I held in my riding with two local cideries in Dufferin–Caledon: Tom Wilson from Spirit Tree cidery, from their beautiful straw building on Boston Mills Road; and Lindsay and Nick Sutcliffe, from Southern Cliff Brands, known for their Pommies and Farmhouse. This is for you, gentlemen.

I met them when they were starting their new businesses in Dufferin–Caledon. They explained to me the successes and challenges they were facing within the cider industry. The more we talked, the more we saw an opportunity to work together to help this industry by legislation.

I believe our private members’ bill will encourage the further growth of Ontario’s craft cidery industry. Bill 110 will give this industry the support it needs and show that there are people at Queen’s Park who want to see this industry grow.

I want to highlight an important difference between Ontario craft cider and other ciders sold through the LCBO, and why it’s so important for us to focus on Ontario craft ciders. They only use Ontario-grown fruit, so we’re not just talking about producers; we’re talking about growers, and we should be very proud of this. This is an industry that is supporting other industries across Ontario, including Ontario’s agricultural sector.

The Ontario Apple Growers know this and therefore are supporting Bill 110. In a letter of support from the Ontario Apple Growers, they state: “The Ontario Apple Growers is providing this letter to voice our full support for Bill 110.”

They represent 235 commercial apple farmers in Ontario who grow apples for the fresh and processing markets.

“Each year, the Ontario apple sector grows approximately 294 million pounds of apples, with a considerable volume of apples going to the processing channels.

“In 2010, as part of the Ontario government’s funding of a 15-year strategy for the tree-fruit industry, developing a robust processing sector for the higher-end and niche segments was identified as a strategic direction. Craft cider definitely falls into this area, and the

Ontario Apple Growers are optimistic about the opportunities that are presenting themselves with the growth of the craft cider industry in Ontario. Ontario craft cider companies source the apples they use to make their cider exclusively from members of the OAG.”

That, of course, is a letter of support from the OAG. Thank you.

I want to spend a little bit of my time discussing the potential of this exciting industry, which deserves support from all of us.

1540

Ontario craft cider is indeed rapidly expanding. In 2008, there was only one craft cider producer in all of Ontario. Now there are some 22 cideries across the province. These cideries are located all across Ontario, but it's important to highlight how important these cideries are to local communities, especially in our province's rural communities. Not only has the number of cideries rapidly grown in such a short amount of time, but the sales of Ontario craft cider have grown just as quickly.

From 2009 to 2014, sales grew 284% at the LCBO. That is astounding. Recently, the sales of craft cider at the LCBO nearly doubled, to \$4 million. Even though sales of Ontario craft cider are growing exponentially, the majority of cider sold in the LCBO is from outside Ontario and Canada. A very important disadvantage the Ontario craft cider industry faces is the very high markup it pays to the LCBO, whereas, as a comparator, the Ontario Craft Brewers negotiated with the Ministry of Finance to pay a lower tax rate because they produce in such small quantities.

I want to read out an email I received from a concerned individual who would love to start his own cider business, but explains how detrimental the markup fees are to the Ontario craft cider industry: “The markup fees are detrimental to a small start-up like myself, and having the support of our government behind any start-up is essential for the survival of its first years. The bill will allow us to grow from a start-up to a business that hires, that promotes Ontario products across the country and hopefully parts of the USA, and that is a contributor to Ontario's revenue.”

I want to commend this individual for wanting to start his own business. I know it takes courage to start your own business, especially in an industry that is in its infancy. We should be supporting our craft cider industry instead of hindering their growth.

That is why I brought forward Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act. Bill 110 will ensure that the markup or tax imposed on Ontario cider does not exceed the markup or tax currently in place with Ontario craft beer. Effectively, Ontario craft cider and beer will be placed on an equal footing. Both industries are important to Ontario's economy, and the Ontario Craft Brewers recognize this.

In a letter of support from the Ontario Craft Brewers to the Premier, they state, “We are writing today to show

our support for the Ontario Craft Cider Association and ask that you join us by backing Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act. Like the craft brewers, Ontario craft cideries strive to produce quality local products. They create jobs in both rural and urban centres, build communities and keep alcohol profits in our province.

“The OCCA has a commitment to use only 100% Ontario apples and pears that will invest heavily in rural infrastructure. Ontario Craft Brewers share the Ontario Craft Cider Association's commitment to crafting the highest-quality drinks and making Ontario a continental leader in craft beverages. Our members already invest with the cideries at many events across the province, and we look forward to collaborating with them for many years to come.” That, again, is from the Ontario Craft Brewers.”

The Ontario craft cider industry has the potential to make a meaningful impact on multiple Ontario industries and to the overall finances of our province, but we will never tap into that potential without first providing the right incentives to this industry. Bill 110 is a start to showing support for this industry. I ask everyone to support this important beginning so that our province can enjoy the fruits of this homegrown industry.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): I now recognize the member from Beaches–East York.

Mr. Arthur Potts: Let me start by thanking the member from Dufferin–Caledon for her initiative in taking on this excellent local initiative.

The reality is that it's a local issue for people right across this province. Apples are growing in all sectors of Ontario. It's one of the largest areas, and we grow great apples for cider production. So thank you very much for taking on this initiative.

I'd also like to thank the member for allowing me to co-sponsor the bill. It's an issue of great importance to me in my role as parliamentary assistant to agriculture, but more importantly, it's an issue to me personally.

If I could do a little bit of personal history: Some 39 years ago, I was in England. I came back to Canada from about a year overseas, and I couldn't drink Canadian beer because I was so used to good, rich English ales like Old Peculier and others. So when I got back to Canada, I went and started to brew my own beer. More so, I got involved with a group called the Campaign for Real Ale 39 years ago and, within four years, we'd changed the rules in Ontario to allow microbreweries to start up. That was almost 35 years ago. From that humble beginning, where we had Connors and the Feathers, the first brew pub in Ontario, which is in my new riding of Beaches–East York, we have now seen an industry that has grown from about 20 breweries 15 years ago to 150-plus. The big change, if you look—it's like a hockey stick. They went in a slow growth pattern like this until we changed the markup rules at the LCBO, and then they just took right off and they were able to expand right across this province.

I see the cider industry in Ontario being very much in the same place as the beer industry was some 10 or 15 years ago, where there's an opportunity for us to do something very special to allow them to take off with the same kind of profitability that we're seeing in the craft beer industry. So it's an extremely important issue.

I'd also like to thank the member for sharing her time, because I want to point out that I think this is the first time since I've been here that I have seen a co-sponsorship of a private member's bill, and the first time that the lead of the private member's bill has been shared with a member on the other side of the House. So I praise her for that initiative and praise her for her commitment to that.

The craft cider industry has three very big asks of our government.

The first is margin enhancement. What this bill is doing is levelling the playing field between what a can of cider costs at the retailer compared to what a can of craft beer costs. Essentially, it's about a 25% difference. A can of cider in the liquor store costs you just over \$4 and an equivalent-size can of craft beer is about \$3. It's tough for the cider industry to make ends meet on that kind of margin. It's tough to be competitive. This will change that.

There's also a desire to develop a quality control alliance, much like the wine industry have VQA: a cider control alliance where we can promote the fact that this is Ontario apples, Ontario cider and local inputs.

Finally, increasing the retail distribution of ciders across the province: This is part of the Ed Clark review, obviously, but we'd like to see more ciders in stores, having special shelving sections in the LCBO, being able to market more co-operatively with their fellows in craft beer, and in farmers' markets. I see a tremendous opportunity that maybe we can include ciders in farm markets where VQA wines are right now.

Opportunity does knock. Because of our climate, Ontario apples are extremely good for cider production. We need to move forward with that. We have seen, as the member opposite noted, that this is the largest growth section at the LCBO right now, but it's coming, for the most part, from imports in England and France. We have a chance now to promote local jobs, keep those investment dollars in Ontario, and support the people who are picking and the people who are processing. That's what this bill will do, and I hope all members will support it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'll be sharing my time with my colleague Catherine Fife from Kitchener-Waterloo.

The bill we have before us today, Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act, is a very important bill for my riding of Niagara Falls, and I'm proud to speak in support of it today. I'd also like to take a moment to thank the member from Dufferin and the member from Beaches-East York for their work in bringing the bill forward.

Earlier, I had the pleasure to meet with Richard Liu from Sunnybrook Wine, located in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake. Sunnybrook is—this is key—an Ontario-owned and -operated company that makes wonderful fruit wines and ciders. A producer of Ontario craft cider, the folks at Sunnybrook are committed to using 100% Ontario-grown apples and pears in their products. They make great products using local produce and creating good local jobs.

But when I met with them this afternoon, they told me they face a problem when they go to sell that product. Instead of being on a level playing field with the producers of other craft alcohol beverages, they find themselves at the bottom of the hill looking up.

Why is that the case? What is creating that uneven playing field?

Currently, craft ciders are categorized as a wine by the LCBO. You can see where the logic in that probably comes from. Ciders are produced from fruit, as are wines, which clearly makes them different from beer or spirits. However, as I'm sure most people are aware, that is about where the similarities between cider and wine end.

1550

Cider is packaged like beer. It has similar alcohol content to beer and is consumed like beer, although maybe not quite the same amount is drunk. By classifying craft ciders as a wine and not as a beer, or as a distinct product, a problem is created. The problem is that while craft ciders are classified as a wine, they do not enjoy the same financial benefits available to wineries, nor are they eligible for the rebates given to the craft brewers.

For example, Ontario wineries are eligible for the VQA program. That program allows them to receive a rebate from their sales and is designed, in part, to help Ontario's wineries grow. It is a great program. You all know there are many wineries in my riding, and I'm happy to see programs that are designed to help them. Craft cider producers, on the other hand, are not eligible for the rebate through the VQA program because that program requires the beverage to be made from grapes.

I'll give you another example. When a craft cider producer wants to sell a keg of their cider through the LCBO at a price of \$145, they are charged—think about this—a 20% markup. If, however, a craft beer manufacturer wants to sell a keg of their beer, at the same price, through the LCBO, they are not charged any markup at all. I don't think that makes any sense. You have two kegs—one of cider, one of beer—both very good, both are about the same in alcohol content, both are produced here in Ontario, helping to create local, good-paying jobs, and both will be consumed, hopefully, in a cold pint glass in a responsible manner. Yet the keg of craft cider is going to cost \$30 more than the keg of craft beer.

Despite all of this, cider in Ontario is doing very well, and growing. In 2012-13, cider sales at the LCBO grew by a staggering 76%, after seeing 60% growth in the year prior to that. Unfortunately, most of those sales are not Ontario craft ciders; instead—listen to this because this is important—they are international and Canadian blends or imported ciders.

Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act, will help to address this uneven playing field that I have just described for you. The bill amends the Liquor Control Act to ensure that the markup or tax on the sale of Ontario craft cider at a government store or at a bar does not exceed the LCBO-imposed markup or tax on the sale of Ontario craft beers. Passing this bill will allow the Ontario craft cider industry to continue to expand and help it in reaching its full potential. The bill is supported, of course, by the Ontario Craft Cider Association, but also by the Ontario Apple Growers and the Ontario Craft Brewers, and I'd like to use my last minute to tell you why.

Quoting from the craft brewers: "Like the craft brewers, Ontario craft cideries strive to produce quality, local products; they create jobs, both rural and urban, build communities and keep alcohol profits in the province. The OCCA have a commitment to use only"—think about this—"100% Ontario apples and pears and will invest heavily in rural infrastructure." Clearly, the craft brewers understand that this bill is actually about more than just helping the Ontario craft cider industry. It's about all of the economic benefits for the rest of the province in doing so.

For example, I spoke recently in this House about how the Ontario tender-fruit growers and the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation will be planting 130,000 tender-fruit trees in my riding. Those farmers will benefit from the growth in the Ontario craft cider industry because they will have more people making cider than they will have customers for their products.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 110 is an important piece of legislation for the Ontario craft cider industry, and that's why they're here today. It is an important piece of legislation for my riding of Niagara Falls, and it's an equally important piece of legislation for the entire province. I urge everyone here today to support this bill and to help the Ontario craft cider industry reach its full and very large potential.

I'd just like to say, because this is a private member's bill—and I agree that it's nice to see co-sponsorship—that here is an opportunity where the Conservatives, the Liberals and the NDP are on the same page. We all understand the importance of this industry for the province of Ontario. I say to the Liberals very clearly: You can do this immediately. You have a majority government. You have the support of the Conservatives. You have the support of the NDP. You obviously have the support of the industry. Bring it in with a bill. Let's get it passed so that this summer they will be able to sell their products right across the province of Ontario.

Thank you very much for giving me a few minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): The member from Northumberland–Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It gives me great pleasure to speak about Bill 110 today. I want to thank the member from Dufferin–Caledon and my seatmate from Beaches–East York for co-sharing this important bill. I'm not going to rehash what we've heard from previous speakers, be-

cause that's what the bill is about. Of course, I'm going to support it.

Speaker, I want to talk about a real story that came out of the hard apple cider industry that we have today. I want to talk about some people in my hometown, Brighton, in the little hamlet of Codrington: Jennifer Jarrell McRae and her husband, Chris, and a couple of friends of theirs—I believe they're related—Laura and Felix Wittholz. It all started with Chris McRae brewing some apple cider for his own use. Of course, some of their friends tasted their brew, and so they were encouraged. This happens at home; my father used to make homemade wine.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Very good stuff.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Very good stuff. Unfortunately, I don't have his talent, and he is gone.

His friends encouraged him, that maybe he should commercialize this, so he did.

Fast-forward a little bit: They can't keep up with the demand. Working out of their revamped garage—as a matter of fact, this year they planted some five acres of apple trees in their own backyard. But as they will say, when those trees come to fruition, it's not going to be big enough, so they're going to depend on our local apple industry. They're dealing with orchards that are as close as possible to their cider establishment. I can tell you that Northumberland–Quinte West, in those areas—Brighton, for example—was full of apple orchards. We don't have quite as many, but what's left are the best in the province. So they are buying local. They're using local apples. They're going to be able to use their own apples pretty soon, just down the road.

This is a success story for a small business in Ontario. We want them to flourish. I think we need to give them all the opportunity we can.

With what we're trying to do with Bill 110, I think not only Empire Cider will benefit, but I think it will even spur new industry. It's all good, Speaker, and I'm ready to support Bill 110.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act.

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Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and southern Georgian Bay have the ideal climate for apple production, so it's no surprise that we're the apple capital of Ontario, growing some of the best apples at Vail's Orchards, Barbetta Orchards, Nighthawk Orchards, Grandma Lambe's, Filsinger's orchards, Maple Lane Orchards, Bayview Orchards, as well as Golden Town, a key processor in the province.

As of a few years ago, our area is becoming the cider capital of Ontario as well, being home to five of 22 cideries in Ontario: Coffin Ridge cider, in Annan; Duxbury Cider Co., in Meaford; Beaver Valley cider, in Kimberley; and Hoity Toity Cellars, in neighbouring Huron–Bruce, in Mildmay.

Simcoe–Grey has Thornbury premium cider. With 7,500 acres of apple trees, Thornbury is Ontario's largest producer of craft cider.

Cider, as we've heard, is one of the fastest-growing beverage products, using 10% of the entire harvest of Ontario-grown apples and pears. Over 200,000 litres are produced in a year, across 22 cideries. Compare this number to just several years ago: In 2008, we had just one craft cidery in Ontario.

It's estimated that overall economic activity could grow to over \$60 million by 2018, and 350 jobs could be created in this industry and its suppliers, sending taxes of over \$2 million to local, provincial and federal governments. That kind of success is good for not just my riding's agricultural industry but also for our entire province: jobs and the supply chain of machinery, equipment, storage, bottles, cans etc. The potential for growth is undeniable, but it will take some legislative work to get there.

Bill 110 will ensure that the tax or markup imposed on Ontario cider does not exceed the markup or tax imposed on beer in Ontario. It will also ensure we treat our craft ciders the same we support our craft brewers, levelling the playing field and providing an opportunity for consumers to consume Ontario-grown cider. I think this is good news for not just craft cider producers but also Ontario apple growers.

Here's what James McIntosh, who is with us in the audience today, of Duxbury Cider in Meaford said about the importance of passing Bill 110: "Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is home to the highest concentration of Ontario craft cider makers in the province. This is a great position for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and our homegrown industry is making significant strides in the marketplace. Yet, as North America's oldest and, until recently, forgotten beverage industry, we need new support from the province to make sure we have a strong and lasting future.

"Please consider the tremendous success of our Ontario Craft Brewers as a model to help the Ontario Craft Cider Association's members continue to build the Ontario hard cider industry as a world leader."

Bryan Watts, also in the audience and VP of marketing and sales at Thornbury Beverage Co., said Bill 110 would bring as much as \$11 per case recovery to their cidery: "The reduction of these markups and taxes would be a game-changer for our company and would contribute greatly to our expansion plans in Thornbury, subsequently adding more jobs and agri-tourism revenue to the local economy.

"If Bill 110 is approved and passed by the Legislature, this would mean as much as \$11 per case recovery for Thornbury Beverage Co. Yes, we make \$11 less per case of beer versus a case of cider. Our beer is made from imported ingredients while our cider is made from 100% Thornbury apples. It just makes no sense.

"The more cider we sell, the more apples we need, and we are growing in excess of 30% per year."

I think we owe it to our cider entrepreneurs to pass Bill 110.

One last parting comment: Brian Gilroy of the Ontario Apple Growers association said that if the apple industry continues to shrink, it will lose the supporting businesses and infrastructure. Anything that might help growers transition to new varieties and growing techniques will ensure the sustainability of the industry.

For this reason, I called on the agriculture minister last year to share some of the \$40 million the province earmarked for food processing with apple growers to help revitalize the industry and narrow the gap between what we grow and what we import. Sadly, Ontario continues to lag behind other provinces, a number of which have either implemented or are in the process of implementing an industry revitalization program for their growers. We need to support this.

I'll turn it over to my colleagues Mr. Smith and Mr. Hudak.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to join the debate today. I think that there's consensus in this room, and that rarely happens.

Of course, New Democrats will be supporting Bill 110. We believe, obviously, in striving for fairness among people, businesses and industries, and this is a perfect example of levelling the playing field in this particular industry. As a result, we will be supporting it and, actually, looking forward to—this could be a precedent-setting day, Mr. Speaker, in this House, this co-sponsorship of bills.

In my own region, of course, there is this one craft cider distributor, KW Craft Cider. I could relate exactly to what the member from Dufferin–Caledon was saying about the markups being a significant deterrent to growing businesses and expanding or creating or going into the start-up business for craft ciders.

KW Craft Cider—his name is Mike Kramar. I was just reading it in the Record. He was selling cider out of the back of his car. He now has some very popular restaurants in the Waterloo area. One of them is the beer bistro Beertown.

The consensus is that cider is becoming just as popular, if not more popular, than those flavored beers. This actually lends to the restaurant business, which of course is supportive of the craft cider industry growing in the province of Ontario, and we welcome those changes. I want to thank both the member from Dufferin–Caledon and the member from Beaches–East York for raising it.

The truth of the matter is that the craft beer industry in Ontario is about 15 years ahead of the cideries, allowing them legislative changes along the way. I think it's very important that the Ontario Craft Brewers has actually come forward and said, "We support this change as well."

The craft industries, period, the local food movement and the local alcohol movement are gaining momentum across the province and across the country, and I think more and more people around the world are recognizing Ontario as a leader in this regard. If we can get this bill

passed, perhaps the government may actually move quicker on it, accelerate the bill so it doesn't sit as a sort of successful private member's bill experience. Let's get this done. I mean, we have to catch up for 15 years now. Let's get it done. Let's work together, level the playing field for this industry and ensure that the economy for the Ontario craft cider industry is bright.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Grant Crack): The member from Halton: I recognize you now.

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and speak in favour of Bill 110, the Growing Ontario's Craft Cider Industry Act. I would like to start by thanking the members from Dufferin-Caledon and Beaches-East York for co-sponsoring this bill.

As you've already heard, the bill amends the Liquor Control Act so that the markup the Liquor Control Board of Ontario imposes on the sale of any Ontario cider, including craft cider, cannot exceed the markup that the board imposes on the sale on any beer, including craft beer. This amendment balances the tax that is imposed on cider in the province. It levels the playing field, as we heard, and makes things fair. That's why I support this amendment.

Cider has become the latest trend in brewing. You just have to take a walk through any local LCBO or check out the beer taps at your local pub to see that cider is gaining in popularity. In fact, the market is growing, and major beer brands have already launched cider in recent years, including Alexander Keith's cider and Molson Canadian cider. Local craft breweries have also been getting into cider brewing. The Ontario Craft Cider Association lists approximately 20 craft brewers across the province. Cider is one of the LCBO's fastest-growing sectors, with Ontario craft cider sales rising 93% in 2014-15. Yes, you heard me right: 93%.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been in the process of modernizing the alcohol system. This is part of our plan to give consumers more convenience and choice, strengthen the position of Ontario's small and craft brewers, and at the same time not waiver on our strong commitment to social responsibility. We are retaining the best parts of our existing retailing system, which will enable Ontario to maintain its consumer prices for beer below the national average. We are strengthening things for our Ontario-based brewers and creating new opportunities for economic growth across the province.

Now, the Ontario cider industry is also an important part of our province's economy, and we are committed to building on its success. It's time that we gave this sector the support it needs, and that is what this bill does. It's important to recognize that, like craft beer and many other parts of this sector, growth in cider sales can lead to other opportunities in agriculture and tourism. I think about the specifically when it comes to my riding.

We know that Ontario is already known for its quality apples. In my riding of Halton there are dozens of farms that have vast apple orchards. For the last few months,

thousands of people have been making their way to the farms and orchards in my region to buy fresh apples and even pick their own bag. If any members, by the way, are interested in heading out to Halton, we have a great website listing all the farms where you can go and purchase your own apples, pick yourself and participate in the many activities going on.

1610

Our apple growers in this province produce more than 330 million pounds of apples each year, contributing more than \$75 million in terms of Ontario's economy. It's clear there would be additional great benefits from the sustained growth of our craft cider producers.

In 2013, the Ontario Apple Growers and the Ontario Craft Cider Association released an economic impact assessment of the cider industry in Ontario. They stated that cider is Ontario's ideal industry: agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and it's green. The study projected 73% job growth in the industry and among its suppliers by 2018, and projects sales in Ontario of \$35 million by 2018.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear: Cider in the province of Ontario is a success story and I am excited to see where it goes. Today's bill lays the groundwork for a fair tax on cider. It is one step we can take today to support the industry. This will be good for our economy, good for the industry and good for consumers.

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

Mr. Tim Hudak: Speaker, I'm supporting Bill 110 for three reasons. Let me list them off for you:

(1) It responds to a growing consumer demand for ciders of the province of Ontario;

(2) It has significant economic benefits. I know my colleagues from Niagara will verify that for every dollar spent on VQA wine, there's a \$3 spinoff to the local economy. I suspect something very similar for cider in our province;

(3) Fair is fair. I'll get to that at the end.

I'm proud to say, too, that we have a good number of ciders, along with wineries, in the Niagara and Hamilton area: Revel Cider, Stoney Creek; Puddicombe cider in Winona, just outside of my riding; Sunnybrook—I believe they're here today—Niagara-on-the-Lake and growing.

I'm going to tell you two quick stories in my time. One is true and one's not. First story: We have a tradition in my family. If it's your birthday, you choose the restaurant you go to. One of my colleagues recently announced my birthday. She said I was 58 years old. Speaker, I know being leader does age you, but that is not quite accurate. In fact, I'm 28.

But I got a chance to go to a restaurant and I had a Spirit Tree pear cider. Truth be told, with my birthday on Halloween, the night before, it might have been a bit of hair of the dog. I had a Spirit Tree cider from Caledon, Ontario, an outstanding product. I know Tom Wilson, the owner, is here today. Tom happens to be the president of

the Ontario Craft Cider Association. Welcome, Tom. This shows you that when I'm making random selections of what to drink, it's political at its heart; I picked the one with the president, Speaker.

The second story is that they actually brought in Franz Kafka himself one day for a tour of the LCBO, and then Kafka visited the Ministry of Finance. They tried to walk him through all the rules and regulations around alcohol in the province and Kafka himself said, "This is just nuts," and he ran from the building.

One of those stories is true and one isn't, my point being that sometime we'll get to a place where I can actually go to my corner store or the grocery store and buy cider, buy a VQA wine or buy some liquor at a local, private store. We'll get there. I know some politicians have concerns: "One step at a time." This is a very solid one step.

It's my test sometimes: I think of what Mrs. Jones in Fonthill, Ontario, would have to say. If I said, "A bottle of cider should be taxed the same way as a bottle of beer the same size," she'd say, "Of course. That makes a lot of sense." This particular Ms. Jones from Dufferin-Caledon would probably agree with that as well. I think fair is fair, Speaker.

This is good for agribusiness. It's good for the province. It responds to consumer demand and ultimately, it's fair. I support Bill 110.

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

Hon. Jeff Leal: It's a great pleasure for me to get a few words on the record this afternoon for Bill 110, a marvellous bill that's been put forward by two wonderful members, from Dufferin-Caledon and Beaches-East York.

I had the opportunity earlier today to meet with the leaders of Ontario's cider industry, to make sure we could do everything possible to advance the growth of the cider industry in the province. In St. Catharines, Ontario, there's a very famous restaurant called the Golden Pheasant. I want to make sure that on Fridays, when people go to the Golden Pheasant in St. Catharines, Ontario, with that \$6.99 fish-and-chips special, they can get their cider as part of their lunch experience on that given day. I know my good friend the member from St. Catharines is looking forward to that experience in the not-too-distant future. We'll be doing everything possible to make sure that happens.

A bit of an aside: I know the good folks of Peterborough are watching this afternoon. They're now turning to channel 95 on Cogeco because they know that this debate is so very important to the future of agriculture in the province of Ontario.

When we looked at some of the statistics here, where it says Ontario craft cider is one of the fastest-growing categories in the LCBO, with sales rising 89% between 2011 and 2015—Al Capone would have been envious of that kind of growth in this alcohol beverage sector. We've got to make sure that we take the steps to build a

foundation to grow the agricultural sector in the province of Ontario.

The member from Halton spoke today. I remember chatting with the previous member from Halton, Ted Chudleigh. I said, "Ted, one of the ways you could grow the apple industry in the province of Ontario is to put a few more apples in your frozen pies that you're selling at Sobeys." That would have been a great way to help expand the apple industry in the province of Ontario. Maybe Ted is working on that as we speak. I hope he is.

Mr. Speaker, we're looking at ways. We're working with Ed Clark in terms of the reform of the beverage alcohol industry in the province of Ontario. You know that we've made some progress in terms of the distribution of beer. We do know that Mr. Clark has set his sights on looking at the other areas—the cider and the fruit wines—in the province of Ontario.

This, with Bill 110, is a unique opportunity. We grow more than 330 million pounds of apples each year, contributing more than \$75 million to the province's agriculture economy. I've had the opportunity to visit with my good friend Charlie Stevens. Charlie operates Wilmot Orchards in Clarington, Ontario. I've also visited Algoma Orchards in Clarington. Of course, Algoma is a vertically integrated business, where they grow the apples and they produce wonderful ciders.

I am glad that we are achieving a consensus on all sides of the House to support Bill 110. I want to encourage all members of the House to take the opportunity to support Bill 110 and be at the Golden Pheasant this Friday to get your apple cider and fish-and-chips special. It will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

This is a great bill. We need to support it. We've got to move forward.

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

Mr. Todd Smith: What we've heard here today is a lot of people doing a lot of bragging about the best region in the province. It has given a lot of people the chance to brag about the great products that come from their area, their region and their riding. But I can tell you there's no cider better than the cider that comes from Prince Edward county. The granddaddy of the beverage alcohol sector is in Prince Edward county and he's the granddaddy when it comes to cider: Grant Howes is right here. Hey, good to see you, Grant. It's good to see Jenifer Dean here as well, from beautiful Waupoos on the south shore of Prince Edward county. They produce some amazing things.

You all know what a great place to live Prince Edward county is, what a great place to visit Prince Edward county is. We have over 40 wineries now. We have a beautiful craft distillery, 66 Gilead. We've got a couple of great breweries down there. Barley Days Brewery just re-opened a couple of weeks ago. They're members of the craft brewers association. We've got Lake on the Mountain brewery, which is wonderful as well, down by the Glenora ferry. They're going to re-open in a new facility next spring.

But the granddaddy of the beverage alcohol sector in Prince Edward county, the guy who came before all of those great venues, was Waupoos's own County Cider, and they're producing some great stuff. If I went through the list of everything that they've produced and all the awards that they've won, we would have to have another hour just to talk about the great stuff that's being produced there. It all comes from the wonderful limestone soil in Prince Edward county.

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The Howes family have 40 acres of apples there. I believe it's 15 different types of apples that they're using for their ciders. They have the pear cider as well, and the blood orange cider—all of this is good stuff.

But as Mr. Hudak alluded to earlier, there are three reasons why he is supporting this bill. There are three reasons why I am supporting this bill as well. They're sort of the same.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's good for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Todd Smith: Yes.

(1) We need to level the playing field, right? It only makes sense. We've heard a lot of numbers being tossed around here this afternoon as to the disadvantage that the cider industry has in Ontario. The craft brewers have a better deal, and they're fully in support of the craft ciders getting that same deal. It's just fair. Level that playing field. Allow them to compete in the same way that the craft brewers have been able to do.

There's so much more that we could do to help the craft brewers as well. There was a guy in the Legislature who introduced a bill not so long ago, the Raise a Glass to Ontario Act, that might do that as well.

(2) We could create jobs in Ontario. What we all want to do is see more jobs created, especially in rural Ontario. We need those jobs.

Everybody has talked about all the jobs that could be created in apple orchards, in cideries and in manufacturing facilities. If they were just given that level playing field, they could actually create jobs and expand the market faster than it has been expanding already. Ms. Jones, from Dufferin–Caledon, actually alluded to how quickly the industry has been growing. So we want to create jobs in Ontario.

(3) It's just the best darned cider out there, and it should be given an opportunity to expand into different markets.

I know that Mr. Howes has his County Cider in California. They're selling County Cider in California now. You know what? That's great. That's great, but there are a lot of other states that don't have access to County Cider right now that should. There are all kinds of other countries—and provinces in Canada, for that matter—that should get to experience the great products of Prince Edward county.

Let's level the playing field. Let's create jobs in Ontario. Let's let the world taste our award-winning cider that we're producing here in Ontario.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Cheers to that.

Mr. Todd Smith: Bob Bailey says, "Cheers to that," and I think, from what I've heard today, all 107 members of the Legislature are in full support of the private member's bill, Bill 110, supporting the craft cider industry. We believe that maybe we should call a vote on this, just to test the temperature of the Legislature, to see if this is something that might pass.

Bill 110 is exactly what we need to allow the craft cider industry to grow and to expand and to create jobs in Ontario. It's long overdue. The tax system hasn't been fair for this sector for a long, long time. Mr. Howes has been in the industry for 20 years. They call him Grandpa Cider for a reason. It's time that we gave this sector of our Ontario economy that level playing field so they can compete.

Everybody in the Legislature, let's raise a glass to Ontario today and say cheers to Ms. Jones for her private member's bill. Let's support the craft cider industry in the province of Ontario. Cheers to that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): I now return to the member for Dufferin–Caledon.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'd like to say that I'm speechless, but I'm not—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): One second.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ten seconds?

Mr. John Vanthof: That's right.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Okay, I recognize the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane. You have 10 seconds.

Mr. John Vanthof: In reality, Speaker, we all support this bill, but the reality is that only one side of this House can make this bill a reality very quickly, and that's the government side, and we urge them to do it. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The member for Dufferin–Caledon, you've got two minutes for a response.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Obviously, I'm thrilled that people from all sides but, more importantly, from all parts of Ontario—actually, when the last member spoke, from northern Ontario, I can now honestly say that I have support, with the member from Beaches–East York, for Bill 110 from across Ontario—eastern Ontario, southern Ontario, northern Ontario. I very much appreciate it. I know that the members from the Ontario Craft Cider Association appreciate it. Thank you for your encouragement and your support of the bill today.

I'm going to say that, while it is accurate to suggest that only government can bring forward this bill into committee and for third reading, there is actually a third way, and the third way is by regulation. So while I don't often say this, please take my bill. Put it into regulation. Make the changes. You don't need to wait for legislation to bring forward this change that will make such a difference in rural Ontario in the industry.

As I say, I don't often say, "Steal my bills," but you're welcome to this one. I think it has resonance both in our

communities and, more importantly, on our economic vitality. So by all means, it's yours.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): A point of order: the member for Etobicoke North.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I respectfully invite all members of the chamber to welcome the next contribution of the Qaadri household to the parliamentary process, Shafiq Qaadri Jr. Hopefully he'll be standing and be recognized in the members' gallery.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION TAX
ABOLITION ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 ABOLISSANT
L'IMPÔT SUR L'ADMINISTRATION
DES SUCCESSIONS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): We will deal first with ballot item number 79, standing in the name of Mr. Brown.

Mr. Brown has moved second reading of Bill 136, An Act to abolish the estate administration tax and provide for related matters. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with this vote at the end of private members' business.

MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL
SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT
(PAROLE), 2015
LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LE MINISTÈRE
DES SERVICES CORRECTIONNELS
(LIBÉRATIONS CONDITIONNELLES)

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Mr. Yakabuski has moved second reading of Bill 130, An Act to amend the Ministry of Correctional Services Act in respect of parole. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to—Mr. Yakabuski?

Mr. John Yakabuski: The Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): It is requested that it be referred to justice policy. Agreed? Agreed.

GROWING ONTARIO'S CRAFT
CIDER INDUSTRY ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LA CROISSANCE
DE L'INDUSTRIE DU CIDRE
ARTISANAL DE L'ONTARIO

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 110, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: I'd like to refer it to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): It is requested that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills. Agreed? Agreed.

ESTATE ADMINISTRATION TAX
ABOLITION ACT, 2015
LOI DE 2015 ABOLISSANT
L'IMPÔT SUR L'ADMINISTRATION
DES SUCCESSIONS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1629 to 1634.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): Can I ask the members to please take their seats? Thank you.

Mr. Brown has moved second reading of Bill 136, An Act to abolish the estate administration tax and provide for related matters.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hudak, Tim	Nicholls, Rick
Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Pettapiece, Randy
Barrett, Toby	MacLaren, Jack	Scott, Laurie
Brown, Patrick	MacLeod, Lisa	Smith, Todd
Clark, Steve	McDonell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Fedeli, Victor	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Hardeman, Ernie	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Harris, Michael	Munro, Julia	Yurek, Jeff

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Albanese, Laura	Gates, Wayne	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Moridi, Reza
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Mitzie	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Naqvi, Yasir
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Colle, Mike	Kwintar, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz

Damerla, Dipika
 Delaney, Bob
 Dhillon, Vic
 Dickson, Joe
 DiNovo, Cheri
 Fife, Catherine
 Flynn, Kevin Daniel
 Fraser, John

MacCharles, Tracy
 Malhi, Harinder
 Mangat, Amrit
 Martins, Cristina
 Matthews, Deborah
 McGarry, Kathryn
 McMahan, Eleanor
 McMeekin, Ted

Sergio, Mario
 Singh, Jagmeet
 Sousa, Charles
 Tabuns, Peter
 Thibeault, Glenn
 Vanthof, John
 Vernile, Daiene
 Zimmer, David

The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):

The ayes are 24; the nays are 51.

Interjections.

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

I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move adjournment of the House, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon): The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I declare that the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, November 16 at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1638.

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	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–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
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	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	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	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	
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Norm (PC) Miller, Paul (NDP)	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
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC) Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	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) Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	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) Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Essex Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC) Potts, Arthur (LIB) Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB) Rinaldi, Lou (LIB) Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB) 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
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	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) Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB) 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) Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	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) Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB) 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
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
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**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong
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

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala
Jim McDonell, Eleanor McMahon
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: John Fraser
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins
Robert Bailey, Vic Dhillon
John Fraser, Wayne Gates
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi
Cristina Martins, Randy Pettapiece
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney
Randy Hillier, Michael Mantha
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri
Laurie Scott
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton
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

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry
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
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