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Vendredi 22 janvier 2016

**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Pre-budget consultations

**Comité permanent des finances
et des affaires économiques**

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES FINANCES ET DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES

Friday 22 January 2016

Vendredi 22 janvier 2016

The committee met at 0830 in the Ottawa Marriott Hotel, Ottawa.

PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIONS

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Good morning. Welcome to Ottawa. I just want to inform the committee that the Clerk just told me that we're streaming live back to Queen's Park. They're doing an experiment this morning on us, so let's see how it goes. We may be watched by our colleagues and others this morning.

We're starting early this morning. Good morning, Mr. Clark and Ms. Lisa MacLeod. Welcome. It's nice and sunny.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Bonne année.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Happy new year to both of you.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Gong Hei Fat Choy to you too.

ADVOCIS

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The first group coming to us is Advocis, the Financial Advisors Association of Canada: Mr. Kris Birchard. Welcome.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I understand from the Clerk that you have brought one copy, so the Clerk will circulate your written submission shortly, just so you know.

Mr. Kris Birchard: Yes. I apologize for not bringing enough. I only brought three.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): That's okay. We'll look after that.

As you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official third party. You may begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Welcome.

Mr. Kris Birchard: Thank you. My name is Kris Birchard and I'm the national chair of government relations for Advocis, the Financial Advisors Association of Canada.

Advocis would like to thank the Ontario government for its attention to reviewing the regulation of financial

advisers and planners. As I said, my name is Kris Birchard. I am a principal of a financial services firm in Ottawa and a practising financial adviser.

We believe that in order to protect Ontarians, any regulation must be inclusive of all financial advisers, not just financial planners, as some other groups are proposing.

Despite all the work that's being done in the financial advice industry through the expert committees, it's important not to lose sight of the fact that securities regulators in Canada and Ontario are considering imposing a ban on third-party commissions on mutual funds and the imposition of statutory fiduciary duty for advisers. This proposed direction resembles regulatory changes that have taken place in the UK and Australia, leading to dramatic losses in the provision of financial advice to the middle class.

Recently, Tracey McDermott, the acting chief executive at the Financial Conduct Authority in the UK, has suggested that the UK may return to some element of commission compensation for advisers. This was the result of the loss of financial advice being given because of the mass exodus of financial advisers in the UK. This evaluation of the RDR showcases the need for us to be very careful with any regulation we decide to implement here in Ontario. We need to be sure that Ontarians continue to have access to the advice they need to ensure their future financial health.

Advocis has argued that comprehensive empirical evidence is needed prior to any reforms with respect to the banning of commissions or changing from the common law fiduciary standard that currently exists to a statutory fiduciary standard. We have researched and written extensively on these topics and are of the view that a change to the existing fiduciary duty or commissions will harm and not benefit our clients. We would refer the government to our detailed analysis on fiduciary duty as well as our submissions on the banning of commissions and our alternative, which speaks to the raising of the professional bar for all financial advisers, inclusive of planners.

This presentation has been made to this committee previously in some other jurisdictions. I'm going to change some of our comments a little bit and add some personal comments.

I mentioned the situation in the UK. I have clients who formerly resided in Ottawa who moved back to Europe.

On one occasion they took it upon themselves to fly home at their own cost to seek my advice because they could not find an adviser where they lived as a result of these reforms that had taken place.

Consumers currently have a choice in compensation, all the way from embedded commissions to a platform of hourly fees. In our own office, we discuss compensation with clients and agree upon the amount of embedded commission that will reflect the amount of work that the client requires, usually somewhere between 50 to 100 basis points of assets under administration. CRM II, the client-relationship model which was rolled out in January of this year, will now allow for transparency of the amount of embedded commission that any investor is being paid. By that, they will be able to understand more fully what it is that they are paying for their advice.

We at Advocis believe that any changes in regulation should be truly reflective of what consumers want, so we decided to ask them. In November 2015, Advocis released research that surveyed consumers whose financial advisers were Advocis members. Now, the third-party firm that did this had previously done the same research with non-Advocis members, and the results were identical.

When asked how valuable the financial advice they received is for them, 96% of respondents said that it was “very valuable” or “somewhat valuable,” and 92% said that their adviser is worth the money that they pay. In addition, 93% report that they either completely trust or somewhat trust their adviser and 92% believe that they are better off financially for working with their adviser.

When asked, “Would you prefer the government leave the choice up to you as to whether or not you pay an hourly fee, a percentage of your assets under administration or an embedded commission?” 4% said no, it does not matter; 8% said they had never thought about it; and 88% said yes, they prefer to choose for themselves. It’s clear that the large majority of consumers want choice. In regard to these issues of how they pay for financial advice, consumers are clear: They want choice, whether it’s an hourly fee, a percentage of their assets under administration or an embedded fee.

In 2012, the CIRANO report, an academic study done by professors at the University of Montreal using econometrics, released a study that showed households using financial advisers over a period of 15 years have 2.75 times more assets than households that did not. It’s curious to note that when the OSC called for research on the impact of embedded commissions and rates of return, i.e. the cost, they did not ask for any research on the value of advice, i.e. the benefit. It seems odd to me to measure cost and not the benefit received.

The OSC’s Investor Advisory Panel, in its recommendation to ban embedded commissions, did not, it appears, examine any other models. I would submit that the research that’s being done is perhaps incomplete or somewhat flawed.

Now the economic impact in Ontario: The small business financial advice industry in Ontario produces almost

\$10.8 billion to GDP in direct or indirect contributions and represents more than \$2.5 billion in Ontario government tax revenues. In Canada, the small business advice industry contributes 1.4% of GDP and 1.5% of employment. Those numbers are greater than the contributions of the pharmaceutical, motor vehicle manufacturing and aerospace industries. In fact, in Ontario, if we’re talking about employment, all those three industries combined employ less people than the small business advice industry does in Ontario.

So the evidence is that consumers value advice. They currently have a choice in how they pay for that advice. The foreign experience had negative unintended consequences and was attempting to resolve a problem that does not exist in Ontario or Canada. It was spurred by some scandals that were taking place within the pension part of the banking industry in the UK, and it is a problem that does not and never has existed in Ontario or Canada.

Why then would there be a movement to disrupt the system? Some believe that there are inherent conflicts of interest in the commission model. Advocis believes that where these conflicts may exist, the formation of a designated administrative authority will create a platform to solve the issues of conflict, while improving the regulatory framework without disruption to a significant Ontario industry.

We look forward to continuing to work with the government of Ontario on solutions to these issues. I’m prepared to answer any questions that members of the panel may have. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much. I’m going to turn to Ms. Fife to begin this round of questioning.

0840

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks very much, Kris, for being here this morning and for sharing your concerns with the direction that the government is going in this regard.

The banning of third-party commissions: Did that come out of the expert committee to consider financial advisory and financial planning policy alternatives that didn’t have an expert on it?

Mr. Kris Birchard: No. First of all, it’s not the government at this point in time; it’s the regulators that are looking at this. I believe that what happened in the international experience that I talked about, in the UK and Australia, caused the regulating community—the Canadian Securities Administrators, led by the Ontario Securities Commission—to do some research on this, to ask for submissions on it and to come forward. Our reading of it is that they seem to be moving in that particular direction.

It’s interesting to note that Howard Wetston, the late chair of the OSC, refused on many occasions, when asked by us, to meet with us, even though the Minister of Finance, Charles Sousa, had suggested that this would be a good idea. Now, the current chair, the new chair, I understand, is going to meet with us. But it seems that they did not want to consult with us on a direct basis.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So even though the finance minister recommended that the regulator meet with Advocis, at that point they had not decided to meet with you?

Mr. Kris Birchard: Our request to meet with the chair, Howard Wetston, was never acceded to, and we never had the opportunity to meet with him.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay, that's good to know.

Obviously, the goal of financial advisers is around consumer protection.

Mr. Kris Birchard: Right.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Could you speak to the current economic environment and how important quality financial advice is? We need to get this right.

Mr. Kris Birchard: There's no question about that. Our concern is that in larger communities, in very affluent situations, in those particular situations, people will always be able to afford and pay for advice. But if you're living in a rural area or don't have the wherewithal to pay hourly fees, if there was not any embedded commission opportunities to you, then clearly, Ontarians will not get the value of an accredited financial adviser or planner giving them this kind of advice.

I know that the Ontario government is concerned about the financial stability of Ontarians, given their current mission for the ORPP. So when it's shown that households that have advice have almost three times the amount of assets as households that don't have advice, it's very curious as to why we would be doing things that would, if we look at the other experiences internationally, drive advisers out of the marketplace.

I'd make another brief comment that some of us have done studies in our own firms as to what the cost of compliance is. It's somewhere around \$150 to \$250 per file, which is probably equal to the trailer commissions on a \$70,000-to-\$80,000 invested account. Clearly, most of the middle class will be in a position that can't afford this, because an adviser, if they're paying that much for the cost of compliance and haven't paid their staff or they're under the heat, are in a very precarious position.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay. Well, thanks very much for coming in and lending some insight. Thanks, Kris.

Mr. Kris Birchard: You're welcome.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you very much, sir, for your presentation this morning.

Mr. Kris Birchard: Thank you.

REGISTERED NURSES' ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Our next witness is the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. Good morning.

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Good morning.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes for questions. In your case, the questions will be coming from the government side. For the record, when you begin, could you please state your name.

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Good morning. My name is Wendy Pearson. I am a member of the board of directors of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, RNAO, the professional association representing registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and nursing students. The region that I represent encompasses the Ottawa-Carleton area and is home to thousands of these dedicated professionals.

We thank the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs for the opportunity to offer guidance as the government engages in its pre-budget consultation.

I want to begin by jogging your memory and taking you back to the early 1990s, when former Premier Mike Harris compared nurses to hula hoops. Thousands of our colleagues were fired or displaced, part-time and casual work became the norm, and thousands, including many new graduates, left to work in the United States. It had a disastrous effect on patient care and in the overall delivery of health care in Ontario. It took a full decade to recover because nurses, especially RNs, lost trust in their employers and in government. To recover, we partnered with the government on initiatives such as targeting funding for RN positions, committing to have 70% of Ontario's RNs employed full-time, creating the nursing graduate guarantee and a strategy to retain our late-career nurses.

I am here to tell you that Ontario can't afford another setback. Although we are not in the disastrous situation of the 1990s, there is again an alarming trend of replacing RNs. Indeed, some health care organizations—both hospitals and home care—are cutting RN positions or replacing RNs with less-qualified providers. Some organizations are also reverting to models of functional nursing, a task-oriented approach that is piecemeal and does not put patients first. In practice, this involves parcelling out a patient's care needs and assigning them to multiple less-qualified providers. None of these providers have the full grasp of the patient's needs, errors increase and patients feel lost without knowing who their nurse is.

These changes are motivated by financial pressures and perceived efforts to save money. The reality is this approach delivers worse care and costs more. The evidence is conclusive: RNs have a direct impact on patients by decreasing mortality and morbidity, improving quality of life, shortening lengths of stay in the hospital and in home care, and reducing adverse events and complications. Simply said, fewer RNs means patient outcomes are worse and health expenses are higher. At a time when the health system is shifting to provide care for only the sickest of the sick in hospitals and when people in the community have more complex health needs, it is simply wrong to replace RNs with less-qualified providers.

You may be wondering what impact this will have on Ontarians. We don't have to look far for research and past experience that paints a compelling picture. RN staffing results in better patient outcomes and decreases hospital length of stay, hospital-related mortality, failure to rescue, cardiac arrest and hospital-acquired pneumonia. So-called team-based models of care increase

costs because more time is spent coordinating, delegating and supervising. It blurs accountability and decreases continuity of care and continuity of caregiver. When RNs provide total patient care, safety increases and so do health and financial outcomes.

The replacement of RNs with less-qualified providers may seem like an attractive approach for health care organizations in a financial pinch. But we must learn from the 1990s and not repeat the same mistakes, because these come at a significant cost to the health system and Ontarians.

That's why the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario recommends, in the strongest possible terms, that the government of Ontario demonstrate strong leadership by introducing measures in the 2016 provincial budget that will put a stop to the replacement of RNs with less-qualified providers. This leadership must come from Premier Kathleen Wynne and Minister of Health Eric Hoskins by sending a clear directive to Ontario's health care employers to immediately stop replacing RNs. RNAO understands that the government is facing tough financial pressures and health care costs are rising. As a firm supporter of a publicly funded and not-for-profit health system, we urge the government to identify ways to maximize the resources already available.

One way of doing this is by expanding the scope of practice of RNs to include RN prescribing, and we are pleased that the government is moving there. RNAO requests that an enabling framework be built, so that RNs are fully utilized to improve timely access to health services. I will not focus on this, as we made a full submission to the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council—HPRAC—which is currently advising the minister on implementation.

I do want to focus on another critical area to achieve cost control and savings: That is by launching a pharmacare program that provides universal access to medically necessary drugs to all Canadians without user fees or co-payments. Public drug spending in Ontario consumes 9% of the health budget, up from 1.2% in 1975. Pharmacare would deliver equitable access to medicines, it would financially protect the sick and it would result in a net saving of money. The savings come from several areas, including reduced administration, streamlining processes and use of purchasing power to reduce drug prices. A 2015 Canadian Medical Association Journal article estimated savings of \$7.3 billion if such a plan was adopted. The savings to all sectors would be so large that the government could finance universal coverage out of its own savings and by taxing back some of the savings enjoyed by employers who no longer have to provide drug insurance payments.

0850

The public is onside. A poll conducted in May 2013 by Ekos found that 78% of Canadian respondents supported a universal public drug plan for all necessary prescription drugs. The support was even stronger in July 2015, when Angus Reid reported that 91% of people polled supported pharmacare in Canada, and 87% sup-

ported adding prescription drugs to the universal health coverage of medicare. One reason for the overwhelming support is the fact that almost one quarter reported that they or someone in their household couldn't afford medicines that they had been prescribed.

Health ministers from across the country have met this week with their federal counterpart. This meeting marks an excellent opportunity to propel pharmacare forward. We have been pleased with Minister Hoskins's support of a national pharmacare program, and the window to move is open. The federal government is looking at implementing some kind of public drug program, and we urge the Ontario government to press for a universal program that covers all medically necessary medications, without user fees or co-payments. That would deliver the full benefits of pharmacare.

In closing, RNAO extends its gratitude to the standing committee, and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you very much. Ms. Wong has questions for you.

Ms. Soo Wong: Thank you very much, Ms. Pearson, for your presentation. I'm going to declare my conflict of interest: I am a registered nurse.

I understand that the RNAO's CEO, Doris Grinspun, recently presented to Minister Hoskins and Minister Sousa with regard to a similar ask at the minister's pre-budget consultations, so I'm rehearsing it. We also heard from your colleagues in Hamilton, as well as in Windsor, about similar asks.

I have a couple of quick questions for you. What I'm hearing is that you're saying that the province needs to be more prescriptive, more defining in terms of funding the nursing envelope in the hospital sector, because most of the cuts right now, as you're experiencing, are in hospital care. We know there is evidence to prove that RNs will save more lives, making sure patients are safe. So you're asking the government of Ontario, when we fund the funding envelopes for hospitals versus long-term care and the others—that there will be dedicated RNs as opposed to the unregulated or less regulated health professionals. Am I hearing that?

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Yes.

Ms. Soo Wong: Okay, because I know that we have done that for long-term care, as you know. The funding envelope for long-term care is very prescriptive that if that nursing envelope is not spent, those dollars get returned back to the province. We also, in our regulations, require X number of RNs per shift—

Ms. Wendy Pearson: I work in long-term care, so I'm well aware, for sure—

Ms. Soo Wong: Yes, that's what I'm hearing—

Ms. Wendy Pearson: —and appreciate what the government has done.

Ms. Soo Wong: Okay. I'm hearing that you want a similar type of requirement when we do the funding for the hospital sector, so that there will be dedicated RN funding.

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Yes.

Ms. Soo Wong: Okay. We also heard from your colleague—I was just going through some of my files last night—dealing with the NPs, nurse practitioners. There was a written statement from your colleague that came in from Hamilton about nurse practitioner salaries, because he was representing the RNAO. There has been concern expressed about the salaries of physicians as well as the salaries of NPs.

Your colleague put this presentation to us in writing, so I just wanted to get some clarification and to be on record. I'm just going to read, and I want to hear your opinion about this, because in your submission it's a little bit different about protecting the RN position in hospitals.

What he wrote to the committee is the fact that NP compensation has been frozen. Meanwhile, according to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, physicians' gross salaries in Ontario have actually gone up. In fact, between 2003 and 2013, physicians' wages jumped 61%.

I just want to hear from you: Does RNAO have a written position about compensation for nurse practitioners? Because very clearly, this was on the RNAO letterhead. I just want to hear your views. Has the RNAO, as an association, put a similar position to the minister?

Ms. Wendy Pearson: I know it's been discussed with regards to NP salaries not being competitive enough. Nurses who are looking to go into the NP role, certainly with the extended education and the extended responsibility, are not compensated adequately, is what I'm hearing from RNAO, although I don't know if we have a position statement on it.

Ms. Soo Wong: Okay. The last question I have for you, Ms. Pearson, is regarding the government's position in terms of the transformation of health care, the shift of the dollars going to the community, to reach the patient closer to their homes. What is the RNAO position about this kind of investment? I believe we have increased it to 5% for home and community care. What is the RNAO position about making sure the shift of the dollar also goes to the community?

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Well, of course, the Ontarians who are being taken care of in the community, and there are far more of them now, need the RN role to ensure that their care is adequate.

As far as funding going to the community and home care, yes, we're seeing that shift. We're seeing the shift from hospitals to the home care sector. Unfortunately, sometimes, because there are still a vast number of Ontarians in hospital and they are sicker, we are seeing the hospital sector being left behind to a certain degree. That was the concern with RN replacement.

Ms. Soo Wong: Okay. I want to say thank you very much for your presentation. I also want to acknowledge all the great nurses, my colleagues across the province, in making Ontarians healthy and safe in our community. Thank you for all the good work.

Ms. Wendy Pearson: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you very much for your presentation.

CHAMPLAIN REGION FAMILY COUNCIL NETWORK

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Our next witness is the Champlain Region Family Council Network. Good morning.

Ms. Grace Welch: Good morning.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): You have 10 minutes to present, following which there will be five minutes for questions, in your case from the official opposition. As you start your deputation, if you could please state your name for the record.

Ms. Grace Welch: I'm Grace Welch, and I am chair of the advocacy committee of the Champlain Region Family Council Network. I'd like to thank you on behalf of our committee for this opportunity to speak to you today about issues critical to long-term care in the region and in the province. Our network of volunteers represents the family members and friends of residents in 60 long-term-care homes in the Champlain region. The Champlain region is one of the largest of the LHINs in Ontario, stretching from Renfrew to Cornwall, and it of course includes Ottawa.

Family councils have been established under the Long-Term Care Homes Act to allow family and friends to advocate on behalf of their loved ones in long-term care. Basically, our raison d'être is to ensure their loved ones have quality care in a safe environment where they are treated with dignity and compassion.

Our comments and recommendations are based on first-hand observation experience in long-term-care homes, supplemented by reviews of research reports and studies of care for seniors. The presentation that we've given to you is also reviewed by our network of family councils, so we've had their feedback.

Our first priority is quality care. I think for any of you who would have a loved one in long-term care, this would be your first priority, as well. For quality care, there need to be more front-line staff.

The nature of long-term care has changed considerably in the last decade. Long-term-care homes have in some respects become acute care hospitals, in terms of the degree of illness that they're now caring for. The elderly are entering long-term care when they are older, frailer and have multiple medical conditions. Statistics on residents' conditions in long-term care in our submission illustrate the growing complexity of care.

One of the most significant challenges is the number of residents with Alzheimer's, estimated at between 60% and 70% of all residents in long-term care now in Ontario.

Most residents need help with all aspects of daily living: dressing, feeding and even toileting. At the same time, many long-term-care homes are now providing services once confined to hospitals, such as peritoneal dialysis and IV therapy.

Coupled with the increase in resident care requirements, reporting requirements set by the province have become more complex and demanding. Less than half the average workday of a personal support worker, or

registered nurses, is spent on direct care for residents. While monitoring and accountability are important, these activities should not be accomplished at the expense of residents' care.

0900

It is said that Ontario has the most highly regulated long-term-care sector in Canada, while being among one of the lowest funded. Despite the significant increase in care needs, staffing levels in Ontario long-term-care homes have remained almost static. In 2008, the government endorsed the provincially funded report by Shirlee Sharkey, which recommended a provincial average of four hours of care per resident per day to be reached by 2012. When I say "average," it means that some residents might get six hours and some residents might get four but, on average, they'd all get four.

Recent figures from the ministry show that residents receive only 3.4 hours of care per day, well below the recommended standard, which should have been achieved four years ago. We have a significant gap. This standard of four hours of direct care is recommended by a number of research reports in the United States and Canada, as well as by most stakeholders in long-term care, such as the Registered Nurses' Association, Concerned Friends of Ontario Citizens in Care Facilities, the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions and the Ontario Health Coalition.

Lower staffing levels are associated with higher levels of aggression, more falls, more pressure ulcers, increased incontinence and use of restraints. Staff in long-term care are at their limit. In a 2014 focus group by the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions, 91% of the participants said they're not able to provide good-quality care, citing lack of staff and heavy workloads.

Those of us who regularly visit long-term care see the impact of this insufficient staffing: requests for toileting ignored; food shovelled into residents' mouths while the overworked care worker tries to feed multiple residents; staff so harried that they do not have time for social interaction with the residents in their care; and an increase in the number of critical incidents. I visited a long-term care nearly daily for six years and I can attest to these statements, and I still visit weekly to help with lunch.

We are convinced the only way to ensure that the government funding goes directly to personal care for long-term-care residents is through a legislated minimum standard that meets or exceeds that recommended in current research. We legislated care requirements for day care; why not for this other vulnerable population? The care standard that we're recommending has to be constantly reviewed and assessed against care requirements.

We also recommend that the ministry work with stakeholders to identify ways to reduce the burden of reporting, so that more front-line resources can be committed to personal care.

Lastly, our first priority for better care doesn't just involve more staff. There is increasing recognition that food plays a critical role in the physical and emotional

well-being of LTC residents and the food budget has not kept up with inflation. It's \$8.03 a day per resident to provide three meals and snacks. This amount includes specialized meals for cultural and medical reasons, nutritional supplements and nutrition delivered via feeding tubes. We support the recommendation by the Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors that the raw food allocation be increased immediately by 62 cents and that the food allocation be linked to the consumer price index.

Our second priority, just as important as the first, is ending violence in long-term care. We've seen a significant increase in aggressive behaviours in long-term care across the province. Did you know that the Ontario coroner's office reported that there were 25 homicides in the province's long-term-care facilities between 2001 and 2011? In just two years—between 2013 and 2014—there were 13 resident-on-resident homicides. Roger Skinner, the supervising coroner, in the 2015 coroner's report indicated that these deaths are just the tip of the iceberg.

When does it stop and what must we do? Much of this aggression results from the significant percentage of residents who suffer from dementia. Estimates indicate that 46% of all long-term-care residents exhibit some level of aggressive behaviour, with nearly 10% exhibiting severe levels of aggression. Dementia is the primary cause of this aggressive behaviour, but also, we have seen other factors that contribute to increased aggression. The closure of mental health centres across Ontario, combined with the lack of group homes, has meant that long-term-care homes have to accept an increasing number of individuals, from the age of 18, with developmental disabilities, brain injuries, mental health issues and drug and alcohol abuse problems, so it's becoming a dangerous mix.

We are somewhat encouraged, because I know our LHIN is doing some work to keep younger people out of long-term care, and I hope that other LHINs across the province will follow this trend.

But we are very concerned about our loved ones. We're also concerned about the staff in long-term care. A study that's a bit older now found that Canadian personal support workers are more than seven times more likely to experience violence on the job, compared with their counterparts in Nordic countries. The study attributes the violence to staff having to do too much in too little time, with not enough resources.

We're asking that the number of behaviour support units be increasing. Currently, there are only six in the province. We'd like it to go up to 18. These transitional units would allow more homes to transfer their residents with extremely aggressive behaviours for evaluation and therapy.

Coupled with this, we need to expand capability within each home. They should have a behaviour support team. Right now, they sometimes have to wait days or even weeks for help from the mobile units that are in place.

Also importantly, specialized training on dealing with responsive behaviour should be given to all front-line

long-term-care staff and incorporated into the curriculum for diploma programs, so that new support workers are trained in handling these types of behaviours.

Lastly, as recommended by the Long-Term Care Task Force on Resident Care and Safety, there needs to be a better process for the evaluation, appropriate placement and transfer of residents with specialized needs.

Our third priority is better capacity planning for long-term care. There are still 20,000 Ontario residents—are you telling me I'm running out of time?

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Yes. Can you just wrap up, so I can turn it to the opposition party?

Ms. Grace Welch: Okay. We've got 20,000 people on the wait-list. People are waiting years for a bed. We're asking that we expedite the long-term-care planning in the province. We have to recognize that there is going to be a need for long-term-care beds, regardless, and that long-term care has to be viewed as a critical component of our health care system.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Ms. Welch. I'm going to turn to Ms. MacLeod to begin this round of questioning.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much, Chair, and happy new year. It's the first time we've seen one another.

Ms. Welch, that was a very pragmatic and important deputation that you just gave here today. There are very few people speaking up for those in long-term care, and very few who speak up for their families, so I want to thank you, as a local member of provincial Parliament, for your presentation here today.

I appreciated your conversation with us on improving care, ending violence and building capacity. It's building capacity that I think I'd like to have a conversation about with you.

I'm not sure if you know the type of riding that I represent, inside the city of Ottawa.

Ms. Grace Welch: I live there.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Excellent. Which part do you live in?

Ms. Grace Welch: I was in Stonebridge for 10 years.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Which is great, because you're part urban, part rural there.

Ms. Grace Welch: That's right.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: One of the concerns I have, having the most populous but also the largest geographic riding inside the city, is that I have a vast rural area. What has concerned me is that the Osgoode Care Centre, for example, is the city's only rural long-term-care facility. It's going to need to be upgraded over the next couple of years, which will be a \$20-million price tag for that small village.

What will happen, if the community cannot raise that money—because there won't be any money coming from the province for that—is that those 100 beds will close, and it means that when those 100 beds close, people will be looking for even more bed space inside the city.

We already know we have some bed-blocking happening in our hospitals. That was very well known. It has happened at the Queensway Carleton Hospital, for

example, because there hasn't been the appropriate level of care in LTC. That has sparked some synergies with some of the various seniors' residences.

0910

I guess the question that I have for you is, when we look at upgrading the various bed spaces across the province, and in particular here in our city—understanding that we already have a backlog—and if there isn't sufficient funding for upgrading the beds, where do you see, in the next five or 10 years, the situation inside the city of Ottawa, in terms of capacity?

Ms. Grace Welch: Well, I think it's already very critical now. I looked at the long-term-care wait-lists for some of the more popular homes, and there are between 500 and 600. There are several homes in Ottawa that already have over 600 names on the list, so we've already got a crisis situation.

Now, in terms of upgrading, the ministry did announce last year a program to upgrade over 30,000 beds, and I would think that a home like Osgoode would have access to that funding. I know I've had a certain level of frustration in that it seems to be going very, very slowly. I don't know, in this region, if any homes have been identified, although I know that there is work that is going on. What we're concerned about—I mean, I was out for dinner last night with four friends, and we're all worried about having access to long-term-care homes for our loved ones, and that they'll be there.

I think that in the rural ones it's going to be quite challenging, because some of the smaller homes may not have the resources. I think somehow the province, in doing their capacity planning, has to recognize that these rural homes need to continue and maybe have extra supports.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I really appreciate it. It's about a \$20-million commitment that their community is going to have to come up with. Whether there are some resources from the province or not, it's still quite hefty.

One of the things I did appreciate from your presentation was that you talked about other models of senior accommodations in Ontario communities. I think that's important, because we have had a drive in the last decade toward more seniors living on their own and encouraging seniors staying at home. That program is fine. It's just that I don't think we have to put all of our eggs in one basket. That concerns me, and it's one of the things, representing a high-growth area, that we've seen. Not every situation is suitable for that. But where it is, we have to build the capacity for care in the home, and where it is not, we have to have, I think, a sustainable system and invest appropriately with those long-term-care homes.

When you talked about investigating—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Ms. MacLeod. I'm going to stop you here.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: We'll carry this on afterward. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm very mindful of the time today. We have a full house.

Thank you very much for your presentation, as well as your written submission.

Ms. Grace Welch: Thank you very much. I very much appreciate the opportunity.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Have a great day.

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CONTRABAND TOBACCO

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before us is the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco: Mr. Gary Grant. Welcome, Mr. Grant. We see you regularly, or I should say annually.

The Clerk is coming around with your written submission. As you know, the routine is that you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questions will be coming from the official third party. You may begin any time, and please introduce yourself when you begin for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Grant: Thank you. It is nice to see everyone again. I am Gary Grant. I'm the spokesperson for the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobacco, or NCACT. I'm a 39-year veteran, retired, of the Toronto Police Service, and I'm the chair of Toronto Crime Stoppers.

NCACT is concerned about the danger of contraband tobacco. Our 18 members share the goals of working together to educate people and urging government to take quick action to stop this growing threat. More information about the coalition can be found on our website, stopcontrabandtobacco.ca.

I'm pleased to be here today to discuss Ontario's contraband tobacco problem and what the province can do to stop it. As you may know, Ontario has the worst contraband tobacco problem in Canada. In fact, an average of one in three cigarettes purchased in 2015 was illegal. That spiked to almost 40% of cigarettes in September.

Ontario's illegal cigarette problem is beginning to spread beyond its borders. Contraband cigarettes produced in Ontario have begun to be smuggled to other provinces, such as Manitoba. This spread extends even beyond Canada's borders, as revealed by recent reports in Mexico and Costa Rica. In fact, 12% of lost tobacco tax revenues in Mexico are because of illegal cigarettes produced in Ontario. Copies of these articles have been provided.

So, what is contraband tobacco? It's unregulated, but it's extremely cheap. A baggie of 200 cigarettes often costs less than a movie ticket, or one tenth of the price of the legal product. It is sold through a criminal distribution network that connects cigarettes to kids, without the hassles of checking for ID. This dangerous combination of low price and easy accessibility has made illegal cigarettes a prime source for youth smoking.

In fact, a study by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health flagged the easy accessibility of contraband tobacco and its low price as being especially attractive to youth. They found that almost 40% of youth smokers reported using contraband tobacco in the last year.

The fact is illegal cigarettes fund some of Canada's least desirable elements. The RCMP estimates that contraband tobacco is the cash cow of more than 175 criminal gangs, who use the proceeds to finance their other activities, such as guns, drugs, even human trafficking and smuggling.

Ontario is an epicentre of illegal cigarette manufacturing. Cornwall Island, a short drive from Ottawa, is at the heart of illicit cigarette production in Canada, with the RCMP identifying dozens of illegal cigarette factories operating on both sides of the border, and there are more located just southwest of Toronto.

A single factory can produce as many as 10,000 cigarettes a minute. That means millions and millions of cigarettes are produced in this province each year. The profits from these illegal sales end up in the hands of criminals. In fact, the RCMP have identified about \$100 million in suspicious financial transactions over a six-year period from a contraband production hot spot in Quebec. That's a lot of money from what is currently a very low-risk enterprise, which gangs use, as I said, to fund their other illegal activities, including guns and drugs.

Criminals involved in the trade work to protect their operations and terrorize nearby communities. The RCMP has had to repeatedly warn snowmobilers in the Cornwall area to watch out for booby-traps set by the criminals that smuggle cigarettes in the area. There have been numerous other cases of direct intimidation of law-abiding citizens in the area by the criminals that smuggle cigarettes across the St. Lawrence River and then to private property.

Preventing youth smoking and cutting off funding to organized crime are reasons enough for the government to take action against contraband tobacco, but there are also important effects to the public purse. In fact, the Drummond report highlighted contraband tobacco as one of the areas that Ontario should address when battling the deficit.

In 2013, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation, a coalition member, released a report estimating that the overall contraband tobacco trade in Ontario cost an estimated \$689 million to \$1.1 billion in lost tax revenue in 2011 to both the federal and provincial governments. This adds up to an astounding estimated \$3.4 billion to \$5.5 billion over the last five years. That's a lot of money, particularly in an era of fiscal restraint and budget tightening.

Every illegal cigarette sold in Ontario represents a loss to the provincial treasury, which is trouble enough. But as you can see, the social harm is much deeper. Contraband brings with it troubling consequences that demand action.

So what should Ontario do? Well, we're pleased to see that the government has begun to take action against contraband tobacco, beginning with commitments in the last provincial budget and continuing in the fall economic statement. Some of these have already been implemented, including allowing law enforcement to stop and search a vehicle if there is reasonable and probable grounds to believe that it's being used to smuggle raw

leaf tobacco. In the fall, new regulations were also proposed that further bolstered raw leaf tobacco regulations.

These are in addition to the passage of Bill 186 during the last Legislature, which introduced fines for possession of contraband tobacco, and the enactment of the federal Bill C-10, which creates a Criminal Code offence for trafficking for the purpose of contraband, and mandatory penalties for repeat offenders. In this latter case, we have already seen reports of police taking advantage of the new legislation.

Despite these steps forward, there is still much to do. We believe that there are still a number of straightforward and common-sense actions that government can take in the budget that will have a real effect.

First, new legislative tools for police, like Bill C-10 and Bill 186, would benefit from increased awareness among law enforcement officials and the public. Ontario would do well to increase public awareness and enforcement of these fines in areas where contraband sales and use are most prevalent.

We also believe that there is confusion among members of the public about what is illegal and what is not, especially as it relates to tobacco tax stamps. The government should create an awareness campaign that helps consumers differentiate between legal and illegal products, including how to identify which stamps have all taxes paid and are not subject to fines for possession.

Second, the fall economic statement continued the government's commitment to establish a dedicated OPP contraband tobacco enforcement team. We encourage Ontario to look to Quebec as a model for that successful implementation of such a resource.

In Quebec, provincial programs were supplemented by allowing municipal police forces to investigate and prosecute contraband tobacco offences, even allowing municipalities to keep the proceeds. They were supplemented with dedicated funding through the ACCES Tabac program. That means that police forces have the resources they need to pursue investigations. The government of Quebec has consistently recouped their return on their investment through this program many times over.

Third, Ontario must also do more to curb the supply of illegal cigarettes at the manufacturing level. Illegal factories in Ontario can produce millions of cigarettes in a day. A key element of reducing this is making manufacturing materials harder to get. The government's efforts to regulate raw leaf tobacco are obviously a step towards this. It's important that the government continue to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness, revising as needed.

0920

However, illegal manufacturers have not been limited to Ontario-grown tobacco, smuggling tobacco illegal cigarettes in from the United States or overseas. Indeed, the Cornwall Regional Task Force regularly intercepts enough tobacco to make millions of cigarettes. The 2015 budget recognized this with a commitment to explore the regulation of other cigarette manufacturing materials, including cigarette filter materials like acetate tow.

We would recommend that the province move forward with such regulations as quickly as possible. Acetate tow is manufactured by only a few companies globally and cannot be easily replaced by another substance. Government regulation of filters and acetate tow in the same manner as Ontario is pursuing for loose leaf tobacco would go a long way to curbing the manufacture of illegal cigarettes. If the government is serious about reducing illegal cigarette production, this is an important step.

Finally, all governments must work together on this issue. We would encourage Ontario to ask the federal government to make contraband tobacco a priority in their tobacco control efforts. On matters such as awareness of what illegal products look like, regulation of tobacco manufacturing materials and cross-jurisdictional enforcement, there is a clear role for the federal government to play. Ontario cannot and should not face this problem alone.

In conclusion, illegal cigarettes are a scourge on our communities. They fund organized crime. They facilitate youth smoking. They shortchange taxpayers a phenomenal amount of money. There are clear and straightforward steps that Ontario can take to address this problem, steps which will hurt organized crime, make our communities safer and help the budget's bottom line. The only losers in this equation are the criminals involved in the trade.

Thanks for your time. I'd be happy to answer your questions.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Grant. I'm going to turn to Ms. Fife to begin this round of questioning.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you for being here. This is my third tour with the finance committee and you have consistently come forward with some productive recommendations to the government on contraband tobacco.

Mr. Gary Grant: Thank you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It must feel a little bit like Groundhog Day for you on occasion when you come here, although you made some points today about the last provincial budget as it relates to raw leaf tobacco. Thank you for raising the concerns that raw leaf tobacco doesn't just come from Ontario; it comes from other jurisdictions.

Your comments around lost revenue through contraband tobacco to the Treasury Board are interesting to me. These are long-standing issues that you have raised with both the Minister of Finance and with the President of the Treasury Board.

Do you think the government fully understands the loss or the negative financial impact in not fully embracing contraband tobacco with some solutions? We just found out yesterday that this government failed to collect \$48 million in fines through the Ministry of Transportation from those private companies that failed to maintain our roads. They just didn't collect the fines that they themselves issued to these companies.

On revenue streams, do you want to comment on that, please?

Mr. Gary Grant: Well, I would suspect that the government is fully aware that they're not collecting the money. If it was my bank account, I would certainly know if I was short a lot of money that I should have, and I would be taking every step I could to try and recoup that money.

It is like Groundhog Day, but every year there's an incremental increase and improvement. This year I actually spoke to Minister Sousa. He spoke at the economic update saying that this government is going to make the underground economy, the black market, a priority, especially contraband cigarettes. So I think they do recognize it.

I will say that if I had known about this deficit and how I could recoup this deficit for so long, I would be more interested in taking a look at best practices of how to recoup it, like they have in Quebec. In 2009, their contraband problem was the same as Ontario's, with the same type of losses, and because of Bill 59 and the implementations they've made to that, they've cut their contraband rate by 50%, which has enhanced their treasury.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I think that this government doesn't fully understand the negative impact that it has on the health care system as well. You raised the issue of targeting youth around contraband tobacco, and—this is our fifth day—we have heard health care concerns at every single stop that would break your heart. That's because hospital budgets have been frozen now moving into the fifth year. This government not only has a waste-and-scandal issue, they have a revenue problem and you've identified a way to address some of that.

Thank you for coming in today. I appreciate your consistency.

Mr. Gary Grant: I just would say one thing: When you mention youth, MPP Fife, it is very important to me to address youth. I'm outraged at the problem because of the youth. They have access to cigarettes sold to them by criminals, which starts a whole new generation of smokers, plus they're learning that it's okay to break the laws. If it's okay to break the law in the black market for cigarettes, all the way down the road, that's how they're going to grow up.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's right.

Mr. Gary Grant: I think that really needs to be addressed.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes. It's a multi-faceted issue. Thank you for bringing that to our attention.

Mr. Gary Grant: You're welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Grant, and thank you for your written submission.

OTTAWA CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE ENVIRONMENT
AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before us is the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce Environment

and Sustainability Committee: Mr. Don Anderson. Welcome, Mr. Anderson.

As you've probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning, and this round of questioning will be coming from the government side. You can begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

Mr. Don Anderson: Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the environmental issues that I'm going to bring forth from the chamber of commerce.

Just a short history: Chambers of commerce are not typically concerned with environmental issues. We created this committee five years ago, and we created it with partners here in the city of Ottawa who are recognized leaders in this. It was our desire to have a committee that could provide advocacy on behalf of the chamber, and then therefore have the chamber support and provide some leadership in the city of Ottawa pertaining to environmental sustainability.

As I said, we have been in business for five years, and we've managed to bring some legislation through the Ontario government, as well as to influence even the Canadian government with some policy. This is, again, because of the expertise that we have brought to bear.

We are currently working in an alliance with the leading environmental businesses in Ottawa, and we're trying to lobby and influence the city of Ottawa to do more with its environmental program, specifically in the downtown core.

The reason that this is important is that since 2003, the city of Ottawa has created a committee. They do have a plan, and it's due for an update in 2016. However, two things: They have not put it into a priority mode, and they have not resourced it. Therefore, we haven't made the kind of progress that the capital of the nation needs to have in terms of demonstrating some leadership and in quality of life for sustainable living.

The city of Ottawa is approximately 500 hectares or 1,235 acres in size. I mention this because it is twice the size of Houston, which has three million people, and is the largest city by land mass in North America. We have significant challenges with a city like that, so it's in acknowledgement of that that I say we're focused on the downtown core. We have a rural area, and we have major cities in themselves with Barrhaven, Kanata and others, and we are working with those chambers. But the city has this challenge, and it needs to provide leadership.

Our analysis of this is that leadership has consisted of doing water, trees and bicycle lanes, which is a good start, particularly because it doesn't cost any money to emphasize that. The province also has made those its priorities, and I'm suggesting that the province needs to step up its ability to support and provide guidance to environmental standards that will reduce the waste that we have in our systems and increase the health of our population. It will actually generate more money by being a sustainable city.

I bring this to your attention because we are behind in implementing this, and we need more support and,

actually, guidance in our consideration from the province to ensure that we are aligned.

0930

The province is spending money, but I don't think the province has elevated this to the level of importance that will ensure that the communities in Ontario—and specifically Ottawa, which is more than a community in Ontario; again, being the nation's capital, it's expected that we provide leadership. One only has to look at other capitals, like Washington, D.C. and the capitals of the states in the US, who have demonstrated both the economic and social benefits, as well as the health benefits, of improving our environment.

That said, I am not going to waste a lot of your time preaching about this. I want you to know that this chamber has been in business for five years. We've gotten some legislation passed. We're looking for the government of Ontario to be more proactive. I'm specifically pointing out that there's a great opportunity for you to work with some subject matter experts in Ottawa so that the province of Ontario is gaining and providing the leadership that they're already participating in, in terms of environmental sustainability.

I was inspired to come here, as I had read this from the Honourable Glen Murray, who is your Minister of the Environment: "The cost of doing nothing to fight climate change far outweighs the cost of solving the problem. Ontario is prepared to change and move forward because our future depends on the choices we make today.

"We have the ideas, the determination and the energy to lead the global drive to reduce emissions, and to make the transformational changes that must be made if we are to prevent a 2- to 4-degree-Celsius rise in average global temperatures and ensure a better future for our children and our grandchildren.

"We must do it. We can do it. And we will do it, together."

That's an inspirational message. We're getting it, but I think that message needs to be more actively communicated. There are agencies, like the environment committee, where we could step up together and put a better plan in place.

The city of Ottawa has a plan. It's about to renew that plan. The plan is not bad, but it's not funded and it's not prioritized. We would need the province's help to ensure that the priorities in the cities, and particularly in Ottawa, are elevated and funded.

Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Anderson, for your presentation. I'm going to Ms. Lalonde to begin this round of questioning.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. Happy new year.

As an MPP for Ottawa-Orléans, but also living in Orléans and here in Ottawa for a long time, it's refreshing to know that the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce has actually decided to make a committee part of the environment process. Like you said, sometimes businesses don't always focus on the environmental factor.

It's very nice to meet you. Actually, I don't think we've ever officially met.

For me, I know I look at the city of Ottawa, and certainly our province, as moving things forward in terms of advancing public transit, like the LRT, phase 2, with phase 1 being under construction right now.

I also know from a colleague of mine, Eleanor McMahon, who is a strong advocate for cycling, that Ottawa has made a lot of effort, and our province also. I was asking and consulting with my colleagues, in terms of numbers, but I think it's over \$25 million that we have put in our budget to promote more cycling and opportunities with municipalities.

I'm not sure exactly how the city has responded to that, so I don't know if you're familiar with that investment.

Mr. Don Anderson: I am familiar. The city has responded by putting its own funds out there. It has created, as I pointed out—especially in the downtown core, where we're at today—Laurier and other avenues, where dedicated bike lanes are being put in. There are plans in the future to increase that infrastructure.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: When you mentioned that the 2016 city proposal is under review, have you had consultation with the city to see how they're going to move forward in maintaining those opportunities for cyclists?

Mr. Don Anderson: We have on our committee a number of individuals who are in regular communication with the city at various agencies, including Councillor Chernushenko's environment committee. We are all good friends. We're pursuing the same cause. However, again, there are 23 councillors in the city of Ottawa. I believe about 13 of those are rural councillors. We only have about five who are dedicated to the downtown core. Again, it's one of those issues where we all get lumped together and it's not prioritized. What we are trying to help the city do—and the agencies in the city, like EnviroCentre, are all aligned with us.

We have presented a letter to the city; we have met with the city. They know that we want to encourage them to do more, but that's why I would come here: to ask the province that if it's important to the province—because you have been investing in not only Ottawa but other cities—to provide a little bit more proactive target setting.

It's not actually even a question of money. It's about setting these priorities and moving it beyond bike lanes, trees, and water. Those are all important but I think everybody is addressing those.

What we're not addressing is urban congestion. Here in the city of Ottawa we have a \$3-billion program to do the light rail, and there is no plan in there that measures the ecological benefits of doing that.

We could sit here and have the city say, "We can't do anything because building codes are a provincial issue," but we have a downtown core which we're going to grow by 20,000 to 30,000 people over the next five years after the completion of this, and we're not going to change our

codes to make sure that the built environment is performing with a better environmental footprint than it currently has.

Those are the kinds of issues that we're trying to bring attention to. We want to work with using our subject-matter experts with the city and anything we can do to the province to accelerate this and prioritize it higher.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Anderson, I'm going to stop you here. Before you go, just to remind you that you have until February 2 at 5 p.m. to do your written submission to the Clerk about your presentation today.

Mr. Don Anderson: Thank you, and thank you for the opportunity to be here.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for being here, and thank you for your presentation.

CHEMISTRY INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before us is the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada: Mr. Bob Masterson. Welcome, and good morning.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Be hard on him.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Oh, it's your turn. Anyway, good morning.

Mr. Bob Masterson: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): As you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning is coming from the official opposition party. You may begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Bob Masterson: Very good. Thank you. It's Bob Masterson, president and CEO of the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada. Madam Chair and committee members, it's a pleasure to be here today with you and to provide input to the pre-budget consultations on behalf of Ontario's chemistry industry.

The Chemistry Industry Association of Canada has made a formal submission for the pre-budget process; however, this morning I want to speak to you from the heart about something I care very deeply about, and that's improving the competitive position of Ontario's manufacturing sector. Fiscal discipline is important, sound stewardship of public finances is important, but only economic growth will deliver the jobs and prosperity that Ontarians need and deserve.

I have three key messages to share with you today. I will be brief.

My first message for the committee is that, to be sure, the low Canadian dollar is not a panacea for what ails the manufacturing sector in Ontario. The impacts of the lower dollar are very complex. They vary company by company and facility by facility. Many Ontario enterprises receive raw materials and key machinery from offshore. As those input costs have risen by more than 40%, the competitive position of Ontario's operations has eroded significantly.

Many companies have very sophisticated currency-hedging programs in place specifically to guard against the volatility and vagaries of violent currency swings. Those companies are not fully benefiting from a low dollar.

Finally, those Ontario operations that report to global and US headquarters often must achieve sales and profit objectives priced in US dollars. If significant portions of the sales are made within Canada, those objectives are impossible to achieve. What often happens is, companies make decisions to dispatch US-based operations instead of those in Ontario.

It doesn't suggest that some companies won't benefit and are not benefiting from a lower dollar; it just says that it's very complex. More importantly, what it says is that this temporarily low, unpredictable currency exchange does not and will not factor into investment decisions to locate major plants and machinery in Ontario.

0940

The second message I wish to leave with you is that our collective attention must be focused on improving the investment environment in Ontario. My biggest concern is that, as a society, we now understand and appreciate the need for Ontario industry to compete for market share globally. But we fail completely to understand the need for Ontario to compete globally for its share of investment.

As Ontarians, we're comfortable with best efforts, personal bests, silver and bronze medals. Here in Ottawa, we were extremely proud when the Red Blacks competed in the Grey Cup. But make no mistake: When it comes to investment, there's no second prize. Ontario either wins the investment or it gets nothing.

Ontario has done many things well to try to attract further investment. The lowering of corporate tax rates and introduction of the HST: These were important. But for every step forward we've seen one step back at least, and this impacts our ability to attract investment.

For the chemistry sector: It is currently the fastest-growing manufacturing sector in North America. There are currently more than 140 new projects being tracked and announced, totalling over \$160 billion in US dollars. Since 2010, in Ontario, we have attracted over \$1 billion of those new investments: \$500 million for NOVA in Corunna, Ontario; \$250 million by Jungbunzlauer in Port Colborne; \$200 million by Cytec in Niagara Falls; and \$185 million by BioAmber in Sarnia. Those are good numbers. In aggregate, though, what we should have expected, based on historical patterns, is at least \$5 billion of investment in Ontario by now. We haven't seen it.

We can't rely on a low dollar. It's not going to help. But if we're intentional and diligent at this time, we've got a bit of time and a bit of space to correct our course and position the important manufacturing sector for success in the future.

Finally, my third message for the committee is this: In addition to electricity prices, one of the biggest barriers to new investment in Ontario is the complex, costly and grossly inefficient regulatory system we all operate

under. We can't point fingers here; it's a situation that has built up over many, many years, and we all have responsibility for the situation we're in.

I'll just share a brief story with you to illustrate this. One of our members recently made a major investment in new equipment to double its capacity. One key piece of equipment required separate approvals from the Ministry of the Environment and two different branches of the Ontario Technical Standards and Safety Authority. Unfortunately, each of these three regulatory branches of government imposed incompatible requirements on the same piece of equipment. Eventually, at great cost and time, those issues were addressed.

My story is not done there. When yet another branch of TSSA dictated the operator training and qualifications required for the new equipment, the regional TSSA officer overruled those decisions and imposed his own requirements on the plant. That company has decided to make an economic decision to operate at less than full capacity at this time rather than meet that arbitrary requirement, a requirement not imposed in other jurisdictions operating similar equipment.

Look, no one questions the need for regulatory regimes to protect workers, the public and the environment. What they do object to, though, are schemes that impose a disproportionate burden compared to other jurisdictions when those schemes don't provide any commensurate benefit to Ontarians.

The complexities, the inconsistencies, the cost, the average 700-day wait time for environmental approvals—make no mistake: Those issues paint Ontario in a very negative light in the investment centres of global multinationals.

I bring this to your attention today because I strongly believe Ontarians deserve better and I strongly believe that we can do better, but we can no longer avoid addressing this rather large elephant in the room. We must work collaboratively for better outcomes.

With that in mind, we were especially pleased to note that chemicals manufacturing was identified as a priority sector in the newly launched Red Tape Challenge initiative, which was announced by Minister Duguid this week. We remain hopeful that our participation in that initiative will provide an opportunity for meaningful improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of Ontario's regulatory regime.

Once again on behalf of the Chemistry Industry Association of Canada, I thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts in the pre-budget hearings.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm going to turn to Mr. Clark to speak in this round of questioning.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thanks, Chair. Happy New Year; nice to see you. Mr. McDonell also has a question.

I just want to thank you, Bob, for your presentation today. I did some pre-budget consultations in my riding earlier this week at a mayors' breakfast. This whole issue of our regulatory system and the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing: I'm particularly saddened

by that TSSA story, where one officer overrules another decision.

I have a riding that's in close proximity to the United States—I have two international bridges in my riding—and a week doesn't go by that I don't have a business come to me, saying that the US is trying to entice them there for low hydro rates, decreased regulatory burden, and the list goes on and on.

What do you think would be the best government approach to try to deal with issues like the regulatory system? Is the ministry currently doing things in the right direction in terms of a review or should there be something perhaps from an all-party perspective that looks at that particular issue?

Mr. Bob Masterson: Well, you're the ones who can decide that, how the assembly itself should approach the issue.

Look, my approach: I'm a graduate student of public policy, and my advice—the same as I give to my children all the time—is when you're in a hole, stop digging. The main thing is that as you, in government and in the assembly, see new initiatives coming before you, you'd better ask some much tougher questions. You'd better ask: How does this line up with how it's done in other jurisdictions? Can we afford this? What's the most efficient way to accomplish these objectives? Are there other service providers that can do this in other ways? Those are all good questions that we've never had to ask in the past, but today we have to ask them if we want to be competitive. I think that's the main thing: Stop digging the hole. Let's start doing things better, having better outcomes going forward.

I can't talk about the Ministry of the Environment. I think there's a process there that will be under way, but it will be imposed on them. But I will say very favourable things about the work being done by MEDEI and Minister Duguid. They are asking the right questions. My only comment to the committee, the assembly and the government itself is to please support Minister Duguid and his deputy Gherson and what they're trying to do. They're asking all the right questions. They're trying to pull the right levers. If they are ignored, you're going to put us behind for another generation.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I believe Mr. McDonell has some questions for you.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you for coming out today. I have a private member's bill to address some of the issues of TSSA. We're looking to at least publishing the regulations so companies and designers can actually know what the regulations are before they go for approvals.

In my own riding, one of our largest employers was looking at creating two lines of additional manufacturing. After going through the process for the approval of one, they left. They never followed through on the second one because of the regulation and the issues they had with TSSA.

I met with a manufacturer in our area who refuses to design product for Ontario because he can sell his

equipment all around the world, but there's so much trouble selling it in Ontario and the costs of getting the inspections done—again, they're arbitrary. They go in, and a regional person wants something different. The customer is getting fed up. They're seeing approvals that cost—equipment that should be almost nothing being \$50,000 or \$60,000 and still not having approval.

Are you seeing the same things?

Mr. Bob Masterson: Well, we do, and I mentioned TSSA, but that was just by way of an example. I think if you just focus on that, you're missing the big picture, which is that the entire regime is complex, costly and inefficient. For those costs, if we got better outcomes, we could all celebrate that and say it was worth it, but we're not seeing better outcomes. We're seeing the types of things that you've mentioned.

There are opportunities, again, to reform that, to look at some of the best practices in other jurisdictions, whether it's an inspector from the Ministry of the Environment or TSSA—the TSSA people are very powerful. I didn't mention the name of that company because their TSSA officer has the ability to shut them down. It's very difficult, even for them, to come forward with a concern about how this works. They've got a new line. They could be operating 24/7 around the clock and they've made a decision to only have two shifts because they think it's an arbitrary decision, the operator training and certification requirements that are now imposed after the date and that are different than what was said at HQ.

It's a broad story, but it isn't just TSSA.

Mr. Jim McDonell: It's interesting you talked about companies being afraid to come forward, because that's very much the same thing that happened. They have the opinion and they get picked on.

Mr. Bob Masterson: It's a risk.

Mr. Jim McDonell: If they go public and talk about something, then the TSSA seems to be in the next day with another regulation that is kind of out of the blue. We see it time and time again.

Mr. Bob Masterson: Again, it's not the only issue; I just used it as an example. But it's a statement of how complex it is.

You asked about other jurisdictions. I'll just say, very briefly, in my last comment, you talked about the draw to take Ontario facilities and investments to other jurisdictions. Ontario's not in that game. That's the part that's the most frustrating. As an economy, we're not out saying, "We want that investment to come here. What would it take to make it work and to get you to make that investment?" So other people are just stealing it and giving what needs to be done.

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One of the key things we see in other jurisdictions that make investment work is a one-stop shop, so that it's not the investor and the operator who have to go ministry to ministry, department to department, branch to branch to try to make this thing work. There's one place they go, and when they have problems, they come back and say, "Oh, you need to provide that department with this. Can

you get me that by tomorrow?" Done, and things move very quickly.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Mr. Masterson, I'm going to stop you there.

Mr. Bob Masterson: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): If you have any written submissions, you can do so by February 2 at 5 p.m., to the Clerk. Thank you very much again.

PROBATION OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is the Probation Officers Association of Ontario: Elana Lamesse, as well as—there are two of you, I understand?

Ms. Elana Lamesse: She's not going to come.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): She's not going to come in? Okay. All right.

Welcome. You've probably heard you have 10 minutes for your presentation followed by five minutes of questioning, and this round of questions will be coming from the official third party.

You may begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Good morning, everyone. My name is Elana Lamesse. I am a probation and parole officer, and I am also the president of the Probation Officers Association of Ontario. POAO is a voluntary, non-profit organization representing the professional interests of probation and parole officers across Ontario. POAO is an association of like-minded professionals who believe in the work they do and the role they play in the criminal justice system. We are committed to the preservation of the fundamental role of the probation officer within community corrections. I would like to thank you for providing us the opportunity to present here today.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has a mandate to protect the public by establishing, maintaining and operating adult correctional institutions and probation and parole offices in Ontario. In our communities, probation and parole officers strive to meet that mandate by supervising convicted offenders who receive a sentence that allows them to stay in the community on probation, conditional sentence or early release on parole.

Corrections in Ontario has recently received a lot of media attention, partly because of the threat of a strike, but more so because of the ongoing major incidents that unfortunately have become far too commonplace in our business. Those incidents are not simply isolated events, but are the symptoms of a system that has broken down from neglect and poor management.

Bear in mind that the public only hears about a fraction of the incidents that occur on an ongoing basis within the walls of our institutions as well as our probation offices. As a charter member of the critical incident stress management team, I can tell you that these

incidents are becoming more and more commonplace as officers find themselves in risky situations on a more consistent basis. I believe in the critical incident stress management model, but my heart sinks a little bit each time I receive a call activating me to respond to the needs of a colleague who has suffered some form of trauma in the workplace.

Correctional services, like any other system in government, requires resources to operate effectively. When those resources are denied, the system suffers. In corrections, this has come to a critical point where the safety of our community, our staff and the offenders we serve is being significantly compromised.

I am here today to focus on community corrections. Our probation and parole services monitor over 50,000 offenders in the communities of Ontario on any given day.

The Ontario Auditor General, Bonnie Lysyk, identified some alarming trends in the 2014 audit of adult community corrections services. I will share the following highlights:

—Ontario has the highest offender population of all provinces and territories.

—Ontario probation and parole officers have the highest caseload averages in Canada.

—The Ontario government spends the second least on probation and parole services in Canada, just \$5.81 per day per offender.

—44% of our offenders are classified in the high- to very-high-risk category.

—By the ministry's own estimates, the number of offenders with mental health issues has grown by almost 90% since 2003, to about 10,000, or 20% of the entire offender population as of 2013, yet the ministry has provided no resources and minimal training to help officers deal with this workload pressure.

As a probation and parole officer for the last 25 years, I can say that I have some considerable knowledge of the subject matter. Our POs are a dedicated and skilled group of professionals who continue to give their all to deliver on the mandate of our ministry. Sadly, we just cannot meet all of the requirements of the job with the staffing levels that are presently in place. That means that public safety suffers, officers suffer from burnout and vicarious trauma, and offenders are not supervised to our fullest capacity.

Almost all of the disconcerting facts uncovered in the Auditor General's report can in some direct or indirect fashion be attributed to a serious lack of resources—human resources. The recent agreement to hire 25 new officers is comforting; however, this action does not even drop the caseload average in Ontario by a single percentage point.

What the Auditor General's report does not highlight is that our ministry does have a robust program model, and the standards of supervision that our government sets are as high as, if not higher than, the rest of this country. PPOs in Ontario have carried the highest national workload for more than two decades. Despite this fact,

our ministry continued to increase the duties and responsibilities of officers to administer their case supervision.

A new style of supervision is on our horizon as well. This style entails an intensive amount of training along with a new way of interacting with our clients: Strategic Training Initiative in Community Supervision, or STICS, where probation officers are being trained to apply evidence-based principles of offender rehabilitation in all aspects of client supervision. Training for this initiative is designed to enhance the skills of probation officers to include structured one-to-one intervention techniques that target the criminogenic needs of medium- and high-risk offenders in the community.

Make no mistake, POAO is behind this initiative and believes that it can be an integral tool used by probation officers to rehabilitate offenders and keep our communities safe. Our fear is that there will be no resources to accommodate the extra duties that front-line officers will be forced to take on in an effort to meet the increasing demands of our caseloads. This will also result in less time for other workload requirements. This has been an ongoing theme within this ministry for more than a decade. At some point, with enough pressure, any dam will break, and I put it to you that, in our case, it already has, regardless of the creative ways we as probation and parole officers try to maintain our service delivery.

POAO's counterpart to the south, the American Probation and Parole Association, APPA, suggests a caseload average of 50 for a probation model that is similar to that which we utilize in Ontario. Our officers typically have caseloads of 60 to 75, and in some areas, the numbers range between 80 and 90. This is unacceptable and it's unsafe. Public safety is the most important aspect of the mandate of our ministry.

Our minister recently posted a message about the transformation of correctional services in Ontario where he mentioned the need for our correctional system to better care for offenders with mental health issues. This is very, very true. In the past 25 years, I have seen the changes in the clients we are serving. These are high-risk, high-needs individuals, often dually diagnosed with complex issues. We are seeing individuals who are unable to cope with the everyday stressors of daily life. Often, their probation and parole officer is their only source of support. These are not cases; these are people: people who need us, people who we just do not have the time they deserve to serve them because of our workload pressures.

Probation and parole officers are in need of cutting-edge and ongoing training and professional development. We have to stay on top of the trends. Our communities depend on it. This is sorely lacking. When training is available, it is difficult to get away from our caseloads in order to attend. Who supervises our clients when we are in training? No one. When we return from training we are so far behind in our work that we fear something or someone will be lost. When we drop the ball in our work, there can be dire consequences.

We are allocated \$100 per probation and parole officer annually to attend professional development. What kind

of professional development do you think is happening with that kind of budget? Yet we must keep on top of the trends in order to be effective in our profession. Does it make sense to force a professional who society has entrusted to look after our most damaged population to search for professional development based on cost? Is adequate professional development being received for \$100 per year? I think not.

With a caseload of 51,000 provincially, and anticipating more pressures on the community with changes to parole and other alternatives to custody, Ontario would need another 100 probation and parole officers to achieve caseload sizes that are consistent with APPA recommendations. Taking into account the 25 new full-time positions promised to us by this government, 100 new full-time officers would require an increased contribution of approximately \$7 million to the current budget. That is far less than the amount of money spent in the last 14 months on preparation for a strike that did not occur.

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The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Could you wrap up your presentation, please?

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Thank you.

Laughter.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Oh, you had two more seconds.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: I'm right at the end. I have two sentences left.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Ms. Fife has questions for you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Do you want to finish, Elana?

Ms. Elana Lamesse: May I?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Okay. It is difficult to say how much would be needed to run an effective program with consistent, relevant and ongoing training for our probation and parole officers, but I put to you today that it is far less than we will pay down the road if we do not begin to heal this broken system we call corrections. Thank you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Elana. I want to say, first off, thanks for the work that you do. I think that as this committee has gone around the province, we've actually had the unique opportunity to listen to parole officers, particularly in Thunder Bay. I hope that we have a better understanding of the work that parole officers do as it relates to corrections. When the mayor of Thunder Bay called the facility in Thunder Bay a "rathole"—

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Yes, I saw that.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And the correctional officers called it "criminal college."

Ms. Elana Lamesse: That's not unique to Thunder Bay.

Ms. Catherine Fife: No, it's not. I toured Maplehurst and Vanier in Milton. I have to tell you, what I saw in those institutions will stay with me forever. Every MPP needs to tour a correctional facility in this province to see how bad they are and how long the correctional staff and parole officers have been waiting for justice, which is

something ironic, don't you think, that correctional officers have been waiting more than a decade for justice?

The Auditor General—I'm so happy that you've raised that report. The Auditor General is an independent officer of the Legislature. She has no partisan affiliation. Her job is to follow the money and to find the weaknesses. That report came out in 2014, and now you only see an increase of 25 more officers? It is really something else.

Also, I wanted to give you a chance to touch on or expand a little bit on mental health, because what we've heard is that this is the criminalization of the mentally ill.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Very much so. That's what we're seeing.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And to see these women who are in solitary confinement in their own kind of hell at Vanier—that will never leave me. Because it's such an important piece in the training and the professional development piece, can you please expand on that, Elana?

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Well, if you're familiar with the Jahn decision, human rights decision where our ministry was supposed to commit to ongoing training for mental health: I'm still waiting. It hasn't happened. Our caseloads are becoming so complex, and I'm not trained to deal with the sick mind; I'm trained to deal with the bad mind. So it's a whole different way of looking at things, and unless there's support out there, it just doesn't happen.

That's not to mention the wait for services in the communities. When we're faced with somebody who is finally ready to tackle their issues and talk to somebody or get medicated, and then you tell them they have to wait 18 months for an appointment, it's reprehensible.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes. And from the parole officer perspective, your caseload is so high that when the gaps are exposed, usually it's because of a tragedy.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Exactly, and that's what we would like to avoid. We've seen it in Wilno.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Obviously. Can you give us some insight? We've had the Auditor General, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services' reports, Department of Justice reports. What is the barrier to actually ensuring—the correctional institutions are supposed to keep us safe and rehabilitate, which is not happening.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: It's not happening. There is no rehabilitation.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Tell us in your own words: Why is this government refusing to act?

Ms. Elana Lamesse: I wish I knew the answer to that. I'm dumbfounded by it. There's just no money for anything, to do anything. We are taking on more and more. We're getting more and more administrative tasks, in that we're forced to make sure that our files are tidy and that we're complying with standards. But somewhere along the way, people forgot that we're dealing with people.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I would suggest to you that there is money, because there's a cost to not funding a just correctional system.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Right.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you so much for coming in today, Elana.

Ms. Elana Lamesse: Thank you for giving me this opportunity. I do really appreciate it.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you very much. If you want to submit something in writing to the committee, you can do so until 5 p.m. on February 2.

OTTAWA CENTRE ECODISTRICT

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Our next witness is the Ottawa Centre EcoDistrict. Good morning.

Mr. Don Grant: Good morning.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes for questions. In your case, it will be from the government side. Before you begin, if you could state your name for the official record.

Mr. Don Grant: My name is Don Grant. I didn't bring a presentation to look at, but I have copies for everybody, so if you'll just go through that.

I'm here to talk a little bit about our organization today, just talk about the success that we've had and make a pitch for more in the future.

In Ontario and Ottawa, we are proud to be the home of Canada's first EcoDistrict. An EcoDistrict is a way of developing a sustainable neighbourhood. In our case, what we've done has been mostly community-led with a lot of support. What we've tried to do is adopt a successful US model and apply it here in Canada.

At the end of the day, what we're trying to do is three things. We're trying to reduce the environmental footprint of buildings and operations; we're specifically looking at energy and water and waste; and also how people get to and from work. We're looking at trying to shrink that footprint. It has financial benefits to organizations and companies and it has environmental benefits and obviously health benefits to people who have the opportunity to get out of the car and walk or take a bike or that type of thing.

In Ottawa, if you take a look on the second page, we're the purple area. We're working with businesses and organizations downtown to try to get this vision off the ground; we're looking at some specific things. Geographically you can see that it's a small area. The research that I've done in the past shows that when you have large plans, it's hard to zero in on the specifics and to meet people one-on-one and to really see meaningful changes, so that's why we focus on the small area.

Interestingly enough, here in Ottawa, there are several areas where we're looking at similar kinds of improvements, where we're trying to build a greener, more responsible downtown. The area there in orange is a new development that is proposing to be the world's most sustainable development. They're shooting for zero carbon and zero waste. It's called Zibi.

The area in green is Energy Ottawa development, where they're going to triple the capacity of the current hydroelectric generation at Chaudière Falls.

The area in red is the LeBreton Flats proposal. That's a NCC initiative, a federal initiative, to redevelop those lands. There are two proponents who have come forward. We're going to hear about that next week.

Then the area in blue is where the city of Ottawa, in partnership with the province, is proposing the development of an innovation centre at Bayview Yards.

We're seeing, for us, a real coming together of this kind of a move towards a more sustainable community.

In terms of our organization and what I wanted to speak about today, we're a success story from the Trillium program. We received a grant in 2014 that allowed us to both build capacity internally and also to leverage funding from other sources. So by having Trillium, we were able to secure private sector funding, other public sector funding, and we also built a network of over 50 businesses and organizations. We've got six of the largest property management firms—Minto, Morguard, Bentall Kennedy and so forth—as well as some other organizations that have come together, and we're working to execute this plan. We've had over 160 volunteers who have put in over 1,200 hours and we've launched a number of projects.

We've looked at things like energy conservation. The federal government has a district energy facility here in the downtown core and we're working with them to try to ensure that if they move forward with a P3 capability, that energy can be available to all private and public entities in the downtown core. That gives us a reliable and lower-carbon source of energy right here in Ottawa.

We've worked hard on electric vehicles to promote them and to better understand the barriers to adopting use.

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We're also very pleased that the province has put forward \$20 million for electric vehicle charging stations. We are working with the city and hydro to find excellent locations for those, because we know that will bring tourists to downtown, and other things, and it will help to get the infrastructure going.

We've worked hard to understand why we haven't been able to succeed on waste diversion, especially in the ICI organizations.

A quick little story: We had a student-led project where we looked at two different food courts in the downtown core. Roughly 50% of people took less than five seconds to dispose of their waste. They just walked up and tossed everything in the garbage. When the students introduced themselves, in one of the two instances, and said, "Oh, today we're doing a small project. We're from the University of Ottawa and we're just here to observe how people manage their waste," it went up to 80%. So the message there is that there is a real human intervention that needs to happen in order for us to achieve our environmental goals.

Interjection.

Mr. Don Grant: I know. We get them there all the time.

In terms of the future for us, we're going to be supporting action on climate change. We'll continue to

work on the district energy file. We're going to be working with the city to support a renewable energy strategy, and electric vehicles. The city is going to roll out LED lighting in the downtown core, so we've gone to some of the private landlords and said, "We'd like the downtown core to be an LED-friendly zone. Will you invest some money of your own to also do exterior lighting?" They've said yes, so that has been a positive.

We've got a plan to work with small businesses, to go door to door and talk to them about how they can adopt environmental measures. We're hoping to partner with the IESO and with Hydro Ottawa on that one.

With tourism, we're looking at trying to make the tourist experience better. We have a lot of knowledge about cycling, so we want to make cycling maps that are easy to follow. For instance, we have this crazy idea that you'll have a green dot route and a blue square route, like skiing. The green dot will be the one where you can go around town and you can be completely on separate infrastructure, so even little kids could do it; right? The blue squares would be the safest way to the Museum of Civilization and so on and so forth. There are lots of great things going on.

We're supporting health. We did a really neat project with citizen-led science where we dropped 60 volunteers on 20 street corners in Ottawa, with their bikes, in 12 different wards, and we asked them all to cycle to downtown and report on it. We collected all that data and provided it to the city. We have excellent data now on those routes and what could be done to improve them.

These are just some of the little things that we're doing.

Why am I here, other than to tell a nice story? I wanted you to understand that the Trillium fund supported us as a not-for-profit. Not-for-profit is difficult because a lot of the funding available is for charities, and a lot of the funding that's available does not support core operations. So it's very hard for me to ask somebody at a fundraiser, "Hey, listen, can you pay my salary?"

The way that it has been done has been really important, and it has helped to leverage a lot of volunteer hours and a lot of good things. We're basically dot connectors, and we've pulled people together to work on specific projects, when they'd probably just continue to work in their silos.

Looking forward, one of the things I think we could do well is to provide fee-for-service work to support a whole range of programs. We could probably do it more effectively than municipal governments and probably do it more cost-effectively than large consulting firms because we're on the ground, we're already mobilized and we have a low overhead. If you think about things like delivering awareness on improving cycling lanes or getting people to manage their waste properly, I think organizations like ours are well positioned. The feds used to call it "contribution agreements." We think that's an area where we could demonstrate our value.

We believe that it should be pay for performance. Once you grow to be an NGO of a certain size, like we

are, if we say we're going to cut a certain amount of watts, we should be accountable for that and report on that and be able to demonstrate a positive track record. If we're in situations where we can access funding to do specific jobs that need to be done to help improve environmental performance and other things, we would want to be accountable for that. I think that those kinds of ideas—as we look at how we're going to tackle climate change and other challenges, we just want to be innovative and we want to be there. We're finding that there are a lot of really smart people in the NGO sector, especially young people in social enterprise. We would just encourage you to continue to support that through specific programs related to things like the rollout of climate change and so on and so forth.

That's basically it.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you very much. Ms. Vernile has questions for you.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Good morning, Mr. Grant.

Mr. Don Grant: Good morning.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much for a very interesting presentation.

Mr. Don Grant: Thank you.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Research and Innovation, the Honourable Reza Moridi, I found what you said this morning very inspiring, particularly how you are trying to create sustainable neighbourhoods and you're looking at energy and waste and transportation. I know that our Premier cares very much about this issue. Recently in Paris, at a world conference, she joined world leaders to stress her commitment to addressing the very serious issue of climate change.

You know that, in Ontario, we're the first jurisdiction in North America to shut down all of our dirty coal-fired power plants. I'll tell you, as the mother of a child who suffered with asthma, back in the 2000s, when he was about 12 or so, there were many, many days where we'd be at the local hospital, where he couldn't breathe. Back then, we used to have between 30 and 50 smog days a year. Since we shut down these coal plants, in the last two years, we have had, in Ontario, a total of zero smog days. So that's a really great initiative and I would imagine that you care about that too.

You talked about the challenges in getting businesses on board with your plan. There are many critical voices in Ontario today who would believe that businesses do not care about this, and that they may not want to embrace our cap-and-trade program. What do you say about that?

Mr. Don Grant: My experience has been that it just takes time. You have to network with people.

Again, if I go back to the landlords that I'm working with, they're very supportive, but they get approached by so many organizations and small entities that we, in our sector, need to take the time to sit with them, to listen to them and to say, "How can we help you?", to find out what their issues are and to find out how we can move things forward slowly.

The LED lighting idea came from one of those six; it was from Bentall Kennedy, in fact. They said, “You know, I’ll tell you what, Don. If you can get the city on board and get our lights changed first, as soon as you get your lights changed, we can do this, and I’ll bet you our other landlords would.”

I’m not dealing with large industries; I’m dealing with small, everyday businesses and organizations like that. When I go and talk to them, that’s the approach that we take, and I find that is one of the most important things that we do as a small entity.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Don, do you think that this could be modelled elsewhere in Ontario, what you’re doing here in Ottawa?

Mr. Don Grant: Yes, 100%. It’s hard to take a new methodology and make it work, but the idea of having community groups come together under a not-for-profit framework is really at the core of this new approach from the EcoDistricts. I think it’s a reasonable way to go forward. I know that there are some other similar successes, like Sustainable Kingston and a few other places. I think it can be modelled pretty much anywhere. I would say that it would scale down to even communities in the 10,000 neighbourhood.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: You are doing this with a Trillium grant. Can you give us a dollar figure? What would you need to continue this in Ottawa? What would you like to see in the budget?

Mr. Don Grant: I would just like to see funding available. I don’t have a number. But when you’re thinking about how we can fight climate change in communities, to have grants available where a person can come forward with a solid business case and tell you what kind of a contribution they can make—we’re talking about projects in the \$25,000 range, I’d say, and that would keep us busy for several months.

I’m not here to just get that. I’m here saying that hundreds of those, invested judiciously around the province, would give us good returns.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I want to find out from you what it has been like, dealing with the Ontario government. How do you find them as a partner in all of this?

Mr. Don Grant: Well, I’ll say this: My other two partners are the federal government and the municipal government, and you guys have been the ones who have been the most receptive to date. I can say that I’ve had excellent communications with my local MPP, the Honourable Yasir Naqvi. He met with us right off the bat. Good, very good.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: We have a new partner in Ottawa too, and I think they get it.

Mr. Don Grant: I hope so.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much, Don, for coming and chatting with us today. We appreciate it. Keep up the great work.

Mr. Don Grant: Thank you. Thanks for your questions.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Thank you, and if you do want to make a written submission to the

committee, more than just this, you have until 5 p.m. on February 2. Thank you very much.

ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS OTTAWA

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Our next witness is the Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa.

Mr. Steve Clark: Chair?

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): Yes, Mr. Clark?

Mr. Steve Clark: I’ve just been talking to the Clerk. The next presenter after this gentleman is from my riding, so I’d like the committee to consider having the NDP and I switch questioning on the next two deputants. Ms. Fife, I believe, is okay with that. I just wanted to ask the other members of committee if it was okay.

The Vice-Chair (Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn): If there is agreement on committee? All right, it’s agreed. Thank you very much.

Thank you for coming this morning. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, following which there will be five minutes for questions. In your case, the questions will be coming from the third party. That’s what we just agreed to. As you begin your presentation, if you could please state your name for the official record.

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Mr. Mike Bulthuis: Sure. Good morning. Thank you for being here. My name is Mike Bulthuis. I’m the executive director of the Alliance to End Homelessness Ottawa. The alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization working in partnership here in Ottawa to inspire local action, to generate knowledge and to inform our community-wide effort to achieve an end to homelessness in our community. We represent over 50 Ottawa-based service-providing organizations working to strengthen residents’ housing outcomes. We are driven by a vision of an inclusive community where everyone has an affordable and appropriate home. We believe that every sector in our community, including governments and the private sector, can and need to do more to help us achieve that vision. We want to work with you and with them.

We actually believe that the province of Ontario shares our vision as well. Early in 2015, this provincial government appointed the Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness, which in October released its final report and recommendations, entitled A Place to Call Home. The panel, in its recommendations, calls for progressive action centred around the government’s earlier commitment, expressed as part of your Poverty Reduction Strategy, to end chronic homelessness in Ontario within 10 years.

Now, we know that ending homelessness is not only good for our vulnerable neighbours; it’s good for our communities, our economy and the entire province. In response to the panel’s report, we applaud the \$10-million commitment over two years in targeted funding from the Local Poverty Reduction Fund, pursuing innov-

ative approaches to help prevent and end homelessness across the province.

Here in Ottawa, with initiatives like Broadening the Base, a collaborative table bringing together funders, developers, landholders, philanthropists, ourselves and others to develop innovative solutions to address our shortage in affordable housing, we recognize that new approaches are needed. However, the provincial response needs to go further. Yes, while additional provincial data may be needed on some aspects of homelessness, we echo the panel's call for "immediate action—a down payment," to use their words, "—to demonstrate the commitment to ending homelessness."

We also do applaud the government's concurrence with the panel, not only in its bold commitment to ending chronic homelessness in Ontario within 10 years, but in choosing to prioritize provincial action to reduce homelessness in four areas, around youth, aboriginals, individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and a fourth category that's a bit more challenging, homelessness following transitions from provincially funded institutions and systems of care, such as jails and hospitals.

In our brief that we have presented—and I won't have the time to walk through every item of our brief—we walk through four sections. What we want to outline are ways to make further progress towards this commitment of ending homelessness and towards enhancing residents' housing outcomes through, first, the province's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, which is due to be released in its next iteration this spring. Secondly, we do call and continue to call for meaningful increases to provincial rates of social assistance, and I'll talk briefly to those. Thirdly, we begin to identify some concrete areas to make progress on those four priority sub-populations, because they do each require unique responses. Fourthly, we outline some very brief, non-budgetary measures that we think can also be implemented, particularly through the Planning Act and issues of zoning to permit municipalities that would actually help without necessarily costing the province. I'll speak briefly to these four sections.

We encourage the province to seize a significant opportunity this spring and in the coming years to make progress vis-à-vis both the four populations and indeed all Ontarians with significant budget support for the next phase of the Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy. Enhancing the province's availability of affordable housing through long-term and stable funding must be seen as core to any strategy to ending homelessness within the province.

We know we have work to do, and we outline a few stats, not to discourage us, but simply to reiterate the urgency of the crisis that is before us. We publish an annual progress report on ending homelessness and track year-over-year progress in a number of areas. We know that in 2014 here in Ottawa, a very wealthy national capital, 6,520 individuals spent some time in an emergency shelter. Their average length of stay was 77 days. Seventy-seven days times 6,500 individuals is tens and

tens of thousands of bed-nights in our shelter system, which is costly and unfair.

Over 500 of these individuals were between the ages of 16 and 25. One fifth—a number that I don't think we think too much about, because we don't necessarily see them in the ByWard Market or on our streets—are children 17 and under staying with their families in family emergency shelters.

Over 500 individuals were chronically or episodically homeless, again iterating the priority for that population, and we of course have over 10,000 households on our wait-list for affordable housing.

We know that the shelter data is only one slice of that. We did a survey last spring, interviewing over 130 young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who were homeless. We know that the majority of them were not accessing a shelter, and yet, still, 63% of them reported having been homeless for six months or more, so there is a hidden homelessness reality beyond the shelter data.

In our first area, we call for increases to our investments in affordable housing to grow the investment in the affordable housing program to ensure that funding is available for repair and renovation and, in response to what we hope is about to come in a wide, large-scale federal social infrastructure program, we ask the province to continue to match those investments, because together we can make some incredible change happen in the coming years.

Our second area is to continue to call for meaningful increases to social assistance. We know that with the shortage of affordable housing, those who aren't able to access that housing are struggling significantly with having to make choices between either paying the rent or feeding their kids. It might be an expression that we hear over and over again, but it's much more than a cliché, and we have some powerful data to point to that.

There is census data that came out last September that shows that one in five renter households in Ottawa—so we're talking about 22,000 households in Ottawa alone—are paying more than half of their income on rent and utilities. Our own federal government issued a standard of 30% many years ago, saying none of us should have to spend more than 30%. Because they're spending more than 50%, they are having to make choices between transportation, clothing, children's programs, food and so on. In fact, food bank lines across the province are reporting that over 70% of their income is going towards their housing. For those who can't access that affordable, subsidized housing, our rates of social assistance simply need to be increased.

We continue to track housing affordability if one's primary source of income is social assistance, and for an individual in this province to afford market-rate housing in Ontario, they would require close to 120% of their monthly receipt. Of course, that's simply impossible, so the rates are simply not keeping up.

So we call for increases to address the basic income levels of Ontario residents receiving OW and ODSP, so that they have the ability to afford safe and stable

accommodations. We want to establish a goal that would lead us in the longer term towards a guaranteed annual income.

Recognizing that there have been increases in the minimum wage in recent years, which is a very positive thing, and that they will continue to grow by inflation, we also ask that it is increased to become an actual living wage. Someone in this province who is working full-time on minimum wage in Ottawa is still spending more than 40% of their income on rent. If we're asking someone to work full-time, even if they're doing that, they are struggling in poverty.

I won't go into too much detail on our third section here, but there are four subpopulations that are prioritized by the province in terms of reducing homelessness in Ontario: youth, aboriginals, our chronic homeless neighbours and those exiting provincial systems. We outlined a number of measures, and this is really one area where, as a membership-driven organization with 55 service partners on the ground, we wish to partner with you and with others to develop innovative, creative, effective policy solutions.

I'll just refer to one area: youth. We know that youth are a priority both in our homelessness strategy and also the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy, and that one of the commitments the province has made is to developing youth labs where youth will come together to work with us and you to develop solutions to homelessness.

Here in Ottawa, we have recently convened partners through an initiative called A Way Home Ottawa. It is a two-year initiative to develop a plan to prevent and end youth homelessness in Ottawa. We're developing a youth leadership team right now, and last week had a closing date for youth assistants to help us with that. We had over 75 apply, and going through them, I can assure you that the vast majority of them have lived experience of homelessness. There is a real desire by young people to participate in this process, and I think the youth labs that are promised by the province—we would love to be one of those—are a great, concrete way of making progress.

In all of these categories, investments in housing are key, but the supports and assistance structures—especially around chronic homelessness, some of the ways in which social assistance is structured are sometimes serving as a disincentive for folks to leave the shelter system. I know that in the provincial review of social assistance, we're also calling for some attention to that.

Our fourth area—I'll briefly close with this—is that we know there are also no-cost and low-cost mechanisms that can be implemented to help us make progress. We're pleased to see, within the mandate for municipal affairs and housing, attention to reviewing how planning tools can enhance affordable housing outcomes, and we recommend that Ontario deliver legislation that ensures affordable housing is included as a requirement in new housing developments.

One initial step could be to strengthen tools such as section 37 of the Planning Act to facilitate greater

transparency and predictability, and also to take a page from the federal mandate—and we hope to hear more about this—to actually leverage surplus provincial government land, because land is so often one of the most expensive pieces and prohibitive factors in developing affordable housing.

1030

In closing, we thank you for your commitments to date—we say that with much sincerity—around poverty reduction, ending homelessness and a long-term affordable housing strategy, but we do now look to further concrete actions in this budget and in the future to actually deliver on these priorities. We know that investing in people and their housing outcomes is good not only for those who today may be vulnerable but for their families, for our communities and for the province as a whole. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): All right. Thank you very much. I'm going to turn to Ms. Fife to start this round of questioning.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks very much, Mike. You have really good ideas and a comprehensive report to the finance committee on action that needs to happen.

Homelessness is not new.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: No.

Ms. Catherine Fife: To be fair, we've known a lot of the solutions. We do need the political will and we need the financial commitment to support reports that have pretty much come to this government almost on an annual basis—sometimes their own reports.

I do want to touch on a couple of issues, though, that you raised. The 2016 spring report that's supposed to come from Minister McMeekin on housing—this is the opportunity for you to really say to the government what needs to be the key priority of that report. I'm just as hopeful as you are that it actually is a plan that can be implemented quickly and accelerated in certain parts of the province. This is your opportunity to weigh in on that, please.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: Bar none, the solution that will affect all of our priority population areas—all of those who are vulnerable to housing loss and those who are homeless—is investments in actual housing. We know that increasing the stock of non-profit, affordable housing is important for the long term, but we also have an immediate crisis. We've been finding here in Ottawa that while the housing-first approach has been prioritized provincially and federally, the shortage in that piece is the housing itself.

We need not just new stock but we need things like housing benefits and housing supplements so that someone who is exiting the shelter can afford a unit that's available on the private market today.

Our current inflow of refugees into the city—I know that for the first year, it's more of a federal responsibility, but those levels of assistance are made to match the level of provincial social assistance for the 13th month and beyond. We're finding that both of those, whether it's OW or whether it's the RAP federally, are simply

insufficient to afford market housing in Ottawa. So some form of an Ontario housing benefit, which I know has been called for by food banks and by many, I think needs to be a crucial part of the housing strategy that comes forward.

Lastly, housing is social infrastructure. If we do see an increase at the federal level, we really call on the province to match that and to demonstrate that political will.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And there are no excuses for that co-operation to not happen now.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: I completely agree.

Ms. Catherine Fife: The social assistance rates: We've heard about these rates at every single stop. It is incredible that the clawback for child support still happens. Do you want to comment on the negative impact? That adds to the instability of housing. People lose their housing because of the clawback.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: Yes. I'm not sure what I can even add to that. The notion of the child benefit, like any other tax credit, is to further supplement.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's right.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: And so by nature, the clawback is a contradiction with the intent, I would say, of that particular measure. And it is; it's forcing families to make choices.

Here in Ottawa we have two family shelters. On a nightly basis, if I'm not mistaken, between 75 and 100 families are staying in overflow emergency family shelters. Their average length of stay is about six months or more.

Ms. Catherine Fife: These are in motels sometimes, and hotels.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: Precisely. Families are bearing a significant brunt of this. We don't necessarily see them on the street, but the reality is pretty stark.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So ending the clawback of social assistance, that has to happen. Essentially it's stealing from the poor, in my estimation.

It's incredible to me that the Ministry of Transportation doesn't collect on \$48 million worth of fines to private road maintenance companies but they can take \$40 away from a single mother who's living in precarious conditions. I wanted to raise that issue.

The other, bigger, broader political issue of social assistance, though—a solution did come to us in Hamilton around establishing an independent board that would look at social assistance rates, essentially taking the politics out of determining what is a fair social assistance rate. Do you want to comment on that, Mike?

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: I think that would be great, but similar to your comments earlier around reports coming annually, we know that there was a review of social assistance—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, I'm so sorry. I need to stop you there, Mr. Bulthuis.

Mr. Mike Bulthuis: We call for an implementation of those recommendations.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you for your presentation and your written submission, and thank you for being here.

BETH DONOVAN HOSPICE

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is the Beth Donovan Hospice. I believe it is Dawn Rodger, the executive director. Ms. Rodger, you have a colleague here. She's welcome to join you. So please come on up.

Ms. Rodger, as you know, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. Have a seat. This round of questioning is from the official opposition party. Please begin any time. When you do begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Ms. Dawn Rodger: Thank you. Good morning, everyone. My name is Dawn Rodger, and I'm the executive director of the Beth Donovan Hospice, located in Kemptville. Our hospice is centrally located, 53 kilometres from Ottawa, 95 kilometres from Cornwall and 58 kilometres from Brockville. I share this with you so you can put into perspective our geographic proximity to our larger urban centres.

I'd like to begin this presentation by thanking the Chair, as well as each and every committee member, for the privilege of addressing you here today.

I'd also like to acknowledge the presence of Mr. Steve Clark, the member of provincial Parliament for Leeds–Grenville. I must thank him publicly for his ongoing support of our mission.

As you've travelled across Ontario, you've already heard at least four devoted hospice professionals speak about the dire need for hospice funding and support for more residential hospice beds. You've undoubtedly heard how hospice care is the most efficient and humane means of providing care in the very last days of life.

I plan to add some specific information about rural hospice needs.

Beth Donovan Hospice has been in operation for 24 years and is a member of Hospice Palliative Care Ontario, and we fully support their policy position and financial request. Adding to their position, this presentation is about the need for residential hospice beds in our rural area, and how the lack of rural residential hospice beds impacts the constituents of rural eastern Ontario.

I have been privileged to be the executive director of Beth Donovan Hospice for the last eight years, and have served a term as director for the Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program board, and as a former vice-chair.

In my time, I have seen our current system fail to provide dignified care to far too many individuals at the end of their lives. I would like to share one particular story with you today. I know that all of you must have your own stories that resonate within you regarding family members, friends and loved ones that you've lost along the way.

The fact is, yes, we at Beth Donovan Hospice have plenty of success stories from our burgeoning rural hospice that I'd be equally pleased to share with you if the time permits, but for now, I want to paint you this picture.

Just last week, I was contacted by a family in crisis. I attended a palliative client who was unable to get the pain medication he desperately needed in his final hours of life. Instead, he remained at home in the care of his elderly wife, with minimal home support, no family doctor oversight, and insufficient pain medication, let alone the exhaustion his spouse was experiencing.

This was a man who, in his last few weeks of life, was seen at three different hospitals, suffered immense and prolonged pain, and was finally admitted to hospital when it was clear that no attending physician or nursing care was available to support home-based care, and died in hospital—with another patient sharing the same room—after spending 17 hours in the emergency room department.

This gentleman did not require the complex care of a hospital but just very good pain management. He would have been an excellent candidate for residential hospice services, at a far lesser cost to the Ontario health care system.

As the committee will have heard by now, 80% of Canadians prefer not to die in hospital, but the majority do.

1040

A recent article about the costs of dying in Ontario produced some gripping figures. Ontario spends nearly 10% of its total health budget on care during the last year of life. This amounts to \$4.7 billion annually; of that, \$1.3 billion is spent in the final month of life. An acute care hospital bed costs \$1,100 per day, whereas a residential hospice bed costs \$460 per day. You can equate the cost savings to the system.

In spite of this remarkable expenditure, the vast majority of patients are not well served at end of life. Demographics dictate that overall end-of-life costs will increase dramatically in the coming years. While dying at home may be an individual's preference, under the current support system, medical home care professionals in the rural areas are travelling vast distances to reach their patients. They have a crushing caseload and they may not have access to ideal medications in a timely fashion or have the depth of experience in caring for palliative patients at home.

Collectively, we must face the fact that there is a lack of a palliative care infrastructure, programs and training in the province in general and in the rural areas in particular. Hospitals, by their own mission statements, are geared to emergency and acute care. Hospitals typically are very busy places and not designed to offer a calm and quiet setting for an individual in their last hours of life.

If I may be so bold as to say, the entire system simply isn't structured and funded the way we need it to be. In some rural areas of eastern Ontario, the only options a

person has are to die in a hospital or a hospice located in the city. This requires loved ones to spend hours driving every time they want to visit. Also, the impact experienced by the dying individual: As if dying wasn't enough, they're transferred to an unfamiliar environment, and not the community that they've been raised in for the last 64 years, where they have gone to church, they have friends, they curl, they play bridge or have lived off of a family farm that has been in their family for three generations.

They could die at home if there is family support and local medical resources to provide care, but families aren't always comfortable with this scenario. They want to be with family, not necessarily be the person who is tasked with managing medications and care schedules, and spend those precious moments with their loved ones.

The other option is to die in the hospital, which may be ill-equipped to serve palliative patients. This is a less-than-ideal option for the individual families and, again, it's a costly one for the health care system.

To have the option of dying at a residential hospice in a rural setting like ours requires dedicated resources and therefore your support. At the moment, Beth Donovan Hospice provides a portfolio of five programs: in-home support; a day hospice program; grief counselling; as well as community education and equipment lending programs. Our client numbers to date are 295 clients who we've served this year.

But what is lacking is provincial funding for rural hospice beds, where community, family and friends can come together to lend their support and care at the end stage of life. Just like our rural neighbours in Williamsburg and Almonte, where community hospice home services exist, citizens in Kemptville and North Grenville are vastly underserved when it comes to residential hospice beds. We are prepared to work together and we already do.

In closing, I offer the thought that people in our communities are too often robbed of the choice of where they would like to die. We can't expect families to drive many hours a day to an urban centre to access hospice beds. Like many communities across the province and many of our rural comparators, we have zero residential hospice beds.

The current system of funding, which is both inadequate overall and focuses solely on urban hospice beds, doesn't align with anything—not individual wishes, not family capacity, not health care system financial goals, not the recently published Patients First consultation document that was endorsed by Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health.

Today, I respectfully request that the committee use its powers, exercise its influence and take action to help initiate a program of change that would meet the needs of rural populations by supporting the funding for rural hospice beds.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I welcome any questions that you may have.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to turn to Mr. Clark to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Steve Clark: Thanks, Chair, and I want to thank the committee for allowing me to switch so that I can ask Dawn some questions. And I want to thank you for being here today.

I've been the member of provincial Parliament for Leeds–Grenville for what will be six years in March. I've been very patient and I've worked very closely with the Champlain LHIN. Every time there was a new executive director or every time there was a new board chair, I made sure that I called that person and let them know that my priority for the municipality of North Grenville was a Beth Donovan residential hospice to cover my area.

Those who are in the room who know the Champlain LHIN know that North Grenville is just a small corner of the area that Champlain represents, but as Dawn has pointed out, many other jurisdictions have, over those six years, received funding for a residential hospice.

We've jumped through every single hoop that the ministry has asked us to. If they've asked us to do a feasibility study, we've done a feasibility study. What has that study shown? The study has shown that there's an existing need, a growing demand and a lack of funding.

They asked us to increase our volunteer capacity. What did we do? We did that. They asked us to increase our fundraising capacity. We did that. We almost have unanimity in our community that a residential hospice in a rural area is needed in North Grenville. We've worked with the LHIN. I'm so glad you mentioned, Dawn, that you were a director of the Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program; that was one of their requests.

We've been quiet. We've worked with the LHIN. Certainly, Chair, I talked to the parliamentary secretary for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, Mr. Fraser. He knows about it. I've asked for his support. I've warned Ms. Lalonde from Ottawa–Orléans that I want her support as well.

I just want—as a question, Dawn—to talk about the partnerships and the work that you've been able to do over the last six years to get to this today. We haven't been at every pre-budget consultation. We haven't shown up every year, but I think it's acknowledged in the community that we're ready this year and we want to move forward this year. Maybe if you could just let the committee know what we've been able to accomplish in a very short period of time.

Ms. Dawn Rodger: Certainly; thank you. In 2012, we submitted an integrated health service proposal application to have the funding increased for our community support programming. Previously, we were funded at approximately \$91,000. With the successful health service improvement proposal, our budget increased to \$251,000 with base funding, so the LHIN has had much faith in us with our growing programs and services.

We've worked very diligently with the Champlain Hospice Palliative Care Program board to enhance our capacity and our partnerships. We work with the Upper Canada District School Board, and we've initiated a PSW partnership that has delivered 200 direct client-service hours, free of charge, administered by a PSW to our

clients, so there's a cost savings to the system yearly with that partnership.

We've also been reviewing opportunities for research partnerships, but definitely have integrated ourselves into the community so that there are different partnerships everywhere we look. We've also initiated a partnership with the family health care team, where there's a direct palliative care patient referral system. The patient is referred through our hospice and is paired with a family physician who has an education in palliative care and a desire to provide that care.

Those are just a few partnerships that we have worked on, but certainly ones that have benefited clients as a whole and our community and have enhanced our human capacity to deliver those programs to a degree. Five programs and services service 300 clients yearly, with a full-time equivalent of approximately 3.7 FTEs. It's not a lot of staff for the amount of work that we're able to accomplish.

This past fiscal year, we've had 100 volunteers administer thousands of hours of care in the community to palliative patients who have been discharged from hospital, often very complex. Their retired registered nurse skill sets are very valuable to this community.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): One minute.

Mr. Steve Clark: One minute.

Thank you for that. I think it was very important for the committee to hear that.

1050

This program started from extremely humble beginnings: a volunteer program that went from the very small village of Merrickville into North Grenville.

I want the committee members to know—I think it was my second member's statement. I was maybe an MPP for a month. It was because Beth Donovan had passed away. I gave her a tribute in the Legislature and pledged to her that day that I wouldn't let her dream die and I would make sure that I advocated for it.

I know that she's watching me and is glad that we're at this point that we've actually accomplished everything that the LHIN has asked us to do. Now it's up to them to reciprocate to the community.

So I just want to thank you for being here.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. Mr. Clark, I'm going to stop you.

Ms. Rodger, thank you for your presentation and your written submission. As the Chair, I just want to let you know that at every stop, the hospice community has come forward with some suggestions and recommendations for the committee. As Mr. Clark also alluded to, the parliamentary assistant to Minister Hoskins, John Fraser, has taken the leadership on this particular file. I'm sure that the Premier and Minister Hoskins are working with the federal government, because we have been talking about dying with dignity and compassionate care. Thank you again for your presentation and your written submission.

Ms. Dawn Rodger: Thank you very much.

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming forward is the Police Association of Ontario: Mr. Bruce Chapman.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Is this round the Liberals?

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Oh, yes. Yes.

Mr. Chapman, welcome. As you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. When you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard? Thank you.

Mr. Bruce Chapman: Thank you very much. Good morning, committee. My name is Bruce Chapman. I'm the president of the Police Association of Ontario, the largest police association in Canada and representing more than 18,000 men and women in law enforcement, both sworn and civilian.

I'm here today to speak to this committee and government about Ontario's strategy for a safer Ontario and police funding for 2016 and beyond.

You may have heard from others that police costs are unsustainable going forward. I'm here to warn you of the consequences of not continuing to provide adequate and enhanced funding to protect our communities.

There are two areas I want to concentrate on. One is the value of professional policing.

Policing as we know it today has changed. Acts of terrorism and cybercrimes are to name a couple. Terrorism in the world today has made our country different than in the past; cybercrimes as well. It may take an officer eight hours or eight days, sitting in front of a computer screen, to catch a pedophile. Those eight days will not show, through stats or any other true number, the value of what that officer did. What it will show is that his salary was paid for for eight days. But by catching that pedophile, that officer potentially saved millions of dollars and protected countless children from becoming prey to that luring predator. In addition to saving children from potential harm and abuse, they will have saved the health care system and social service agencies from future costs associated with the victimization of our children. That in itself is priceless. That is the cost of policing today.

In the wake of a number of provincial budget cuts to policing, such as PAVIS and TAVIS, the PAO is hopeful that in the coming budget, they will not whittle away valuable police resources any further.

Fears about municipal budget issues can be mitigated by a strong provincial commitment to professional policing and by making it clear, through funding and policy, that outsourcing police services to private service providers is not an option.

A PAO survey of Ontarians in all regions and across all social and economic groups found only that 15% of the 1,315 Ontarians surveyed supported the concept of outsourcing police services. Some 74% of those Ontarians surveyed are very concerned with private security

companies having access to their private information, and 72% of those Ontarians surveyed said that public safety is more important than cost-saving measures, meaning the majority of Ontarians are very comfortable with taxes going to support police services.

The government's commitment to increased police regulations must be met with adequate funding to allow for proper training and adequate personnel to meet the government's goals of effective, efficient police services.

Outsourcing or reallocating traditional police functions to the private sector or to other parts of the public sector will prove to be a massive cost driver when a non-existent safety and privacy infrastructure would have to be created for non-police personnel to operate under. Any savings imagined by reductions in police services would be dwarfed by the massive outlays needed to sustain a parallel system.

Any parallel system will not be subject to the same civilian and government oversight as policing. These funds required to create robust oversight that mirrors functions such as the Special Investigations Unit and the OIPRD, the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, would be significant. Privatizing of policing is no more than policing for profit. Our communities don't want it and neither should this government. The risks greatly outweigh savings, if any.

The second issue is PTSD or OSI presumptive legislation for first responders. The rate of PTSD among first responders is estimated to be 18%. Many first responders will go undiagnosed and untreated, resulting in absenteeism, substance abuse issues and other negative outcomes that drive up the overall costs of policing and the stigma that's attached. Early and effective treatment made possible by presumptive coverage keeps officers in the system for less time and gets them back to work.

The Premier, the Minister of Labour, and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services have promised a robust program to fight PTSD on three fronts: prevention, resilience and treatment, which includes presumptive legislation. These programs do not work without adequate funding. I strongly encourage this committee to support and advocate for robust budget measures to tackle the mental health crisis among first responders.

That's what I have for the committee. Thank you very much for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Wow, that was very succinct. I'm going to turn to Mr. Milczyn to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Good morning, Mr. Chapman. Thank you very much for your presentation.

I just wanted to start off by saying how much we value and appreciate all of your members and the tremendous work that they do every single day across the province to keep us all safe. We always hope that they are also safe, and come home safely to their families.

Your presentation raised a number of good issues. I did want to point out that I don't know the specifics about every community in the province but I do know

that, for instance, in the city of Toronto, the provincial grant for the Toronto Police Service went up by 10%, year over year, from 2014-15 to 2015-16—by \$4 million. That's in the city of Toronto. I don't know what the increases are in other communities. I do know that provincial funding for local police services is going up. In the case of Toronto and I imagine other communities, the specific funding for TAVIS was reduced but overall funding was increased, which was to allow the local police service to make the decisions about where they need to put those resources.

Are you finding that, across the province, there is flexibility for individual forces to decide how to best allocate the resources they have?

Mr. Bruce Chapman: I would like to say yes, but with the change from the reduction of PAVIS/TAVIS, which was specific to the guns and gangs task force for Toronto, for example, the new funding formula is government grants to municipalities to decide how that money is spent on policing issues and not necessarily to the police services to allocate that money within it. Policing has changed completely, as I mentioned, so costs are going up as a result of acts of terrorism. I can give examples of a surveillance team following a lead on a terrorist in the country for three weeks, 24 hours a day straight. That was not done two, three, four, five years ago. So the costs of policing have gone up, but it's to deal with the difference in crime and criminals as we know it today. Policing has changed.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Yes, obviously the nature of offences and the nature of investigations is changing. We do know that overall crime rates are decreasing, but yet in specific types of investigations, like maybe cybercrime or terrorism-related, the number of offences might be small but the complexity of investigations is great.

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I think our approach of increasing the grants and allowing local forces to make the decisions on how to allocate them is giving them the flexibility to allocate resources where they think they'll best be utilized.

Mr. Bruce Chapman: I agree, providing it's used for professional policing. The concern of the policing community is, that money will be used for outsourcing or privatization. The fear is that the oversight will not be there to regulate private companies the same way it is now.

You mentioned a good point about crime rates going down. Crime rates are going down because of the professional police doing their job.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Without a doubt.

Mr. Bruce Chapman: Any reductions in funding to policing in general may result in those crime rates going up, because we are doing an effective job, both in our training and in our experience and our education.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Now, I also note that over the last three years, we've increased funding for an enhanced youth action plan, to help the police and the community intercede earlier on with young offenders and put them on the right path. Is that an effective use of resources for the police and the community?

Mr. Bruce Chapman: It is, and in addition to that is the hub system now. That's the integration of all of our community services. Our health professionals, our social services, our educators and our police are all reviewing files, either weekly or monthly, and getting together on who will hold that file and who will take the lead on it. It is using all of the resources of all those agencies in a better way. You may have eight different agencies, all having files on one family, when one could take the lead on that and allow the other services, or the other agencies, to use that money more effectively.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: If I could finally ask you, if you had one specific priority for the 2016 budget, what would that be?

Mr. Bruce Chapman: What we're most hopeful to hear from the government is either Bill 2 or an enhanced presumptive legislation for PTSD for first responders, including our civilian personnel and dispatchers as well.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Mr. Chapman, thank you for your presentation. Now, we noticed that you haven't given us a written submission. If you plan to do that, you have until Tuesday, February 2, at 5 p.m., to send it to the Clerk. Thank you, Mr. Chapman.

Mr. Bruce Chapman: Great. Thank you very much.

INTERFAITH SOCIAL ASSISTANCE REFORM COALITION

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before the committee is the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition. Mr. Gunn, welcome. If your colleagues want to join you, they're welcome to. There are lots of seats there.

I believe the Clerk is coming around with your written submission. As you heard earlier, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official opposition party. You may begin any time. Please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard when you begin.

Mr. Joe Gunn: Merci, madame la Présidente. I will be brief, because I grew up in Scarborough and we know how well-behaved people are, from Scarborough.

I want to thank you very much, the members of the committee, for allowing us to be here, representing Ontario's major interfaith anti-poverty coalition, which is called the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition, or ISARC. We represent Ontario's major faith groups: Jewish, Muslim, Christians and others. I serve as executive director of Citizens for Public Justice. My name is Joe Gunn. Our organization is a 53-year-old faith-based charity that works on public policy in the area of poverty as well.

What I wanted to start with is a short example of what CPJ does. With ISARC, we've done hearings across the province with people living in poverty, because we're convinced that not only do we have to convince you, but

we have to convince members of our community that things can be done to look at issues of poverty.

So we've had hearings across the province, and a wonderful experience here, most recently, in Ottawa with a woman I'll call Mary, who was living in poverty because she came to Ottawa, fleeing a violent situation. She was forced to spend all of her money—any money that she had—before she could get social assistance. She couldn't find good housing.

The thing that broke her heart, and her story to us, was she went out after church one day and some people invited her for coffee. She didn't have money for a coffee, and she broke down crying with them and had to explain what she was living through. Shortly after that, Mary was miraculously saved from poverty. She turned 65. She started getting government supports. She found a supportive housing situation. For her, it was like a miracle that allowed her to participate in the community in a way that we think would be dignified and that we should all enjoy.

I think this shows us that we can have an impact. Public policy, government policy, does have an impact and should have an impact. For ISARC, of course, poverty is not an abstract issue. You all know, in your constituencies, that our faith groups work face to face with people in desperate need for food, shelter, clothing and other basic needs.

We know that poverty is bad for the economy. We know that there are hidden costs of poverty. The Ontario College of Family Physicians has reported that poverty is “a risk to health equivalent to hypertension, high cholesterol and smoking.” So we sincerely believe that, ultimately, a budget is not just about allocating sums of money for different programs and services, but it's really a moral document. It reflects that which we truly value. We urge the government to be guided by the value of inclusion, making sure that no one is left on the margins of society.

You have our brief entitled *Making the Best Investment Possible: People*. ISARC feels that this is the heart of the issue before us. We need to see real poverty reduction in Ontario. We were delighted, like many others, with the passage of the Poverty Reduction Act six years ago. We unfortunately haven't seen all of the progress in actually alleviating poverty that we had hoped would occur as a result.

Our brief explains a few of the examples of hardships that people in poverty are still experiencing. We heard Mike Bulthuis of the Alliance to End Homelessness a few minutes ago, telling you this morning that we actually have 10,224 households in this community in Ottawa on the waiting list for subsidized housing.

Aside from the human suffering, which is not at all a minor thing, poverty affects us all. There are all kinds of hidden costs with homelessness, poor housing conditions, people eating poorly, kids having trouble in or prematurely leaving school. ISARC has met with government leaders many times, but we hear a common response that even the politicians share our goals that

everybody should live in dignity, that government needs to do more. We run up against this wall and we hear often, “We can't do more because of the deficit.” Frankly, we don't accept the argument that the cupboard is bare when it comes to providing resources for poverty reduction. You don't hear of faith communities walking away and running and hiding when people come to us in need. Politicians shouldn't do that either. Governments and societies can always find the resources we need if we have our priorities straight.

The churches and faith communities involved in ISARC outline a range of tax measures that could help raise funds for poverty reduction. We're well aware that the word “taxes” sometimes is controversial, even in our own communities. But for us, really, the issue is—and I think we'd agree—are taxes fair, and then, how are the revenues spent?

There are a few suggestions in our brief. For example, a suggestion: The price of gas has dropped in recent months—we've all realized that. If we were to put a three-cent increase in Ontario's gas tax, we could raise \$480 million. We in Ontario have one of the lowest corporate income tax rates in North America. If we even put those rates back to a 2009 level, there would be \$2.5 billion available to government. We don't even have to go that far.

With the revenue, our faith communities believe that we should raise social assistance rates for single people by \$100 per month and that there should be other increases for families. We know that current rates are so low that people are forced to rely on survival programs and food banks in my church, for example. The numbers keep growing.

Secondly, we think public dental benefits are a good idea—maybe we could start that by 2018—and affordable housing: You've all heard the need for that, and we would reiterate that.

A further point that I think the committee should definitely recommend, which you will not find in the brief but is an initiative that wouldn't cost the province a cent but would be a helpful signal to show low-income families that Ontario cares: You know that we are awaiting an April budget from the federal government. They ran on a platform of having an improved Canadian child benefit. We hope to see that type of measure come forward with details in April in the budget, but I'd ask this committee to ensure that all of Ontario's children, regardless of the source of their parents' incomes, get the full benefit of anything that the federal government creates in their April budget. How could we do that? Specifically exempt federal child benefits from social assistance incomes and ensure that either Ontario Works or ODSP benefits are not clawed back or restructured.

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How we choose to control costs in the short term can have long-term consequences. At the same time, programs that have a proven success should be seen as an investment in the future of all people in Ontario. ISARC encourages you and all of us to make the best investments we can in people. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): All right. Thank you very much. I'm going to turn to Mr. McDonell to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Jim McDonell: In our office every day we see people coming in. One of the biggest issues we have is the cost of electricity. People who were very well set up, had retirement plans or lost their jobs and used to be able to survive quite well at home are now basically choosing between food and electricity. The programs aren't there; they don't catch them. We just don't have the funds. Do you see that all the time in your own line?

Mr. Joe Gunn: Absolutely. I would imagine that the cost of electricity could increase; I think with the interest that faith communities also have, that we take our environmental responsibilities seriously, that may very well increase. It looks like Ontario is moving that way and the federal government wants all of the country to move.

What we have to do is we have to make sure that with the revenues we get through a cap-and-trade system or whatever it might be, there is special attention to the people it will affect most. We actually have seen in other provinces that you can defend northern communities or rural communities or people living in poverty by making sure that those rate increases don't hurt the most vulnerable among us. I think there has to be particular attention to that.

Mr. Jim McDonell: In Cornwall especially, we used to have a number of large employers where, when I was growing up, right out of high school, you could get employment. These companies have all left.

We see businesses coming in; they'd like to stay or they'd like to grow, but we're talking about a province where you have the highest property taxes in North America, you have the highest electricity rates in North America and the highest payroll taxes in North America. It's hard to convince people to invest, come and look at hiring people. And the regulation makes it very difficult to hire low-income people with possibly low education levels because if something happens, they have to keep them employed. So they don't even look at them, and they go, of course, to more educated people, where many of these people could do a very good job and would do a good job, and have in the past.

Mr. Joe Gunn: It's an issue that we struggle with too in faith communities. We have to be able to suggest to people that we have to look at some of the causes of poverty down the road and we have to look at why people can't get good employment and so on.

It seems to me that looking at taxes, as I mentioned in the brief and as the ISARC community has looked at, it's really important for us to be able to do that education for people. Taxes are what we pay to have a democratic and well-functioning society. You find that people of faith are those people who volunteer more often in the community, donate more often than other people in the community and donate more than other people in the community, and I think we should also be the people who are prepared to pay our taxes more readily.

But again, we have to see the benefits of those kinds of things, so that's why they're suggesting certain increases for those kinds of people who really are the most vulnerable. In many of our faith communities, frankly, we know people are getting older and the communities are getting smaller. It can't be left to that remnant of good folks.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Walker.

Mr. Bill Walker: A couple of real things came out for me in this survey. You mentioned poor housing and the ongoing planning and study of affordable housing. Can you just share with us some numbers as far as the commitments the government has made and not actually gotten to? I'm the critic for long-term care, and I challenged them on a very similar thing. They make a plan, they study the plan, they put out a number, and yet when you challenge them and say, "Where are the numbers? When are you planning to do this?", I don't get anything. Do you have that type of numbers, that we're actually below where you believe we should be for housing?

Mr. Joe Gunn: I know that there's a section in the ISARC brief that talks about it. I think there was also an earlier brief that might be interesting for you. The Alliance to End Homelessness spoke of that as well. I think that should be made available.

Really, the numbers that were provided in Ottawa are stark. We have a number of faith communities, for example, in this city that are actually trying to redo buildings—or take away parking lots, in one case—to build affordable housing. There are communities that are able to do that as we need fewer church buildings and so on, but that's a drop in the bucket.

We have had situations in city hall where we've had faith leaders—bishops, archbishops, imams and everybody else—trying to get together. Everybody agrees that something must be done, but frankly, the need to have—I think it was mentioned this morning—5,000 severe cases and 10,000 on a waiting list is not good enough for Ottawa, for sure.

Mr. Bill Walker: I know you referenced that the sale of Hydro One will exacerbate Ontario's financial position. Again, our concern that we've been trying to get out—certainly the public is saying it to us—is that there's a \$700-million revenue source that we're going to lose when they get rid of this. Again, that money could have been going there.

I note you made a reference to the ORPP, the registered pension plan. Again, one of the concerns that I'm certainly hearing is that we're going to duplicate that bureaucracy. Again, that money could be going into these much-needed programs and services.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Mr. Walker, I'm going to need to stop you.

Thank you, Mr. Gunn, and thank you for your written submission. Have a great day.

OTTAWA HEALTH COALITION

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is the Ottawa Health Coalition. The Clerk is

coming around with the written submission for the committee. I believe we have Albert Dupuis, Mary Catherine McCarthy and Nancy Parker. You're all welcome to join us at the table. Welcome, and good morning.

As you've probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official third party. When you begin, could you please identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: Thanks very much for having us. My name is Albert Dupuis. I'm the current co-chair of the local coalition, the Ottawa Health Coalition. With me to my left are Nancy Parker and Mary Catherine McCarthy.

I imagine that people on the committee are familiar with the Ontario Health Coalition and other local coalitions around the province, but just to reiterate, we are an advocacy group composed of people who work in health care, community members, retirees and interested community groups who believe in the feasibility and the necessity of a publicly funded, publicly administered health care system.

Today we're going to begin by telling a couple of stories that relate to the real, significant and continuing hospital cuts that have been happening over the last nine years and especially over the last four. I'll begin by asking Nancy Parker to speak, please.

Ms. Nancy Parker: Good morning, everyone. Thanks very much for the opportunity to speak. I've become a new member of the health coalition as a result of my experience with my husband's illnesses. He suffered a heart attack a year ago November, and that was followed by some very serious complications. He has been at the Ottawa Civic campus in emergency on five different occasions. All except one visit required him to eventually be admitted to the hospital, and I'll explain to you why I say "eventually."

The most recent visit happened in May 2015. We arrived on a Tuesday afternoon at approximately 2 p.m., and emergency was once again very packed. Given his medical condition, I assume, he was processed quite quickly and moved to the observation area. For those of you who might not be familiar with the observation area at the Ottawa Hospital, it's a large space with the nurses and the doctors in a central hub and a number of cubicles that surround that area for the patients. I think there were 15 of the cubicles.

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The cubicle is a curtained-off small area. You have a hospital bed, you have the table and you have a chair. There's not a lot of space. You often need, in fact, to step outside when the medical practitioners come in, to make room for them. There's absolutely no privacy whatsoever. Private conversations between doctors and patients, doctors and nurses, and patients and families are easily overheard. The sound of patients in pain is often very loud and chilling. There was a young man who had come in with a fracture, and they were trying to stabilize the

fracture while we were there. It was bone-chilling to listen to him screaming.

This is all extremely difficult to deal with when you're already dealing with a serious health condition of a loved one. By 4 a.m., they told us that he would eventually be admitted to the hospital. Unfortunately, it might be a bit of a wait because there were five to seven patients ahead of him waiting to be admitted to the hospital. By 4 a.m., I was pretty exhausted, and I thought, "I need to go. I need to stay strong and I need to be prepared for him." So I made my way home.

On my way, I realized that I was going to be facing yet another expensive parking bill. We had come and had had difficulty finding parking. I parked further away from the emergency. Because it was so late, I moved my car, later in the evening, closer to emergency. By the end of the day, I was facing a \$26 parking fee. That was just for one trip. You add on your meals, your coffee and whatever; it can be pretty expensive.

In my husband's case, as I said, five trips—at least four where he was admitted—and he stayed anywhere from five to nine days on each visit. The money starts adding up pretty quickly. Eventually, he was moved to a room late Thursday afternoon. That was almost 48 hours after we arrived on the Tuesday. He was told that he would need to have more tests but he would have to wait his turn. That was Thursday. He wasn't able to get his tests until Monday, so he ended up spending yet another weekend in the hospital.

It's challenging to keep him there because he can see the patients on the stretchers and he can see the older people who need beds. We've learned, since, that he has emphysema and he would need to be referred to a respirologist. This was in May. The first appointment that he was able to get to see the respirologist was early December. It's really difficult to watch a loved one having a hard time, having difficulty walking across the room. The sad thing is, I know he's not the worst. I know there are many other people left there that have endured a lot worse than he has.

Cuts to staff and beds and resources are having an impact. The government can't just keep relying on donations from people or putting profits before patients or budget lines. Canada is a better country than this. Please. We ask that you do what you can so that you can ensure all will receive access to the public health care system.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: Mary Catherine?

Ms. Mary Catherine McCarthy: Thank you for the opportunity to tell my story. My mother turned 90 in March 2015 and was still living in her own home with my sister, who was her key support, along with a few hours of home care each week. She had Parkinson's disease, but was still able to walk, sometimes with a walker. She also had celiac disease and some dementia.

On Easter Sunday, she fell and was taken to the Civic campus of Ottawa Hospital, where there was going to be such a long wait that she had to be transferred to the General campus. She had broken her hip and needed surgery.

On the hectic orthopedic ward, she received good care from the nursing and support staff. As she was healing, she received some physiotherapy, careful attention to her gluten-free diet because of her celiac disease, and her medication for Parkinson's.

There were no beds available in the alternative-care ward, where people can recover more from the surgery and be removed from the orthopedic floor. She should have gone to an alternate-level-of-care ward, where she could continue healing and receive physiotherapy.

We met with staff, who coordinated her transfer to a nursing home. Our first four or five choices were not available because of long waiting lists, so we had to accept the first available bed, in a less-than-desirable facility. We knew that she was not going to be able to go home.

In the long-term-care facility, the staff were uninformed about her condition, and they were unprepared to care for an elderly woman recovering from hip replacement surgery. They commented that they normally would not have to care for somebody with her needs.

We made sure that a family member was present at mealtimes, to make sure that her diet was adhered to, as Mom was no longer capable of being vigilant about her food.

Often when we went there, the staff on duty did not know about her condition. They did their best for Mom, but the high workload, combined with part-time staffing, meant she didn't receive the consistent care that she needed. The staff were also dealing with an enteric bacterial infection outbreak on one of the wards, putting more stress on the facility.

The second nursing home was a little better, with more consistent staffing, but they still were not properly prepared to help her. She died on June 3, two months after her fall. She didn't walk again.

My mother was more fortunate than many, to have family close by who could advocate for her and assist in her care. Physiotherapy and medical professional care were reduced to less than once per week in the long-term-care homes.

Recovering in the community or close to home sounds like a laudable goal. However, our hospitals need to be adequately funded so that complex-care elderly patients are not sent out into a community not prepared to give the appropriate care needed.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. McCarthy, I'm very sorry. I need to stop you here, because I know we're going to be turning to Ms. Fife to ask this round of questioning. I know you have your written submission from your group. I'm very sorry, because we have 10-minute allocations.

Ms. Fife, can I turn to you for this round of questioning?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much for coming and for sharing your stories—very emotional. Health care is emotional, right? When you need those services, there are expectations that they are going to be there and that they're going to be compassionate.

I wish I could tell you that your stories were unique. We've heard stories in Hamilton, Windsor, Thunder Bay and Sault Ste. Marie this week that have been consistent. So I don't think that the government can ignore the fact that the freeze on hospital budgets, moving into perhaps the fifth year, is negatively impacting patient care.

You have some numbers, actually, that are really interesting for me, in your presentation—the part where you get to the point where you talk about summary remarks. You mentioned that the Ottawa Hospital has seen approximately \$100 million slashed.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: That's right.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Do you want to talk about that a little bit, please?

Mr. Albert Dupuis: Our real budget is frozen, as you know, which means real dollar cuts.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Operational, yes.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: That's right: global operational budgets. That means real-dollar cuts because of inflation. The budget of the Ottawa Hospital is about \$1.1 billion a year, so if you take 3% of that, we have actually had a succession of cuts, year over year, of about \$30 million in each of those years. We've come up with a total of about \$100 million since, I guess, 2011 or something like that, and that has resulted in some of the numbers you see here, with 250 RN positions and 75 RPNs.

I'm a member of CUPE 4000, the Ottawa Hospital support staff local. We've seen 507 positions eliminated from our staff there. Around the city, we see emergency rooms that are filled with people who are waiting for beds, as opposed to being strictly emergency beds. Nancy's story is not unusual, unfortunately, as you've witnessed around the province.

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Moreover, what we see is this neo-liberal economic philosophy that's been pervasive in Ontario and other places, but especially in Ontario, for quite a few years now, probably all of my working life. What we see is basically a \$10-billion or \$15-billion gap, according to Hugh Mackenzie's numbers—and more sometimes—in the amount of taxes that are collected, especially at the corporate level and at the high-end level. It's not because spending on things like health care is increasing as a portion of the economic output of the province; it's basically this policy of continuing to create the so-called climate for investment, which we also know, by way of analysis, is not paying off the way it has claimed.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Certainly, and compromising our publicly funded health care system also doesn't incentivize investment, because that's also a draw. That's the social infrastructure that draws investment into Ontario.

I want to speak to the parking fees because a moratorium has been called by the government. I think that's welcomed by people across the province—that was my perception—but in the north, where parking fees are \$6 a day, it doesn't really have any impact. It was really interesting for me to hear administrators speak out about that because hospitals have become so dependent on parking fees to fund health care that it was not received

positively by the people who are actually on the front lines trying to make sure that patients get the care they need.

I'm glad that you included Hugh Mackenzie's piece. I have to tell you we have made a proposal to the government to increase corporate taxes by 1% in the province of Ontario to directly fund—targeted funding for health care. Ontario has a corporate tax rate that is lower than the state of Alabama, if you can believe that, and I can tell you right now there isn't anything progressive about that.

You go on to say, "Does it need to be this way?" I want to give you an opportunity to propose some solutions here. This government needs to listen to financial recommendations because we'll be debating this issue after today, and then we have two more days in Toronto as well.

Albert or Nancy, do you want to talk about the portion of it that says, "Does it need to be this way?"

Mr. Albert Dupuis: Yes, I can mention very briefly that there's a fairly specific demand that you may be hearing around the province this year and it stems from a very reasonable observation that Ontario funds its hospitals at 25% less per capita than every other region in the country, or at least—that's not correct—compared to the Canadian average. If we lift, for example—and I mentioned this in the brief—hospital funding in Ontario to the Canadian average, you would have, just in Ottawa here, I think \$316 million or \$314 million more for Ottawa hospitals alone, which is about a third of the budget of our huge Ottawa Hospital, which is, like I said, \$1.1 billion. That's a third of the Ottawa Hospital budget or equal to a small hospital.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That would be a significant game changer for Ottawa.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: It would be huge.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's actually \$312 million, as per your report.

Mr. Albert Dupuis: Yes.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Finally, I just want to say thank you for raising the issue of privatization. The Auditor General has raised this with this government. In her latest report just this fall, for the CCACs, 61% of the funding is going to direct patient care, but the other 39% is going to administration and more bureaucracy and profit—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Ms. Fife, I need to stop you here.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much for being here today.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): And thank you very much to each one of you for being here. Ms. McCarthy, I'm very sorry about your loss. Thank you for your written submission.

I'm just going to call out to see if the Orléans Chamber of Commerce is here. They're not. I'm going to do a little recess until that witness comes forward. Don't go too far.

I was told by the Clerk that at 4:15, we have the Victorian Order of Nurses of Canada. The CEO, Jo-Anne Poirier, is coming to present.

I'm just going to recess the committee. Please do not go too far, because they are scheduled for 11:45. I'm going to reconvene the committee the minute this witness comes forward, because after the next witness, we're going to be recessing for lunch. Okay? So please do not go too far, because the minute that next witness comes in, I'm going to reconvene the committee. Is that fair? Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1135 to 1150.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, I'm going to reconvene the committee. I'm going to do one more call for this particular group because it is now 11:50 and they were supposed to be here for 11:45. For the record, is the Orléans Chamber of Commerce here?

Seeing no one, I'm going to recess the committee until 1 o'clock for lunch. We will be back here for 1 p.m., committee members. We're recessed until 1 p.m.

The committee recessed from 1151 to 1300.

ALTERNA SAVINGS AND CREDIT UNION LTD.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, I'm going to resume the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. Good afternoon. Welcome back to Ottawa.

The first group before this committee is Alterna Savings and Credit Union Ltd., and José Gallant. Good afternoon. Welcome. I'm not sure you were here for this morning's sessions. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

You may begin anytime.

Ms. José Gallant: Thank you. Madam Chair, committee members, it's a pleasure to be here. My name is José Gallant. I'm the chief administrative officer of Alterna Savings, and we're based right here in Ottawa.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation, and for the government's continued support to the credit union sector. As you may know, credit unions play a vital part in Ontario's economy, often being the only financial services institution in smaller communities, and align with the government's vision to invest in people and support a dynamic business climate in the province. Credit unions strengthen the health of our economy, in particular small and community-based businesses, by financing innovation and growth.

I'm proud to say that Alterna Savings has been serving our community and our members since 1908. Alterna is one of Ontario's largest credit unions, with approximately \$3 billion in assets. We're owned by over 100,000 members and we have approximately 500 employees. We provide financial services to our retail and commercial members through 24 branches across Ottawa, the GTA, Kingston, Pembroke and North Bay.

I'm here because I believe credit unions are in a unique position to help grow the economy and create jobs

in Ontario. That's because our focus is on local prosperity. Our goal is to improve the financial well-being of families, local businesses and community organizations in the areas that we serve. We invest resources where our credit union members live and work. At Alterna, approximately 85 cents of every dollar is reinvested back into the local community in the form of personal and commercial loans and mortgages to Ontarians. We also help our communities through partnership with non-profit organizations, sponsorships of community events and grants. In 2015, we participated in and offered financial support to over 160 community events.

Part of our earnings are used to provide economic opportunities for marginalized groups. For example, our micro-finance program is a unique lending program focused on access to business credit for small and developing businesses through community-based micro lending. Securing credit and accessing banking services are major roadblocks for many Ontarians, particularly women, youth and newcomers to Canada looking to start a business. Alterna's micro-finance program finds an innovative way to assist these marginalized entrepreneurs. This past year, we celebrated 15 years of strengthening communities through our unique micro-finance program. To date, the program has provided 700 members with over \$3.9 million in micro-loans. It has helped to create jobs, increased the income of micro-borrowers, and reduced reliance on government income-support programs, all by supporting the growth and expansion of micro-enterprises in our communities.

To give you an example, one of these happy members is Marcia Francis. A single mother with poor credit and no savings, Marcia was working two jobs and struggling to be a provider for her four children. She was determined to make a change in her life, and with a little help from Alterna's community micro-finance program, Marcia was able to make a big change possible. Today, she is the founder and owner of Freedom Support Services, a successful Toronto health care services company which offers at-home care for seniors and people with chronic illnesses and disabilities. Her company has generated over \$1 million in sales and employs over 50 people. Her company flourished with an initial loan of \$5,000 and financial advice that Marcia says she would not have received from any of Canada's big banks.

At the provincial level, credit unions as a whole are a large and growing player in the Ontario economy. As of November 2015, Ontario credit unions that are part of Central 1 have total loans of \$34.1 billion and total deposits of \$32.3 billion.

As you know, this is a very important year for credit unions. The legislation that regulates us is in the process of being reviewed, and we're expecting to hear the fruits of that review any day now. I'd like to thank Ms. Albanese for all of the work she's done in that regard.

Our policy submissions to the current government have encouraged Ontario money to be reinvested back in Ontario, but financial services face global competition for investment and talent. To continue on a path of

growth benefiting businesses and families across Ontario, credit unions will need to explore new ways of differentiating ourselves and capitalizing on opportunities in order to have a sizable impact.

I want to take a moment to reiterate a few opportunities that are of particular interest to us, for your consideration in your upcoming budget.

First, we would ask the government to show confidence in the strength and the stability of the credit union system by increasing the deposit insurance for credit unions in Ontario. To increase our market share, credit unions require new and additional sources of liquidity, including an ability to grow deposits. The Deposit Insurance Corp. of Ontario provides insurance coverage to credit union members to a maximum of \$100,000 for non-registered accounts, and that's the lowest rate for credit unions in North America. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador each have a \$250,000 limit, while every province west of Ontario provides unlimited deposit insurance for credit unions.

Banks also have \$100,000 of coverage, but that is based per account for each subsidiary, meaning that bank clients can double and triple up on their insurance coverage. Banks also operate extra-provincially, meaning there's no guarantee that money will stay in the province.

We believe that raising the level of deposit insurance to \$250,000 for non-registered deposits in Ontario would encourage more deposits to be kept in Ontario with local institutions and help to level out the competitive playing field.

Second, we ask that you align the ability of credit unions to accept deposits in the MUSH sector. We think it makes good sense for municipalities, universities, schools and hospitals to keep deposits with local financial institutions. Unlike chartered banks, credit unions do not have a credit rating or bond rating, and this is often a prerequisite for the MUSH sector to make deposits in a financial institution. Meanwhile, the cost of getting a credit rating for a credit union is often prohibitive and it's difficult to justify for our size of institution.

We believe that increasing the deposit insurance limit to unlimited coverage would replace the credit or bond rating requirement for deposits in the MUSH sector and will remove a significant barrier for credit unions to access this source of liquidity. These deposits, of course, will be reinvested right here in the province.

Third, we wish to applaud you for not raising the provincial tax rate on credit unions as was done by the federal government in 2014. Today I want to strongly encourage you to maintain our present tax rate. As credit unions are the small businesses of the financial services industry, this makes good business sense. Contrary to banks, capital for credit unions is built mainly from retained earnings, a fact that was recognized long ago when the credit union tax deduction was put in place.

Our inability to access public markets for capital is still a reality today, which is why it is so important that the tax deduction remain in place. An increase to our tax rate would be an unnecessary burden to our capital in an

already difficult economic environment. It will be extremely difficult to replace this capital, which would limit our ability to grow. To illustrate, we estimate that if the provincial tax rate was increased, it would result in a decrease of \$266 million in loans to households and small businesses across Ontario.

Our time today is limited so I'll leave it at that, but I just want to reiterate that the credit union difference is all about service to our members and our community. This means driving community and economic impact as well as pioneering innovative approaches to banking, and with the changes I've outlined today, credit unions will be better positioned to thrive as an integral part of Ontario's economy.

I thank you for your time and consideration and I'd be pleased to take your questions.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much. I'm going to turn to the government side and ask Ms. Albanese to start this round of questioning.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you very much for your presentation and for giving us an idea of what credit unions do in the province, specifically your credit union.

As you mentioned, I have been conducting the review of the act that governs the credit unions and the results should be expected very soon. I look forward to sharing the recommendations that I have given to the minister.

I was wondering if you could, for the benefit of the committee, explain how credit unions help small communities in different parts of the province. For example, during my consultations, I learned that in many communities in the north, banks have pulled out, and the only help that small businesses or families especially have is from a credit union. So you play a unique role and a specific role in different parts of the province—if you could explain that.

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Ms. José Gallant: Absolutely. Credit unions are co-operatives, so they're member-owned. The credit union really looks to provide the benefits of their existence back to the members in their communities. While a bank may close or may look only to profits for the decision of maintaining a branch in a specific location, credit unions don't operate in the same manner. As long as it can provide benefits to their local community, and as long as they're able to sustain themselves as the regulations would require, they will stay as a rooted part of the community, to help their members.

As an example, I'll just speak for Alterna. There was a bank that closed in Pembroke, and Alterna purchased the assets of that particular location and we're operating it as a co-operative today. That was, I would say, about 15 years ago. You can see that we're perpetuating something in a community that maybe wouldn't have existed if the co-operative had not stepped in.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: You mentioned that the credit unions need new sources of liquidity. Can you explain why, in more detail?

Ms. José Gallant: Liquidity is most important because, for us to be able to provide loans and mortgages to our members, we need to bring funds in. We're not able

to raise that money through capital markets in the same ways that banks do. We must raise it through deposits or through, for example, securitizing mortgages.

But as you know, those types of transactions are somewhat limited, because not all mortgages would qualify for securitization through the CMHC's CMB program. So being able to gather deposits from Ontario-based businesses, institutions and individuals is very key for us to be able to reinvest back into the community with those funds.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: You mentioned the micro-finance program that you have. Did I understand correctly that it's about 15 years now that it has been running?

Ms. José Gallant: Yes, indeed.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: My understanding is that you're able to help individuals or entrepreneurs who would not otherwise have qualified for loans.

Ms. José Gallant: Yes, and I've described to you, in my remarks, a member who has had a loan with us for several years and was able to build a business that was quite successful.

A few years ago, we did a study with Carleton University with regard to the impact of this program on the community. I can't recite the specific statistics to you at the moment, but I can tell you that the majority of those who went through this program were able to get off social assistance, and were able to better feed their family and had a better diet for themselves. Many of them became homeowners. Many of them really improved their quality of life and still operate their businesses today. So it's really creating a difference, and we're really proud of that.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: I think my colleague Marie-France had wanted to ask something specific. You wanted to know how many—sorry?

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mrs. Lalonde?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: How many people actually, let's say, in Ottawa—do you have numbers of how many people were able to benefit from this particular program that you offer?

Ms. José Gallant: I don't have the breakdown by city, but so far, we have helped 700 members, mainly across the GTA and Ottawa, for \$3.9 million. The maximum amount of the loan is \$15,000, so it's a lot of people.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you. Merci.

Mrs. Laura Albanese: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much. Before you leave, Ms. Gallant, you have until Tuesday, February 2, at 5 p.m., to submit anything in writing. I believe you've just heard some of our colleagues' questions. If you can, in your written submission, include that information, it would be very helpful. Thank you for your presentation, and have a great day.

Ms. José Gallant: Thank you very much, committee members. Thank you, Ms. Wong.

WEST OTTAWA BOARD OF TRADE

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is the West Ottawa Board of Trade: Rosemary

Leu, executive director. There's another presenter as well: Rick Chase, the chair of the economic development committee.

Good afternoon. Welcome. As you've probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. In this round, the questioning will be coming from the official opposition party. When you begin, if you can identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard, that would be great. Thank you.

Ms. Rosemary Leu: Good morning, everyone. My name is Rosemary Leu. I'm the executive director for the West Ottawa Board of Trade. The chair of my economic development committee will make our presentation this morning, but I would just like to make a personal thank-you to the committee for coming to Ottawa and listening to the voice of business for half of our nation's capital. Thank you for that.

Mr. Rick Chase: I'll echo Rosemary's comments as well. Thank you very much to the committee for coming to Ottawa, and thank you to the Chair of the committee for being here. I know that's probably how everybody starts their presentation; if they don't, then they should.

The West Ottawa Board of Trade is an over-600-business-member organization, just to the west and, primarily, the majority of the west side of our nation's capital here in Ottawa. The West Ottawa Board of Trade was formerly—a little bit of the history of us—the chambers of commerce for Nepean, Kanata, Goulbourn and West Carleton, so we have a great mix of members, urban, rural and suburban. It really gives us a unique perspective, and hopefully we can share some of that perspective here today with the committee.

Our hope is that you understand that we're not a polished advocacy group by any means, with rehearsed talking points, but hopefully we can share some perspective from the small and medium businesses that this finance committee does have quite a bit of scope and influence for.

With that being said, our primary focus within the organization is networking, education and business-to-business benefits, as you'd find with chambers of commerce across this province. By virtue of osmosis in the nation's capital, we do take on an advocacy element for our members as well, primarily with the municipal government, but from time to time we do have this great opportunity to bring the message beyond municipal government to a committee such as yourselves, so, again, a message of thanks.

When we talk with our members, one of their primary concerns at this stage is ORPP. I know that this is not the ORPP committee, but we would be remiss not to bring that message forward with the amount of horsepower that we have in the room today. Our members would think that we weren't doing our jobs and I wasn't doing my job as a volunteer if I didn't at least bring this forward.

Our members are mostly concerned in a couple of capacities. As the ORPP has been presented thus far, their concerns are with competitiveness—we border the province of Quebec; there are some competitiveness

challenges that could arise from a labour market perspective. There's also the challenge—and let me just say that I don't hope to present to you something as detailed as Advocis did this morning. They would have the facts and statistics far more than what we do, but we do partner quite closely with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce to hopefully back up some of what our grassroots members are telling us and put some statistics behind it.

That being said, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce found that 44% of Ontario businesses would look at adjusting their payroll if the current proposed ORPP is brought forward. With that being said, they also recognize—as do we and as do our members—that change is still not a bad thing. How do we effect that change? They're asking us to bring the message forward: How can that change be done in a way that's going to keep them competitive? And if they're already doing something, going above and beyond what many businesses do for their business in terms of RRSP plans and doing something in terms of pension already, that competitiveness is there and that a matching plan be considered—again, we would change the scope of the ORPP slightly.

Outside of that, they would also ask us to bring to this committee that the government look toward working with the federal government for enhancements to the CPP, potentially in lieu of even moving forward with the ORPP. Again, I recognize that this is not the ORPP committee, but I did want to bring that message forward from our members, so thank you for listening to that.

In terms of Ottawa, it's a very dynamic and changing landscape from the Ottawa that many of us remember and the Ottawa that I grew up in. I would say that on the West Ottawa Board of Trade—and Rosemary has done a great job with this—we have people, process and performance. We put that on the board every time we look at any project or any partnership that we look to have. We wanted to bring a third-party perspective because we know that this is day five of many presentations from many different organizations, and some from here, directly from Ottawa, with a request for partnership quite a bit.

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We wanted to bring the committee the message that Ottawa is there. We have the people in the right seats, driving the right buses, in the right environments. These are organizations such as our economic development here in the city of Ottawa, Ottawa Tourism, Invest Ottawa and our 2017 committee. They have the right people, but more than that, the right people have put the right processes in place and they have most certainly now started to have the performance to back up what they're doing, and they're showing results.

We would be remiss to try to present to you everything that they have—we know that, again, it's day five, and you've had a long presentation—but we wanted to bring you that third-party perspective that Ottawa is there. When you're looking for partnerships, these other organizations that are presenting to you, from our

grassroots third-party perspective, are worthy of your partnership.

With that, I'll close—again, just to share that we're very thankful that the committee is here. We're very appreciative of that and we're very appreciative of being invited here, as well, to speak and share the perspective from small and medium business here in Ottawa. Thank you again.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much. Just so you know, Ottawa Tourism is coming to us at 3:15, so you're welcome to stay.

Mr. Rick Chase: Ah, perfect.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to turn to the opposition party, Mr. Walker, to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Rosemary and Rick. You've raised a lot of very valid points. I'm from a rural area in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound as MPP, so not only do I hear from the grassroots, but from those small business people. The chamber of commerce and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business are echoing exactly what you're saying in regard to the ORPP. It's very concerning for our business community what's going to be the end result of this. As you say, wage reviews are going to happen. A lot of people are suggesting that they now give their employees RRSPs as part of it, and they may have to scale those back to be able to afford to do this mandatory benefit. So it's very disconcerting for us. The competitiveness is obviously a critical piece.

I think the other thing that we're starting to hear more and more in the community is that the government may actually impede the federal government doing an enhancement to the CPP. What I'm hearing from a lot of my constituents is that they don't want to see an identical bureaucracy created at the provincial level that already exists at the federal level, if you can actually just enhance it. Rather than thinking that they're being leaders by imposing this and using the spin that it's going to take care of everyone's retirement, there are other ways to do this.

Certainly, the Premier pushed very hard against Prime Minister Harper to just enhance the CPP. I'm hoping that she's going to do the exact same thing, in this case, with the new Prime Minister. We don't need a duplication of service. We don't need another bureaucracy. We need to do what's best in the minds of businesses and our regular constituents and taxpayers. It was very refreshing to hear your view on that. I think that partnership piece is good.

The other thing, I think, that needs to be brought to light is hydro rates. A lot of things that we've heard, certainly in my time here and earlier in the committee, is that those things are having huge impacts on our business community as well. How are they going to adhere to a doubling and tripling of hydro rates, going forward, plus the ORPP? It's challenging enough in the business environment in today's climate to make a go of it. So I think what we're hoping, from your perspective, is that you'll continue to use your advocacy. Whether they're

scripted points or not, I think it's always good to hear from you at the grassroots and the work that you do on behalf of your membership.

I don't think this is significant to just Ottawa; I think it's what we're hearing across the province, whether it's in Windsor, northern Ontario, or a riding like mine or Jimmy's in Cornwall. A lot of small business people are really worried about what's going to happen with this ORPP, with hydro rates. We hope the government is listening, when they think of their budget. Rather than partisan, political thoughts, it should be what's best for Ontarians and ensuring that we've put regulation and legislation in place to actually encourage business to expand.

One of the things I think is challenging right now is that we have a lot of people coming through the manufacturing industries, through the large business sector, saying, "You're uncompetitive as a province. We're actually looking at other provinces rather than coming to Ontario." We have a lot of small, medium and large businesses saying, "I want to expand, but I'm not certain Ontario is going to be the place." So we need to create that environment. We need to create those partnerships and synergies so that people actually want to invest.

The previous speaker with the credit unions—the opportunity of being innovative and finding the products that people will actually buy into and say, "Yeah, I want to start my own business. I want to expand my own business," and make it enticing for people, as opposed to mandatory things like ORPP, which will I think in the end have a very negative impact to our province. Jimmy, anything to add?

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. McDonell.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Just with your chamber, what are your biggest issues, other than the ORPP, that you have as a chamber?

Mr. Rick Chase: That's a very good question, and I think it probably might be a slightly different answer from the volunteer perspective and a board member than our executive director. Not to put her on the spot, but—Rosemary?

Ms. Rosemary Leu: No, that's okay. I would echo the comments about hydro. Obviously, that's of significant importance to individuals and to the business community.

There are maybe different challenges here in Ottawa, with the size of our geography, where we have a large percentage of the city that is under one hydro, under Hydro Ottawa, and then the more rural community, which is under Hydro One, and the challenges that those businesses face with increasing rates of hydro.

Absolutely, that's echoed, I think, and you're going to hear that from everybody.

Mr. Bill Walker: I just want clarity on that: All sizes of business you're hearing that from as well? It's not just the big conglomerates that we keep hearing about, that they can take this impact. It's the small, little guy. The M&M Meat stores, the Mac's Convenience Stores, that are running freezers 24/7, are saying, "How do I actually do that?" So you're hearing the same thing here?

Ms. Rosemary Leu: I would say more so. In our organization, 80% of our members are small business owners. We have some of the larger businesses, but the majority of our members are those with 10 employees or less. For those guys, their bottom line, with the margins that they have, is significantly impacted by even the smallest thing. Hydro is a big part of it, and the ORPP is a part of it. I mean, a 3% decrease on their bottom line is not a good thing for a small business owner.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. Ms. Leu and Mr. Chase, thank you for being here. You have until Tuesday, February 2, at 5 p.m. to send your written submission to the Clerk; okay? Thank you for being here, and have a great afternoon.

Ms. Rosemary Leu: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I want to welcome Minister Naqvi.

I believe, Mr. Walker and Mr. McDonnell, you've been here this morning. I didn't get a chance to welcome both of you.

Just for the committee members to know, we are actually streaming live—that's what staff told me—to Queen's Park. If you have colleagues who want to watch this hearing today, maybe I'll get the Clerk to give you the website link.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): It's a test. It's not live.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): It's a test. It's not live.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Nobody is really watching.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I don't know. Somebody may be curious. All right, so I just want to let people know it's being tested—

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): There are interested people out there.

OTTAWA-CARLETON DETENTION CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. Mr. Denis Collin, I believe, is the local president. Mr. Collin, welcome.

Mr. Denis Collin: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Good afternoon. As you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. In this round, questioning will be coming from the third party. You may begin at any time. When you begin, could you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Denis Collin: Good afternoon. My name is Denis Collin and I have worked as a correctional officer in the province of Ontario for the last 19 years. I'd like to thank Catherine Fife for saying hello on behalf of Jennifer French. Minister Naqvi, thank you for attending and listening to my report, and Madam Chair.

I am presently the elected OPSEU Local 411 president at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre. I would like to present to the committee areas within the Ministry of Correctional Services that could use focused input of financial resources.

Over the past year, we've been speaking out in regard to the crisis in corrections that is occurring in Ottawa and around the province of Ontario. This crisis has been in the making for many years and, so far, little has been done to stop it. Over the past several years, the media has been actively reporting on riots, violence within the jails, deaths of offenders, failure of buildings and security systems within our newest facilities, high-risk offenders in the community not receiving the level of supervision needed and, most recently, a hostage taking of a correctional officer in Thunder Bay who was threatened with death.

This crisis has seen severe understaffing in our provincial jails, detention and correctional centres. This has led to increased lockdowns within our facilities. We have seen a significant corresponding rise in inmate-on-staff assaults. Our probation and parole officers carry the highest caseloads in Canada. We are exasperated by the mental health and addiction issues of the offenders, the overcrowding within the jails and the lack of programming, just to name a few.

The crisis is very real and it's compromising the safety of staff, offenders and the Ontarians we serve. I believe there is a commitment from this government to address the crisis, and the union is committed to working with this government to solve the issues that plague our correctional system.

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The first step is to secure the needed budgetary resources to deal with the issues head on. The president of OPSEU, Smokey Thomas, has gone on record stating that \$100 million needs to be invested into Ontario corrections to address the ongoing crisis. This infusion of funds is a much-needed start to address the shortfalls and visible failings we see in our line of work on a daily basis.

The first challenge the ministry needs to accomplish is the hiring of a significant number of correctional officers to properly supervise the offenders under our care and supervision. The ministry is in need of approximately 800 officers—300 of them full-time and 500 of them fixed-term—above and beyond any ongoing staff attrition.

We need an infusion of new training officers who can train new recruits year round. New recruits are normally trained at the correctional college in Hamilton, but we need resources and the ability to hold future classes in northern and eastern Ontario. State-of-the-art facilities need to be built to permit new recruits to learn in an environment that is indicative of a correctional institution setting.

Correctional officers need to have up-to-date training so they can continue to use their personal protective equipment, which includes restrictive weapons. Training

for first aid, fire emergencies, use of force, self-defence and mental health training are all needed immediately to allow officers to perform at the highest and most professional level possible. We must make sure we provide our officers with the best equipment and training possible to keep them safe.

Furthermore, when our officers suffer from occupational stress injuries or post-traumatic stress disorder related symptoms due to the nature of our work, we are there to provide them with the immediate resources needed to help them heal.

Additional equipment needed to support and protect correctional officers and probation officers: full-body scanners for institutions to detect internal weapons, drugs and other forms of contraband; protective vests for all correctional officers; additional radios so every staff member has an emergency lifeline while working in an institution; additional MSA to effectively deal with fire emergencies; walk-through metal detectors for all community probation and parole offices; and an improved emergency response network for all probation and parole officers.

The province of Ontario has 26 correctional facilities within its jurisdiction. This is down from 50 institutions just over 20 years ago. Ontario still has jails that predate Confederation, jails built in the early 1900s to the 1960s and the 1970s. Such is the case in Ottawa, which is also in desperate need of a regional intermittent centre due to the growing accommodating sentences handed out to offenders.

Ontario has progressively gone to what is considered a super-jail format, which holds in excess of 1,000 inmates. These super-jails hold over one half of the province's inmate population. The expectation is that it is cheaper to house these inmates, but the province has now taken on a warehousing aspect to deal with a greater number of offenders.

Studies have shown and have been supported by groups such as the John Howard Society and the Elizabeth Fry Society to build new regional facilities that do not exceed 300 beds. This size of facility provides for the offenders to remain within the realm of their community and provides access to families, court and community services, and the greater likelihood of successful reintegration into their communities.

Ontario's newest and largest detention centre is experiencing many significant issues. This model seems to focus more on the profit available to the partnership than the security needed for Ontario's citizens.

Inmate supervision and rehabilitation remain as the core duties and mission statements of institution and community corrections. Within the context of today's crisis in corrections, with severe staffing shortages, overcrowding and probation and parole caseloads at the highest in Canada, inmate supervision and rehabilitation have suffered, and we have failed to live up to those mission statements.

With future investments and resources, we hopefully can turn the corner and provide the appropriate super-

vision and programming needed to assist the offender population. This is why eastern Ontario, our region, is in desperate need of a correctional facility that gives resources to offenders that a detention centre such as OCDC cannot provide. Programming is an important pillar of the direct supervision model and assists the offender to make more appropriate choices. It will help with their eventual return to their communities.

Greater mental health resources are needed more than ever as the province's jails have become the location of last resort to house and care for offenders with ever-increasing mental health and addiction issues.

Probation and parole officers supervise about 56,000 offenders on any given day in Ontario. The Auditor General released a report in 2014 concerning community corrections. The auditor's findings included that 44% of the supervised offenders fall within the high-risk to very-high-risk category, and 60% of this group recidivates during their term of community supervision.

Additional findings were that Ontario spent the least amount of money of any province—it is at a mere \$5.81 per day—on probation offender services, and probation and parole officers carried the highest caseloads. The caseload average is 65 offenders per probation and parole officer in Canada. The auditor's findings would suggest there is a strong correlation between the lowest spending, the highest caseloads and the highest probation recidivism rate in the country.

Various reports state that the caseload averages should not exceed 50 offenders per probation and parole officer to achieve optimum case management results. The province of Ontario needs to hire several hundred more probation officers to achieve similar improved results as experienced in other provinces.

Ontario's corrections record management system is antiquated and does not fulfill the needs of the largest provincial correctional system in Canada. Successful organizations have—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Collin, can you please wrap up your presentation so I can turn to Ms. Fife to ask you some questions about your presentation?

Mr. Denis Collin: Yes. My summation would be that the crisis in corrections can be reversed and Ontario can achieve the needed transformation for its correctional services. With appropriately applied and focused resources, the Ontario ministry of corrections can become a leader within Canada. The recommendations provided above will assist the committee in its budgetary decisions. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you, Mr. Collin. Ms. Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you so much, Denis. I have to say that at every stop along the finance committee's tour this week, OPSEU has presented, really, a comprehensive overview of corrections in the province of Ontario. It is quite astounding that you have been waiting over a decade for justice. It's somewhat ironic in some respects.

This morning we heard from the president, Elana Lamesse, from the parole and probationary officers

association as well. She even cited the 2014 Auditor General's report, which you also referenced, around the high rates of caseloads, the nature of the offenders and the offenders that you deal with in the jails.

I want to touch on a couple of your points because you've made a point for infrastructure—capital infrastructure, physical infrastructure—and then programming, which is essentially human resources, which makes the difference in our jails, right?

When we were in Thunder Bay, the mayor of Thunder Bay actually called the Thunder Bay Jail a “rathole.” One of your colleagues, Mike, said the officers refer to it as “criminal college.” There's still the presumption of innocence, and some of these inmates are on remand, so you have the most vulnerable, potentially—mentally ill people as well—in with some of the more violent people in our society.

Do you think that this model of these super-jails, which you rightly point out are sort of warehousing—do you think rehabilitation is possible in this model if the funding does not change?

Mr. Denis Collin: No, and the funding must change. There's not enough within programming and there's too much concentration within buildings now that warehouse people.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

Mr. Denis Collin: When you look at the Elizabeth Fry Society saying that smaller institutions really would work best—I started off at a small jail called L'Original Jail that ended up closing.

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I ended up going to Rideau Correctional and Treatment Centre. It was a treatment centre that actually took care of many needs and gave many resources to offenders that would go out back into the community. Then I landed back into the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre.

Since then, you see a place like Rideau that ended up closing, and what happened is that all of the resources have gone away from rehabilitation. Ottawa now is not only a detention centre, but we've tried to impose some sort of structure to compensate for that, and it doesn't work. It's either you're a detention centre or you're not. If we really want to go towards rehabilitation in eastern Ottawa, we need a correctional facility for that. Super-jails: If we don't have a correctional aspect with regard to rehabilitation, even within these superjails, we're just making our situation much worse.

Ms. Catherine Fife: The other delegations have also talked about inmate-on-inmate violence and violence against all staff in the corrections.

I toured Maplehurst and Vanier. Maplehurst has almost 1,000 inmates and Vanier is a penitentiary for women. What struck me in both of those—I felt very unsafe in the male correctional because it was so crowded. Three men in a cage: one on the floor, one on a bed and then one sleeping on the very top. Those were the folks who were in protective custody, so the violence there was quite something.

The mental health piece—and I know that you've called for training to deal with the influx of those who are

suffering from mental illness in the institutions. Because there are so few resources out in the community, this is where they end up. I can tell you at Vanier, for some of those women, it seemed inhumane and it seemed cruel that these women were in these institutions in solitary confinement, essentially.

Can you talk about the impact of those inmates who are mentally ill on corrections officers?

Mr. Denis Collin: I know that in Ottawa, the mentally ill are segregated. That's about as much as we can do for them. We need more. They're the mentally ill; they're the most vulnerable in our society. And it not only has an impact on the offender population who are mentally ill; it has an impact on the officers working with them, also. It's very unnerving to work in a situation where you have nothing to offer to a population that you've vouched to serve. You're not doing that. The offenders are locked up and they're given what is provided for them in those areas. A segregation area is a place where you're segregated. You're given a phone call. When you ask for it, you'll have a 20-minute phone call. You'll have a 20-minute yard. You'll have a shower during the week. And that's about the extent of what we do for the mentally ill.

In Ottawa, we're not a correctional facility; we're a detention centre. Therefore, we provide very little in Ottawa when it comes to the mentally ill.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. Fife, I need to stop you there.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to say thank you for the work that you do on behalf of the inmates.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Collin, if you have any written submission, you may submit to the Clerk by February 2 at 5 p.m. Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Denis Collin: Thank you.

AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before us is the Air Transport Association of Canada. The Clerk is coming around with the written submission. Mr. Michael Skrobica: I remember seeing you before, sir.

Mr. Michael Skrobica: Yes, I spoke here last year.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I believe so. Welcome again. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. When you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purpose of the Hansard.

Mr. Michael Skrobica: Good afternoon. I am Michael Skrobica. I'm the senior vice-president and CFO of the Air Transport Association of Canada, also known by its acronym, ATAC. My organization is a trade association representing commercial aviation in Canada. It represents 175 members.

Thank you very much for meeting with me today and coming to Ottawa. I am pleased to present on three issues today, and they all stem from the increase of the Ontario aviation fuel tax. ATAC recently commissioned a study

on aviation fuel taxes for all Canadian provinces and territories and all US states adjoining Canada. A summary of the report is attached in appendix A. It indicates that the Ontario tax is uncompetitive in the sense that it is the highest by far in Canada. The only province that comes close is British Columbia, and you have to add in their carbon tax, which is a stated policy area that the province of Ontario is going to avoid, yet you're in the same neighbourhood as a province with a carbon tax. Ontario's 6.7 cents per litre is substantially higher than virtually all US states with the exception of Ohio, and that's a sales tax that includes aviation fuel.

We would ask that you re-examine this program with a view to making Ontario more competitive vis-à-vis other provinces, territories and US states. Otherwise, you're going to have a leakage of passengers going to places that can offer air transportation at a cheaper rate.

The study also indicates that Ontario was unique in levying a fuel tax on international travel. This violates the United Nations Chicago Convention on extra-territorial taxation of fuel, which Canada is a signatory to. Ultimately, this will impact the number of passengers leaking to the United States and negatively affect the level of service at Ontario airports. I would ask that you please review this issue with a view to making Ontario more competitive.

Finally, ATAC has a number of flight schools in its membership: 17 in the province of Ontario. The competitive nature of flight schools is impacted by the over 30% foreign students who come to Canada to obtain their commercial pilot licences. All of this earns them a federal education tax; indeed, many of these flight schools are community colleges. If those foreign students elect to go to another province, it will negatively impact the flight schools and employment in the province of Ontario.

It is critical to ensure that Ontario's schools are competitive. This is an education matter. We've analyzed this and attached in appendix B an analysis which indicates that even if you were to totally exempt Ontario flight schools for relevant educational activity, it would cost you approximately \$148,000 a year; this is modest. It would further education on a vocational basis. From our standpoint, it makes a lot of sense by way of an investment by the province to further this. We recommend a full remission for flight schools.

I'd like to thank you very much for hearing our concerns this year, and I'm ready to take any questions.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to turn to Mr. Milczyn to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Thank you very much. It's nice to see you again this year. Before we get into your presentation, I just wanted to ask you—I think I asked you the same question last year. The lease rates which the federal government charges for major airports in Ontario: How do they compare to other provinces and how would that compare to the cost structure of commercial airports in the US?

Mr. Michael Skrobica: It's a federal issue. The head leases are between the Department of Transport federally

and the various airport authorities. Toronto pays a disproportionately high ground rent. We have anywhere from four million to six million people who leak to US airports. The ground rent is a major contributor to the additional costs. Indeed, in the United States, airports receive money from their federal government, and here in Canada, the money is being siphoned off in what effectively is a hidden tax.

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Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Thank you for that. In terms of the issues that you've brought forward, I'm very interested in your proposal around full remission on the aviation fuel tax that would be utilized by flight schools. Approximately how many flight schools are there in Ontario?

Mr. Michael Skrobica: There are 17. A list is attached in appendix B. We had a study that a number—I think about eight of them—provided information to, as to the amount of fuel burned each month. We made an estimate based upon the number of aircraft at the other schools and we removed from that the ancillary revenues, for example airplane rentals for people who are trying to keep current. We're trying to focus it on strictly the educational aspect, which we estimate to be about 60%.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: Approximately how many students are served by these flight schools each year?

Mr. Michael Skrobica: It would be over a thousand.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: And you're saying that about 30% of that are foreign students?

Mr. Michael Skrobica: Yes. We did a study, and foreign students prefer Canada; it's a cheaper place to obtain your pilot's licence than a lot of other locations and we have a very large component of our student base that originate from overseas. In category of numbers, China, India and then the EU are in that order with regards to flight training here in Canada.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: And I would imagine that part of that is easier ability to get a student visa to come to Canada than to the US for many people.

Mr. Michael Skrobica: Yes. We've been quite fortunate with regard to having easier visa requirements than, for example, the United States, where there is a reluctance to train overseas students.

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn: I want to thank you very much for bringing this forward today, and certainly for your recommendation around aviation flight schools. I think that's a very interesting recommendation that I certainly will take back to the minister. Thank you.

Mr. Michael Skrobica: And it would also be modest.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation, sir, as well as your written submission. Have a great afternoon.

Mr. Michael Skrobica: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, The next group coming before us is the Ottawa and District Labour Council.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Katch Koch): They're not here yet.

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The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): They're not here yet? They're not here yet.

CORNWALL AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): How about the Cornwall and District Labour Council? I have Elaine MacDonald. The Clerk is coming around with the written submission. Welcome, Ms. MacDonald.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): As you probably heard already, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questions will be going to the official opposition party. You may begin anytime. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Thank you very much. My name is Elaine MacDonald and I'm the vice-president of the Cornwall and District Labour Council. I'm happy to be able to present here today. Thank you for hearing all of us. I think this is such an important duty that you've performed, tedious as it must be by Friday afternoon.

I'm here representing workers in the health care system, especially in long-term care—people who work in nursing homes. I hope that this afternoon, in my short 10 minutes, I can communicate to you the sense of crisis our workers report to us that they experience at work. After that, I hope you'll be able to communicate that sense of crisis to your caucuses, and hopefully we'll see some sort of meaningful response in the budget of 2016 in terms of regulatory care built into the program.

People enter the health care profession because they want to help vulnerable people. The work is hard and, given the end-of-life nature of most people's residence in long-term care, the work is frequently heartbreaking, but the satisfaction our members draw from their work is the reason they go back every day. In recent years, though, they report that it's harder and harder to serve their clients in anything more than the most superficial and perfunctory manner.

I could give you details such as the gentleman from the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre gave you of so many tasks that have to be done that get skipped because of job pressures; too much is attempted to be done by too few for so little. Over the past decade, chronic and progressive underfunding of health care, either in reduced transfers or outright cuts, have challenged long-term-care homes to provide even the most basic supports to their residents, and they make patient-caregiver bonding difficult to achieve.

We dare say that reduction to barely minimal service is characteristic of the entire health care system, so the problems of nursing homes aren't unique. But the

repeated cycles of unrelieved austerity and successive rounds of changes to care delivery have destabilized the system, and long-term-care facilities are being squeezed and pressured by reduction in hospital availability on one hand, and by inadequate community care on the other. For well over a decade, it seems that financial considerations have trumped social and medical concerns. We feel entirely justified in claiming that care at every level has been compromised through a too-aggressive program of restructuring, reduction and restraint.

We're not opposed to change—there isn't improvement in a system, after all, without change—but change has to be managed and planned and the results have to be measured. We feel that in Ontario too much was attempted too soon with too few resources brought to the task. As workers in the system and as observers, we agree with the overall admirable goal of providing care closer to home, where people's medical, social and emotional needs are best met. But, unfortunately, the resources to implement the care-at-home program were short. The health care sector has failed people who need access to more complex care than can be provided at home. For almost two decades, hospital closures and bed cuts have severely rationed hospital access, and sadly, the alternatives to hospital care, which is either a nursing home or home care services, have not been adequate to support clients in the conditions in which they present themselves.

The wait-lists of those who qualify for admission into long-term care are at a record high of 20,000 plus. While they wait, fortunate people are sometimes served as outreach clients, visiting long-term-care facilities and receiving support and physical therapies while they await admission. This is a good stop-gap measure, but workers who perform the outreach report that assessments of clients' conditions are made only once a year, and the clients' conditions can deteriorate dramatically as they languish on the wait-list and their statuses are not upgraded.

Then there is a wait to access the interim outreach care program, too. Staffing levels are so barebones that people who would participate can't even access a phone line with a live receptionist responding. This drives people to go to the outreach venue directly and inadvertently interfere with the work there by engaging the therapist or recreationist on the spot for evaluation and registration. I can't tell you how often we hear of and experience this phenomenon: No one answers the phone and no one returns the messages left. That seems like a trivial complaint, even a whine, but this lack of responsiveness and the inability of an overstretched system to respond to people's calls and messages is symptomatic of a system in deep trouble. It's a good segue to the saddest and most tragic feature of life in a nursing home today.

As observers and workers in the system, through our unions and sometimes individually, workers have been warning of health care cuts reaching the point of harm for years now—not malicious, deliberate harm, but inevitable harm from too few resources being brought to the

job. Today, our members tell us the long-anticipated harm period has arrived, and reporters who cover the health care sector, and nursing homes especially, concur.

Today's nursing home is not yesterday's. In years past, seniors who would come into nursing homes might spend years living in a kind of semi-dependent retirement, needing and receiving more help as their conditions went on and they weakened. But now, with access to long-term-care homes constrained and people kept in the community longer, seniors who are entering a nursing home are well beyond any capacity for independent living. The majority are within the last 18 months of their lives and are in need of extensive care. They demonstrate acute physical and psychological needs, but the care is not there. It's a casualty of the shrinking budgets of the past.

Sadly and tragically, the single most outstanding new factor in the mix is dementia and behaviour problems. These are often a feature of late-stage aging. These features demand supervision and therapy, but too often they get neither.

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Sadly and tragically, dementia manifests itself as acute anxiety that drives sufferers to lash out at other residents and at staffers. One woman, a worker with 26 years in her career, said she insists now on being accompanied by another worker, even when they're short-staffed, which occurs frequently, when she enters a patient's room. A workmate of hers turned her back on a resident who she thought was sleeping in a chair. He attacked her, kicking and punching her repeatedly. In her third week of absence from work, her doctor determined she was suffering from something akin to PTSD, as is experienced by members of the military.

The conditions in a nursing home are rife with the factors that cause PTSD. Our members work with the constant fear that the vulnerable patient they're tending might turn on them and hurt them badly, given the adrenaline rush that fear and anxiety can provoke. But most often, the victim is another resident. I'd ask you to bow your heads when you hear this: Since 2001, 24 nursing home residents have died by violence that has been ruled as homicide, and not criminal, of course. In the last two years alone, 13 people have so died, and the problem is escalating.

CUPE Ontario, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, is showing great leadership on this issue. The union is campaigning for mandatory staffing ratios. They are appealing for a minimum standard of four hours of care per resident per day. This ask seems modest, given that the average is apparently over three hours in the Champlain LHIN where we are. By comparison, four hardly seems enough, but it's a place to start and we urge you, Ministers, to enact the legislation that would make it the norm in long-term-care homes.

The alarms coming out of long-term-care homes are not just being articulated by workers and their unions, and by the resident and family councils. The call for action is being made by the media, too, which track and

publish the stories of abuse, violent deaths and sheer neglect that are endemic in our underfunded and unregulated system. The whole world is watching Ontario, and as a province, we have to act. People enter long-term care knowing it will likely be their last move, and they accept that they will end their days there, but they do not expect nor deserve that their deaths there will be violent ones, at the hands of companion residents.

Last night, as you're aware, the provincial health ministers ended their conference with Jane Philpott, the federal Minister of Health, in Vancouver. Before the cameras, they pledged to work together for transformative change. I shuddered. The Ontario experience of the last two decades of change makes it a hard sell here in this province, after the seemingly non-stop process of destabilizing change.

All around us, we see evidence of growing gaps in patient care—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. MacDonald, can you please wrap up?

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Okay, sure.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): You can finish your sentence, but don't go on.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Okay—in patient care, safety and healing.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. I'm going to turn to the official opposition party. Mr. Walker, do you want to begin?

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you, Elaine. I just want to make sure that we're on the same page in regard to some of the things that you've definitely brought to light. I am the long-term-care critic, so this is very close to my heart. I want to make sure that people listening and watching know that this government has had record revenues, so it's not a case of a revenue issue. It's a case of where we put that, and the mismanagement and waste that we've had in the system, which are part of the problem that we're struggling with here.

I want to make sure that we understand as well that, to your point, we've had 30,000 beds promised by this government for long-term care, of which a very, very small number have ever been actually built or re-developed. I asked in estimates where their plan was: How many beds per year? Where were they going? No answers to that.

My colleague from Haldimand–Norfolk reminded me that 20,000 beds were built under the Mike Harris government, and very few beds since then have actually been added to that list. I was told by one of the long-term-care associations—you've noted the waiting lists—that those are going to double in the next six years in their projections. So again, to your point, this is a challenging crisis. It is something they have to be doing.

But I just want to make sure that the public understands, as well, that it's not a case that they don't have the money; it's a case of managing the money better, putting it where it needs to be and making sure that patient care is absolutely the focus of what we're doing. We don't need more studies. We don't need more people going out and doing all of this all over the place—

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: I have to tell you, I totally agree with you that we need more care—and you’ve got a global picture. I just have a view on the ground. I don’t think there are enough resources in the system.

We are facing a 0.2% increase in funding this year. When you consider what’s happening to the price of groceries and food alone—these people, after all, have to be fed—I don’t know where this money is of which you speak, but it’s not coming into long-term-care homes. So somewhere in there, there’s a problem.

Mr. Bill Walker: Just a point of clarification: What I mean is within the government coffers, the money they’re bringing in. Where they put us and where they actually put their priorities is a much different misalignment but—

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: I agree with you there. Thank you. I misunderstood you.

Mr. Bill Walker: No, that’s a good, fair point. I want to make sure that we understand there are record revenues that they have at their disposal. There’s a lot of waste and a lot of mismanagement. The Auditor General came out in her last study and said 40% of CCAC funding is going to administration, not to front-line care; there’s a prime example.

I’m going to turn it over to my colleague so I don’t take all the time.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Thank you. I’m sorry for misunderstanding that and I’m glad you clarified it.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Well, just to clarify, the revenues have doubled from \$65 billion to \$130 billion, and this is what we’re seeing per year. But just to take something from back home, a few years ago, on something you were involved with, the general hospital when they were closing off the rooms, we were obviously short. We had people there who had been in this temporary facility for two years while they were waiting. In my dealings with the CCAC, their words were, “We have more than enough room.” They didn’t need those beds.

The Auditor General’s report at the same time showed that we have the worst wait times in the province. When I asked her what were her figures showing when we were out of beds, her answer was, “The numbers only go up to 2,030 and we have no shortage before then”—which really makes you wonder, because if they’re saying the population of the seniors in that time frame doubles, either we are doing a really bad job—because obviously, they’re saying we have double the amount of beds we need—or somebody is not telling the truth.

And we have—seeing beds being built. I was down talking to your treasurer the other day, talking about Glen-Stor-Dun Lodge. They’re taking tax money from property tax to make up the difference because they can’t be—the provincial regulations in these rooms, rooms with dementia and only two people on. They’re looking after 24, 26 people.

It’s a shame what’s going on there, and somebody’s going to get hurt, as you were saying.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Yes, truly. They talk of a tsunami coming in the future. The tsunami is here.

Mr. Jim McDonell: You talk about, what, a 0.2% increase? Look at the costs of hydro going up this year. You’re saying that just to overcome that 5% or 10% increase this year, you’re laying people off.

We met in one of the local hospitals where they had to close 22% of the beds. When I brought that up, the hospital was upset because in this culture of fear, you’re not allowed to criticize the government, because the word is that next year could be worse. So they’ve got everybody sworn to secrecy. How could you lose 22% of your beds and not say anything to the public?

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Truly.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I mean, that’s what we’re seeing all the time.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, Mr. McDonell. Ms. MacDonald, thank you for your presentation and thank you for your written submission.

Ms. Elaine MacDonald: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

OTTAWA AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us, I believe, is the Ottawa and District Labour Council. Just for the committee’s purposes, it is not Sean McKenny who is coming before us. It’s Marlene Rivier, the vice-president.

Good afternoon. Welcome.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Thank you.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: A shy one.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Very shy and retiring.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): As you probably heard, Ms. Rivier, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the third party.

You may begin any time. When you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Welcome.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Thank you very much. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the committee, first of all, for the opportunity to present here this afternoon. My name is Marlene Rivier and I am the vice-president of the Ottawa and District Labour Council. Our president, who had intended to be here and to do this presentation, was called away on a matter related to his duties.

For those who are not familiar with our labour council, the Ottawa and District Labour Council is chartered by the Canadian Labour Congress and is one of the largest of the 110 labour councils across the country. It is also one of the oldest, dating back to 1872. Currently, the labour council represents approximately 90 union locals, with a combined membership of over 55,000 working men and women in the city of Ottawa. It’s the largest democratic and popular organization in the Ottawa area.

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It continues to frustrate that the government, in its attempts to balance budgets, find savings and reduce its deficit, does so on the backs of working people. At the

same time, input directed towards these measures provided by some, including organized labour, is often met with polite acknowledgement and then is quickly discounted and tossed aside.

I want to talk for a moment about the real impacts of layoffs. I know that when layoffs are made, a calculation is made as to the savings. I'm afraid that it seems that the calculation is not made as to the costs. There are, of course, personal costs. There are the financial costs to individuals and their families. There is also the personal cost to the individual: the loss of identity. Sadly, at its extreme, we are seeing increasing suicides in regions that are hit by layoffs; we've seen that in Alberta most recently.

There are also broader costs in the community when people are laid off. We see a greater reliance on social supports. When we lay someone off, we lay off a taxpayer—someone who is paying their taxes who is no longer in a position to do so—and we impact local economies. My first request would be that when calculations are made around the savings that are related to layoffs, calculations are also made around the cost to individuals, to families and to communities.

Our economy benefits when government, with input from labour, business, community and individuals, initiates policy and legislation—when we do that together. How easy it's been and continues to be for the government to choose workers as a fairly easy target. When it's time to find money and to cut costs, it's often jobs that we're looking at. In much of the work that we do, the work is about the workers. In a hospital, it's great to have equipment, but if you don't have people to run it, you can't provide services. Often the complaint is, "Oh, labour costs are so high." Well, many of these types of work rely on workers. They have to be the main cost.

A rally was held a couple of hours ago, you may have heard, not unlike what is happening in other communities that you're visiting: rallies attended by hundreds of people gathering together to say, "Enough is enough." Hydro privatization, hospital cuts, student debt, rising inequality—all real—and the effect is devastating on our communities, not just here in Ottawa, but in communities across this province.

Budgets built with austerity as the central focus do not work. Budgets built by restoring public services and growing our economies and expanding our revenue base will work, and that is what we are here to promote.

We want to see a greater balance between the interests of workers and common people and the interests of corporations. We're very disappointed not to see an effort to call on the corporate community to do its fair share in pulling Ontario out of its economic doldrums. We are a very low-tax province when it comes to the corporations. We certainly tax much more lightly than they do in the States and in most of the G7. There is, in our view, a lot of room there for us to call on our corporate friends and to remind them that they are part of our communities and that they have a moral obligation to contribute to their communities and not simply to find ways to avoid their taxation responsibilities.

We are calling on you, in preparing this budget, to look more broadly than where you can cut, where you can give small increases, and to look across our province, across our society, and ask that all those who benefit—and that includes the corporations—be called upon to pay their fair share. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation. Ms. Fife, do you want to start this round of questioning?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you so much, Marlene. It was good to see you out there as well: a very strong turnout for the Ontario Health Coalition, the labour council and also PSAC members, who are facing really difficult—well, they're locked out.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Yes, they are.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Which was really quite something.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: And by a corporation that is making billions, and these people have not seen an increase in many, many years.

Ms. Catherine Fife: OLG is doing pretty well, I'd have to say.

Ironically, though, there is this call for a public pension and pension is the defining issue in that lockout. So I guess it isn't pensions for everybody in the province of Ontario.

I'm really happy that you mentioned Hydro One. You talk about revenues. This is a lost opportunity, with the privatization of Hydro One. This has been confirmed by the Financial Accountability Officer. I don't know if you know that.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Yes.

Ms. Catherine Fife: But we will see. Obviously the government is going to pull in some revenue until—

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Excuse me.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Gentlemen, can you take your conversation outside so Ms. Fife can ask the question, please? Thank you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This is a lost opportunity with the sell-off of Hydro One. Do you want to comment on—overall, what do you think? Why is this government doing this?

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Of course, I'm not part of the inner circle but I do have my theory: That is that this government would like to balance its budget before it goes into the next election. If that means selling the furniture then they're quite prepared to do it. What we are seeing is a willingness to sell the goose that lays the golden egg in order to meet some arbitrary budget mark. I would agree with you that that is absolutely not in the interests of the people of Ontario.

It's certainly something that was tried before. The Mike Harris government made the same proposal and eventually had to back down in light of the legal challenges that they faced. I really found it quite shocking that this government would be willing to walk the path of Mike Harris.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'm sure it doesn't surprise you that the Financial Accountability Officer confirmed your

fears. The year after this deficit is supposedly erased—really, on the backs of what we've heard: on patients, on inmates across the province—they're willing to go back into debt again. It's very short-sighted.

Thank you for raising tax compliance as well. There's a huge opportunity for this government to ensure that those who should be paying their taxes need to, and those are large corporations with HST giveaways.

Also, the province of Ontario has a combined corporate tax rate lower than Alabama. I hope you would agree with me that that's not so progressive.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: It's certainly not progressive. I would call upon these corporations to do a bit of self-reflection. Are they committed to our province? Are they committed to the people of this province? Because if they are, they will pay their fair share, and our government should be heralding that cry to them.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you for your time today.

Ms. Marlene Rivier: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation. If you would like to do a written submission, please do so by Tuesday, February 2, 5 p.m., to the Clerk. Thank you.

CEMENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next presenter is the Cement Association of Canada. I was told by the Clerk it's Steve Morrissey, the executive vice-president, coming forward to present. Good afternoon, Mr. Morrissey. As you probably heard, the Clerk is coming around with your written submission. You may begin any time. When you do begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. Okay? Thank you.

Mr. Steve Morrissey: Thank you, Madam Chair. My name is Steve Morrissey. I'm the executive vice-president of the Cement Association of Canada. We represent manufacturers in Ontario that provide all of the domestic cement, the reliable supply of the materials that go into the sustainable communities that we have today.

I want to deviate a little bit from my script in that I had an opportunity to hear some of the previous witnesses. Representing a large industry, it's a bit humbling to now come and talk, once hearing the plight of seniors needing long-term care and of the unemployed, which is, of course, always an issue.

But as a large industry, too, we have a role to play in affordable housing and we're very quickly reaching an inflection point in how we build our communities. The reason for that is largely where we are talking about climate change and a price on carbon, which is a very important discussion. We have to think now how we are going to build communities that are going to be more resilient, that are going to be more affordable for people, and of better quality.

Energy costs: I don't have to remind anyone at this table where energy costs are going. It's a real concern

why we are continuing to have energy codes and building codes; developers are able to build very energy-efficient structures. Cement and concrete can play a role, and we'd be happy to have another discussion with parties about what that role could be.

1420

Very quickly, I'd like to talk—I think the last time I presented to this committee was on a Friday afternoon, so thank you very much. As Henry VIII infamously said to his wives, I won't keep you very long.

But there are a few important issues that we want to talk about in this budget cycle. The first is on the cap and trade. I know that is very topical. We believe that the province is on the right path. We have to talk about a cap-and-trade system, a price on carbon for industries.

The real question is, how are we going to do that in a way that makes Ontario businesses remain competitive and incents industries to reduce carbon? A well-designed system is very important, and we're having those discussions right now with MOECC officials. It has been very positive, and I'd like to thank Minister Murray for his energy into this process.

As an energy-intensive, trade-exposed sector, we export a lot of product to the United States, and it's very important that we get this right.

Moving to the building side of the conversation, one of the things that we would ask the province to mandate, when making infrastructure decisions, whether it's transportation, buildings or bridges, is that there are tools that are available in the asset-management realm to make better decisions. These are life-cycle assessment tools and life-cycle cost assessment.

Now and going forward, we need to consider the environmental impact of the buildings and infrastructure that we are making. We also have to consider the initial cost, and we have to make sure that when the province makes these decisions, we consider the full life-cycle cost, which includes the maintenance costs in infrastructure and includes the operating phase, which are the parts of the buildings and transportation that are very GHG-intensive over time.

Life-cycle assessment tools, life-cycle cost analysis: These are important tools that have been developed and that the province, municipalities and the federal government are looking at. But we think we should move one step forward into mandating these tools in infrastructure decisions.

The other topic of conversation is how the revenue should be spent from a cap-and-trade system. It is very important, we believe, that revenue should be put not just into general revenue, but in fact should be spent on improving long-term productive infrastructure investments. That is something which I think everyone agrees would be important to helping the economy in these generally gloomy times that we have.

We also believe that if the province is going to reach its targets in reducing greenhouse gases by 2030, by 2050, we also have to look at what the technology is that's going to get us there. This applies across all

sectors. If we are going to reduce industrial emissions, there's research and development that the province can participate in, and some of the funds should be available for that work.

We also feel that any revenues from a cap-and-trade system should be separate and transparent from existing government funding programs, so that the public can understand how these revenues are being spent.

Another issue, of course, is electricity costs. I'm sure you've heard this issue many times through this process. Our companies are multinational companies which have operated in Ontario for upwards of a century, but our companies make global decisions about where to invest. Ontario must view electricity and energy prices in the context of its North American and global competitiveness, and right now, we are not a competitive jurisdiction in North America.

To give you an example, from our perspective, of how important this issue is, one of our plants, St Marys in Bowmanville, uses the same amount of electricity annually as Cornwall. Another one of our plants, in Bath, not too far from here, uses the same amount of electricity as Orillia. So we're not talking about insignificant industrial electricity needs.

We understand that there is a concern about how reducing costs for one places an additional burden on others, but we have a cost-effective, fiscally responsible ask of reducing the cost of industrial energy without burdening another rate class.

Last year, Ontario spent over \$1 billion paying competing jurisdictions to take our surplus power. We believe that the government should work with Ontario's major industrial users to give them access to that surplus power. Instead of paying Michigan and New York to take our surplus power, Ontario could make it available to large industrial users at an affordable rate. This would help our heavy manufacturing and industrial sectors remain competitive and, in fact, renew or expand investment in new production capacity in Ontario and create and maintain jobs.

Finally, very quickly, we think that the province is doing a fantastic job addressing the infrastructure gap. Over the past decade, Ontario has spent an average of over \$10 billion annually on public infrastructure and making important investments in the municipalities. We hope that these investments in municipalities will continue. Our municipal partners need long-term, predictable and sustainable funding, so that they can work to address their respective infrastructure challenges.

Thank you very much for the opportunity. I'd be happy to take any questions.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Morrissey. I'm going to turn to Ms. Hoggarth to begin this round of questioning.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Good afternoon, Mr. Morrissey. Thank you for your presentation. I was wondering if you had heard the recent announcement by the Financial Accountability Officer, who said that Ontario is on track for stronger-than-projected economic growth in 2015, that household spending is up, that business investment is

up and that real exports and services are up. That's a good thing for Ontario.

The government has lowered business taxes, invested in businesses that create jobs and supported innovative firms to succeed and grow through access to capital, expertise and new ideas. We've also reduced the regulatory burdens, because business has asked us to that, without sacrificing public safety.

How has this helped your business succeed?

Mr. Steve Morrissey: I am not aware of the specifics of the report, but I think you make an excellent point. We have to view competitiveness as a basket of inputs and determinants which impact the cost and profitability of firms. The low dollar is probably the most effective instrument, right now, that is helping the export of our product to the United States, which is a very positive thing that's creating and maintaining jobs here.

But, as I mentioned, there are barriers. The cost of electricity has a huge, huge impact on our business, which impacts investment decisions. The others are regulatory red tape issues. We have worked very successfully with the province in implementing regulation last year to help incent increased alternative fuels. As you may know, we burned a lot of coal and we need to replace that. But there are still regulatory barriers in place which would, possibly through the Waste-Free Ontario Act—help incent and create new industries in getting those alternative fuels to their appropriate markets, which would result in new jobs and decreasing emissions.

So it's a work in progress and I applaud the government for what it has done. We want to work cooperatively and transparently in moving forward with other things that we can do.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you. I just wanted to say that I take it, from what I've seen here, that you are working with Minister Murray to work towards finding an alternative to coal-burning energy for your business.

It's funny: The very first week that I was elected, I had a constituent come in to tell me that he had an alternative and it sounded really good. I haven't been able to get a hold of him. I've been trying, ever since then, to get a hold of him. I don't know whether he sold it to someone else, but it seemed to me like a wonderful idea, and hopefully I'll be able to get a hold of him and it will help all of us out.

Mr. Steve Morrissey: Well, if there's anything I can do to help. Of course, we always have an open invitation to any of our elected and unelected officials to visit our plants. They're very interesting facilities. Of course, it's hard to understand industrial concerns until you've really had a feel for what it's like. It's not something that Ontarians have a capacity to do all the time.

So it's an open invitation to anyone. We've had a number of plant tours and we're always pleased to do them.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you very much for your input.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you, Mr. Morrissey, and for your written submission today. Have a great afternoon.

Mr. Steve Morrissey: Thank you.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
OF EASTERN ONTARIO
ROGER'S HOUSE

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next presenter is the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The Clerk is coming around with the written submissions. Ladies, if you're part of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, please come down and come forward. I believe that there are three presenters: Marion—is it Rattray?

Ms. Marion Rattray: Rattray, yes.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong):—who is the manager of CHEO's Palliative Care Program and Roger's House; Carol Chevalier, the palliative care social worker; and I believe—the Clerk informed me just now—is it Kimberley Jordan-Waara?

Ms. Kimberley Jordan-Waara: That's correct.

1430

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. You're the parent member of the family advisory committee. Ladies, when you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official opposition party. You may begin any time.

Ms. Marion Rattray: I'm Marion Rattray, the nurse manager of Roger's House, a pediatric palliative care hospice, and the CHEO Palliative Care Program. Our team offers perinatal hospice care to families who choose palliation rather than medical termination when their child is diagnosed in utero with a condition that is not compatible with life, and to families who choose palliation after their child is born and a fatal disease is discovered.

Perinatal hospice care was initially provided in 2007 by our team to a little baby girl known by her parents during pregnancy to have a chromosomal abnormality and who was born with an expectation of death in early infancy. The family was referred to the palliative care team after her birth and was cared for over months. Following her death, her parents, who had struggled in isolation during their pregnancy after receiving the devastating news, could only say, "We wish we had known about your program earlier." This experience was the impetus for us to embark on the development of a perinatal hospice program, as we then recognized the unique needs of this population.

Perinatal hospice care is offered by our inter-professional team of pediatric palliative care specialists in conjunction with the obstetrical team and other pediatric subspecialties. It includes counselling and preparation of an empowering, family-centred, specialized, flexible birth plan that respects the family's beliefs and values and outlines choices for care received during pregnancy, labour, delivery, post-partum, neonatal periods and beyond. It allows parents and family members to explore

choices and life issues as well as prepare for precious time with their baby. It involves accompaniment of the family during the palliative illness trajectory and ongoing bereavement support from the time of meeting to well after the infant has died, in the form of individual counselling, couple and sibling counselling, and perinatal loss support.

Referrals for perinatal hospice are received from obstetrical and pediatric specialists such as maternal/fetal medicine teams, neonatologists, geneticists and by family self-referral. Referral received at the time of diagnosis allows collaboration between teams and establishment of a therapeutic relationship with the family. A perinatal hospice should be introduced to families at the time that the options of termination and continuation of pregnancy are presented. We know that this is not consistently happening, as many families who come to our bereavement group report never having known of the perinatal hospice as another option.

The outcomes of having received perinatal hospice services include decreased anxiety and stress, and enabling families to fully experience the birth of their child and the bonding that occurs, and to reach a more peaceful acceptance of their loss. It allows parents to parent their baby and share in his or her life, and it also ensures dignity.

An important component to perinatal hospice is bereavement aftercare. Most parents who have lost a child perinatally experience significant grief, and like any parent who has lost a child, this emotion is not resolved quickly. Most of the parents have reported that they felt that people in their lives did not validate the significance of their loss as they had not known their child for very long. They were left asking questions about whether they were crazy for still grieving and mourning their child.

What is required to enhance provision of perinatal and bereavement services? The key to effectively providing our services is early referral of appropriate families. This is also essential for families who are being referred for bereavement support following an unexpected neonatal death. Education about perinatal hospice care and its benefits should be included in the curriculum of university programs such as nursing, medicine and social work.

Education of professionals and the general public is required. Collaboration between teams is imperative. Local, provincial and national outreach and mentoring by professionals experienced in this area would be very supportive in enhancing knowledge and skill in the provision of perinatal hospice and bereavement support. Referral criteria and processes to implement perinatal hospice and bereavement support need to be established, clarified, and disseminated. Perinatal hospice referrals for these parents need to become a recognized standard of care. Additional investment in resources is necessary to increase timely referrals, ongoing care and bereavement support.

We are extremely passionate about the care that we provide to these families. Since the development of our program, the care team has provided this very important

and necessary service without any additional budgetary support. The team provides care activities over many weeks and is available around the clock, seven days a week, for the birth of their precious patients and to support the families and the care teams. It is truly an honour and privilege to care for these individuals. We thank you for your interest in supporting us to continue the work that we do. We hope that with the passing of Bill 141 and the ensuing increase of education in the area of perinatal loss support, there will be an increase of referrals of eligible patients and clients.

Thank you for allowing us to present to you today.

Ms. Kimberley Jordan-Waara: My name is Kimberley Jordan-Waara. I am a member of the Roger's House family advisory committee. Good afternoon. Please accept my profound gratitude for the interest and support you have shown for Bill 141.

In the spring of 2013, I was pregnant. When I was asked, "Is this your first pregnancy?", I would answer, "No, it's my fifth." When asked, "How many children do you have at home?", it always pained me to say, "None."

My name is Kimberley Jordan-Waara. I am a mother. Our daughter, Zoe Faustina, was born in 2013. I am also the proud mother of Ethan David, who was born on June 4, 2010, and died in my arms seven days later. In all of this, my husband, Jeffrey, has been at my side, and Rogers House has helped to guide our journey.

In the 20th week of our pregnancy with Ethan, we learned that he had hypoplastic left heart syndrome. I remember leaving the hospital with a hand-drawn diagram of a heart and the knowledge that our baby would not be able to sustain life once he was born. We desperately struggled to support each other and to simply breathe.

In the week that followed, we made life-changing decisions for our baby and for our family. Despite our physician's repeated advice to terminate our pregnancy, we insisted on exploring other options. What followed was not a compassionate consultation. In the depths of our pain, our needs were ignored and we were conspicuously judged. We were told that in this situation, most people terminate. Late-term abortion is legal in these circumstances. We were even asked if our desire for other options was a religious decision. In the end, we mutually agreed that it was best that we be transferred out of his care. We ultimately found our way to a new physician and to Roger's House.

At Roger's House, we were warmly greeted by a team of pediatric end-of-life care professionals. We were asked things such as, "Do you have a support system? Kimberley, how are you physically managing? What do you desire for your family, and how can we help you achieve this?" Finally we were with people who valued Ethan's life as much as we did.

After two trips to Toronto, it was concluded that existing surgical procedures were not the right choice for Ethan. We would continue to parent Ethan in utero and prepare for his birth. Our team thought of things we never would have, and now it's all we have. Pregnancy photos? In the circumstances, I couldn't think of them,

but Roger's House did. The same photographer captured our seven days together.

When we met Ethan and held him for the first time, the Roger's House team was already in the hospital room. Within hours, we were at the house, where they made our family home. Every aspect of daily living and our family's privacy was taken care of for us so that all of our precious time and energy could go towards getting to know and loving our son: his baptism, his first bath, watching him, holding him. Ethan and Jeffrey watched a playoff hockey game together. Our first family outing: tea on the patio under a blue sky. All of these things happened at Roger's House.

When Ethan began to show signs of heart failure, the medical team made him physically comfortable. Jeffrey and I held him and let him know how much he was loved until he was no longer alive.

A handprint: This is the hand which we held, bathed, kissed and ultimately let go. We have these memories because of Roger's House. They mean everything to us.

The week after Ethan's death, I had emergency surgery. Afterwards, I was placed in a room with a mom waiting to deliver her second child. When the nurse asked if I was crying because I was in pain, I had to explain that my seven-day-old baby had died the previous week. I was grieving our loss.

1440

In truth, since the day I left the hospital with a hand-drawn diagram of a heart, I have needed to cope with my grief and loss. There are commonly held perceptions that at some point, the hurting stops: The healing is complete; we get over it. This has not been my experience.

Before Ethan's birth, we needed help to build a support network to communicate our situation with family and friends. Immediately after Ethan's death, we needed help to cope with daily living: answering the phone, grocery shopping and returning to work.

During our three subsequent pregnancies, technicians and doctors repeated the same inappropriate questions at each appointment. We felt that each time we had to relive our loss. The compounding grief was suffocating. The fear that Ethan would never have a sibling was overwhelming.

Five years have passed since Ethan's death and our daughter is two years old. Like any parents, we are concerned when we have to take her to the hospital, but unlike most parents, we enter emergency having already lost four other children.

I speak from first-hand and in-depth experience when I tell you that bereaved parents require long-term support. It can be a very lonely road.

When I was in labour with Ethan, I was intensely aware that as soon as he was born, his heart and lungs would have to work on their own and, essentially, the clock would start ticking. While I wanted to keep him inside of me where I knew he was safe, I also knew that he was meant to be born. We were meant to be at Roger's House. We are very proud of Ethan, and his story is meant to be shared.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to need to stop you here because I need to be mindful of the time. I'm going to go to the opposition. Mr. Walker, can you please begin this round of questioning?

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, especially Kimberley, for your courage in sharing your story. It's heart-wrenching, obviously.

In my community, I'm not certain that we have perinatal hospice, but certainly I've been very involved. We're getting a new general hospice in our area, and you can see the impact that it's having on the families.

My understanding is Mr. Colle's PMB has passed; it was unanimously supported by all three parties. I think by reading your brief and hearing your story, what I most—I think the government needs to hear, as part of this deliberation, what really specific types of things you are looking for. I get the pre-analysis, the referrals, but can you just be a bit more specific and can you give me a bit of an idea so that I can churn it through my head a little bit more? When you're talking referral, do you have a model? Is it regional? Is it provincial? Is there something very specific? I would encourage you, if you're going to, hopefully at a further deliberation—Chair, I believe we have until February—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): February 2 at 5 p.m.

Mr. Bill Walker: —to include those types of things in there, so that it's more wholesome and fulsome for the government. We'd welcome any thoughts you can share with us.

Ms. Marion Rattray: Okay. There are two pieces to this. It's education: I think how these couples are treated in so many circumstances—I've tried to figure out in my head why that is. Why don't we get it? There has to be a reason, and the only way around that is education.

The second piece is resources. How big an area do we serve? We serve all of Ontario. Anybody who approaches us can come to our hospice. Since 2007, we have had 55 perinatal referrals, but we haven't pushed it because we don't have the resources to meet that. It's an understanding of the public as well, so that people don't walk up to people like Kimberley and say, "Well, you can have more kids."

There are three areas: There's resources, a huge amount of education, and there needs to be a standard of practice and policies and protocols around this.

Mr. Bill Walker: Again, I'm six and a half or seven hours from where you are, so getting a new hospice—again, they're expanding from six beds to 10, hopefully—sadly, I guess, that's reality.

Rather than having only one—again, that's where I'm going: Is there a regional so that people in my area wouldn't travel as far? I think everyone likes to be closer to home.

You're doing a wonderful job and certainly I think you deserve more resources, but I'm wondering, from across the province, because we do have to legislate from a provincial perspective of having a standard of one out of every five or six in a certain geographic area has a perinatal so that every family has the resources they

deserve and certainly need—the education is absolutely critical in all of these types of things. It's a shame that you've had to go through what you've had to. Certainly, thoughts to you and Jeffrey and your family.

I think that's what we're here for. We're here to learn, we're here to help, and I think the whole goal of all governments should be to put the front-line services wherever we can so that people get the care when they need it in the most compassionate and effective manner possible. Thank you.

Ms. Marion Rattray: You're welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, ladies, for your presentation.

I want to say to Ms. Jordan-Waara, thank you so much for sharing your story. If there's any additional information, please do submit it to the committee by February 2 at 5 p.m. Again, thank you for being here, as well as for your written submission.

HOSPICE CARE OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is Hospice Care Ottawa. The Clerk just told me that there are three presenters—not what's listed on the sheet. The three presenters are Stephen Whitehead, the board of directors; John Laframboise, the board of directors; and Kim Sheldrick, the director of finance and HR. Welcome, gentleman and lady. Thank you very much for being here.

As you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official third party. The Clerk is coming around with your written submission. You may begin any time. When you do, can you please identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Stephen Whitehead: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for giving Hospice Care Ottawa the opportunity to make this presentation. My name is Stephen Whitehead. I'm a volunteer serving on the board of directors of Hospice Care Ottawa, and I'm the chair of its communications and fund development committee.

I'm joined by John Laframboise, who is also a volunteer serving on the board of directors. John is the vice-chair of the board. Also with us is Kim Sheldrick, the director of finance, HR and facilities of Hospice Care Ottawa.

We're here today to ask you to address the growing need for funding for hospice palliative care services in Ottawa. Hospice Care Ottawa was formed in 2013 by the amalgamation of two smaller hospices—the Hospice at May Court and Friends of Hospice Ottawa—to increase efficiencies and try to better meet the needs of our population. We provide residential hospice care, community home visiting, day hospice, bereavement and caregiver support.

Our mission is to accompany and support individuals and their families through their end-of-life journey by providing compassionate, high-quality care. Our goals

are to improve the quality of life for palliative clients and their caregivers and to reduce the burden on the health system from unnecessary hospitalization for palliative individuals. All of our programs and services are provided at no charge to patients and their families.

Currently, we have 19 residential beds at two sites and offer community support services at three different sites in the city. Last year, we served almost 300 people in residence and over 1,400 clients in total with our other services. We provided our services with 66 professional and administrative staff, and with over 1,000 tremendous volunteers who last year provided over 55,000 hours of services and community support.

Hospice Care Ottawa is, of course, not the only organization providing palliative care in Ottawa, as you just heard from the previous presentation. We work closely with the local hospitals, with Bruyère Continuing Care, which provides acute palliative care beds; Roger's House, which provides pediatric palliative care; the Champlain LHIN; CCAC; and many other local organizations.

John?

Mr. John Laframboise: Despite significant progress to advance hospice palliative care both locally and provincially over the past years, there continues to be inadequate and inequitable access to integrated and comprehensive hospice palliative care. For a city the size of Ottawa, with close to one million people, we should have 60 to 70 hospice beds for adults, in addition to community hospice services. Currently, we have nine beds at our May Court hospice site and 10 beds at our temporary site at 1400 Carling Avenue in Ottawa. The Ottawa Mission has 15 hospice beds serving chronic homeless adults. So we currently have a shortage of about 30 hospice beds for adults in our community.

Of special concern is the lack of francophone hospice services in Ottawa. Hospice Care Ottawa has begun to develop programming in east Ottawa for the francophone community but will require significantly more funding to adequately meet the needs.

We know that 3% of us will die suddenly. The remaining 97% of us will require some sort of assistance with end-of-life care. Recent provincial data estimates that at least 12% of those should be served in residential hospice. Hospice palliative care can, and does, provide a variety of alternative end-of-life care settings, but all of these options are underfunded. In a recent study, Canada ranked ninth globally in a Quality of Death Index. It's really shocking to observe that only 16% to 30% of Canadians who die have access to or receive hospice palliative and end-of-life care services.

1450

In addition, it is well recognized that our population is aging, with those age 65 and older doubling in the next 20 years. In Ottawa alone, this means the number of deaths will increase from 9,000 to 19,000 per year. An increasing number of seniors leads to more people using hospital and emergency rooms, which of course increases costs to the system and wait times.

Hospice palliative care in the community is far less expensive than hospital care. As you know, the Auditor General of Ontario noted in 2014 that hospice beds cost \$460 per day, while acute care hospital beds cost \$1,100 per day. Hospice palliative care frees up much-needed acute care hospital beds. Hospice Care Ottawa's 19 beds currently save the health care system \$4.4 million per year. Imagine what we could do with more beds.

Mr. Stephen Whitehead: The government funds less than 60% of Hospice Care Ottawa's requirements, and residential hospice operation funding is restricted to nursing and PSW costs. That translates to us needing to fundraise almost \$2 million annually just to provide our existing services.

Last year, Hospice Care Ottawa spent the majority of its budget, 76%, on direct programs and services rather than administration. As all charities know, fundraising is becoming increasingly difficult, and it increases the administrative costs on charities. If we cannot raise sufficient funding from private donations, our existing services are in jeopardy, and if we cannot increase our private funding, we cannot offer additional services such as those needed by the francophone community. It is inappropriate that the ability of Hospice Care Ottawa to provide palliative care in our community, which is an integral part of our health care system, should be in such a tenuous position.

Apart from operational funding, 100% of any capital costs must be fundraised. Hospice Care Ottawa needs to build a new residential hospice in Kanata to continue providing services that the LHIN is financing on a yearly basis at our temporary site. To do this, we needed to raise more than \$6 million completely through donations. Compare Hospice Care Ottawa's situation to that of hospitals, who currently need to fundraise only 10% of their capital costs. We've made the case that more beds and more services are needed, but the burden of fundraising this amount of money for a small community organization is enormous.

We support Hospice Palliative Care Ontario's request that Ontario broaden the envelope for government operational funding beyond nursing and PSW costs, and provide funding for 80% of eligible costs. This would assist Hospice Care Ottawa in ensuring that the critical services that it provides can continue to be available, especially with the increasing demand for such services from an aging population. In addition, this would free up some of the fundraising that we obtain from private donors to provide more programming and to add capacity to support the inevitable increase in demand. Our ability to meet the geographic and French-language needs of Ottawa can only be met with support for additional hospice services in Ottawa's east and west ends.

Hospice Care Ottawa is also asking the province to re-examine its policy regarding capital funding for community hospices. Currently, there is no avenue for such organizations to access capital dollars, and even programs provided by Infrastructure Ontario which purport to support hospices do not recognize fundraising pledges as equity for loans.

In closing, I would ask you to think about this from two perspectives. First, consider the important role of hospice palliative care. Think about the kind of care you would want for yourself or someone dear to you when dying.

The majority of us do not want to die in a hospital, and would prefer to die at home. Community hospice services can support people who are dying at home, but when that is not always possible, for reasons such as medical needs, family support or finances, residential hospice provides as close to a home-like environment as possible, where family, friends and even pets can remain with the person who is dying. As one family member recently told us, her mother being in hospice allowed her to be a daughter and spend those last few days with her mother, rather than providing care. Those were precious moments for her.

Madam Chair, I think I'm running out of time. There is a personal note there that I would encourage the members to read, and I'll just conclude with asking, secondly, that we'd like you to consider this from an economic perspective. We pointed out that funding hospice services provides overall cost savings to our health care system, and we have pointed out that our services are in constant jeopardy under the current funding model if we cannot continue to raise sufficient funds from private donations. Hospice Care Ottawa respectfully asks the committee to recommend that the government of Ontario broaden operational and capital funding of hospices. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Whitehead. I'm going to turn to Ms. Fife to begin this round of questioning.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much for coming in today. I have to say, we've heard from the hospice community at every place this week, which is good. It's good that the message has been consistent. The call has been to broaden the operational funding piece. I think a lot of people at the beginning of the week, myself included, were surprised that hospices were not funded for heat, hydro and food. Those other funding options actually need to be part of providing quality hospice care.

I just want to read something for you from the 2014 Auditor General's report. She found that "palliative-care services in Ontario developed in a patchwork fashion.... Although efforts have been made to create an integrated, co-ordinated system to deliver palliative care in Ontario, no such system yet exists." She went on to say that the ministry didn't have adequate information on patients' needs in various areas of the province or what services are available for them to be able to provide the "right care at the right time in the right place," which is what hospices do. So that's part of the problem, I think. The ministry hasn't bothered to collect the information. You have to understand the problem in order for you to address the problem.

But this is also part of a bigger conversation that's happening in Ontario and in Canada. I think the politics of it is living with dignity and also dying with dignity. Do you want to talk about the timing of this? Because the

economic case is clear from our perspective, and we'll be bringing that forward to the government.

Mr. Stephen Whitehead: From an economic point of view, the need is immediate. Part of my job as the chair of the communications and fund development committee is to oversee us raising the \$2 million we need, and I can tell you, it is a struggle. I'm relatively new to the board, but the financial challenges of the hospice are very significant. And yet the role that it plays in the health care system, particularly the fact that it actually saves money for the health care system, is in jeopardy.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, and when you look at the sheer dollars of it—I mean, there's the right reason to invest in hospice care and compassionate palliative care. There are some moral reasons. But then there's also the economics and the finances of it. The numbers that have been presented to us are that for an individual to pass away and die in a hospital is almost twice as much. It's \$1,200 versus—I think \$580 was the number that was given to us in Hamilton.

The issue around francophones: That's a unique ask. We haven't heard of that yet across the province, so I want to thank you for bringing that to our attention.

The message has been consistent, and so we will be urging the government to embrace new hospice funding from an operational perspective in this upcoming budget. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much. Thank you for your presentation as well as your written submission. Good afternoon.

OTTAWA TOURISM

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): We are a little ahead of schedule, and I know that Ottawa Tourism is not here yet—

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): They are? Oh, sorry. The Clerk tells me where to go and I go. I was told otherwise.

Ottawa Tourism, you can come on down. Mr. Brown, welcome. As you heard earlier, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. Mr. Brown, you may begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard. Thank you.

Mr. Dick Brown: Absolutely. Good afternoon. My name is Dick Brown and I'm the president and CEO of Ottawa Tourism. Previous to that, I was president of the hotel association and involved in forming the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario. It's from that perspective that I want to flag three issues for the committee that I think are pan-provincial; they're not Ottawa-centric.

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First of all, I'd like to identify a financial risk that I'm not sure you folks are aware of, which emanates from tourism. I met yesterday with the Minister of Tourism in his strategic review and made him aware of this and I'd

like you to be aware because failing to deal with that will be harmful not only for the province, but the tourism industry.

Currently, the funding of tourism is primarily done through private-sector hotels' destination marketing fee, which is a 3% fee you see on your guest bill. That's a voluntary arrangement that hotels have agreed to do because of the absence of money for marketing Ontario's destinations nationally and internationally. My estimate is that in excess of \$50 million is generated through that program in Ontario, but it is extremely fragile because it's voluntary for hotels to participate, and that is a very competitive industry. It's also an industry that is driven by big corporations that are not centred, necessarily, in Canada or Ontario. It would just take one industry leader to say, "We're withdrawing from that program," and the house of cards would collapse tomorrow. Toronto, Ottawa and other centres that are reliant upon that would find themselves in a very serious problem.

The Ministry of Tourism provides Ottawa Tourism with less than 30% of the funding that we receive; the rest is all private sector. Toronto is the same. If this model was to collapse—we couldn't do without the marketing. Sales and marketing are the lifeblood of tourism. No matter how good your product is, you have to tell the world. So I'd like to draw that to your attention.

There is a framework that we have that could be put in place, which would allow the industry within destinations to have the destination marketing fee regulated, so that it was mandated if a majority of the businesses wanted it there. I encourage you to become aware of this problem and talk with the Ministry of Tourism about the details because it has implications, as I say, for your budget.

If this collapses, there would be two options in Ontario: The government is asked to write cheques to replace some of that money, which I don't believe you have the capacity to do at this point in time, or to consider imposing a province-wide hotel tax, which I also don't think you want to do, and I would not recommend that you consider that option. There is another option, so I flag that as a risk for this committee.

One of the other two things that I wanted to talk about is the opportunity that tourism presents for the province. I don't think Ontario has taken tourism as a significant and serious player in its economic portfolio, and yet it is. I think, as we're transforming our economy to a more balanced and sustainable economy and not solely reliant on the manufacturing and other sectors, that we're going to be looking for global opportunities, and tourism is one of them. But it's only going to be one of them if we look at it through the economic development lens and not just as a feel-good opportunity to have activities in our various communities around the province.

I'll point out to you that not all visitors are of equal economic value. Ontario's tourism is made up of 86% of Ontarians visiting Ontario, which is a great thing but we're moving the money around our province, stimulating activity in small towns and villages and cities, which is good; I'm not devaluing that. But the high-value

visitors are national and international visitors who come to our province and they stay longer and spend more. They're part of the export economy that we're trying to grow. That 86% of Ontarians only contribute 67% of the visitors' spending. You can see the gaps. If we can grow the numbers of non-Ontarians here—again, that's a strategic reorientation for your Ministry of Tourism to start thinking about that and creating, as a structured goal, the objective of increasing Ontario's participation in the global tourism community. Globally, tourism is growing at a terrific rate; we want to be there.

Finally, I think it's essential that you urgently deal with the unregulated online service providers—Airbnb, Uber and others. We have to embrace it; the online community is not going away. Those businesses are here to stay, and yet they're operating in an unregulated environment. It's an unfair environment for existing, traditional businesses, and so I would encourage you to deal with it. I know that you're aware of it, but it needs to be dealt with urgently, and it has the potential to contribute financially to this province in a way that I think is necessary as the province grapples with the financial challenges before us.

Quebec has recently introduced legislation that we believe almost solves the problem in dealing with Airbnb in that province, but there's one element missing, and that is the requirement of Airbnb to report to the province the activity and revenues of the service providers, much like employers report on the salaries and wages paid. This will allow us to ensure that illegal businesses are ferreted out, that the legal Airbnb businesses are paying their fair share of HST and other taxes, and that the hosts are paying income tax as appropriate. I would encourage you to look at that. We in Ottawa have more than 10% of our hotel room capacity available in Airbnb listings on any given night. There were 1,500, the last time I looked, where you could go—unlicensed, untaxed operations.

I just draw those three to you. I'm not here asking for money or anything, but I think it's important as you look at the financial requirements of the province going forward to look at the opportunity that tourism affords the province and address the risk associated with the funding. And with that, I'll rest.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, Mr. Brown. I'm going to turn to Madame Lalonde to ask you some questions about your presentation.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you, Madam Chair. "Madame Lalonde"—I like that.

Mr. Brown, welcome. It's certainly a pleasure to see you here presenting in front of this committee. I live in Ottawa, and it's certainly always a pleasure to see tourism coming to our province. I'm sure you're aware that yesterday there was some huge announcement for Ottawa 2017, where that group were able to secure the Red Bull Crashed Ice tournament venue coming in. We've looked at numbers and you're looking at over \$10 million over and above expectations for just that venue.

So I understand how important tourism is for—I'll talk for Ottawa for now, if I may. Certainly this is something

that I know your group is working on very, very diligently, to bring new ideas and new tourists. Has the lower loonie—unfortunately for us, but maybe good for the tourism industry—had any impact recently for tourism in Ottawa?

Mr. Dick Brown: Yes. Certainly the exchange rate is a benefit to all Canadian destinations in terms of our friends to the south as well as the international market, but we're not a low-value destination and we don't want to be seen as a cheap place to go and only go for that reason. But that is one benefit that we want to take advantage of.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Have we been able to market to our friends in the States regarding the potential in terms of exchange rates?

Mr. Dick Brown: It's interesting: To date, the research shows that Americans, although the message is out there, when they're checking out of their hotels, are surprised at the discount. It hasn't to date shown itself to be a motivator for a substantial increase, although we think that will grow with time.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. I know we provincially are providing Ottawa Tourism about, I believe, \$3.56 million in terms of pre-planning events, and all kinds of, I'm sure, valuable things. I guess my question would be: How does that money help your organization, from a daily perspective of operations?

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Mr. Dick Brown: It allowed us to expand from the \$8-million to \$9-million private sector funding by another \$3.5 million.

Marketing, as I said, is the lifeblood of tourism. Being the nation's capital, we're trying to tell every Canadian that this is the most important city in the country, and every Canadian should visit their capital and have an opportunity.

We're also trying to attract high-value visitors from the United States and Europe. We have staff working in Beijing full-time; we have them in the United States and in the United Kingdom. Those monies help us do that.

Our budget is \$13 million. Many of the big cities in the United States are spending \$50 million to \$100 million doing the same thing. Toronto is spending \$30 million to \$35 million doing that. Tourism is all about having resources to get out and tell your story about the great province we live in and the great destinations that we have for people who choose to come here.

The \$3.5 million that comes to Ottawa is helpful for sure. That's why I point out the risk. If the private sector funding was to be withdrawn, we would close. We wouldn't have the resources to make an impact upon this industry and the world.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: One final thing: I just want to touch base regarding the underground economy that you were referring to. That was part of our 2015 budget. I think what I can say at this point is that it is something that certainly the Minister of Finance has been reviewing. As to the input that you've provided today in terms of ideas and suggestions, it's actually quite welcoming for us as a government. Thank you very much.

Mr. Dick Brown: Thank you. I think the digital issue is an urgent one. I would encourage you to deal with it in the next budget, if at all possible. Quebec has; other jurisdictions—change is happening so fast. If we delay, we're going to be left behind, and what we're looking at today won't work for the next generation of technology approach.

Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you, Mr. Brown. Before you go, you have until Tuesday, February 2 at 5 p.m., because I think it's always good to have written submissions. I encourage you to do that. You have until February 2. Thank you for being here, and thank you for your presentation.

CITY OF OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I believe the next group coming before us is the city of Ottawa: Saad Bashir, the director. Mr. Bashir, welcome.

Mr. Saad Bashir: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): You probably heard that you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official opposition party. When you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

Mr. Saad Bashir: Very good. I also heard that you want to call it a day pretty soon so that you can start the weekend.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Oh, yeah. It has been a long week.

Mr. Saad Bashir: I will be very brief. My name is Saad Bashir. Thank you, Madam Chair Wong, and your fellow committee members, for this speaking opportunity. As the director of economic development and innovation at the city, let me first of all welcome you to your nation's capital.

You've heard today from a variety of interest groups, from nursing to environment. Although I did not listen to all of those submissions, I'm going to make an assumption that many of those were looking for increased funding, because the needs are always higher than the resources available. I know that you will evaluate all of those submissions on their merits as you draft your recommendations.

I want to make it clear that I am not here to request funding for economic development—at least, not today. I'm here to support the submissions of my economic development partners from the West Ottawa Board of Trade; the Orléans and Ottawa chambers of commerce; Ottawa Tourism, who you've just heard—Dick Brown; the Innovation Centre and Invest Ottawa, represented by Bruce Lazenby and by Blair, right behind me; as well as share with you some highlights from the city's economic development plans.

During my remarks, I want to cover three things: firstly, acknowledge your investments in the city of Ottawa; secondly, provide you a brief summary of what we're up to; and finally, some food for thought.

Given that municipalities are creatures of the province, we rely heavily upon you on almost every aspect of our function. Economic development is no different. The province of Ontario has played, in my opinion, an instrumental role in the economic development space in Ottawa. Since my last five years with the city of Ottawa, we have witnessed provincial investments in securing sporting events such as the FIFA Women's World Cup, cultural events like the Junos, entrepreneurial support efforts such as the construction of the Innovation Centre, support towards a variety of entrepreneurial programs, investments in major technology firms in Ottawa, the creation of a cybersecurity centre, investment in the new convention centre, and several others.

Although I am one of those who sometimes wishes that we could always get a little bit more funding, it's important to recognize the investments that you have made to date. I feel it is our job to demonstrate to you the returns that we are producing out of those provincial investments.

We at the city of Ottawa try to be a bit strategic when it comes to economic development. Unlike other regions around the world, where their primary resource is underneath the ground, our primary resource is between the ears of the smart knowledge-based talent that lives and works in the city.

We realize that our city will never have the same amount of cash to spend on economic development as Abu Dhabi and that we will never have big internal economies such as Jakarta or Istanbul. We have to be extremely smart, and that's going to be our secret sauce: to innovate with our limited resources.

The city of Ottawa's 2015-18 economic development strategy is appropriately titled Partnerships for Innovation. Why partnerships? Because we know that individually we are all struggling for resources, but collectively we find that we sometimes have more than enough.

Within our strategy we have four key pillars: investment attraction, entrepreneurship, tourism, and data.

Under these pillars, just a few initiatives that are worth mentioning: To ensure that we stand a better chance to attract private sector dollars, we created an arm's-length agency called Invest Ottawa. What is so innovative about it? A couple of things: governance, for one. Co-chaired by the mayor and a private sector leader, the board of Invest Ottawa is a top board of the city, with the four presidents of the four post-secondary institutions sitting on it. This is a demonstration of the tight relationship that must exist between academia and the private sector for long-term economic development growth.

Another innovative approach regarding Invest Ottawa was to house a number of economic development services, which in another city would be spread over different organizations, under one roof in the city of Ottawa.

Internally at the city we have created a concierge program called the Capital Investment Track or CIT, which facilitates city hall investments. To date, we are working with six CIT projects that are worth about \$3 billion and 15,000 jobs. Our principle is quite simple: We

want to undertake whatever possible to roll out the red carpet and not the red tape, because time is money for our investors. A snapshot of that CIT program is listed in the package that was given to you.

Another flagship project for us is the Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards. This will be the physical showcase of the private-sector innovation that takes place in Ottawa. Of course, what will give life to the building itself will be the many programs that are going to be run in that building, something that the next speaker is going to talk about in more detail.

Another innovative initiative that we put in place is the Innovation Pilot Program or IPP, which we think is the first of its kind anywhere in Canada when it comes to municipalities. This allows companies that have unique pre-commercialization technologies to pilot using the city of Ottawa's infrastructure for a period of three to six months at no cost, allows the start-up venture to get a solid reference at the end of the pilot and exposes the municipality to new technologies.

We launched it a few months ago; we already have 50-plus applications, and we have been quite amazed by them. We believe that this is a program that the province should closely examine, not because we want money out of it but because we feel that this is something that you could actually roll out in every municipality in the province of Ontario. We would be pleased to share our learnings with you..

Tourism development is key to Ottawa's economy, as Dick was talking about. It is a space that has become extremely competitive and hence ripe for innovation.

A couple of things around tourism: A partnership that has since won a national award is one between Ottawa Tourism and the city of Ottawa around attracting large-scale events to the city. This program currently stands at an annual \$1.5 million in funding and has resulted in tens of millions in economic impacts, such as the Red Bull event that the MPP mentioned before, which are creating a lot of revenue, especially for the province.

Similarly, the city and our tourism partners have come together to take a leadership role to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday right here in the nation's capital. Our year-long bold and innovative program is being led by an arm's-length 2017 bureau that has been successful in raising a lot of interest. As we roll out the program, we believe that people across the country will be compelled to visit their capital in 2017. I encourage you to check out ottawa2017.ca and make sure you bring your family and friends to Ottawa next year.

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Our last pillar is data and research. I will not be offended if you felt that that is a really boring topic to end the presentation with. Economic development decisions made in the presence of good data that has been thoughtfully analyzed are critical in ensuring taxpayers' dollars are invested appropriately. That is a key priority area for us.

I'll wrap up my remarks with a few items of food for thought. The province can help arm municipalities such as Ottawa to create centralized data management tools

that consolidate data and make it available to all. There's a big gap in that area, and many municipalities like Ottawa are spending a lot of resources figuring that out.

In the tight fiscal environment that we all face, the province should consider linking economic development to a variety of municipal investments you make, particularly around infrastructure. Every year, we build roads, every year we renovate bridges, every year we are doing the same things over and over again. We should proactively connect those massive, annual, repetitive investments at the municipal level and use them to attract investments and talent to Ontario from around the world.

The province should take a serious look at the concept of smart city, which is all about municipalities taking advantage of the Internet of Things. A very basic example to illustrate the point: We are talking about garbage bins that can exchange fill-level data with garbage trucks to collect trash only when required. This is an innovation that is being practised in Seoul, South Korea.

Making every aspect of municipalities a shining example of innovation can be Ontario's economic development differentiating factor and embracing smart city could be a good way to go about it. We in Ottawa have been getting a good grasp of it, along with my colleague Bruce Lazenby from Invest Ottawa, and we will be more than happy to share what we have been learning over the last few months.

Lastly, there is a lot of noise within the economic development space. Almost every project—and I sometimes am on the receiving end of these projects from people within the city. Everybody is marketing their project as having economic development impacts. We think that you should pay really close attention to the performance metrics not after the project has been funded but well in advance. The province should practise this approach in every Ontario city and on every economic development project.

I thank you for your attention and I'm available for questions both now or in the future.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. I'm going to turn to Mr. McDonell to begin this round of questioning. Thank you for your presentation.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you for coming out. You highlighted the importance of the smart city, smart initiatives with the Internet. A couple of points: I looked at this government's record on some of the smart initiatives. We talk about the smart meters that have been a dismal failure—different programs. And eHealth, which is so critical to health care and is still not up and running after billions of dollars spent.

I go back to a program through the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus; I had a meeting with them last week. We spent hundreds of millions of dollars upgrading eastern Ontario for Internet access, and we still have gaps, and, worse than that, we have many gaps just with basic cell service. I go back to, I believe, 2008. Before this program started, my own municipality had been awarded a grant. The telephone companies or the cell companies at that point were offering basic cell service,

which included data. It was too late for us; we were just at the edge of our project when the technology was coming to fruition.

I said that we have to be smarter when we do these things. We're spending lots of money. If we were to allow the cell companies to provide the Internet service, we would end up with both Internet and cell service, and the program would likely be cheaper because they could use the revenues.

The ministry of the government said, "You can't do that. We can't support these providers." So we're sitting here now. One of their major asks now is to go back and redo the system for cell service. It just talks about how we're not being smart when we go out and we aren't utilizing all the proceeds that are there.

We installed across eastern Ontario—the manufacturer discontinued equipment that now has to be replaced, and who's going to replace it? I think engaging the private sector, engaging municipalities, and ending up with a system that not only generates enough revenue to replace itself but getting state-of-the-art technology in place is something that we need to get into this province. Any comments on that?

Mr. Saad Bashir: I completely agree with your last two sentences about making sure that—only because I'm not privy to all of the previous stuff. But you're absolutely right. This is my first job in the world of municipalities and I'm only now realizing how close to the action municipalities are. This is really where you can make a direct difference in the lives of the citizens. I absolutely agree with you that partnering with the municipalities, and especially bringing the private sector in versus us trying to figure out—we are finding that there are lot of good best practices, especially in the U.S., in Nashville and Chattanooga in Tennessee, that we can learn from. We have all the talent in Ottawa, and I'm sure it's the case in Waterloo and other places, that we can exercise.

Mr. Bill Walker: The other point that I'd like to raise—congratulations on your six projects. That's very ambitious. I think two of the key tenets of that is to be competitive and to certainly be attractive to companies to come here. All of what you're talking about is heavily reliant on energy, whether it be that huge hotel that runs 24/7 or industrial complexes. We have the highest energy rates in North America, so one of the challenges that we have is to remain competitive so that we attract those businesses like you're trying to attract here.

I come from a recreational background in a municipality. Some of the things that I think are also a big issue are those things like arenas, pools and libraries that we run as municipalities. If your hydro rate doubles, that is going back onto the property tax if you're not getting it from the provincial government. So again, we have to be very cautious and make sure people understand there is a ripple effect here. If we don't attract those companies, it's a downward ripple effect. We don't have the jobs and we don't have the taxation to do all of the things that you want.

I think the key to a lot of this is analyzing the data, as you say, but not just what we can see in front of us. We

have to be looking behind the scenes and saying, “What are those unintended consequences?”

Again, we’ve heard all week about cuts to hospitals. A lot of that is because if your hydro rate is going to double and you’re on a fixed budget, something’s got to give. At the end of the day, we have to be very—having worked in a municipality, I think those are very similar concerns that you would share.

Can you just elaborate a little bit? Do you see those concerns of hydro and things like the ORPP, which is going to add another 3% to 5% onto the employer and/or the employee or combined? Again, keeping us competitive: Why are they going to come to Ottawa and Ontario if we have the highest rates in the country?

Mr. Saad Bashir: What we are finding is that investment and talent is highly mobile. We can pretty much do what we want to do in Ottawa almost any place in the world. You can do it in Ghana. When we talk with investors, especially through Invest Ottawa—and I’m sure that they’ll put some more details when they come and speak—we find that the number one thing that everybody is talking about is talent. Everybody has a big, long wish list. And of course, cost of overhead and cost of doing business in the city is one of those things, and hydro would be one of them. The more competitive we can be in all facets that are required to attract investment to Ontario and to Ottawa would be helpful for sure.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Bashir, thank you for your presentation and your written submission.

Mr. Saad Bashir: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): And thank you for welcoming us to Ottawa, our annual visit.

Mr. Saad Bashir: Have a good weekend.

INNOVATION CENTRE
AT BAYVIEW YARDS
INVEST OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group before us is the Innovation Centre, and I was told by the Clerk it’s also Invest Ottawa. There are two speakers before us: Jeff Westeinde and Bruce Lazenby. I think the gentleman before Mr. Bashir indicated he’s from Invest Ottawa.

Gentlemen, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official third party. You may begin any time. When you begin, can you please identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard.

I think the Clerk has some written submissions.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I think it’s going to come when we get back to Queen’s Park.

You may begin any time.

Mr. Jeff Westeinde: Thank you. Merci pour l’invitation d’être avec vous, and hello, Ms. Lalonde in particular. Thank you very much for the invitation to

come and speak to you. I’m Jeff Westeinde, the vice-chair of the Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards. As it turns out, we did not photocopy enough handouts to pass out, so you will be receiving some material when you get back to Queen’s Park. However, given that we’re in the digital economy, I would encourage you all to go to thebayviewyards.com and everything that you need to see will be online.

Thank you for coming to Ontario’s second-largest economic engine after the GTA. I do know that at Queen’s Park you live and work in the GTA, and it’s an extremely active economic hub, and we’re thrilled to have an engine like that in our province.

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However, many people think of Ottawa as a sleepy government town, and in fact we are not. As a private sector leader here, we are the second-largest economic engine in the province. We have 1,700 private sector technology companies here. To give you a sense of scale, that’s three times more than the city of Waterloo has.

The knowledge-based jobs, as Saad Bashir mentioned ahead of time, are very exportable. Not only do they create exportable products but they’re mobile. It is critically important that we stay competitive for those jobs and keep the economy here in Ottawa strong. We are thrilled that the province has recognized the importance of those jobs and has assisted us in building what will be one of the world’s best innovation centres here: the Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards. We were fortunate to receive a \$15-million contribution from the province that was matched by the city. We are actively seeking out private sector funds as we finish the construction of that centre.

The centre is a 50,000-square-foot municipal building located at 7 Bayview Road, and it will be open by 2016. I happen to be the chair of the building committee—I had no grey hair when I started that job—and we’re working hard to get that done. That’s the first phase.

The second phase is a 180,000-square-foot centre. We have worked extremely hard to be sure that the centre is financially resilient; that is, we will not be coming to see you on an ongoing basis for ongoing grants to operate the centre. We are hopeful that you will come and visit us more than once or twice a year. Come see the innovation centre, see the benefits that it has to the community and assist us with phase two.

The concept behind the innovation centre is really a mash-up of all sorts of different sectors and technologies that we have here in Ottawa to create that innovation that happens, oftentimes over a cup of coffee, over a new technology, by bringing the various sectors of our industry together. I did want to come and assure you: As I mentioned, I have a few more grey hairs and I’m losing a bit of sleep, but the innovation centre is on track, on budget, and we will be open in October 2016.

I wanted to thank you again for the confidence that you’ve shown not only in the Innovation Centre at Bayview Yards, but the city of Ottawa for your contribution.

With that, I'll turn it over to my counterpart, Bruce Lazenby from Invest Ottawa.

Mr. Bruce Lazenby: Bonjour. Je m'appelle Bruce Lazenby. Je suis le président et directeur général d'Investir Ottawa.

We're going to be the largest tenant in the innovation centre. I didn't have any grey hair until he took over the job of building the innovation centre, but we're all very confident.

We talk about Ontario sometimes in big chunks. There's a big manufacturing chunk, there's a big resource chunk and there's a big high-tech chunk. The manufacturing part is a problem globally, as we know. Commodities are depressed now and will be for a while. Happily, we have a large high-tech community in this province and it's one that we need to continue to promote. The Ontario technology corridor is an idea that connects Waterloo, Toronto and Ottawa to create what would be the largest technology corridor outside of Silicon Valley. This is something that is currently on the books, and we think it's something that should be emphasized.

To put that into context, Jeff mentioned briefly that there's a group called the Branham 250 that counts the top 250 ICT companies in Canada. Not surprisingly, 23% of those are headquartered in Toronto. But it might surprise you to know that Ottawa is number two, ahead of Vancouver, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary, and about four times the participation of Waterloo on that list, so we've got that. We're also living in the most sustainable city in Canada. Maintaining that are two things: talent and capital.

From the talent point of view we need to do two things. One is reinforce the universities with their STEM programs, including K to 12. I was talking to the dean of engineering at the University of Ottawa and he tells me they're taking in 1,000 new students. That sounds great. They had 8,000 applicants. What I heard is that we turned away 7,000 possible engineering applicants.

The second thing is immigration: We have the best country in the world, literally, as voted by the Reputation Institute. People want to come here, and we should have an immigration process that can take the best and the brightest who want to come here and allow them to do that.

Financing is important. Two key elements: There is lots of private sector money sitting on the sidelines. You can animate that money by offering angel investors a minor tax credit. BC has been doing it for a long time. It was previously on the books in a previous budget—2012, I believe—but it never made it to the table. I believe you should reinforce that.

The last thing is that in about 2007 or 2008, the government created something called the Ontario Venture Capital Fund. They invested \$80 million into that fund. That fund has now expired, and guess what? You were returned \$95 million, and created thousands of jobs in the process.

Given the current financial situation, you'd be sorely tempted to take that \$95 million into general revenues.

Don't do it. Reinvest in Ontario Venture Capital Fund II. That money goes out to private sector venture capitalists who are really smart at investing it in Ontario companies and creating more growth and jobs. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you, gentlemen, for your presentation. I'm going to turn to Ms. Fife to begin this round of questioning.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you for your presentation. You rightly pointed out that one of the major deterrents is access to capital, both at the early stage and then also at the IPO stage. We're losing a lot of those start-ups to other jurisdictions who court them away after an initial investment.

If I'm to understand you right, from a finance perspective, aside from the initial capital that you're currently working with, you would like the government to actively be involved in a tax credit for angel investors, to animate that money, if you will. Do you want to expand on that a little bit, please?

Mr. Bruce Lazenby: Sure. There are literally tens of billions of dollars in the hands of private net-worth individuals who are trying to figure out where to invest. Frankly, real estate has been a solid investment for the last decade and a half. That's about to end. We're seeing already the flattening of real estate, and the construction is starting to slow down a little bit, so you've got a lot of people with a lot of money trying to figure out what to do with it.

Money, like water, takes the path of least resistance. If you can incent them—in BC, what happens is that if you make a qualified investment into an angel-qualified company, you immediately get 30% of that investment back in the form of a tax credit. From an investor's point of view, I can put \$100,000 in, I get \$30,000 back, and I'm getting \$100,000 worth of investment for only \$70,000. That's enough to get them moving. It's enough to get them off top dead centre, as we say.

The IPO markets you talked about are fascinating. We're losing a lot of Canadian companies to Americans. There are two things that we can do there. One is to more actively promote the concept of building larger companies. In fact—this is important—Ottawa software companies have raised more money in the public markets over the last five years than every other city in Canada combined, and that's not just Shopify. We can do a lot more of that.

But hostile takeovers in Canada can happen very quickly. In the United States, they have legislation which gives the company a chance to prepare a response to their shareholders. We don't have that time limit here in Canada. That's a legislative opportunity for the government, to look at this and say, "Do we want to give Canadian companies more time to prepare a response to a hostile American takeover?"

If you haven't checked recently, the value of our dollar means that we are rising on the target of a lot of American companies who are sitting on more cash on their balance sheets than they ever have in history. They're hungry for great talent. We've got it, and we're now not only for sale, we're on sale.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I represent the riding of Kitchener–Waterloo, and what we’re finding in Waterloo—we have Communitech and Accelerator Centre; we have these great hubs and partnerships with the universities. Mobilizing and commercializing that research, which is also an investment on the university side, is key. We’re courting some of that talent back from Silicon Valley because of the social infrastructure of Canada and Ontario.

I’m asking you, though, to also be strong advocates for a strong publicly funded health care system and education system, and the connectivity piece, which is transportation. That’s a big issue for Waterloo, because Silicon Valley has that connectivity and productivity through rail. That’s also an investment that we’re looking for: that two-way, all-day GO, which right now only goes one way. We need those 10,000 people to come from Toronto or from Ottawa to the GTA, because those are the connectivity pieces that need to be in place.

Finally, perhaps given the prevalence of grey hair for both of you, you may want to invest in some Grecian Formula. A new formula may be on the agenda.

Mr. Bruce Lazenby: This is guidance I’ve never received from the government.

Ms. Catherine Fife: We’re colouring outside the box.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much, gentlemen. I know that one of you has submitted a written submission to the Clerk. You have until February 2 at 5 p.m. for any additional information you want to share with us. Thank you very much, and have a good afternoon.

Mr. Jeff Westeinde: Thank you. Merci.

EACOM TIMBER CORP.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): The next group coming before us is Eacom Timber Corp.

I know the Clerk has—Christina, can you share this? Can you circulate that? Just for the committee members, there is a written submission for the next presenter. Christina is coming around to share that with the committee. Okay? We’re ahead of schedule, ladies and gentlemen.

1540

Ms. Catherine Fife: One more?

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Yes, one more after this, Ms. Fife. I’m keeping us on schedule.

We have Eacom Timber Corp. Come on down. If you want to bring your colleague forward, it’s fine with me.

Ms. Christine Leduc: Oh, no—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): He doesn’t want to? Okay.

Ms. Christine Leduc: It’s just me today.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. We have before us Christine Leduc. Welcome. Good afternoon. You have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the government side. You may begin any

time. When you begin, can you please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

Ms. Christine Leduc: Thanks. Mrs. Chair and members of the standing committee, thank you for granting me the opportunity to address your committee today. My name is Christine Leduc and I am the director of public affairs with Eacom Timber Corp.

Eacom is a major eastern Canadian wood products company formed in 2008 and headquartered in Montreal. Operations include the manufacturing and distribution of lumber and wood-based value-added products, and the management of forest resources here in Ontario. Eacom currently owns seven sawmills, five in Ontario, two in Quebec; a remanufacturing facility in Quebec; and a partnership operation in an engineered I-joist plant in Sault Ste. Marie, for a total of 900 employees. Eacom is Ontario’s largest softwood lumber producer.

Since 2012, Eacom has invested over \$50 million in Ontario:

- \$27 million to rebuild the Timmins sawmill with 20% more capacity;

- the re-start of the Ear Falls sawmill in northwestern Ontario for an \$8-million start-up cost, which today supports 132 direct jobs; and

- an additional \$18 million at Elk Lake and Nairn.

In 2015, Eacom announced an additional \$2.8-million capital investment project at the Timmins sawmill, which builds on previous investments in Ontario to increase our capacities in shifts, employment levels and production. Investments such as these demonstrate our commitment to maintaining strong assets and position us better for future stability.

We believe in the strong potential of Ontario to become a leading softwood-lumber-producing jurisdiction in North America. Our forests are vast, sustainably managed, independently third-party-certified, and strategically located next to northeast US and southern Ontario markets.

Sustainable forest management is implemented under a robust regulatory framework, which requires that forests be regenerated and managed to promote their long-term health. Crown lands are not being deforested as a result of sustainable forestry activities.

For ongoing business confidence, Eacom needs reliable and affordable access to wood supply, socio-economically feasible forest policies, certainty of tenure, market promotion and access, public forest road support and competitive industrial electricity rates. To realize further growth and investments, we require the collaboration and support of an Ontario government fully attuned to the security of long-term wood supply and a predictable forest policy environment.

I’ll start with access to wood supply. For all of our sawmills in Ontario, predictable and affordable wood supply is critical. We need consistent, long-term access to our wood commitments, and we ask the government to commit to conducting transparent socioeconomic impact assessments of any new policy that could impact the forest sector through reductions to wood supply. Any further government policy that significantly reduces

access to supply will directly affect our production, investments and employment.

Socioeconomically feasible forest policies: We need appropriate, balanced public policy that provides for all three sectors of sustainability: society, economy and environment. Eacom would like to work with the government to develop a solution that respects Ontario's commitment to harmonize the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and the Endangered Species Act.

Regarding tenure, Eacom recommends that MNRF focus its limited resources in areas where government/industry and all stakeholders agree that tenure reform is a priority.

Regarding market promotion and access, customers purchasing Ontario forest products should know they are making a sound environmental choice and supporting local economies. Eacom is grateful for government efforts to promote the sustainability and legality of Ontario wood products to global customers and encourage continued efforts in this regard.

Public forest road support: Eacom was pleased to see the needs of the forest products sector addressed in the 2015 Ontario provincial budget with a commitment of \$60 million in resource roads funding. Primary and secondary roads are strategically important to natural resource development in Ontario and critical to our business. While Eacom believes that the province should return the program to its initial level of \$75 million, I am here today to ask you for a funding level of \$60 million for 2016.

To conclude, Eacom is proud to be a part of Ontario's forest products sector, which generates a domestic economic impact of over \$10 billion, total wages and salaries of almost \$2 billion, almost \$4 billion in domestic exports, and directly employs over 56,000 people for a total of 170,000 direct and indirect jobs. The sector expects to see continued growth, providing innovative and sustainably harvested products to help the province achieve its fiscal and environmental objectives.

Eacom is prepared to work with government and all stakeholders to create a prosperous, sustainable economy for the well-being of all Ontarians. We hope that we can count on government support for our company's efforts to maintain and enhance Ontario's softwood lumber industry and associated communities to the health and prosperity that should be theirs.

I would like to thank all the members of the committee for your attention today. Best wishes for a productive consultation, and thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Wong): Thank you very much. I'm going to turn to Ms. Vernile to do this round of questioning.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Christine, thank you very much for a very informative presentation this afternoon. We're getting very close to the end. We've been on the road for a week now. You are one of the few people who stand between us and our dinner tonight.

Ms. Christine Leduc: Oh, sorry.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: We have been touring a number of communities in Ontario. We had a visit to Thunder

Bay on Wednesday, where we heard from a couple of people from the forestry sector. Yesterday, we were in Sault Ste. Marie, where we heard from Bonny Skene at Domtar. She gave us a great deal of background on how your industry is innovating and how you are committed to being sustainable and successful. I'm glad to hear that you are on that same course with what you are doing.

I'm just looking at some of the facts here concerning your company. Our government has invested more than \$860,000 to help you upgrade mills here in Ontario. Overall, we have invested over \$1.3 billion to the forestry sector since 2005.

Specifically, I'd like to mention the Jobs and Prosperity Fund, as it has been targeted to the forestry sector, as well as supports for energy costs through the Northern Pulp and Paper Electricity Transition Program, and the Northern Industrial Electricity Rate Program. With all of that, let me ask you, how are these supports and investments helping you and your company to succeed?

Ms. Christine Leduc: We are certainly pleased to have seen the announcement on the Jobs and Prosperity Fund in 2015, and we are having discussions with MNRF for 2016. Eacom will look for more investments and will definitely work with our MNRF partners to see how we can take advantage of the Jobs and Prosperity Fund.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: One of the presenters this week talked about the devastating effects that we're seeing in your industry with the drop in newspaper sales. How is that impacting you, and how are you making up the difference?

Ms. Christine Leduc: Eacom is a lumber producer; we don't own any pulp and paper mills. But the sector itself is very integrated. While we might not have any pulp and paper mills, they are our customers, and our operations are not viable without them. It is a very integrated sector, and we are at a very sensitive area in Ontario when it comes to our pulp and paper mills. We certainly would not want to see another one get closed down.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Anyone travelling to Florida is not liking what's happening to the loonie these days. However, there are many sectors, many industries—exporters, manufacturers—who actually feel that a lower dollar is good for them. How is a lower dollar impacting your sector?

Ms. Christine Leduc: It is having a favourable impact. However, we do pay all of our production costs in Ontario. It is favourable, in addition to the low oil prices, but we want to be as competitive a jurisdiction as possible.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: We heard from one of the presenters this week, in forestry, that there is a bit of a public relations issue that your industry has to deal with, where people think you're chopping down trees and that's that. So what are you doing to reach the public to let them know the other side of the story?

1550

Ms. Christine Leduc: That is an ongoing challenge, something that we're sensitive to. We do a lot of very

good work, but that good work is not known by most Canadians. We want to make sure that we stay factual and are as transparent as possible. We are operating on crown land. They're the people's trees, so everything that we do has to be transparent.

We are working with partners such as Forests Ontario and other groups that have mandates on outreach and education. We also work with folks at the Ontario Wood initiative, which is an Ontario government initiative, just making sure that everyone understands the sustainability and legality of all Ontario-made forest products. It is important.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: You've given us a dollar figure: \$60 million for 2016. Is there anything else you would like us to tell the Ontario government on your behalf?

Ms. Christine Leduc: Just how ready and willing forestry companies are to help the province achieve their environmental and fiscal objectives.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you very much for the great job that you are doing in running an industry that is sustainable and successful.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation and your written submission. Have a great afternoon.

VICTORIAN ORDER OF NURSES CANADA
ONTARIO COMMUNITY SUPPORT
ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Our last presenter, ladies and gentlemen, is the Victorian Order of Nurses Canada. I believe we have Jo-Anne Poirier, the chief executive officer, here today. Welcome. If you want to bring your colleague to the table, you're welcome to do that.

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: Thank you very much. I did invite her, but she's doing work back—

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Oh, okay. So as you probably heard, you have 10 minutes for your presentation, followed by five minutes of questioning. This round of questioning will be coming from the official opposition party. You may begin any time. When you begin, please identify yourself for the purposes of Hansard.

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: Thank you very much for inviting us to speak. I'm Jo-Anne Poirier, the president and CEO of VON Canada. Il me fait un grand plaisir d'être ici avec vous aujourd'hui.

I will read some of my notes just for expediency purposes and will be happy to focus on the priorities and answer your questions.

I wanted to offer support for the government's "putting patients first" agenda and by acknowledging the commitment to strengthening home and community care in Ontario. Much work has been done and much remains to be done.

You are also to be commended for the home and community care review and for the work now under way to define a better, more patient-centred system for caring

for the health and well-being of Ontarians—where, when and how they want to be cared for.

You've also made an important commitment in last year's budget to continue to promise 5% increases to the home and community care sector. There is some room to go here, but nonetheless this is a very significant investment.

We also urge you to keep a strong focus on ensuring that more of our home care dollars are spent at the front line as the system is reorganized for greater effectiveness, efficiency and accountability.

I'm here today representing VON Canada, our country's longest-standing charitable organization that delivers home and community care. We've been part of the Ontario fabric since 1897. We have 4,000 employees and 5,500 volunteers in Ontario, keeping us healthy through community-based programs like transportation, Meals on Wheels, falls prevention and other programs, as well as serving the health and home support needs of thousands of people in their homes each day.

We're a registered charity, but I also think of us as a business with a social mission. Increasingly, we're challenged to meet the growing needs of the population we serve in a financially sustainable way that's also respectful to the value of our employees. While we, like others, engage volunteers and raise funds to support our delivery of care, it never makes up for the insufficient public resources that we all know we require.

I'm also here on behalf of the Ontario Community Support Association, which is a group of champions for the strong, sustainable home and community support sector for all Ontarians. Their not-for-profit, community-based member agencies provide a wide range of clinical and non-clinical services that help seniors and people with disabilities remain independent and live in their own homes and communities. These cost-effective services prevent unnecessary hospitalizations, emergency room visits and premature institutionalization. They're also key to sustainable health care. We improve the quality of life for the people we serve.

A few numbers: Across Ontario we have more than one million people who receive home and community support, and the need is growing, as we all know. The number of higher-needs patients being cared for at home has increased by 94% since 2009. Many of our folks are supported by family caregivers, who take an estimated 80% of the care provided to those who are ill, frail or dying at home. Almost 30% of Ontarians are family caregivers. Outside of the caregiver community, the volunteers dedicate more than four million hours to provide home and community care each year through the not-for-profit sector and community care agencies.

There are three priorities that I'd like to speak to you about today from VON and OCSA's perspective. This is confirmed: OCSA did a membership poll this week, and you'll hear some numbers from that, as well.

Our first priority is investing in the people who deliver these services: the home and community care. The demand is growing each year, as home and community

care agencies are being relied on to provide more services to an older population who are being discharged from hospital earlier. Yet we face severe funding constraints which affect our ability to compensate staff appropriately and it makes it challenging to meet the service needs.

Some 86% of the OCSA members surveyed said that the wage restraint or compression is an issue for the agencies. The PSS wage enhancement or wage increase for personal support workers was a valuable step, which improved wages for an essential group of workers. The implementation has been costly, though, for some of the organizations like ours and has created some disparities and additional pressures. We have had no home care rate increase for six years and the gap between inflation and funding is widening.

To deal with some of the funding constraints, organizations like ours have a few choices, like reducing services, increasing fees to clients and reducing staff. Wages of non-PSW staff such as nurses and skilled managers do not recognize the value they provide increasingly.

This affects our ability to recruit and retain staff and it's very challenging to compete with the long-term care and hospitals at a time when home care and CSS agencies need to hire more skilled front-line staff. More needs to be done to ensure that the people who are the heart of our system are appropriately compensated for the value that they deliver.

Our second priority is to invest in necessary technology supports. There is a major and growing infrastructure deficit in the home and community support sector. Investment in technology is critical for quality client care: assessment tools and the ability to share people's medical information among home care, primary care and hospitals to co-ordinate patient care. This investment should be supported.

The CCACs' invaluable client information system needs to be used for all home and community support services, not just the specific clinical services provided through the CCACs. These valuable and expensive system assets could be leveraged for the entire health system and could bring desperately needed technology capacity to the hundreds of community support agencies and home care agencies across the province.

Nearly 60% of the OCSA members have examples of information and communications resources in their local areas that are improving care co-ordination and quality. These successful local programs should be spread across the province and extended to providers. So food for thought.

Our third priority is to invest in strong supports for caregivers. We're all caregivers in some way, as we know. It depends on informal caregivers, and their roles are not often recognized or supported. Caregiver burnout is a crisis, and we see examples of this every day. We call the caregivers, actually, the "silent patients." They're often just one step away themselves from illness and breakdown.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, along with other organizations such as Health Quality Ontario and the Change Foundation, has made improving support for caregivers a priority. The investment in training and resources for caregivers is also a crucial step forward, but more needs to be done to provide real relief and day-to-day support that the caregivers say they need.

In fact, 82% of the OCSA members report that there are insufficient resources in their regions to support caregivers and prevent burnout. The top two programs that they say would help are more respite programs and adult day programs.

Quickly, an 82-year-old gentleman who's fit as a fiddle, who still likes to go downhill skiing, gets to drop off his partner, his wife, to an adult day program. She has dementia and it gives her a break, social activity and a hot meal, and he gets to go skiing and to remain fit. So you can see the double impact of that investment and the real difference it makes in people's lives.

Our sector is closest to caregivers and we provide the programs that have been proven to prevent and relieve burnout. Investing in these very cost-effective programs, such as adult day programs and respite, will continue to support loved ones at home, keeping them out of hospitals.

Our clients, patients and their families know how important this sector is to maintain independence and quality of life, and they want greater access to these services. The strategic investments identified would have a clear impact on the lives of many.

1600

I really appreciate the opportunity to come and speak to you. I will leave my remarks there so that I can answer some questions.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to turn to Mr. Walker to begin this round of questioning.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you very much, Jo-Anne, for all that your organization does for health care in our communities.

At the back of the package, it's noted that you have contracts with both CCACs and LHINs. I'd like to get a sense of whether you think this amalgamation is a good idea and is actually going to benefit front-line patient care.

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: I think that is the intent, and we will hopefully have input into how that restructuring does occur. We have significant contracts with the CCAC organizations, and I think the overall objective is to make sure that more dollars find their way to front-line care. I think that we, as provider organizations, could also play a bigger role in simple coordination. The more complex cases could certainly work with the CCACs and the LHINs. So we do see an opportunity for integration. We would like to be a part of that. We also do see that a bundled services approach taken with the primary care teams and hospitals can help redesign the system.

Mr. Bill Walker: That just goes to the Auditor General, who showed that 40% of current expenditures are going to administration in the CCACs and not to that

front-line care. Certainly, in my riding, I hear that significantly—that a lot of time is spent churning paper and calling and finding, but the person actually coming to take care of that 82-year-old is not there.

The other one that I found interesting is your PSS wage enhancement. Is that complete now?

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: I believe it's the final year. What it has created is some disparities internally. For example, we had to invest in a software program to effect the change. It also created disparities between programs. We have PSWs working alongside other PSWs who have not experienced that wage enhancement because the program didn't qualify.

What we would urge the government to do—because it was a very worthwhile initiative—is to make sure to involve us before changes are made, so that we can look at the implementation issues that follow.

Mr. Bill Walker: We certainly agree and want to make sure that the government is hearing that—that when they come out and say “you shall,” there are other unintended consequences. You had to buy a system although you haven't gotten an increase in six years. Hmm, what gets cut here? Probably patient care. That's the concern I have as an opposition member. It's challenging when they have good-intended ideas but they haven't thought it through to say what's the real impact to the end user and the client.

The other one I would like to get a sense of—and maybe you'll put a further written submission in, but very specific—is your third priority: the government's investment in training and resources for caregivers. For someone like me—you're on the front lines; you know your world. I need to see concrete examples of the types of things that we can then do, and we can try to push and help the government, partner with the government, to put actual good systems in place that are practical. I think you used the words earlier that you want to be engaged; you want to be part of that process if there's significant change. You're on the front lines.

One of the challenges that I've seen in my four years of government is, we design a lot of systems but we don't

always consult the people who are actually the implementers; then we go back and spend a lot of money on resources and systems and not on front-line patient care. That's what I hear the most from the public: “I want the care when I need it. I don't want to have to go through five different agencies. I don't want to have to have 14 administrators. I want the care.” As opposition critic, it's one of the things I certainly hear a great deal about.

That home care service, again—we fought very hard to keep a restorative care program in the community of Chesley that really gave valuable care to transition to get you home, so that when you come, they're prepared, they're ready and the resources are there. We all know that it's very expensive to keep someone in hospital if they can be at home, but you also need—and I think the other thing you touched on was that acuity of care. Knowing that you haven't had an increase in six years, knowing where that demographic boom is coming, and you're trying to deal with more complex cases—well, that increase is obviously going to be very daunting.

Any final comments on specifics?

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: I think that there are very pragmatic ways that we can resolve some of those issues. An example of the caregiver training would be as simple as how to lift safely. You can see the impact. If you don't do that, then you have another patient on your hands.

We look forward to working with the government. We're very grateful for the investments that have been made, and we certainly want to be part of the solution.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you very much for your presentation as well as your written submission. If there's any additional information that you want to share with the committee, you have until Tuesday, February 2, at 5 p.m.

Ms. Jo-Anne Poirier: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Have a good afternoon.

Committee members, I'm going to adjourn the committee till Monday, February 1, in Toronto at 9 a.m.

The committee adjourned at 1605.

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