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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 1 December 2016

Jeudi 1^{er} décembre 2016

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk
Todd Decker

Greffier
Todd Decker

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 1 December 2016

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 1^{er} décembre 2016

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: On a point of order, Speaker: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private bills.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The President of the Treasury Board is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed. President?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively and that the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate:

Pr47, Pr48, Pr49, Pr50, Pr52, Pr53; and

That Mr. Bailey may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr48 on behalf of Mr. Hardeman; and

That Mr. Colle may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr49 on behalf of Mr. Dong; and

That Mr. Colle may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr50 on behalf of Mrs. Martins; and

That Mr. Bailey may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr53 on behalf of Mr. Walker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Ms. Sandals moves that orders for second reading—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Motion agreed to.

289619 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr47, An Act to revive 289619 Ontario Limited.

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

Second reading agreed to.

289619 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr47, An Act to revive 289619 Ontario Limited.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING CANADA I
LTD. ACT, 2016

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Hardeman, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr48, An Act to revive Liberty Tire Recycling Canada I Ltd.

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

Second reading agreed to.

LIBERTY TIRE RECYCLING CANADA I
LTD. ACT, 2016

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Hardeman, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr48, An Act to revive Liberty Tire Recycling Canada I Ltd.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

STONERIDGE DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION
ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle, on behalf of Mr. Dong, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr49, An Act to revive Stoneridge Development Corporation.

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

Second reading agreed to.

STONERIDGE DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION
ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle, on behalf of Mr. Dong, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr49, An Act to revive Stoneridge Development Corporation.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

SIMPLE STOPWATCH INC. ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle, on behalf of Mrs. Martins, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr50, An Act to revive Simple Stopwatch Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

SIMPLE STOPWATCH INC. ACT, 2016

Mr. Colle, on behalf of Mrs. Martins, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr50, An Act to revive Simple Stopwatch Inc.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

ALL ABOUT WATER LTD. ACT, 2016

Ms. DiNovo moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr52, An Act to revive All About Water Ltd.

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

Second reading agreed to.

ALL ABOUT WATER LTD. ACT, 2016

Ms. DiNovo moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr52, An Act to revive All About Water Ltd.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

SOUND BAY PROPERTIES INC.
ACT, 2016

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Walker, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr53, An Act to revive Sound Bay Properties Inc.

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

Second reading agreed to.

SOUND BAY PROPERTIES INC.
ACT, 2016

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Walker, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr53, An Act to revive Sound Bay Properties Inc.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

MODERNIZING ONTARIO'S MUNICIPAL
LEGISLATION ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 SUR LA MODERNISATION
DE LA LÉGISLATION MUNICIPALE
ONTARIENNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 30, 2016, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 68, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to municipalities / Projet de loi 68, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne les municipalités.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): When we last debated this issue, the member from Prince Edward–Hastings had the floor.

The member has the floor.

Mr. Todd Smith: It's a pleasure to speak here again today. Yesterday, this bill was sprung on us without any notice, really, from the government. That's an unacceptable practice, in my view. This is a comprehensive piece of omnibus legislation that actually requires our critic and our critic staff to examine all the layers of the bill that have been presented.

It's funny, because some bills that come from the government are very thin on details. There's just a shell of a law, and then regulation is added after the fact far away from this Legislature by bureaucrats in the ministry. This bill actually has some meat on the bone that needed to be examined. I didn't think it was appropriate yesterday that the government sprung this bill on us without any notice. The fact that our critic was unavailable to respond to the bill yesterday was important to us. We should have our critic responding to government bills. That's why we decided to use the legislative tool that we had and ring some bells and join the protestors who were out on the front lawn, actually, Madam Speaker. There were thousands of protestors out on the front lawn of the Legislature, just the latest group of protestors upset with the direction of the Liberal government in Ontario. We've seen large groups—yesterday, skilled trades workers—who were out on the front lawn. But we've seen all kinds of different protests over the last several months, whether it's education workers or families dealing with autism or, of course, the thousands of people who are struggling to pay their electricity bills. They've all been out there protesting this government's direction.

0910

Then yesterday we had the—

Interjection.

Mr. Todd Smith: Yes, don't forget the demonstration schools. Thank you to the member from Dufferin–Caledon for reminding me. That's a pet project of mine.

Yesterday we saw more examples of the waste, mismanagement and scandal of this Liberal government in the Auditor General's report. Clearly, this is a government that's lacking in direction.

There are some issues with this bill that has been put forward by the government all of a sudden. Bill 68 is the Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act. We started to dissect it a bit yesterday. I have about 12 minutes remaining in my time and will take a closer look at what is in this bill and how it contradicts some things that the government has changed in other pieces of legislation that they have brought forward this fall.

I know that the member from Oxford, who is our critic, looks forward to really getting deep into the issues of this bill when he has the opportunity in his one-hour leadoff to examine this latest piece of legislation that has been put on the table.

A few months ago, the House actually passed a bill to change the way that municipal elections are conducted in this province, as I'm sure you're aware. At that time, the government continually congratulated itself on the steps that it was taking to clean up fundraising practices around municipal elections. In this bill, however, and I think it should be pointed out, the government increases the municipal campaign donation limit to \$1,200. So while they're reducing in other areas, they're increasing limits for municipal elections. You might think that was done to line up the municipal donation limit with the provincial limit, even though that has never been the case before, and you would be right. But the government knew it would be amending provincial limits in the spring, so it could have amended the municipal bill last spring when it was changing how we conduct municipal elections in this province.

There is a schedule in Bill 68 that actually seeks to amend a section of a bill currently being struck out and replaced in another piece of legislation. Were this bill to pass before that one, that bill would end up striking the amendments made by this one. So we have competing pieces of legislation with this bill.

The government has touted their extensive, summer-long 2015 tour of consultations on this bill, and our party's critic, the member from Oxford, will be dealing with the content of many of those submissions in his leadoff, which is soon to come. I find it interesting, though, that the government is introducing the ability for councillors to participate in meetings electronically, given that the last time this was introduced in a bill it was actually government members who removed this section from the bill at committee, proving that some habits haven't changed since 2003: It's still possible for a Liberal to be against something before they're in favour of it. It kind of reminds me of the Hydro One sale.

This was supposedly done for large rural municipalities like Hastings Highlands or Tweed in my riding; they're large rural municipalities. This would allow councillors who may live in Queensborough to electronically attend a meeting of council or a committee meeting in Tweed, or councillors who may live near Combermere to attend meetings in Maynooth, which sounds like a

good idea. It actually does sound like a good idea. However, you're forgetting one thing: In large swaths of rural Ontario, there simply isn't the broadband Internet to allow that to happen.

Now, I commend Hastings county, and I commend the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and the provincial and federal governments for contributing to a large project in eastern Ontario, the EORN project as it's known, the Eastern Ontario Regional Network. A lot of money has been spent over the last five years in trying to light up, as they say, homes and businesses across eastern Ontario.

Keep in mind, eastern Ontario is the size of a lot of small countries in Europe. It's a large area, and there are a lot of different geographical obstacles to overcome when it comes to the topography, especially when you're up in the hills in McArthurs Mills in Carlow Mayo township. You've got a lot of beautiful scenery up there, but it doesn't make getting Internet to those homes and businesses the easiest thing in the world to do.

The other thing that happened since EORN started that project in trying to light up Internet in homes in the rural countryside is that something called Netflix came along, which is using an awful lot more Internet capacity than maybe they had planned for when they started the project of the Eastern Ontario Regional Network. What they have to do is go back and build up the capital projects even further, so that there is that capacity there for Internet in rural Ontario so that these councillors, if they want to be able to sit in their home office and participate in a council meeting, could do so.

The other thing that is very important as the objective, I believe, of this bill is that a lot of times in rural Ontario, particularly in the winter months, we're seeing roads that are impassable. There was evidence of this yesterday in the Auditor General's report. Contracts have been given to companies that simply aren't meeting the requirements of the contracts, and they still keep getting the contracts year after year. The fines that they're supposed to be receiving are forgiven, and they actually end up giving them bonuses for impassable roads.

There were a lot of moments in the past where perhaps there was a council meeting on a Monday afternoon in Maynooth and the councillors simply couldn't get to the Hastings Highlands offices. Perhaps they would have taken the opportunity to participate in that council meeting through the Internet via a teleconference, if they had that opportunity. This is just one example as well.

I think maybe this portion of the bill is well intended. I think it just shows the lack of a grip on what is actually happening in rural Ontario, where there simply isn't the capacity for this to become a reality. I think it shows how out of touch this government can be when they're drafting legislation, particularly on how it impacts rural parts of the province. I believe the stated rationale of this was always to make it easier for people in some large rural municipalities to attend council meetings.

The act also amends the City of Toronto Act with the same provision. Geographically, the city of Toronto isn't all that large. It's certainly not rural. Including the provision makes sense if you feel that Toronto should be

treated the same as every other municipality, and that's fair. It makes sense, as I said, when paired with the parental leave provision that's included in this bill.

But pretending that the provision is being included largely to make life easier for councillors in large rural municipalities is laughable. I know that the people writing that line were thinking, "It gets cold up in north Hastings," or some similar municipality in rural eastern, southwestern or northern Ontario. The roads aren't very good. If you have ever driven Highway 62 north of Maynooth, then you know what kind of shape that road is in. If you've ever driven on County Road 49 in Prince Edward county, you know what kind of shape that road in rural Ontario is in.

That's why Highway 62, in particular north of Maynooth, has always been an order paper question of mine. I want to know when the government is going to help Hastings Highlands fix that piece of highway that goes through their region. If it's a really snowy day, you just might not chance that road.

Actually, what's happening on that road now, for the people who live in Herschel or Monteaule townships in Hasting Highlands, is that road is being shut down at times, with load limits put on it. It's causing real difficulty for industry in that area, particularly the logging industry that uses that road in the wintertime. The road is just disintegrating before the eyes of the roads crew in Hastings Highlands, and it really needs the help of the provincial and federal governments to fix that situation. I think I've probably emphasized that point enough for the purposes of this particular speech, though.

I'll move on to a final piece of the bill. I think it needs to be discussed, particularly on this day. That's section 25 of schedule 2 of the act. This act allows the city of Toronto to decide on how long its records are kept rather than the city's independent auditor general.

There exists no reason to believe that the city is malicious in its intent with its record-keeping policy or that it intends to somehow shorten its retention so as to make access to information requests meaningless. There are no grounds to believe that. However, we have the experience of the last five years here, and in the last five years here we've seen a government abuse its independent officers in a way that few governments have ever done or dared to. We've seen a government that destroyed records with little regard for existing laws, much less amended ones.

These incidents establish a context under which this law comes before us, but they also clarify the role that independent officers are supposed to play in our Legislatures. If you watch the news at all, you'll hear it said that we live in a post-fact or post-truth world. What our independent officers are supposed to do is act as guardians of reality. They act and they assess, absent the interference of government spin. They are separate from the politics of this particular room, outside the outstretched arms of the great and growing government spin machine, particularly like the one we have here on the opposite side of the House. They're here to tell us when something is out of bounds. With this government,

they've done that well, and they did it yesterday with an over 1,000-page report from our Auditor General, pointing out the mismanagement and waste of this current government.

We see before us yet another bill that attacks the rights and responsibilities of oversight officers. It's as if the arrogance which the government extends to so many of its constituents and to so many other members of the Legislature extends as well to the independent officers who are supposed to be a check on the government's attempts to colour reality to suit their own purposes. It's as if the Premier has decided that the problem with the Auditor General or the Financial Accountability Officer is that they just don't understand what the Liberals are trying to do.

I remember on this day last year when the auditor informed Ontario what most of us already expected: that this government had so botched the electricity system that we were overpaying for power. Did the government then pledge to do better? No, they didn't, Madam Speaker. They disputed the auditor's figures. They didn't even change their talking points. They still said the additional costs were entirely due to improving the system or getting off of coal—none of which addressed the substantive points of the auditor's criticism.

They also ignored another major criticism—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Excuse me. I need to remind the member that he needs to speak to the bill, not about the auditor's report, okay? So in your remaining minutes.

Mr. Todd Smith: It actually speaks to the bill, but since I am not allowed to speak to the bill, I'm going to move adjournment of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Smith has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that it carry? I hear no.

All those in favour?

All those opposed?

I believe the nays have it. Okay.

Call in the members. It's a five-minute bell.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): A 30-minute bell? Okay, call in the members. It's now a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 0923 to 0953.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Members, please take your seats.

Mr. Smith has moved adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing.

All those opposed, please rise and remain standing.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 14; the nays are 32.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I declare the motion lost.

I return to the member from Prince Edward-Hastings.

Mr. Todd Smith: You know, this is the festive season. I just thought it was only appropriate that we had some bells this morning to help us celebrate as we head into the final week of our legislative session. With

everybody here, I just want to wish you all a very merry Christmas.

I look forward to the debate on this bill going forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm happy to add a few comments—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order. The member from Nickel Belt is about to start this round of debate, so please be respectful.

I return to the member from Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker. It was interesting to listen to the member. I want to focus on schedule 4, section 10 of the bill that deals with local services boards and read into the record a letter from the Local Services Board of Foleyet in my riding that goes as follows:

“Currently, the town of Foleyet is in a huge amount of debt (204k) to the Ontario Clean Water Agency for the work that was done at the water treatment plant.” The only way to pay for the clean water agency that has done the work is that everybody's taxes have to be doubled. For example, if you currently pay a residential rate, which is \$816.44, “you will pay \$1,632.88 next year.” The businesses that currently pay \$1,628.05 will pay \$3,256.10. Vacant land goes from \$157.73 to \$453.72.

Why am I reading this into the record, Speaker? Because we have an opportunity with this bill that opens up the act under subsection 42(2) of the Northern Services Boards Act to make the local services boards more transparent.

We have no way to know where the money went. How come Foleyet is in such a huge debt?

I reached out to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, because they oversee local services boards. It's like talking to a black hole. Nobody can tell me. The water treatment plant was upgraded. The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines gave a huge grant for this upgrade to take place. The work was done. It was supposed to be balanced. Now they have this huge debt that nobody can understand.

We need to do better.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: It's good to be here this morning talking about the Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act. I was listening to the member for Prince Edward–Hastings this morning. This was before the bells started ringing. I want to respond to something that he said. He made comments on efforts to modernize and update fundraising for provincial politicians. I might remind him that while committee was working on this—while work was under way—he walked out, refusing to participate in that important work.

Madam Speaker, what I would like to do in my time remaining is to address the part that focuses on ensuring that parents who serve as municipal councillors can take time off for pregnancy and parental leave.

Some quick background on how this piece came about: This was a private member's bill that I brought forward a few weeks ago, which received unanimous consent and went off to committee.

Back in June of this year, my mayor, Berry Vrbanovic, in the city of Kitchener came to see me and explain that municipal councillors are entitled to a general leave of 12 weeks. However, there's no specific mention of maternity or parental leave, and he didn't really feel that 12 weeks was enough. He was advocating on behalf of Kitchener councillor Kelly Galloway-Sealock, who, by the way, just had her third child a few weeks ago.

Quite frankly, I was very surprised to hear this, that they're not entitled to a pregnancy or maternity leave. I say to you, Madam Speaker, if we are trying to attract more women into local politics, how can we do this if local politics is not more family-friendly? Unlike provincial and federal politicians, who do have to travel, many of them will choose local politics because they figure it's closer to home. But we need to find ways to find accommodations for women who do wish to serve at the local level. I think that this is one way to do it.

So I support this. Why? Because it's 2016. I encourage my colleagues to do so also.

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The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Questions and comments? I recognize the member from Whitby–Oshawa.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Again, good morning. There are particular features of this bill that I think we need to talk a little bit more broadly about.

One is new section 23.6 of the act. It concerns the establishment of community councils by municipalities. Those of us—and there are many—who have served on either upper-tier councils or local councils know the importance of the establishment of these types of committees and the role they play in facilitating the type of openness and transparency that all municipalities would like to see. They're also an opportunity for residents within those respective communities to add their voice to the discussion, whether it's planning and development aspects, whether it has to do with the establishment of a tax rate or the inclusion of new services as an aspect of that discussion as well.

Another feature of the legislation that bears some highlighting is section 147 of the act, which governs the provision of energy conservation programs by municipalities. Isn't that timely, in view of the high electricity rates that municipalities are trying to cope with overall? What it is is a mechanism that allows municipalities to facilitate a broader engagement with their community in terms of the types of environmental features that they would like to see within their municipalities.

Finally, Speaker, I'll take you to the revisions of schedule 3 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. This has been a very long-standing issue in municipalities, both from the perspective of what the definition should be and the provision of checks and balances in terms of what's available to individual councillors, but also what's

available to the general public in bringing particular situations forward to councils related to—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I am pleased to rise to offer some thoughts on the speech from the member from Prince Edward–Hastings about Bill 68, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to municipalities.

Like the member for Prince Edward–Hastings, I would have appreciated an opportunity to hear the leadoff speech from the critic from our party, to hear the analysis of the comprehensive changes that are made in this bill. Unfortunately, this bill was dropped on this House with very short notice, and that has prevented us from doing the kind of research that we have an obligation to do as legislators, speaking on behalf of the people we represent.

I wanted to highlight one section of the act in particular. Section 259 of the current Municipal Act is amended to ensure that the office of a municipal councillor does not become vacated due to absences related to pregnancy or the birth or adoption of the member's child. Certainly, as someone who served on a school board, school boards are governed by the same requirement that if you miss three meetings in a row, unless you have a motion from the board authorizing your absence, your seat is deemed vacant. So I would strongly urge that this section apply to both school board trustees as well as to municipal councillors.

As we all know, we want to see more women step forward to run at all levels of government: municipal, provincial and federal. "Municipal" includes local councils and school boards. This is an important way that we can ensure that women are willing to step forward and serve locally.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I return back to the member from Prince Edward–Hastings to wrap up.

Mr. Todd Smith: I thank my colleague from Whitby–Oshawa, who made some remarks on this bill, and also from London West and Nickel Belt.

The member from Kitchener Centre opposite: I'm not exactly sure what committee she thought I walked out on, but I was not a member of that committee. I know there are a couple of us who look similar, but I've never been a member of that committee—if she wants to correct her record on that one. It might have been Mr. Mantha; we get accused of being brothers all the time.

The member from London West gets it. The reason that on two mornings in a row we have rung bells is because the government has been playing tricks in this House. They told our critic that they weren't going to be introducing this bill. They continue to play games with the House schedule. They'll make an agreement and then a member of the Liberal government will stand up and will make a point of order that goes against everything that has been agreed to try to keep the peace in this Legislature, which isn't necessarily the easiest thing in the world to do.

To combat that, we have very few tools at our disposal, and one of them this morning was to ring the bells.

I think the government needs to get over the arrogance that they have. The arrogance that this government displays time and time again, whether it's the Minister of Transportation going out yesterday to try and defend the Metrolinx performance in the Auditor General's report and try to keep a straight face while doing it—they have to get over that arrogance and start to do what's in the best interests of the people of Ontario.

I look forward to hearing our critic's thoughts on this piece of legislation, when we get the opportunity to do that. It will probably be sometime next week. I thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity today.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: I believe we have unanimous consent to stand down the NDP lead on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Vanthof is seeking unanimous consent to stand down the lead on this particular bill. Is it the wishes of the House? Agreed? Agreed.

I return back to the member.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always a pleasure to speak in this House, today on Bill 68, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to municipalities. But I will have to echo some of the concerns from the previous speaker from the Progressive Conservatives that the way this bill is being handled and scheduled isn't actually conducive to a good debate.

As people here know—but perhaps if there is someone watching this—we do get together on a weekly basis, during House leaders', to try to figure out a schedule so the House can run fairly smoothly, so people can prepare. That's why we stood down the lead. I believe that's also why the PCs stood down their lead. The critic is responsible for drilling down into the bill with the researchers to find out what the good parts are, and it's our role as the opposition to find out what the parts are that we disagree with.

When bills are scheduled like this, where no preparation time is allowed, when the schedule isn't followed, we end up with, quite frankly, a lesser quality of debate. My connection to this bill: I was a municipal councillor for many years, so I have some affinity to these issues. But I'm certainly not the critic and I certainly haven't had time to talk to the researchers or to the critic about what this bill actually entails.

There are a few parts that caught my eye as to why we should be a little concerned or perhaps a lot concerned. The way a bill is set up, you have in the front of the bill—we all know this, but perhaps for the folks at home—explanatory notes. Those are basically the Coles Notes on what's in the bill. I know when I look at a bill, that's first thing I read so I can hone in on where I should be looking. One of the things in the explanatory notes that caught my eye is, just for example: "The schedule amends the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act"—fine—"Here are some highlights." I had yet to see that, because usually the explanatory notes lay out what's in the bill, but when it starts out with "Here are some highlights," I get a bit concerned. Then I want to drill further in the

bill. Again, I get even more concerned when this bill is just thrown on to the schedule. When the explanatory notes say, “Here are some highlights,” I get really concerned, because usually in a bill, it’s not the highlights that are the big problem; it’s the low lights.

1010

M^{me} France Gélinas: The details.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, the details. The devil is always in the details. Often we complain or we comment that bills aren’t prescriptive enough, but this one has a lot of meat in it and a lot of issues that perhaps will make a big difference to some places and not a big difference to others, but that have to be drilled down on.

The PC member—where is Mr. Smith from? He’s from Prince Edward–Hastings—brought up an issue that I hadn’t seen in the bill. I listened intently to his remarks regarding meetings via Internet. Interesting concept, but you know what? Where I live, we would just like to have Internet. That brings up a huge issue—and I have every right to talk about that within this bill, because that’s in this bill. Perhaps one of the things we should be talking about is actually providing some kind of equivalent broadband service to the majority of the province, because in most places in rural Ontario—certainly in northern Ontario—that access isn’t there. And perhaps the direction of this bill is actually to help people who live farther away, in farther-flung municipalities. It’s a great idea, but if the capacity isn’t there, it’s kind of a waste of time.

Now, I’m sure it makes sense in some places here. I’m always amazed at the speed of the Internet here. We have pretty good Internet speeds in my more major centres, centres of 8,000 or 10,000 people, but what I have my kids call “country high-speed,” and that is not a compliment. Even if my councillors in my municipality wanted to take advantage of this, it’s not possible. I think that’s something that has to be brought up here. There are a lot of things in a lot of parts of the province that aren’t equal, that aren’t even—we’re not asking for equal, but they’re not even equivalent. This bill brings up some of them.

My colleague from Nickel Belt brought up that there are issues in this bill about northern services boards. I’m sure that most of the people in this House, and by far the vast majority of the people in the province—99.99% of the people in the province haven’t got a clue what a northern service board is; haven’t got a clue. Yet, for the people who live in those areas, that’s their system of government. In some areas, because of that, they probably have some advantages. There are some advantages to living under a local services board, but on the flip side, there are some huge, huge disadvantages. I think it behooves us to take the time to actually look at that, what happens in local services boards.

Not all of my municipalities are local services boards, but a lot of them are. They face unique issues. Organized municipalities that are next to local services boards also face huge issues. In here, they have the right now to incur debt, to tax differently. Other legislation is talking about how the government is looking at changing the tax struc-

ture in unorganized townships. It would be interesting if we knew how these two fit together.

To most of the people in the province, that doesn’t really mean a lot. But for the people who live in unorganized—I don’t know what the actual term is; we call them unorganized townships.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: That is the term.

Mr. John Vanthof: That’s the term? That’s what they are in my neck of the woods, unorganized townships—which tend to become very organized at certain times.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: With certain issues.

Mr. John Vanthof: Perhaps this is one of those times that they need to become organized.

We need the time to actually be able to look at this bill in detail, and that’s one of the things that we haven’t been given. That’s why the Conservatives are ringing the bells. That’s why we are deferring our leads and doing everything we can to give us time to actually do our due diligence. Thank you, Speaker.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Seeing it is 10:15, I will recess the House until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I’m sure members would like to know that Louis Kan, somebody who worked with us for a long time, is here in the members’ gallery, visiting the proceedings and watching the goings-on of what happens in this Legislature, now that he’s gone.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Joining us in the building today will be Mary Ann Edwards, who is receiving the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship for her work as the head of the Rankin Cancer Run in St. Catharines, which has raised millions of dollars to combat cancer.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I’m pleased to rise to welcome Doug DeRabbie and Elissa Hanna from the Ontario Association of Optometrists. We thank them for coming to Queen’s Park today.

Hon. Jeff Leal: In the members’ east gallery today I’d like to recognize Keith Currie, who is the freshly minted president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. We welcome Keith here today.

Hon. Michael Chan: I would like to welcome to the Legislature today Jagdeep Singh, Swati Nanra, Amrik Singh, Arvinder Kaur and Jagroop Bhumber, all of whom are my constituents from my great riding of Markham–Unionville. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Mr. Randy Hillier: I would like to welcome and introduce to the House today a wonderful man: Louis Kan is here. He brings a wealth of experience about government and the public service here.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: It gives me great pleasure to introduce guests of page captain Reagan Smith: her mother, Tawnya Smith; her sister Payton Smith—a former page, I should say; and grandparents Carol and

Dennis Hubble. They're here in the members' gallery this morning. Welcome.

I also want to welcome Herb and Jill Koplowitz from the great riding of Northumberland–Quinte West. They are here to have lunch. Welcome.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I wish to welcome Mike and Mikayla Roy from Georgetown, who are visiting with us today. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I would like to introduce two guests from my riding today. Jackson Louws is serving as page captain today, so I would like to congratulate him.

I also would like to welcome a friend of mine, his father, Fred Louws, who is the principal at Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School. He is also here today with his son. Welcome.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I would like to welcome all of the city of Toronto to a new era in soccer primacy with the win of Toronto FC yesterday over Montreal Impact. Bring on the Seattle Sounders. That's coming next week.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm very proud and pleased to introduce two of my former elementary students who are all grown up and now in university. I would like to welcome Masawer and Mansoor Niazi, here today at Queen's Park for the very first time.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I would like to welcome in the members' east gallery today Brent Wootton, who is the associate vice-president business development, applied research, government and partner relations from Fleming College in Peterborough, Ontario.

Mr. Todd Smith: I know the member from Northumberland–Quinte West has introduced my relatives already, but Christmas wouldn't be the same if I didn't do it. My in-laws Dennis and Carol Hubble are with us today. My beautiful wife, Tawnya, is here, and some of the members of the Legislature might recognize Payton. She was a legislative page a few years ago. Today is Payton's 16th birthday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Leave it to fathers to embarrass their 16-year-old daughters.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: I'm delighted to welcome to the Legislature today, from Waterloo region, Sean Sullivan and his sons, Michael and Jack. There they are. Welcome.

Mr. Steve Clark: She's not here in the chamber, but I'd be remiss if I wasn't able to bring Hansard back to the riding. I want to wish my lovely wife, Deanna, a happy birthday.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Husbands getting brownie points all over the place.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I'm delighted to welcome a group from my great riding of Scarborough–Guildwood. We have West Hill Collegiate Institute here. There are 42 students and their teachers Erin and Andria. Please welcome them.

Mr. John Vanthof: On behalf of the NDP caucus, I'd also like to welcome Keith Currie from the OFA.

ORAL QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation. The government hired a company to build a bridge over the 401. One catch: The company had never built a bridge. The result: The company installed the bridge upside down, at a cost of millions of dollars for the government to fix shoddy work.

How did the Liberals react? They rewarded the company with another \$39 million in government projects.

I wouldn't be shocked if this is the norm for this government. How many other bridges have been built upside down? Mr. Speaker, it's ridiculous that I even have to ask that question, but yesterday's AG report is ridiculous in terms of what we're hearing that your government has done. It is completely unacceptable. How many other bridges, how many other projects like this have happened?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to begin, as I said yesterday, by thanking the Auditor General for her report and for the recommendations contained in her report.

The Leader of the Opposition is raising a project obviously managed and completed by Metrolinx. I would say here today in the House, as I said in the media studio yesterday, that over the last five years Metrolinx has completed 275 construction projects. The majority of those projects have been completed on time and on budget.

I do thank the auditor, again, for her recommendations. I know that Metrolinx will continue to work hard. A couple of things to keep in mind, Speaker: In March of this year, about eight months ago, I provided the chair of their board with a letter of direction. We've received the report back. We now have a tighter opportunity to provide oversight with the agency. The agency is also deploying a new vendor performance management system and—

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, since I can't get an answer on the upside-down bridge and the minister is trying to say that there is more oversight, let's read the headlines. The headline today: "Infrastructure Incompetence." I'll quote one description: "the most spectacular item in the report's cavalcade of nonsense, but not by all that much." That's because the Auditor General highlighted the ministry's sheer ineptitude and their incompetence when it comes to paving our highways.

Asphalt should be laid for 15 years, but in Ontario it cracks after one or two years. Not surprisingly, no one is held accountable. The minister says everything is fine, even after one section of the 403 cost \$12 million to prematurely repair.

Can the minister explain why the Liberals allow our highways to crack and crumble? Does it have anything to do with the \$100,000 in donations from these companies to the Ontario Liberal Party?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I want to reiterate that I thank the auditor for her recommendations, not just as it relates to Metrolinx, but as it relates to MTO and the management of our construction projects.

I think it's important to make sure that the accurate facts are on the record. Over the last seven years, which was the period of time during which the auditor was referencing some of MTO's construction contracts, what we've seen, using the same objective criteria from seven years ago versus today, is that provincial bridges and provincial roads are dramatically improved in terms of their quality. That's because our government has understood how critical it is to make sure that we are investing in transportation infrastructure in every corner of this province because of years of chronic underinvestment when that party was in power.

1040

We're going to keep working hard to make sure that we get it right.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, again to the minister: no answer on the upside-down bridge, no answer on the \$100,000 in donations. I know it's their talking point to say, "I thank the Auditor General." The Auditor General called your government incompetent and inept.

Let's speak very specifically. Again, on Highway 403: paved in 2006; redone in 2008; redone again in—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I did try to make an effort to allow you to kind of find your spot, and you're not finding it.

I am also going to remind members that, even during the heckling, I'm not impressed with hearing names other than the titles or their ridings. So you've decided on your own—by giving you the time to do so—that you're going to be somewhere I can't tolerate. I may have to move to warnings right away.

You can give me any kind of face you want, and if it continues, you'll be leaving.

Finish, please.

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, Highway 403: paved in 2006; again in 2008; again in 2011; and it will need to be paved again in the near future, at an added cost of millions of dollars to taxpayers. That doesn't include the \$686,000 bonus the company received for not doing the job properly. That's their style of government.

How many other companies did the minister reward with bonuses for not doing their job? Is that the order of the day in your ministry?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Speaker, I've got to say there have been a lot of allegations that have been tossed around in the Leader of the Opposition's questions this morning. I'm pretty sure those sleazy tactics worked for 10 years in Ottawa when he was a Harper crony, but they don't work here in the province of Ontario.

Speaker, let's remember something fundamental about that leader and that party. In my time here as an MPP, here is a short list of the projects that they voted against: GO regional express rail; LRTs in Toronto, Peel and Hamilton; BRTs in York region and Durham region; new streetcars in Toronto; Union Station revitalization; four-laning of Highway 69; the Morriston bypass—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Agriculture is not helping.

Wrap up, please.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Speaker, as I was saying, that leader and that party—the 410 widening; the 407 phase 1 and phase 2; 417 upgrades in Ottawa. That party's transportation policy announced killing the Eglinton subway and selling our 407.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Patrick Brown: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Premier. Since I can't get an answer on the upside-down bridge that the minister supported, I'm going to try something else.

First it was the Environmental Commissioner who raised concerns about cap-and-trade, then it was the Financial Accountability Officer who raised concerns, and now it's the Auditor General.

Yesterday, the auditor confirmed what we've been saying all along: Less than 20% of Ontario's emission reductions will actually occur here in Ontario. The Liberal scheme would barely make a dent in pollution in Ontario.

At the same time—this is unbelievable—we're going to send \$466 million to Quebec and California by 2020. All that money is going to leave Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, why do the Liberals want to subsidize companies and businesses in California?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Maybe the Leader of the Opposition should talk to his critic who's briefed up on this because, clearly, he has not been briefed up on this.

The cap-and-trade system and the 3.8—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe-Grey, come to order, please.

Finish, please.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The 3.8 megatonnes comes from the cap-and-trade system. An additional 9.8 megatonnes comes from the results of the action plan reviewed by economists. If you do the math, that's the vast majority of reductions being secured over the next five years. That was the work done by David Sawyer. The 3.8 is the groundwork before you calculate the action plan, Mr. Speaker.

But then he's the member who wants to put a \$157-a-tonne price on carbon.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the minister: Clearly, the minister has not read the AG's report, so let me share with you what the Auditor General said.

“Small reductions in emissions in Ontario ... come at significant cost to ... businesses and households.” The climate action plan “contains unrealistic or unsubstantiated assumptions.” Here’s another assessment by the AG: “Ontario’s cap does not actually control the amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted” in Ontario.

That’s a stinging indictment. The Liberal cap-and-trade scheme has fatal flaws this government is ignoring. And the worst part? With this new agreement with the USA and Canada, not a single one of the credits purchased from California will count towards our emission credits.

Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable. Why do the Liberals want to force Ontario businesses to subsidize businesses in California, in Beverly Hills on Rodeo Drive, and do nothing to fight pollution in Ontario?

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Beaches–East York is warned.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): And if you don’t get the idea, I’m in warnings.

Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I’ll try one more time. It’s not that hard.

Two numbers: 3.8 megatonnes achieved by the market. We understand that? That’s not me. That’s the—

Mr. Victor Fedeli: That’s the Auditor General.

Mr. John Yakubuski: It’s not cap-and-trade. It’s cap and charade.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Read the report.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned. The member from Nipissing is warned. Anyone else?

Carry on.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Speaker, 3.8 megatonnes achieved by the market mechanism: very clearly stated, David Sawyer’s, reviewed by everyone. All the nine large emitting industry associations chose cap-and-trade and support that; 9.8 megatonnes—the result of \$8 billion of reinvestment in Ontario’s industry achieves that. And this is the difference between our plans: Yours is revenue-neutral. You have no money to reinvest in St. Marys Cement or Nova Corp.

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

Mr. Patrick Brown: Again to the minister: I asked a simple question to the minister that he’s not answering. I asked, why is the minister setting up and committing Ontario to a plan that sends \$466 million to Quebec and California by 2020? The Auditor General has pointed out this will grow to over \$4 billion by 2030. The minister will become the best minister of economic development that California has ever seen.

This isn’t the opposition saying this. This is the Auditor General. This is the independent oversight saying that your plan is flawed. Hear me: This does not curb pollution in Ontario. This does not fight climate change in

Ontario. All it does is make businesses less competitive, and it doesn’t meet our emission targets.

Hearing what the Auditor General has said, will the minister do the right thing, take a pause and fix this? Because it’s clearly broken. Do the right thing for Ontario. It’s not too late.

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Mr. Speaker, since I can’t seem to get him to understand two simple numbers, let me try another approach.

Every year, \$42 billion in imported fossil fuels is purchased by Ontario’s families and businesses. The Environmental Commissioner says if we did not have cap-and-trade, those costs, just for the families alone, would go up \$300 million a year. We will be dramatically reducing that \$41 billion in annual expenditures, which is why all of the industry associations do that, because they are all fuel-switching to local, Ontario-generated clean energy, creating jobs in Ontario.

1050

I know the member doesn’t understand that, because I watched him for 10 years, as a member of Parliament, destroying every provincial initiative to reduce emissions.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My question is to the Acting Premier. On Tuesday, I met with Jean Bastien, mine manager, and a number of miners at Richmond Mines near Dubreuilville. These are hard-working women and men who have a love for what they do and a love for where they live.

The company is hoping to hire more employees, but the skyrocketing electricity costs are a big problem for them. They’re hampering the company’s efforts to expand and create more jobs. The sell-off of Hydro One is going to make things even worse, not better.

Will the Acting Premier do the right thing for jobs in the north and stop any further sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I appreciate the question. We all are concerned about ensuring that the people of Ontario, everywhere throughout Ontario, have good-paying, high-value jobs. Certainly, the mining sector is critical as one of the many sectors of Ontario’s diverse economy. That enables us, frankly, to weather economic storms, including when commodity prices hit the global markets. It happened in Ontario as well, but because of our diversified economy, we were able to balance out and continue to prosper and still exceed Canada, the G7 and the United States in the last quarter.

More importantly, the member makes the accusation that by broadening the ownership of Hydro One and somehow making it a much better-run company, to be more efficient and to ensure that we deliver better results

and reinvest them, to build more infrastructure, including, frankly, greater investments and stimulus in the mining sector—I just don't believe the premise of her question.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I also met with the mayor of White River as we visited the White River sawmill. Like all companies in the forestry industry, hydro is a huge part of their costs. Although they're trying to expand and breathe life into the economy in these northern towns, they're worried about their ability to do so because of the cost of their electricity bills, because those bills continue to soar.

We should be building on successes and supporting job creators, not stopping them.

Will the Acting Premier do the right thing for White River and for the White River mill and start getting hydro rates under control and stop the sell-off of Hydro One?

Hon. Charles Sousa: In order to make some of our industries more competitive in the marketplace, it's essential for us to provide some of those supports, and that's exactly what we are trying to do.

The reference to Hydro One, and the assumption, the presumption, that somehow making Hydro One a more effective company—which is one of 72 different distribution centres in the province of Ontario—would negatively impact an industry is not the case.

What is important, though, is the programs that we do have in place, working with NIERP and working with some of our northern programs to provide some of those supports to enable those companies to foster the return on their investment as we provide for more predictability on those rates. That's what's happening. We'll work with a number of sectors to do just that.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: It's not just businesses who rely on hydro that are worried. I also met with Sharon Hill, a retired nurse who is almost 80 years old. We sat at her kitchen table in the Soo. Her hydro bills have hit \$300 a month. She heats with baseboard electric heating. She's living on Old Age Security because she doesn't have a company pension. She doesn't know how she's going to be able to afford her hydro bills for the rest of the winter.

After a long, full life, people shouldn't have to worry about something as basic as being able to pay their hydro bills. Whether you're a miner, a sawmill operator, a young family or a senior like Sharon Hill, your biggest worry is your hydro bill.

Will this Acting Premier, will this Liberal government, do the right thing for Sharon and people like her, get their hydro bills under control and stop making it worse by selling off Hydro One?

Interjections.

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

Hon. Charles Sousa: We agree that families, especially those most vulnerable, need more support. It's

why we on this side of the House have been putting programs in place to foster and support that, and we've also done so with a number of industries in the north.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, when you consider a low-income family in the north or in rural Ontario, we've taken the following steps: We recently announced the 8% HST rebate. We've expanded the rural or remote rate protection program. That combines up to 20% improvement. We provided the Ontario energy support program for low-income families; that's \$600 a year in savings. We have the Northern Ontario Energy Credit, for \$224 in savings to provide for some more support for northern consumers. And, Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Energy and Property Tax Credit can save an additional \$1,000 a year.

I hope the member opposite, when she has the ongoing discussions with these families, provides them with the support and mechanisms that are available to them that we put forward to enable those families to have better support. We're doing our part. We know we need to do more.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Acting Premier. People want to believe in the future of Ontario, but yesterday's Auditor General's report shows that the government is making decisions that are not about people. Hospitals are overcrowded. People are waiting nearly 40 hours for acute care that they should be receiving in eight hours. They're waiting longer to see a family doctor, and the Auditor General said information about wait times for surgery is misleading.

How did the Liberal government get things so wrong, so messed up? How did things get so bad?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: As I said yesterday, I welcome the Auditor General's report and I accept her recommendations as they pertain to our health care system. I welcome her report each year, just like I did last year her two reports that referenced our home and community care program. They provided me with important guidance on how to move forward. I welcome her comments and recommendations with regard to how we can continue to improve our hospital operations so that they better serve our patients.

But it is important to acknowledge the progress that is being made. I'm happy to reference in the supplementary some of the third-party data that we have that was made available. Some of it, in fact, was referenced by the Auditor General, which shows the improvements that have been made over the past number of years for wait times in ERs, for hospitalization and for the outcomes that we're looking for.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, having a good future here in Ontario means having a good job to go to every day, but the Auditor General said that the government's job programs are a mess. Half of the people who enter an

apprenticeship aren't finishing, and the second-career and employment services programs are helping less than 40% of the people who are trying to build a better life with a better job.

This government is letting people down. The Auditor General's report is clear. They are letting people down on many, many fronts. When will this government start focusing on people who are trying to get a better job?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm going to continue to talk about the progress that we've made in our emergency rooms. For example, we had a report that just came out in the last number of weeks from HQO, Health Quality Ontario, which shows that despite an aging population, despite an increasing population and seeing more individuals in our ERs, we've seen significant improvements in the shortening of the wait times in our ERs right across this province. The Auditor General referenced yesterday that nine out of 10 Ontarians are seen and discharged from emergency in the province within the provincial targeted time. That was validated by the work that HQO did earlier, as well.

On other aspects of short times: Just in the past year—and this is information that was just made available by the Fraser Institute, so perhaps it wasn't referenced in the AG's report—wait times for general surgery have gone down by 13%. For elective cardiovascular surgery, wait times have gone down by 36% just in the last year.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: While people are finding it harder to get a job and waiting longer for the health care they need, the Auditor General said that in the meantime, the government is spending more on misleading partisan advertising. The Liberal government needs to explain to the people of this province why people who need health care and people who are looking for work are at the bottom of the pile, at the bottom of the list for attention from their government. If the Liberal re-election campaign needs another \$20 million for partisan advertising, they seem to be able to find the money in the public purse.

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Can the Acting Premier explain to a person who has spent hours in an emergency ward waiting for a bed or who's trying really, really hard to find a new job why the government is more interested in their own re-election campaign than in helping those folks get what they need from their government?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I take the analysis of the Auditor General very, very seriously. I take her recommendations very, very seriously. There's no question that there is much, much more work to be done within our health care sector right across the board, including in our hospitals.

But it is important to acknowledge, when we've invested upwards of \$1 billion specifically to reduce wait times in our health care system over the past, roughly, one decade, that we have made significant progress. The Fraser Institute describes us as being the best or among the best in terms of shortest wait times for selected surgical procedures. The Wait Time Alliance has given

us straight As, as well, on their report card, in terms of having the lowest or near the lowest wait times in all of Canada. We have the shortest wait times in the whole country in that important period from seeing your family doctor or nurse practitioner to getting to see the specialist. We have the shortest wait times in the whole country, Mr. Speaker. We have the shortest wait times in the whole country for CT scans, MRIs and ultrasounds.

There is more work to be done—there's no question—but we have made significant progress.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Victor Fedeli: My question is for the Deputy Premier. Rather than address their own incompetence, the Liberal government continues to attack the credibility of our independent experts. The Auditor General says their numbers can't be trusted; the Deputy Premier says, "We take issue with the auditor's accounting practices." The Auditor General questions why millions in bonuses were awarded to underperforming contractors; the Minister of Transportation doesn't think her perspective is "representative of what reality is."

Well, the minister needs a reality check. The people of Ontario trust our independent, non-partisan auditor, not a Liberal government that is mired in waste, mismanagement and scandal.

Will the government stop attacking the credibility of our Auditor General and look into their own incompetence?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: To the President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I thank the Auditor General for her report, and obviously we do need to work with the Auditor General and continue to work with her on our public accounts.

But I think it's important to remind the member opposite that the Auditor General actually agreed with our analysis of our public accounts for the year just past. In fact, we used the numbers that the Auditor General prescribed to us. There is no disagreement over the numbers, and the auditor agreed with the accounting that we used in the public accounts in the past year. So to suggest that somehow we're undermining her work is just simply not true. We used her numbers.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Back to the Deputy Premier: The Auditor General and the Financial Accountability Officer have revealed that the government has subjected Ontario taxpayers to record tax increases, endless cuts to front-line services and years of waste, mismanagement and scandals.

Yet the Auditor General says the government somehow managed to spend \$50 million on shameless, self-promoting advertisements, advertisements the auditor called "misleading." While this government continues to make—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You cannot say indirectly what you cannot say directly. You will withdraw.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carry on.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Speaker. I'm quoting from the Auditor General here—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please be seated.

The member from Leeds–Grenville is close to a warning. I do not want that challenge of the Chair.

Carry on.

Mr. Victor Fedeli: While this government continues to make life unaffordable for Ontario families, they're advertising on the taxpayers' dime.

Will the government end their tax increases, cuts to front-line services and end their shameless self-promotion?

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would like to remind the member opposite that Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada and one of the few in the world that in fact has a government advertising—we have banned partisan public government advertising. We're the people who did that, and you are the people who voted against that.

Let's just look at your record. Between 1995 and 2002, the Conservative government of Mike Harris spent over \$400 million on government advertising. That's what you spent. I know you remember the days, Speaker, with those horrible, horrible ads—

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

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

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

New question?

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Acting Premier. The government is spending even more money on partisan government ads. The Auditor General calls these ads misleading and points out that these advertisements are—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I'm trying to explain that you cannot say indirectly what you cannot say directly. Even quoting somebody else using that language is not acceptable in this House. The member will withdraw.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Carry on.

Ms. Catherine Fife: These advertisements are "spending tax dollars to reinforce the partisan messaging of the Ontario Liberal Party.

Can the Acting Premier explain why she thinks government ads should be presenting their own messages, whose only purpose is to help the Liberal Party?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I would like to remind the member opposite that our legislation, which is the strictest in Canada by far, actually bans partisan government advertising. It provides a clear definition of partisan advertising: You cannot use the name of any member of this House, government or opposition. You cannot criticize or support any member of this House. You cannot use any partisan logo—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): A subtle reminder: We are in warnings and I will continue to use them. What comes after warnings is naming.

Finish, please.

Hon. Liz Sandals: We have a very strict advertising regime, but what we do do is share information with the public. We have shared information with the public about vaccinations—

Mr. Paul Miller: What colour is the advertisement? Red.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek is warned.

Finish, please.

Mr. Paul Miller: It's the first time I did anything.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Inches away from being named.

Finish, please.

Hon. Liz Sandals: We've shared information about changes in the rules for child care and to help educate parents on how to distinguish between what's licensed child care and what's not licensed child care, and how you respond if you think there's a problem in child care. Those are all things that we have spent money on—

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Everyone in this House knows that that government watered down the advertising rules in this province, and the auditor knows it as well. She has called you out for it and everybody knows about it.

The practice of using government-funded ads to bankroll the Liberal Party's re-election adds insult to injury for the people of Ontario. Parents sitting in hospital rooms with sick kids have to watch commercials claiming that this government has reduced emergency room wait times. Meanwhile, in Kitchener–Waterloo, our local hospital is fundraising for emergency room residents to address the wait times.

Instead of looking out for Ontarians who are waiting for health care, this Premier has been solely focused on getting herself re-elected and using government money to hold onto power.

Will the Liberal Party pay back the money they spent on partisan advertising in this province?

Interjections.

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

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President?

Hon. Liz Sandals: You know, it's really interesting: I understand that the member opposite wasn't actually a

member of this Legislature when we brought in the original government advertising bill in 2004, the one that she claims her party is so strongly supportive of. But in fact, if you go back and check the voting record—

Mr. Steve Clark: Only to benefit yourselves.

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

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You're close. President.

Hon. Liz Sandals: If you go back and check the voting record in 2004, the NDP voted against the legislation that they say they want to defend. And one of the members of the NDP caucus at the time is the current leader of the third party.

Now, the member who's asking the question may not remember that. We remember it, and the public record of Ontario remembers that the NDP voted against the legislation they are defending.

PARENTAL RIGHTS

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Attorney General. This Tuesday, family members of the LGBTQ2+ community across this province were inspired and moved by the historic passing of the All Families Are Equal Act. I understand that before the passing of this bill, many families who used assisted reproduction faced unnecessary barriers. LGBTQ2+ parents were forced to spend time and money to be legally recognized as their children's parents. I have heard that this experience can be painful and humiliating for families. That's not fair and it's not right.

The Attorney General would most likely agree that having a child should be a wonderful time, not a time filled with uncertainty and anxiety. Can the Attorney General please tell this House how the All Families Are Equal Act will help families across this province?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I want to thank the member from Northumberland–Quinte West for asking this very important question.

Speaker, people in Ontario value diversity and equality. All parents and their kids need to be treated equally under the law, and I'm pleased that the All Families Are Equal Act has passed in this Legislature.

This bill updates our laws so that all kids are treated equally by recognizing the legal status of their parents, no matter if their parents are LGBTQ2+ or straight, and no matter if they were conceived with or without the help of assistance. This legislation will update Ontario's parentage laws to make the law as inclusive as possible. It is really that simple.

We're doing this because parents should not have to go to court to be recognized as their child's mother or father. And, Speaker, let's make this absolutely clear: We are not removing mother and father with this legislation. We are broadening this legislation to ensure equality for all families in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Speaker, I'd like to thank the Attorney General for his response. I'm pleased to hear that our government is committed to ensuring that all children are treated equally by recognizing the legal status of their parents, no matter if their parents are LGBTQ2+ or straight.

Many in this House will recall that the law governing the legal status of a child's parents at birth has not been substantially changed in nearly 40 years. A lot has changed since then. In the year 2016, there is no one way to start and raise a family. Family structures, just like this great province that we call home, are more diverse than they were so many years ago. This bill represents a historic moment in our province.

Can the Attorney General tell us more about the families and communities that helped to shape this important legislation?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: The member is right: This is a very historic moment for our province. This Legislative Assembly stood on the side of equality by voting for this bill and showing their support for the LGBTQ2+ community and the values and diversity that are so important to Ontario.

Speaker, this issue was raised by families who are raising their children with love and respect and dignity—something that we all wish for and hope for in our families across the province. I personally, found it very disappointing that some members of this House thought and called our legislation “horrible” legislation when the legislation is all about making sure that kids have certainty as to who their parents are. It's all about ensuring that there's equality for all parents regardless of who they are. That's what this legislation does: makes sure that our children are loved all the time.

I'm glad that members of this House voted in support of this historic legislation.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

The PC caucus has consistently raised examples in this Legislature of how the Liberal government's rationing of health care dollars is negatively affecting patients. The Auditor General's report yesterday confirmed that wait times for surgeries have increased and the health of those waiting for life-saving treatment has been jeopardized.

Due to chronic underfunding, elective and emergency surgeries must compete for OR time. Some 25% of patients with critical or life-threatening conditions must wait double the expected time for surgery. Only 33% of neurosurgeries were completed within the ministry's target times.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister admit his government's policies are failing Ontarians and explain to them why they should trust this government's plan?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: As I mentioned earlier, I appreciate the analysis and the narrative provided by the Auditor General, and her very sound recommendations as they

pertain to all elements of our health care system, including hospitalization.

There is work to be done, and that is part of the reason why we're investing a quarter of a billion new dollars this year in home and community care: so we can pull out some of those patients who are occupying beds in hospitals, who don't need to be there, so that those wait times will be reduced even further. That's why we announced nearly half a billion dollars this year—specifically for hospital operations this fiscal year—to allow us to address some of those capacity and wait-time issues, including for certain important surgical operations like hip and knee in the South West LHIN and in London, for example.

But we are making significant progress. By any objective measure, we have solid evidence that the investments that we've made in our hospitals have borne fruit.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: The Auditor General's evidence is showing this government is failing Ontarians. But it's not just the surgeries whose wait times are out of control. The Auditor General notes that the government is also failing Ontarians on accessing hospital beds when they need to be admitted. Patients must wait in the emergency room for more than 37 hours to get a bed, often in the hallways or other unsafe areas.

Nine years of chronic underfunding and four years of frozen hospital budgets are hurting patients. The rationing of health care has patients waiting hours for life-saving surgeries. Operating rooms are going unused, and patients are stuck in hospital beds when they should be elsewhere. Ontarians deserve better from their government than having to wait for basic care.

Ontarians and the PC caucus have had enough of this government's excuses, waste and mismanagement of our health care system.

When will the minister acknowledge his failings and end the rationing of health care?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I can't even begin to imagine what it would be like if they had succeeded with their campaign pledge to cut 100,000 jobs in education and health care.

Speaking of wait times in Ontario, I know that the member from Kitchener–Conestoga asked yesterday about the emergency department at Grand River Hospital. He was concerned about wait times in the ER, and I'm happy to update him. In fact, the Waterloo Wellington LHIN is number one in all of Ontario, but the specific hospital—Grand River—has the shortest wait times for high-acuity patients in their ER of anywhere in Ontario. In fact, they're beating the provincial average by more than three hours for complex patients, but they're also beating targets for minor uncomplicated needs. The Waterloo Wellington LHIN is number one in the entire province, has the best results ever recorded in Ontario history for—

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

Interjection.

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

The Minister of Agriculture, Rural Affairs and Food is warned.

New question.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour la première ministre par intérim.

The Auditor General has confirmed what Ontarians already know: Under this Premier, it is getting harder to access the health care that our families need. After years of cuts and layoffs in our hospitals, people are waiting up to 37 hours in the emergency room. After years of bed closures, the auditor saw people on stretchers in hallways because our hospitals are dangerously overcrowded. After years of budget cuts to our hospitals, the auditor found long wait times for surgeries that are putting people's lives at risk.

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How can this Liberal government keep failing the patients of Ontario by forcing people to wait longer and longer for the care that they need now?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: That's why I remain so troubled by the fact that that party, the third party, didn't support our budget that had \$345 million of new investments in our hospitals in operating costs to help them deal with capacity issues.

But the member needs to at least acknowledge that we have third-party experts, third-party entities, that tell us that nine out of 10 individuals who go to our emergency departments are discharged from those emergency departments within the provincial targets, within the national targets. That was validated in her report yesterday by the Auditor General.

In fact, despite increasing population, despite increased volumes seen in our emergency departments, we've seen, just in the last five or six years, significant progress in further reducing that. That figure is for both low acuity and high acuity: Nine out of 10 patients are seen within the provincial targeted time.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: The auditor's report is really an indictment of this Premier's record on health care. The Liberal government closed mental health beds, leaving people in distress, waiting without help for months on end.

The Liberal government has squeezed hospital budgets to the point that the auditor says 60% of hospitals are deferring surgery to balance their budgets.

While the Liberal government claims to publish wait times for surgery, the Auditor General found that the real wait times are months longer than what the government claims. She says that the information is misleading for patients.

Why is this Liberal government—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. I don't have to explain myself again. You will withdraw.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I withdraw.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Why is this Liberal government cutting health care, closing hospital beds and publishing wait times that are not accurate?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, I know that their minister of cuts that they were proposing was going to shave \$600 million out of the health care and education budgets. When they were in power, they closed 24% of the acute hospital beds in this province. When they were in power, they closed 13% of our mental health beds in the entire province.

When we look at third-party, independent analysis of our wait times, we have the shortest wait times from GP to specialist in the entire country. We have the second-shortest wait times from specialist to treatment, including surgical procedures, 20% shorter than the national average.

We have the shortest wait times for CT scans, MRIs and ultrasounds. Just in the last year, our wait time for elective cardiovascular surgery has gone down by 36%, and the wait times for medical oncology are down by 39%.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Ms. Daiene Vernile: My question is for the President of the Treasury Board. In 2013, our Premier set out a bold vision to be the most open government in this country. To that end, Ontario has released over 550 data sets and created an inventory of almost 1,300 actively maintained data sets, and those numbers do continue to grow. We've posted the mandate letters for each minister online, and we passed the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act.

As a result of this important work, Ontario was selected as one of 15 subnational governments to join the Open Government Partnership.

But we know that transparency means more than just posting information. It means giving the public opportunities to weigh in on government decision-making. Speaker, could the minister please tell us how her Treasury Board is engaging with Ontarians?

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you to the member from Kitchener Centre for this question. Welcome to her constituents.

Our government has been actively engaging Ontarians in an effort to create better policy, deliver better services and improve outcomes. Last year we posted our Open Data Directive as a Google doc and allowed the public to directly edit and comment on the directive.

We've opened up our procurement directive for consultations, to find out how we can make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses to do business with the government.

Most recently, our government announced that we will spend up to \$3 million in the 2017 budget to bring to life

ideas suggested and voted on by Ontarians, an initiative of the Minister of Finance. Through open government, we're making the policy creation process more accessible to Ontarians and are engaging society to help us co-create solutions.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Daiene Vernile: It's very encouraging to see that the President of the Treasury Board has been reaching out to Ontarians and is helping them to engage with Queen's Park through this kind of policy. Each week, one of the ways that I share information with my constituents in Kitchener Centre is by recording a one-minute video blog of the goings-on at the Legislature. This past week, I encouraged my constituents to get involved and submit ideas for the 2017 budget.

Building pathways for Ontarians to engage is half the challenge, but as elected representatives, we also need to play a role in informing our constituents of how they can make a difference. Now that we've taken stock of what Ontario is currently doing, could the minister please tell us what's next for open government and how the Treasury Board plans to continue engaging with Ontarians?

Hon. Liz Sandals: As the member previously mentioned, Ontario was selected as one of 15 sub-national governments to join the Open Government Partnership, the only sub-national jurisdiction invited in Canada and one of three in North America. As part of the Open Government Partnership, Ontario has been co-developing initiatives to further enhance transparency with Ontarians. We asked Ontarians to submit their ideas online, then we asked them to vote on the ideas that had been submitted. Then we sent the top 15 ideas to public workshop sessions in Toronto, Ottawa and, to make sure we count everybody, online, in an effort to publicly refine and discuss these ideas.

Next week I will be announcing new co-created commitments to further accountability at the Open Government Partnership Global Summit.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question is to the Minister for Children and Youth Services. In yesterday's Auditor General's annual report, she highlighted many concerns about the minister's lack of oversight of mental health services for children and youth.

One of the concerns raised by the Auditor General is that after audits in 2003 and 2008, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services has yet to make changes to ensure that agencies deliver mental health services to children and youth appropriately, cost-effectively and on a timely basis. After 13 years, will the minister finally act on the recommendations made in 2003, 2008 and this year's annual report?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank the member for the question. We know that the majority of mental health and addiction issues here in the province of Ontario begin at childhood or adolescence. That's why it's so important to make sure that children and youth

have timely access to supports when they need it the most.

I'd like to thank the Auditor General for her report and efforts in developing some advice toward government. Her advice is insightful and will ensure that we continue to prioritize the challenging needs of children, youth and families here in the province of Ontario.

We know that when it comes to mental health, it's something that's always changing. The pressures in the systems constantly change, but we've taken the Auditor General's advice and we're moving ahead to implement a new funding model for children and youth mental health services. We're going to enhance oversights to hold service providers more accountable, and expand our use of data to access agency performance and improve quality.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: After 13 years and three reports, the Auditor General found that the minister is still not monitoring the delivery of services to ensure that children are receiving adequate treatment. It's no wonder there has been a 50% increase in hospitalizations of children and youth suffering with mental health illnesses.

The minister's lack of action on mental health has reached a crisis. These children have nowhere to turn. They need help, and they need it now. Use the 26 recommendations from the all-party Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions. Use the 11 recommendations in the Auditor General's report. After 13 years, when will the minister act?

Hon. Michael Coteau: Again, I want to thank the member for the question. In 13 years, there's a lot that's changed in mental health. If we look at the province of Ontario 20 to 30 years ago and today, we know that the stigma around mental health is drastically changed. People are talking about this issue more. We know, 13 years ago and today, that even the pressures in the system have changed.

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We've invested \$100 million into new funding over the last five years, and we're seeing a huge difference.

Community-based children and youth mental health agencies serve more than 100,000 young people annually. More than 4,000 indigenous children and youth access culturally appropriate services in their communities and more than 3,200 specialized consultations for children and youth in remote and rural areas through the Tele-Mental Health Service.

Again, things are changing in mental health, and we're leading that change.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Acting Premier. According to the Auditor General's report released yesterday, only 47% of people who began an apprenticeship program in Ontario actually finished it. The number of apprentices at risk of non-completion increased after the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development implemented a monitoring strategy to overcome this very problem.

There is a shortage of skilled tradespeople in Ontario. We need young people wishing to start a career in the trades to be successful, so that they can stay here and build a future here in Ontario.

When will the Liberal government stop setting up these young people for failure?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, I welcome the question. I thank the Auditor General for her remarks.

I can tell you, we are not setting anyone up for failure. In fact, choosing an apprenticeship is a very smart choice. We encourage more young people to think about apprenticeships when they're considering what to do after high school.

What I can tell you, Speaker, is that prior to 2014, we were very focused on enrolling more people into apprenticeships. We were successful in doing that, but what we have to do now is focus on the completion rate. We are moving forward with a modernization of the apprenticeship system, where we need to better support students to finish. We need to support employers in a way that supports the completion of those apprenticeships.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Aspiring apprentices were not the only ones left behind by the poor performance of the government's employment and training services. Only 14% of Ontarians participating in the province's Employment Service program found full-time employment in their field of study upon completing the program. The government spent \$1.3 billion this year alone on employment and training strategies, with very little to show for it.

How are the good people of Ontario who rely on these services supposed to get ahead? When will the government stop making things worse for Ontarians and invest properly in the services that they need to build a prosperous future here in Ontario?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I find it astounding that the member opposite calls training programs a waste of money. These are really important programs.

Do we need to do a better job measuring the impact? Absolutely, yes, we do, and that's why Treasury Board now actually has a centre for evidence-based decision-making, because we need to do a lot better job, not just in this sector but across government, in actually defining the outcomes we're working to achieve, identifying those programs that are successful, and investing more where we're getting the outcomes that we wanted and less where we're not getting the outcomes. We need to bring that kind of rigour to all of our programs, including those in employment supports.

But I'm very confident that the organizations we have delivering these services in our communities are really committing to doing what's best for young people, or older people, who are getting employment support.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Speaker, the opposition often accuses our government of not paying enough attention to rural communities, and has made claims in the past that we are mismanaging our forestry industry. All too often, we hear accusations from across the floor that we are making lives harder for the people in Ontario. Speaker, surely they are mistaken.

I know that our government has been investing in infrastructure, such as roads and hospitals, in all communities, including rural communities. But the human infrastructure is also important. I know that your staff in MNRF act as tireless advocates for our land and resources all across this province.

Can the minister tell us what our government is doing to make sure that the everyday life of the people in rural communities working in Ontario's forestry sector is in fact easier?

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: I'd like to thank the hard-working member from Barrie for her question. Making sure that we're making life better for people living in rural and northern communities is a major priority for our government. Our government understands how important a strong forest product sector is to Ontario's economy and the key role that it plays in over 260 communities across Ontario.

I encourage Ontarians to look for the leaf on Ontario Wood products and cut your own tree when shopping this holiday season. It's why we've created the Forestry Growth Fund, which will provide up to \$10 million annually for forest operations in our province.

Earlier this week, we were pleased to announce that we're investing over \$4 million into a sawmill in Eganville, which has consequently created and maintained over 100 jobs in the forestry sector, improving their everyday lives in the riding of Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

I encourage everybody to get out on December 6—

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

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for her answer. I'm very pleased to hear that we are creating new jobs in both rural communities and the forest industry.

My father, Jim Torpey, worked in forestry with the then Ministry of Natural Resources for over 40 years. I am proud of the contribution he made and that your ministry continues to make to Ontario.

It's comforting to know that our government is taking steps to ensure that the everyday lives of people in rural communities are better thanks to actions taken by this government, something of which I know the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke would be proud. I'm also proud of the steps that our government is taking to ensure the forest industry in Ontario is sustainable.

Speaker, could the minister please go into more detail about the forestry industry and why it is so important to Ontario?

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: I'd like to thank the member from Barrie for her supplementary question. I'm pleased to report that the forestry industry in Ontario

generates \$11 billion of economic activity and provides well-paying jobs for over 170,000 people in over 260 communities in Ontario. After announcements like the one in the Eganville sawmill, we're ensuring these numbers continue to grow, something we're very happy and proud of on this side of the House.

Our exports of forest products have increased each year since 2012, with a total value of our wood products exports topping \$6 billion in 2015. Last year alone, our manufactured forest product sales increased by over \$1 billion over the year before. I'm pleased to see these numbers and know that every day we're putting more Ontario wood to work. Ontario's forest sector will continue to grow, thanks to the work our government is doing.

Tomorrow, in Cambridge, the Minister of Agriculture and I are cutting—

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

New question.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Yesterday the Auditor General confirmed what we have known all along: The Liberals have no real plan to protect our environment.

The auditor revealed that this government's own analysis of their so-called action plan only forecasts a third of the pollution reductions they're promising. Instead, this government will be sending \$2.2 billion to Quebec and California, and guess where the emissions will be reduced? Unfortunately, it won't be Ontario. The emissions will be reduced in California and Quebec, yet this government still plans to take \$8 billion from people and businesses in Ontario. It's unacceptable.

Speaker, it is time for this government to be honest. Would the minister finally admit that their cap-and-trade is not about the environment, but instead a clever way to get into Ontarians' pockets?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not enamoured whatsoever with those kinds of heckles, and it's going to stop.

Minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: First, I do want to thank the Auditor General. She made 15 recommendations on cap-and-trade. I think we've now implemented the majority of them, and the balance of them will be implemented in the next year. She has been very constructive and helpful.

On the numbers, I want to be very clear. The action plan and the work of David Sawyer, an economist, and experts—not my work—shows 9.8 megatonnes of reductions as a result of the expenditure of \$8 billion. You may notice that all of the large emitting industries, from refining and chemistry to cement and the auto sector, supported cap-and-trade and are working on designing it. We have great confidence in the businesses of Ontario to meet those targets, and that \$8 billion will be

going back into the lives and pockets of Ontarians. When you buy an electric car you get \$14,000 off—

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

ROGER PARENT

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe–Grey on a point of order.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I believe you'll find we have unanimous consent to observe a moment of silence in recognition of Roger Parent. Mr. Parent was a Saskatchewan MLA who tragically lost his battle with cancer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Simcoe–Grey is seeking unanimous consent for a moment of silence. Do we agree? Agreed.

I would ask all members to please rise in a moment of silence in respect for Monsieur Parent.

The House observed a moment's silence.

DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING ONTARIO UP FOR EVERYONE ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2016

LOI DE 2016 VISANT À FAVORISER L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO POUR TOUS (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

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

Bill 70, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 70, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

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

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On November 22, 2016, Ms. McGarry moved second reading of Bill 70, An Act to implement budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor
Anderson, Granville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Baker, Yvan	Fraser, John	Moridi, Reza
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Colle, Mike	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Vernile, Daiene
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Wong, Soo
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Matthews, Deborah	Zimmer, David
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Natyshak, Taras
Arnott, Ted	Hardeman, Ernie	Nicholls, Rick
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Michael	Oosterhoff, Sam
Barrett, Toby	Hatfield, Percy	Sattler, Peggy
Bisson, Gilles	Hillier, Randy	Scott, Laurie
Brown, Patrick	Horwath, Andrea	Singh, Jagmeet
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Clark, Steve	MacLeod, Lisa	Tabuns, Peter
Coe, Lorne	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
DiNovo, Cheri	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
Fedeli, Victor	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Fife, Catherine	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Norm	Yakabuski, John
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul	Yurek, Jeff
Gélinas, France	Munro, Julia	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 49; the nays are 44.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 30, 2016, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

ELECTION FINANCES STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2016

LOI DE 2016 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE FINANCEMENT ÉLECTORAL

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

Bill 2, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to election matters / Projet de loi 2, Loi visant à modifier diverses lois en ce qui a trait à des questions concernant les élections.

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

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On November 30, 2016, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of Bill 2, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to election matters.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Norm
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Arnott, Ted	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Munro, Julia
Baker, Yvan	Hardeman, Ernie	Murray, Glen R.
Ballard, Chris	Harris, Michael	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Barrett, Toby	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hillier, Randy	Natyshak, Taras
Bisson, Gilles	Hoggarth, Ann	Nicholls, Rick
Bradley, James J.	Horwath, Andrea	Oosterhoff, Sam
Brown, Patrick	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadri, Shafiq

Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Jones, Sylvia	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Coe, Lorne	Lalonde, Marie-France	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Smith, Todd
Crack, Grant	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Del Duca, Steven	Mangat, Amrit	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Martins, Cristina	Vanhof, John
Dhillon, Vic	Martow, Gila	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Walker, Bill
DiNovo, Cheri	Mauro, Bill	Wilson, Jim
Dong, Han	McDonnell, Jim	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	McGarry, Kathryn	Yakabuski, John
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Eleanor	Yurek, Jeff
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McNaughton, Monte	Zimmer, David

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 93; the nays are 0.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

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

The House recessed from 1154 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure today to rise and introduce a few people in the assembly.

First, I'd like to introduce a delegation up from Algonquin College in Nepean. It's wonderful to see my friend Jean-Guy Fréchette here, as well as Egor, who is the president of the student alliance there. I want to welcome you both here today as we celebrate Bill Davis's legacy and support Mr. Dhillon's motion. Thanks for coming.

I also wanted to recognize a young man who used to work in my office. He's from Nepean, and his name is Jordan Milks. He's here today with a number of people from CIJA.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I would like to rise and welcome Fred Gibbons, who is here from Northern College. The advances that we have done at Northern College over the years under your leadership have been absolutely amazing—I just want to say that publicly—as well as the support that we got from the federal and provincial governments.

Jim Madder is also here sitting next to him.

We'd like to welcome both to Queen's Park.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: It's an honour to introduce some college presidents this afternoon who are here for the Colleges Week motion that I'll be presenting a little bit later on: Mr. Fred Gibbons from Northern College; Don Lovisa from Durham College; Ron McKerlie from Mohawk College; Chris Whitaker from Humber College; Jim Madder from Confederation College; Linda Franklin,

CEO of Colleges Ontario; and, finally, Jennifer Horwath, who is the president of the College Student Alliance. Thank you for all the hard work you do with respect to each of your colleges. Thank you for being here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Welcome.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Today I'm very pleased to welcome many people here—I'm going to read their names off as quickly as possible—from many Jewish youth organizations, as well as the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs: Ben Buckler; Riley Noik; Aedan O'Connor; Jesse Shkedy; Adam Sniderman; Ilan Orzy; Doreen Benou; Laila Persaud; Rachelle Belne; Stacey Starkman; Dr. Stephen Greenberg; Gaelyn Sale-Mussai; Jody Klapman, who is my friend and next-door neighbour—welcome, Jody. It's your first time here, I believe.

There's James Pasternak, a city councillor in Toronto; Ariella Siboney; Reba Silver; Isaac Bushewsky; Christina Mitas; Danielle Ravuna; Willem Hart; Zina Rakhamilova; Harold Brief; Ron Csillag; Jonathan Halevi, who is a well-known writer for a newspaper; Stan Fedun; Dani Peters; Gershon Hurwen; Joel Reitman; Shir Barzilay; Berl Nadler.

I'm going to stop there, and I'm going to invite all of you to come back another time so that I can read more names into the record.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I never thought I'd witness a filibuster in introductions.

Member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. On behalf of the member from Oshawa, I'd like to welcome Don Lovisa, the president of Durham College. As you know, he's joining us for the debate on Colleges Week this afternoon.

Hon. Reza Moridi: I just want to echo the welcome extended to our college presidents, as well as Linda Franklin, president of Colleges Ontario—and also students from Colleges Ontario: Cira Brijne, as well as Egor Evseev, president of Algonquin College's student association in Ottawa—and my former colleague Jean-Guy Fréchette from Algonquin College, attending the House today.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's my pleasure today to recognize Mr. James Houston from Sarnia–Lambton, who is receiving the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship from Lieutenant Governor Elizabeth Dowdeswell later today.

Mr. Shafiq Qadri: It's my privilege and honour to welcome a gentleman who is objectively the best president of the best college in Ontario: Dr. Chris Whitaker from the great riding of Etobicoke North, representing Humber College, accompanied by the irreplaceable Jane Holmes.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We're getting brownie points all over the place around here.

Member from Huron–Bruce?

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to welcome Mike and Mikayla to the members' gallery, on the west side. Mikayla's grandparents are from Teeswater, Ontario: Joyce and Lorne Millen.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I just wanted to also acknowledge my friend Anne Sado from George Brown College.

And I want to thank Linda Franklin and the team as they lead the transformation of our economy. This sector is leading on cap-and-trade and climate change. No sector of the public service is leading more on retrofitting buildings and cutting emissions than our college sector. They are truly awesome.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I'm delighted to introduce a teacher from Beaches–East York here, Rachel Hoday, who's here with Presteign Heights Public School and a number of parents. Welcome to Queen's Park. It's lovely to have you here.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? Further introductions? If you haven't been introduced, welcome. We're glad you're here.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CHRISTMAS TREE DAY

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'm pleased to rise today to remind members of the House and all Ontarians that this Saturday marks Ontario's second annual Christmas Tree Day. This day is meant to bring awareness to the tremendous benefit the Christmas tree industry has on our province, not only to agriculture, but it also benefits the environment, tourism, employment and the economy.

Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario have a new slogan this year. It reads, "We are tree farmers, and we take carbon out of the air." It speaks to the organization's mandate to bring awareness to the benefit of buying a real Christmas tree.

Let me briefly touch upon some of those benefits. Christmas trees are a renewable agricultural crop. For every tree cut down, 10 more are planted to ensure sustainability. Tree farms counteract the human use of fossil fuels and remove 13 tonnes of airborne pollutants per acre per year. Trees provide a protective haven for a variety of bird and mammal species. The edge effect created by a row of Christmas trees next to a woodlot or an open field is known to increase wildlife diversity. Real Christmas trees are completely biodegradable and return their stored nutrients to the soil from which they came.

Buying a Christmas tree is an easy way to help the environment and our economy.

On behalf of Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario, I encourage all Ontarians to buy a real tree this holiday season and help support an important industry in Ontario.

Finally, I would like to thank Fred Somerville and Shirley Brennan from Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario for their hard work and advocacy within the industry and toward the establishment of Christmas Tree Day.

WINDSOR RESIDENCE FOR YOUNG MEN

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I want to tell you about the Windsor Residence for Young Men. A friend of mine,

Greg Goulin, saw the need for such a facility 16 years ago. Although our area has several places to house homeless young women, it was taken for granted that homeless teenage boys or young men could look after themselves.

Windsor was the only major city in Canada where there was not a place to get homeless male youth off the streets. It took 12 years to get it open, but they have had tremendous success over the past four years. The Windsor Residence for Young Men helps clients find pride in themselves. They've had a 66% success rate and have helped hundreds of young people get their lives back on track. Some have been reunited with their families, some have found employment, and many of them are doing well in school again.

They rely on donations, which is why they're struggling to pay their hydro bills. Hydro costs used to be \$300, sometimes \$400; now they're \$600, sometimes \$800. Charities such as the Windsor Residence for Young Men should be using their money to keep young men off the streets. Instead, they're paying profits to the private investors who own more and more shares of Hydro One.

This government should be providing hydro rate relief to charities that provide services to low-income and vulnerable people instead of selling off Hydro One.

The Windsor Residence for Young Men doesn't support homelessness. They want to end it.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Arthur Potts: Today I want to talk a little bit about what an incredible week this has been for me. It reminds me of how lucky all of us are to represent our constituencies in the House, and the things we get to do to help regular people in Ontario.

This week, on Tuesday, the committee on regulations and private bills met to discuss my Bill 47, the protecting loyalty reward points bill. I want to take this moment to thank the Premier for her leadership, and the minister and all members of this House, the House leaders particularly, for agreeing to fast-track this bill through committee to third reading, which will happen next Monday.

1310

This is an important bill, I believe, for consumers in Ontario. At the committee, we heard from stakeholders. We heard from individuals like Michael Judd, who represents the consumer experience for so many people who have tried to get onto websites, tried to get hold of Air Miles, in this case, in order to find out how many points of theirs were going to expire. They were concerned. They were angry about it. In the course of conversations with my constituents in Beaches–East York, we knew this was something we had to move on.

We could have done nothing, but we became the only province so far in Canada which is moving on disallowing the expiry of air miles. I'm very pleased that we're taking that leadership.

This bill was the third private member's bill that I brought forward which has that same theme of protecting consumers' rights, from the tipping bill to stopping daycares from charging administration fees. Now, I know that everyone in this House has had experience with air miles, and we're delighted that we have an opportunity now to put an end to it.

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to share my sincere congratulations to the Citizen for once again achieving first place in the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards—the highest category in its class.

The awards celebrate the best in community publishing from across the country. The level of excellence that has been displayed by the Citizen in serving both the North Huron and Huron East communities is extraordinary.

This award really goes to show the level of commitment that this newspaper has put forth over the years in order to ensure balanced reporting and comprehensive coverage of its local communities. It is interesting to note that the Citizen has been nominated for the Canadian Community Newspaper Awards previously, in both 2014 and 2015. Its tradition of excellence was recognized once again this year, and it won first place in the categories of best all-round newspaper, best editorial page and best front page.

The Citizen team is one that works hard to keep people informed, and succeeds in its commitment to write on local issues that are important and meaningful. Upon reading the judges' comments on the Citizen, what jumped out at me was this: "This paper has soul." I couldn't agree more.

BRIDGE REHABILITATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: My office was contacted by Mrs. Sherri Allan regarding a frightening incident that her family experienced on Monday while driving in Lively. As they were travelling south on Main Street, going under the first of two highway bridges, debris fell from the bridge, smashing a hole in the sunroof of their vehicle, with falling glass cutting their nine-year-old daughter on the neck. Thankfully, her daughter was okay. It could have been way worse.

They are not the only ones. I have been contacted—and I'll read her statement:

"I too have been a victim of a rock hitting my windshield from the overpass. Last Friday my husband and I were hit by a rock on my sunroof....

"I had the sunroof replaced ... and it cost me \$1,300!"

This morning, I talked to the Minister of Transportation about those two bridges. It was confirmed that they are scheduled for rehabilitation next year, in addition to the scaling work that is under way right now. He reassured me that his ministry would work with the local MTO office to make sure that the two bridges are safe to

drive on, and that Main Street underneath will also be safe for all traffic.

I would invite, though: If anybody else from my riding or around Lively has had a similar incident with pieces of the overpass falling on them as they were driving or if they've seen an incident, please reach out to my office so that we can coordinate with the Ministry of Transportation.

HUMBER COLLEGE

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: Premièrement, I would say shalom aleichem to our colleagues who are here for a bill that will be debated later on today.

I would once again like to objectively recognize the best president from the best college in the province of Ontario, and that is Dr. Christopher L.G. Whitaker, who is the president of Humber College. He has a remarkable track record, holding a PhD from the University of Toronto, an MA from York University and a bachelor's from Queen's. He's been in his position of steward of Humber College since 2012—and what a jewel in the crown of Etobicoke North.

Between the north and south campuses, we have something on the order of more than 30,000 students, with residential spots for 1,000 students; we offer programs, bachelor degrees, diplomas and certificates. It's an advanced skills and technology centre, which I remember opening some years ago, in fields as diverse as journalism and media studies and hospitality and plumbing and woodworking—you name it.

Of course, they are very ably accompanied today by, as I mentioned earlier, the irreplaceable Jane Holmes, who not only served this government as a senior policy analyst in one of our ministries here, but then was steward at the Ontario Horse Racing Industry Association. We remember her fondly from her days at Woodbine. The casino is coming.

So thank you, Jane. Thank you, Dr. Whitaker. Thanks for all that you do.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): You know they're going to get grief for that.

The member from Whitby–Oshawa.

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD

Mr. Lorne Coe: I rise to speak about the ongoing review of the Ontario Municipal Board. What's clear is that planning in Ontario has been and should continue to be a public, democratic process. Any adjudicative process that can supersede municipal decisions must ensure fair and equitable participation by local community members and should meaningfully employ processes and decision-making methods that include the public.

Furthermore, municipalities are a mature form of government and are in a position to take on a more rigorous role in land use planning. This requires a significant transformation of the Ontario Municipal Board's roles, responsibilities and procedures.

If viewers of our proceedings this afternoon believe their council's planning decisions should hold more influence before an Ontario Municipal Board tribunal, then make your voices heard. If you have other ideas, make your voices heard as well.

For far too long, the Ontario Municipal Board has overruled good local planning decisions made by elected officials, and when those decisions are quashed, there is no appeal.

This review is long overdue and clearly needed. I strongly support the initiative and urge all region of Durham residents to participate in the process.

TORONTO FC

Mr. Mike Colle: I rise today to celebrate the great victory by Toronto FC yesterday at BMO Field. By winning the Eastern Division championship over Montreal, this means we'll have the first Canadian team that will be in the MLS championship final on December 10 in Toronto.

The Toronto FC—the Reds—really reflect the true nature and the fabric and diversity of Ontario. If you look at the team, you have Jozy Altidore from the US; Benoit Cheyrou from France; Sebastian Giovinco—the Atomic Ant—from Italy; you have Tosaint Ricketts from Jamaica; and Chris Mannella, who lives at College and Grace.

This team has excited people from all over Ontario—all over Canada. It is a vibrant expression of sportsmanship, of excellence. It also is good for the local economy and keeping our downtown alive. It is also a great role model for our young people, whether they be boys or girls, to play sports and participate.

We wish Toronto FC the best of luck as they go forward in representing Canada in the MLS championship December 10 here in Toronto. Congratulations.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Bill Walker: I rise today to voice my constituents' growing concern over the continued lack of access to mental health services in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, an issue that I am personally passionate about.

The lack of available psychiatrists, mental health beds and other mental health resources is beginning to take its toll on my local hospital emergency departments, which are increasingly dealing with suicidal youth and people suffering from schizophrenia. Instead of matching patients with beds, emergency department staff are calling in police officers, at a very great cost, to guard these patients who continue to wait for beds.

If you can imagine, this is an impossible task, with so few beds in Ontario, and we still have regions without any youth mental health beds, such as the North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN.

I recently listened to comments from Dr. Susan Boron from Hanover and District Hospital, who spoke very

candidly and openly about the consequences of the long-standing problem with the shortage of beds, psychiatrists and outreach that is putting the safety of patients and staff in dire straits. Dr. Boron called it a crisis and warned that it could easily turn into a publicity nightmare for the province.

This warning was echoed by the Auditor General, whose report, released yesterday, confirmed a 50% increase in the number of youth and children needing a mental health bed.

1320

As Ontario continues to go without a coherent mental health system and where care continues to be scattered over multiple ministries and agencies, I take this opportunity to issue another call on the government to immediately direct resources to my communities in Bruce and Grey and all communities across Ontario facing these huge gaps in service, so that our children and youth and people in need can get the mental health care services they need.

I also encourage all members to continue to speak up on these concerns to the Minister of Health and remind him that the time for action is now.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Monte McNaughton: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 41, An Act to amend various Acts in the interests of patient-centred care / Projet de loi 41, Loi modifiant diverses lois dans l'intérêt des soins axés sur les patients.

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

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

Mr. Joe Dickson: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

I will pass this to page William.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. William Short): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 34, An Act to amend the Children's Law Reform Act with respect to the relationship between a child and the child's grandparents / Projet de loi 34, Loi modifiant la Loi portant réforme du droit de l'enfance en ce qui concerne la relation entre un enfant et ses grands-parents.

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

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 24, 2016, the bill is ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present a report on the CCACs—Community Care Access Centres—Home Care Program, section 3.01 of the 2015 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and move the adoption of its recommendations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves the adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a short statement?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: As Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report today entitled CCACs—Community Care Access Centres—Home Care Program, Section 3.01 of the 2015 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the permanent membership of the committee: Lisa MacLeod, Vice-Chair; John Fraser, Percy Hatfield, Monte Kwinter, Harinder Malhi, Peter Milczyn, Julia Munro and Arthur Potts.

The committee extends its appreciation to the officials from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres, and from the Central CCAC, the Champlain CCAC and the North East CCAC.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General, the Clerk of the Committee and the staff in legislative research.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Hardeman has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Debate adjourned.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DES VOLONTAIRES

Hon. Laura Albanese: I rise to recognize International Volunteer Day. In 1985, the United Nations General Assembly designated December 5 as a time to celebrate

the contributions of volunteers around the globe. Each year, Ontario joins the world in recognizing this important day.

I am honoured to have this opportunity to highlight Ontario's incredible volunteers and draw attention to the impact volunteer efforts have in our province.

Monsieur le Président, les bénévoles sont la pierre angulaire de notre société. Ils renforcent nos collectivités.

Volunteers help create an inclusive and welcoming society that all of us enjoy, and their efforts touch countless people's lives, both here in Ontario and around the world.

Each year, almost five million Ontarians generously donate their time and talents to a vast array of worthy causes. It is difficult to overstate their importance and the role they play in creating vibrant communities across Ontario.

Volunteers give back in many ways. For example, they organize fundraisers and food drives. They raise awareness of important issues. They coach sports teams and help kids learn the value of teamwork. They help newcomers, like recent refugees from the Syrian conflict, settle in our communities.

We're fortunate in Ontario to see the power of volunteering all around us.

Notre province se distingue par sa longue et fière tradition de bénévolat. Nous voulons que les jeunes d'aujourd'hui embrassent et continuent cette tradition.

That's why, since 2008, we have partnered with the Ontario Volunteer Centre Network in volunteer centres across the province to deliver the ChangeTheWorld Ontario Youth Volunteer Challenge. The campaign engages 14- to 18-year-olds in volunteer activities in their communities. More than 240,000 youth have contributed 1.2 million volunteer hours through ChangeTheWorld since 2008. It is often said that our young people are the future. When I see so many young Ontarians who are passionate about volunteering and giving back, I'm optimistic that the future will be bright.

Speaker, volunteers are the backbone of our communities. They are also the heart and soul. Volunteers are our neighbours, our colleagues, and our sons and daughters. It inspires me when I see people of every age and in every corner of our province volunteering and accomplishing amazing things.

For example, Hospice Toronto's complementary therapy volunteer team of Toronto supports individuals and their families who are coping with a life-threatening illness. The complementary therapy program provides clients with access to therapies, such as massage and reflexology, which have a positive impact on their well-being. The therapies are provided at no cost by a team of professionals who volunteer their time and skills.

Monsieur le Président, chacun a ses propres raisons de faire du bénévolat. Certains sont inspirés par une cause qui leur tient personnellement à cœur. D'autres cherchent à acquérir de nouvelles compétences.

Some volunteers are striving towards a new career path and looking for volunteer experiences that can

prepare them for success. Some are looking for an opportunity to make friends and meet new people.

We know that volunteering is not only good for people; it is also good for our communities. To strengthen volunteerism across the province, our government introduced Ontario's Volunteer Action Plan last December. We supported the establishment of the SPARK Ontario website where Ontarians can go and learn about volunteer opportunities in their communities.

For that reason, we formally recognize Ontario's incredible volunteers through a number of programs:

- the Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers, which honours outstanding, above-and-beyond commitment to volunteering by Ontarians between the ages of 15 and 24;

- the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship, which recognizes exceptional efforts and long-term commitments to communities;

- the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards, which recognize outstanding seniors who have made incredible contributions to their community since the age of 65;

- the June Callwood Outstanding Achievement Award for Voluntarism, which recognizes exceptional contributions to volunteering and serving communities; and

- the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards, which recognize volunteers for continuous years of commitment and dedicated service to a specific organization.

Over the last year, we celebrated the contributions of more than 11,000 volunteers at 54 volunteer service awards ceremonies across the province.

We are also looking at ways to enhance the volunteer experience, such as looking at ways to recognize individuals who have excelled in the art of volunteer management. Volunteer managers provide meaningful, beneficial and valuable experiences that are useful to both volunteers and organizations. They are often the key to a great volunteer experience, not to mention the success of a not-for-profit or charitable organization.

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We recently introduced an Excellence in Volunteer Management category in the June Callwood awards, specifically to recognize outstanding volunteer managers in our province. I have no doubt that we will hear about another incredibly talented and committed group of people through this new award category.

Mr. Speaker, it is one of the best parts of my job to recognize Ontarians who have made an impact through volunteering and giving back to their communities. Volunteers make a real difference in our way of life. They are part of our province's long-standing tradition of giving back.

Ils sont pour nous une source de fierté, jour après jour. Je ne les remercierai jamais assez de leurs efforts.

They are an essential part of life in Ontario and a key part of our vibrant social fabric. I encourage everyone to join me in recognizing and thanking all of our province's incredible volunteers on International Volunteer Day.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise today and to speak on International Volunteer Day. It was mandated by the UN General Assembly, and it's held every year on the 5th of December. It's viewed as a unique chance for volunteers and organizations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values and to promote their work among their community's non-governmental organizations.

I just want to mention that what's so interesting about this volunteer initiative is right there on the website. For International Volunteer Day, it says that they want the programs to contribute "to peace and development by advocating for the recognition of volunteers and working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming." I really felt that that tied in with what we are going to be talking about later in our anti-BDS motion, which is that we want volunteers, we want community organizations—we all want to work together towards peace, not to be divisive and not to be negative.

I just want to thank the almost five million volunteers here in Ontario. They're really the heart and soul of our province. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention that probably the favourite part of my job, to go to all the events and to do promotion—some of the visitors here today that are here for the first time heard people giving statements about all kinds of non-profit organizations in their ridings, to support them and to promote them. I think I can speak on behalf of everybody in this House that it's such a fun thing for us to do and such a positive thing for us to do.

I just want to bring up my colleague sitting right here in front of me, from Dufferin–Caledon and talk about her bill, which is Bill 15. It's legislation to encourage volunteerism in Ontario. As we all know, there are many volunteers now that have to go through police background checks in order to volunteer for some of the organizations, especially organizations that are working with children. What my colleague is addressing is the fact that so many people do volunteer work for multiple organizations and—just like everybody else here, I'm always surprised to learn about some of the hoops that people have to jump through. Apparently, they have to apply for a criminal background check and pay to do multiple criminal background checks, one for each organization that they volunteer for.

This initiative, which is called the Helping Volunteers Give Back Act, 2015, would allow volunteers to pay for the criminal record check once per year yet access this record and distribute up to five copies to organizations at no additional cost to the volunteer or the organization. I want to remind everybody that these organizations, if they have to help cover the police criminal background check, have to fundraise that money to pay for that. So you can see the problems that it creates.

The benefits of volunteering, as we know, are multiple. One that I'm going to focus on, the first one, is economic benefits. The activities undertaken by volunteers reduce the costs to organizations, and that's obvious. It allows them. Therefore, to increase programming and do better work in our communities in our own ridings. A lot

of times, it alleviates some of the pressure on taxpayers who would otherwise have to be funding the work that's being done by these non-profits. So I want to just commend everybody out there who's volunteering their time.

The social benefits of volunteering help build better communities and better families. We all know that when you give, a lot of times you receive more than you gave. There are social aspects to volunteering. There are so many positive things, including career benefits. We all know that oftentimes people volunteer and it can lead to job training, a job referral and even a career path through volunteering.

I just want to remind all the politicians who are here right now that many of us got our start in our communities. Many of us got elected—many of us put on our campaign literature and our websites all the volunteering work we do. So kudos to all of them.

I'm just going to end with a quote from David Allen, the executive director of Volunteer Toronto, who says in his support for my colleague's bill:

“Volunteer Toronto wholeheartedly supports Bill 15. This legislation will encourage more people to volunteer by streamlining the screening process required by organizations when recruiting volunteers. Many individuals volunteer for multiple organizations at the same time. The current process for obtaining criminal reference checks often entails duplication of effort and cost. By reducing the frequency for a criminal reference check to one year, and making it transferable to other organizations for the same individual, we expect participation rates by volunteers to increase significantly. A major administrative barrier will be eased for getting volunteers started or renewed in their selfless efforts.”

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I am honoured to rise, on behalf of the constituents of London–Fanshawe, on behalf of my leader, Andrea Horwath, and the entire NDP caucus, to add our voices to this important day of recognition of International Volunteer Day.

The UN General Assembly mandated International Volunteer Day to be held each year on December 5. It is a unique chance for volunteers and organizations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values and to promote their work among their communities, non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, government authorities and the private sector.

IVD's 2016 theme is #GlobalApplause. It is meant to inspire us to give volunteers a hand, to recognize volunteers worldwide and all they do in making our communities, cities, province and our country better places to live and thrive in.

As my party's critic for seniors, I have seen how volunteering plays a vital role in healthy aging. Remaining active and staying connected to the community can have tremendous positive impact on a senior's social, physical and emotional well-being. Studies have found that older adults who volunteer have reduced stress-related illnesses and higher self-esteem, and are less likely to feel isolated. Volunteering can also provide positive influences on lifestyle transition in older adults

as they retire, downsize their housing or deal with health issues.

More than half of Canada's 161,000 non-profit and charitable organizations have no paid staff and rely solely on volunteers. That translates to 12.7 million volunteers who contribute close to two billion hours annually. According to Statistics Canada, Canadian seniors volunteer an average of 223 hours each year—more than any other age group. They truly are continuing to lead and inspire younger generations by example. However, volunteers of all ages are leading social change around the world.

This special day promotes the work of volunteers at all levels of participation. Volunteers help us to envision a province that is caring, inclusive and engaged, where volunteering is an important avenue through which everyone has the opportunity to participate and contribute meaningfully.

I want to take a moment to speak about the Pillar Nonprofit Network in my hometown of London. Pillar supports non-profit member organizations in fulfilling their mission in our community, while also making connections for community impact. Pillar provides leadership, advocacy and professional development, networking opportunities and information-sharing. On top of all that, they also do an excellent job of promoting volunteerism in London.

Last week, I was honoured to attend the annual Pillar Community Innovation Awards, which recognize and show appreciation for the valuable contributions that are being made to make London a better place. I am so proud of each recipient, finalist and nomination.

However, I was particularly moved by the recipients of the Pillar Community Collaboration project: The Intergenerational Choir Project. The project began as an idea to bring together youth, Alzheimer sufferers, caregivers and the Sisters of St. Joseph. The goal of the project was to address the stigma associated with Alzheimer's, but it also allowed for generations to mingle and sing together.

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The project teams high school students with people with dementia and their family members or friends. The project provides a safe and secure choral and social structure for the eight-week program, allowing participants to express themselves through music. The choir also educates younger generations about dementia, with training from the Alzheimer Society of London. Regardless of musical background, the choir gives singing opportunities to all. Bringing together the voices of multi-generational volunteers is perhaps one of the most moving experiences I have had the honour to be a part of.

Celebrating volunteers on important days like today and during National Volunteer Week coming up in April 2017 are excellent opportunities to show appreciation, but it's also crucial that we show volunteers that we appreciate them each and every day.

The Intergenerational Choir Project prompts us to think about how the world is changed by people who share the volunteer spirit.

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

PETITIONS

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Robert Bailey: This petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas there is a growing energy affordability crisis in Ontario; and

“Whereas the government’s proposed hydro rebate is a Band-Aid solution that’s simply too little, too late;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call on the Liberal government to take immediate action to give the people of Ontario real relief from high energy bills.”

I agree with this, Madam Speaker, and will affix my signature to it as well.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Ted Arnott: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as well. It reads as follows:

“Whereas the price of electricity has skyrocketed under the Ontario Liberal government;

“Whereas ever-higher hydro bills are a huge concern for everyone in the province, especially seniors and others on fixed incomes, who can’t afford to pay more;

“Whereas Ontario’s businesses say high electricity costs are making them uncompetitive, and have contributed to the loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs;

“Whereas the recent Auditor General’s report found Ontarians overpaid for electricity by \$37 billion over the past eight years and estimates that we will overpay by an additional \$133 billion over the next 18 years if nothing changes;

“Whereas the cancellation of the Oakville and Mississauga gas plants costing \$1.1 billion, feed-in tariff (FIT) contracts with wind and solar companies, the sale of surplus energy to neighbouring jurisdictions at a loss, the debt retirement charge, the global adjustment and smart meters that haven’t met their conservation targets have all put upward pressure on hydro bills;

“Whereas the sale of 60% of Hydro One is opposed by a majority of Ontarians and will likely only lead to even higher hydro bills;

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

“To listen to Ontarians, reverse course on the Liberal government’s current hydro policies and take immediate steps to stabilize hydro bills.”

Madam Speaker, I agree with this petition and I will affix my signature to it as well.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: “Hydro One Not for Sale! Say No to Privatization.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

I will sign this petition, and I give it to page Anne to deliver to the table.

VENTE D’ALCOOL

M. Grant Crack: « À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario : demande à l’agence LCBO.

« Attendu que depuis l’ouverture, en avril dernier, du dépanneur O Coin, situé dans la municipalité de Clarence Creek, les propriétaires Bernard et Florence Marcil se font demander constamment s’ils vendent des produits alcoolisés. Étant donné que dans Clarence Creek, il n’y a pas d’épicerie, pas d’établissement de bière et pas de LCBO et que les gens n’ont d’autres choix que d’aller jusqu’à Rockland pour trouver un détaillant, il serait tout indiqué que le dépanneur O Coin puisse obtenir un permis de vente de bière et de vin. C’est pour cette raison que,

« Nous, Bernard et Florence Marcil, adressons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario la pétition suivante. »

I agree with this petition. I affix my signature and give it to Lauren.

HYDRO RATES

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

“Whereas Ontario has amongst the highest hydro rates in North America;

“Whereas electricity prices are expected to keep rising;

“Whereas the Liberal government has created the hydro crisis by signing lucrative contracts for unnecessary energy;

“Whereas Liberal mismanagement has left Ontario’s electricity system unaffordable and unreliable;

“Whereas the proposed hydro rebate is merely a Band-Aid solution; and

“Whereas the rebate is simply too little and too late;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call on the Liberal government to: stop signing contracts for energy that the province will sell at a loss; and stop selling any further shares in Hydro One.”

I am happy to sign that petition.

DENTAL CARE

M^{me} France Gélinais: I’d like to thank Pierrette Leclerc from Capreol, in my riding, for this petition. It reads as follows:

“Expand Public Dental Programs.

“Whereas lack of access to dental care affects overall health and well-being, and poor oral health is linked to diabetes, cardiovascular, respiratory disease, and Alzheimer’s disease; and

“Whereas it is estimated that two to three million people in Ontario have not seen a dentist in the past year, mainly due to the cost of private dental services; and

“Whereas approximately every nine minutes a person in Ontario arrives at a hospital emergency room with a dental problem but can only get painkillers and antibiotics, and this costs the health care system at least \$31 million annually with no treatment of the problem.”

Therefore, they petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to “invest in public oral health programs for low-income adults and seniors by:

“—ensuring that plans to reform the health care system include oral health so that vulnerable people in our communities have equitable access to the dental care they need to be healthy;

“—extending public dental programs for low-income children and youth within the next two years to include low-income adults and seniors; and

“—delivering public dental services in a cost-efficient way through publicly funded dental clinics such as public health units, community health centres and aboriginal health access centres to ensure primary oral health services are accessible to vulnerable people in Ontario.”

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

HIGHWAY RAMPS

Mrs. Julia Munro: It’s my pleasure to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly.

“Whereas the town of Bradford West Gwillimbury will continue to have robust growth of population and commercial activity in proximity to the Holland Marsh, Ontario’s salad bowl, which consists of 7,000 acres of specialty crop area lands designated in the provincial Greenbelt Plan and is situated along the municipal boundary between King township and the town of Bradford West Gwillimbury, as bisected by Highway 400;

“Whereas the Canal Road ramps at Highway 400 provide critical access for farm operations within the Holland Marsh allowing for efficient transport of produce

to market, delivery of materials and equipment and patronage of on-farm commercial activities; and

“Whereas the loss of that critical access to Highway 400 may threaten the significant financial benefits that the Holland Marsh contributes to the Ontario economy;

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

“That the council of the corporation of the town of Bradford West Gwillimbury hereby advises the Honourable Steven Del Duca, Minister of Transportation, that the town does not support the elimination of the Canal Road ramps at Highway 400, and further, that the town requests that the duration of the temporary closure of Canal Road between Wist Road and Davis Road be minimized to the greatest extent possible during the Highway 400/North Canal bridge replacement project.”

As I am in agreement, I have affixed my signature and give it to page Vishmen.

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PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Wayne Gates: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“Whereas we’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

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

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

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

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

I’ll sign my name to the petition and give it to my good friend Jackson.

ENERGY POLICIES

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

“Whereas the overwhelming majority of citizens from northern Ontario oppose the sale of Hydro One;

“Whereas the majority of citizens of northern Ontario oppose the rate increase which is the direct result of successful initiative to conserve and reduce electrical power consumption;

“Whereas the majority of citizens of northern Ontario oppose the installation and continued use of the smart meter program due to the unreliability of their metering and billing as well as incidents of causing fire;

“Whereas the majority of citizens from northern Ontario oppose the current inclusion of the delivery fee charges on power bills due to the unfair and confusing policies;

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

“Call upon the Liberal government to stop the sell-off and privatization of Hydro One, stop further rate increases caused resulting from lower-than-expected consumption, stop the practice of billing rural customers for line loss charges, and reverse the ill-conceived decision to install smart meters without passing on the expense for replacing equipment to customers.”

I sign this petition and give it to page Charis to deliver.

DENTAL CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: “Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas lack of access to dental care affects overall health and well-being, and poor oral health is linked to diabetes, cardiovascular, respiratory disease, and Alzheimer’s disease; and

“Whereas it is estimated that two to three million people in Ontario have not seen a dentist in the past year, mainly due to the cost of private dental services; and

“Whereas approximately every nine minutes a person in Ontario arrives at a hospital emergency room with a dental problem but can only get painkillers and antibiotics, and this costs the health care system at least \$31 million annually with no treatment of the problem;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to invest in public oral health programs for low-income adults and seniors....”

I sign this petition and give it to page Charis to deliver to the table.

PRIVATISATION DES BIENS PUBLICS

M. Taras Natyshak: J’ai le plaisir de lire cette pétition, qui dit :

« Privatiser Hydro One : une autre mauvaise décision.

« Attendu que la privatisation d’Hydro One est un aller sans retour; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre des centaines de millions de revenus fiables d’Hydro One pour nos écoles et nos hôpitaux; et

« Attendu que nous allons perdre le plus gros atout économique provincial et le contrôle de notre avenir dans le secteur de l’énergie; et

« Attendu que nous allons payer de plus en plus pour l’électricité, tout comme ce qui est arrivé ailleurs;

« Nous, soussignés, pétitionnons l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario comme suit :

« D’arrêter la vente d’Hydro One et de faire en sorte que les familles de l’Ontario, comme propriétaires d’Hydro One, en bénéficient, maintenant et pour les générations à venir. »

J’appuie cette pétition et je l’envoie à la table avec Lauren.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This is a very important petition.

“Nurses Know—Petition for Better Care.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas providing high-quality, universal, public health care is crucial for a fair and thriving Ontario; and

“Whereas years of underfunding have resulted in cuts to registered nurses (RNs) and hurt patient care; and

“Whereas, in 2015 alone, Ontario lost more than 1.5 million hours of RN care due to cuts; and

“Whereas procedures are being off-loaded into private clinics not subject to hospital legislation; and

“Whereas funded services are being cut from hospitals and are not being provided in the community; and

“Whereas cutting skilled care means patients suffer more complications, readmissions and death;

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

“Implement a moratorium on RN cuts;

“Commit to restoring hospital base operating funding to at least cover the costs of inflation and population growth;

“Create a fully-funded multi-year health human resources plan to bring Ontario’s ratio of registered nurses to population up to the national average;

“Ensure hospitals have enough resources to continue providing safe, quality and integrated care for clinical procedures and stop plans for moving such procedures into private, unaccountable clinics.”

I sign this petition and give it to page Calida to deliver.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, this petition is so important that I’m going to have to read it again.

“Nurses Know—Petition for Better Care.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas providing high-quality, universal, public health care is crucial for a fair and thriving Ontario; and

“Whereas years of underfunding have resulted in cuts to registered nurses (RNs) and hurt patient care; and

“Whereas, in 2015 alone, Ontario lost more than 1.5 million hours of RN care due to cuts; and

“Whereas procedures are being off-loaded into private clinics not subject to hospital legislation; and

“Whereas funded services are being cut from hospitals and are not being provided in the community; and

“Whereas cutting skilled care means patients suffer more complications, readmissions and death;

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

“Implement a moratorium on RN cuts;

“Commit to restoring hospital base operating funding to at least cover the costs of inflation and population growth;

“Create a fully-funded multi-year health human resources plan to bring Ontario’s ratio of registered nurses to population up to the national average;

“Ensure hospitals have enough resources to continue providing safe, quality and integrated care for clinical procedures and stop plans for moving such procedures into private, unaccountable clinics.”

I sign this petition and I give it to page Calida to deliver.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The time for petitions has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

Mrs. Gila Martow: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should stand firmly against any position or movement that promotes or encourages any form of hatred, hostility, prejudice, racism and intolerance in any way; recognize the long-standing, vibrant and mutually beneficial political, economic and cultural ties between Ontario and Israel, built on a foundation of shared liberal democratic values; endorse the Ottawa Protocol on Combating Antisemitism; and reject the differential treatment of Israel, including the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mrs. Martow has moved private members’ notice of motion number 36. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to start by saying that my name, Gila, is the Hebrew word for “joy.” We had a press conference early this morning, and I apologize if some people were there and I’m repeating myself by saying that joy, to me, means approaching things with a positive attitude, not a negative attitude. To me, one of the problems that I want to discuss is the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement. It’s negative.

If you have an issue with any policies of the Israeli government, if you have any concerns with any advocacy work by the Jewish community here or around the world, please discuss it with yourselves, discuss it among your clubs, discuss it with me, discuss it with all the Jewish organizations that are here today. We are so pleased to have discussions. It’s what we do best.

I just spoke to a statement about volunteerism. We were recognizing that December 5 is the international day of volunteering. One of the aspects of volunteering is to promote peace in the world. So I invite everybody to get involved in a positive organization and to help bring about that peace that we all so desire, not just in the Middle East but all across the world, here in our streets and on our university campuses, because, Madam Speaker, too often, we are hearing that our university campuses sound more like a battleground of intolerance

instead of that joyful place that I would like them to be, and a positive place.

It has been more than a few years since I myself was on a university campus as a student.

1400

Interjection: No.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes, it’s true. I have to say that I came back to my dorm room one day and somebody had marked a swastika on my door with a marker or a pen or something. I put sort of a positive spin on it and I said, “I guess somebody’s upset that I am in an optometry program at a fairly young age”—I was only 19 years old—“and it has nothing to do with being Jewish or anything like that. It’s just strictly a way to get under my skin.” The door was painted and I just went on. I forgot about it, kind of. It’s one of those things that pops back into your head every now and then. I’m short but I’m tough; that’s what I’m told. I’m a pretty strong person. I have to say that I found it hard, when I was alone afterwards. I found it hard, even though I put a smile on my face, to deal with.

So not every student on our campuses is going to school fully and emotionally—they may have parents at home who are sick. They might themselves be sick. Then, if they have to walk on the campuses and incur hostility and see demonstrations that are demonizing the Jewish community and demonizing Israel, that affects their psychological well-being. It makes it difficult for them to continue their studies.

We would not be here supporting a Ku Klux Klan on our campuses, so why are we allowing BDS movements and other anti-Jewish communities and anti-Israel organizations to have demonstrations and use our campuses, which are taxpayer-funded? It’s a PR battle, Madam Speaker.

I hate to hear about people who want to hide behind freedom of speech, because the boycott movement is actually not just boycotting Israel, it’s boycotting voices. It’s telling people, “You cannot support Israel.” It’s telling people, “You cannot do advocacy work on our campuses.” We are hearing reports of students who want to run for student councils—nothing to do with Jewish clubs or the Jewish community or anything—and they’re told, “We know that you’re Jewish and you’re a Zionist,” or “You support Israel,” or “You’ve been to Israel” and “We don’t want you in our club.”

Interjection: Shameful.

Mrs. Gila Martow: It is shameful, Madam Speaker.

I think all the organizations here like to remind people that Israel is a vibrant country, that the boycott movement is failing, that foreign investment is going up in Israel, it’s not going down. All it’s doing is silencing some of those investors, which, again, is a boycott of those investors’ voices.

People here have cellphones. Unfortunately, many of the people in the gallery were shocked to find out that they weren’t allowed to bring their cellphones in. That’s what a boycott feels like, because most of those cellphones have Israeli technology, I’d like to remind everybody here.

Medical innovations, other apps, software and things like that, that's why people are investing in Israel, because they put a smile on their face and they get on with the work, and the job of enjoying life—not just surviving but enjoying—and trying to make the world a better place. It's a real mandate in the Jewish culture and the Jewish community to try to make the world a better place.

I, myself, had four children who, at various stages of their development, would approach me very quietly and say, "Why do they hate us?" What am I supposed to say to my children when they ask why the Jewish community is so disliked and why Israel is so vilified in the world? It's not something that has just happened since the State of Israel was developed, only 69 years ago. This has been ongoing for millennia, that the Jewish community is used as some kind of scapegoat for problems in a country, maybe to take away attention from bad governance or bad times or whatever, that somehow the Jewish community takes the blame.

Interjection: Blame the Jews.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Yes.

We have a federal resolution in Canada that passed that was anti-BDS. The Congress in the US passed anti-BDS; 16 states have passed it, and there are quite a few more that are looking to pass it and may have even passed it that I haven't heard of.

Again, I want to remind people that BDS is the negative way of doing things. We've all heard of concerts that have been cancelled in Israel, or concerts that went on in Israel where in fact the artists were encouraged to cancel but they refused to cancel. And stickers that are being put in stores—private property. A store or a business owner has products there that come from Israel, and people are sneaking in and putting stickers on that say, "Boycott this product because it comes from Israel." That is not what I call a positive and encouraging way to promote peace or to promote any countries that surround Israel that are hostile to Israel. You want to help those countries—perhaps it's even a country that's an enemy of Israel—you want to promote their products? Go ahead and promote their products, but don't try to encourage some kind of progress in those other countries by vilifying Israel.

We all know that peace is not always easy to achieve. We've heard in committee—just yesterday we were talking about grandparents' rights. We were hearing from grandparents coming in and, on the silliest things—buying their grandchild candy—the parents never allowed them to see the grandchild again and never spoke to them again.

Within families there are disagreements, so we can just imagine how difficult it is to broker peace agreements between countries.

Back to the positive, Madam Speaker: Look at what is positive in your relationships and your families and your neighbourhoods and your work colleagues. Look at what's positive in Ontario, in our communities, in our campus clubs. Get to know the members of the other

campus clubs. Have that open dialogue. Do it in a positive way, not a negative way.

How about if I invite everybody here to visit Israel? Even if you've been to Israel before, visit it again. If you've never been to Israel, please, take the time out of your busy life. It can be a vacation; it can be a work trip; it can be a volunteer experience. There are organizations that are so happy to encourage you and to help you plan the trip. You can even get in touch with me, and I'll put you in touch with the right people.

I want to just say that this motion has been difficult because it's a bit of a—I hate when people call it controversial, because I don't think it's controversial. I just think it's uncomfortable for people because whenever they try to say something positive about Israel, they get yelled at and shut down and they're told all kinds of nasty, misleading facts.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, that I'm expecting this motion to pass because I've had a lot of dialogue, with help from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. A lot of their members and people who work there and people who volunteer there have had a lot of dialogue with a lot of the members here to promote open dialogue, to promote passage of this motion. I want to really thank everybody who's here for supporting not just myself, but supporting all the Jewish organizations and supporting the students on our campuses, because really they've endured the brunt of this movement.

This movement is failing and it's going to continue to fail and it will fail. My problem is, what comes next? We saw Israel Apartheid Week, and when that fell flat on its face—because finally people got educated and realized how ridiculous it was—they moved on to the boycott movement. Soon people are going to realize how ridiculous it is and that you can't stand behind it and say "freedom of speech" because it's actually a boycott of voices.

What's going to be the next movement to try to vilify Israel, to delegitimize Israel, to stigmatize Israel, to make Jewish students feel uncomfortable identifying as Jews on campus or belonging to Jewish clubs? What is going to be that next movement?

I hope it's not going to happen. I hope that everybody who is reading about this in the newspaper or watching this on TV is going to start to look at the facts and to realize that Israel is being unfairly singled out.

If you have any issues with any Israeli policies, that's absolutely fine. Write your letters to the editor, contact Jewish agencies and ask, "Maybe I don't have the facts straight. This is what I was told," but don't go about it by boycotting, divestment and sanctions. That's not the positive way to address any issues that you have.

Madam Speaker, right here in Canada we have ongoing discussions. We even have a ministry for dialogue with our native and aboriginal communities and to address many past injustices that were done. They don't call for boycotts of us; we don't call for boycotts of them. In fact, we're all working together to make Canada and Ontario strong economically and to improve our

environmental practices here in the province of Ontario and in Canada and to spread peace throughout the world. This is the holiday season. It's called the season of peace and goodwill to all men.

On that note, I'm just going to say that I'm looking forward to all my colleagues who are going to rise today with me and speak against boycotting voices and boycotting Israel.

1410

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Before I begin, I also want to acknowledge CIJA's tremendous work. They are a paragon of professionalism in the way they conduct themselves and the way they advocate their position, and I want to acknowledge that as well.

I think we need to be very honest about the situation we're in as a society. There is a deeply troubling rise in hatred in our society across the board. We see this across the world in the rise of bigotry and the rise of prejudice and the rise of racism. And it is all of our responsibility together. It is a shared responsibility for us all to recognize this trend and to fight against this trend, to oppose this trend. We must specifically acknowledge the various forms of hatred that exist in our society. We must call them by name, and then we must denounce them.

I want to make it absolutely clear: New Democrats absolutely stand firmly opposed to any movement which encourages hate, prejudice, racism or intolerance in any way. We stand opposed to those types of movements. We recognize, in fact, the long-standing relationship and ties between Ontario and Israel, and we want to make sure it's clear that we stand against all forms of repression.

Let's name some of those forms of repression. We know there's systemic discrimination. There's systemic discrimination based on race, and specifically I want to name anti-black discrimination as a particularly, heinous form of discrimination. I want to also acknowledge that there are definitely various forms of hatred directed towards religions and ethnicities. It's important to name those as well. That's why I specifically name Islamophobia as a problem in our society. And, of course, today I think it's very important for me to direct all of the rest of my comments toward anti-Semitism—as a growing problem, as a historic problem, and as a current-day, modern problem. It is a serious issue.

This specific hate is something we have to name because it is so pernicious and it is so insidious. It has been historic, and it has left a truly lasting, very negative and heinous impact on our society. So it's particularly important for us to name anti-Semitism, to acknowledge it and then to very repeatedly denounce it. If we can denounce it in this chamber—it's not enough. We need to continue to do that. The more we can denounce anti-Semitism—it's not only important for members of the Jewish community. The solidarity that we show with the Jewish community on this issue of anti-Semitism and acknowledging the great suffering of the community is also a way for us to raise awareness of all communities

that are suffering, all marginalized communities which suffer.

As a member of a community which is a survivor of a genocide, I have a particularly strong sense of solidarity with the Jewish community as a community that has endured a great and terrible, terrible suffering and tragedy. As a survivor community of that genocide, they are a community that we all look toward for leadership in terms of raising awareness and of remembering that heinous, heinous tragedy and heinous, heinous act of violence against their community.

It's important for us to acknowledge that by remembering the injustice, we actually work towards preventing injustice. By remembering and acknowledging those who have suffered, we actually prevent future injustices; we prevent future generations from suffering. That's why it is so important for us to acknowledge that.

In Canada, I feel that we often point fingers in other directions. We look at other communities or other countries and say, "There is injustice there. There is anti-Semitism there. There are problems in other countries." We often fail to acknowledge that anti-Semitism is alive and real here in Ontario.

All too recently, we've seen attacks on members of the Jewish community, and particularly on synagogues. The act of defacing synagogues is an ongoing trend when it comes to one of the more visible forms of anti-Semitism, one of the most visible forms of hatred against the Jewish people. We see that all too often. We must denounce it. We must name it as a hate crime. It's not simply an act of mischief, but it's specifically a targeted attempt to create hatred or incite hatred against a community. That's why it's so important for us to name it as such, to name it as a hate crime. As always, whenever we name these injustices, we must also commit toward working toward ending all forms of this hatred.

In our fight to end anti-Semitism, in our struggle to raise awareness about this injustice, in our struggle to denounce it and to fight against it, we must not be distracted and we must maintain a focus that is laser-sharp, that is directed at the problem—which is anti-Semitism—and direct it at solutions toward solving this problem and ending this problem.

In our focus, we can't be distracted by conflating criticisms of a government or criticisms of a government's policies with anti-Semitism. That distracts us from the real problem, which is anti-Semitism. It exists. It's real. We see it. We know that it exists. We hear it in the banter that sometimes goes on and in jokes that sometimes go on. We need to address the root causes and the actual problems and combat them. But we can't be distracted by conflating the criticism of a government's policies, of a government itself, and the criticism of a people, of a religion, of a faith, of an ethnicity.

People around the world and here in Canada have a right to dissent and to criticize. Specifically, I'll give you an example here in Canada. I would suggest that it would be well within the right of many people to criticize Canada for its deplorable treatment of the indigenous

community. It's absolutely within the right of people. From direct genocides to a cultural genocide based on residential schools, the ongoing systemic discrimination of indigenous people and their deplorable conditions—people would be fully justified to raise a concern about the treatment of indigenous people. But it would absolutely not permit people to incite hatred against Canadians. It would absolutely not be permissible for people to incite any sort of sentiment of hating the people of the country and of hating the actual community. But concern around the government's policies—historic and present-day—and criticism of that policy is absolutely appropriate and, in fact, a part of a democratic society. We can criticize the policies of the United States, for example, without hating Americans. We can criticize Saudi Arabia's government and still combat Islamophobia.

It's absolutely important for us to recognize that peaceful demonstrations, discussions, debate, discourse, whether we agree with them or not, if they are expressed towards the criticism of a government or its policies, are absolutely, within our democracy, something appropriate, whether we agree or disagree.

We must similarly separate the criticism of the government of Israel or its policies from criticism of its people. That distinction must be made. That should never be conflated. A criticism of a country or its policies, particularly its government, should never mean it's a criticism of the people of that country or the ethnicity or the religion of that country.

People must be able to have a right to criticize a state's policies or its decisions. People must be able to encourage a state to follow through on its obligations, whether they're international human rights obligations or whether they're international environmental rights and agreements. People must be able to raise their concerns. But we should never allow people to raise those concerns in a way that inflames hatred against the people of that community.

There are serious concerns with respect to the human rights violations endured by the Palestinian people. We must support the freedom to raise these concerns. People have that right, and we should support people's right to do that.

In a free and democratic society, peaceful advocacy directed toward a government or its policies must never be silenced. We should allow that discourse to happen. We should allow that to occur in a free and democratic society.

The only limitation that we place on freedom of speech is specifically hate speech: speech which directs people to hate a particular community, to create violence against a particular race, ethnicity or members of a community. That is something that is simply not acceptable in our society, nor should we ever support it.

We cannot support a motion which, in effect, seeks to ban the right to dissent. That is one of the most fundamental rights of any society: the ability to raise your voice in opposition, your ability to criticize, your ability to have dissent. The right to criticize, the right to raise

awareness, the right to advocate for a marginalized people is something that we must protect.

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Anti-Semitism is real. It exists and it is growing. We can't be led to believe that in some way it has been addressed; it's something of the past; it's not something that we need to address moving forward. Anti-Semitism is something that we have to denounce. We have to denounce it together. We must use all tools available to denounce it. We must use education. We must use awareness. We must use legislation where it's appropriate and we must absolutely use enforcement. We must use all the tools that we have as a society so that we can combat this very serious and very real problem.

However, we can't allow ourselves to be distracted by a movement which seeks to criticize a government and conflate that with the real issue of anti-Semitism. We can't conflate anti-Semitism with a movement that seeks perhaps to influence a government to change its course of action.

These types of discourse, these types of engagement, are something that we don't have and—in this Legislative Assembly, in this province or in this country—we shouldn't silence. We should, in fact, encourage more advocacy work towards denouncing anti-Semitism. We should encourage more awareness around the ills, the impacts. The impacts aren't only to the Jewish community. Anti-Semitism hurts all of us. Hatred against a community poisons the entire society. We must ensure that we work together to solve this problem.

This isn't something that's going to be dealt with by one group alone. We need to show solidarity with groups and movements which seek to end anti-Semitism and which raise awareness about the harms and impacts on not only the Jewish community but our society at large. We need to show that solidarity to ensure that we stand up and show that our society is a society that believes in inclusivity, believes in accepting differences, believes in celebrating those differences, believes in diversity and in celebrating that diversity. That's the country, that's the province, that's the city that we live in. That's the type of society that we need to build.

I support the member's concerns around anti-Semitism, and as New Democrats we stand always opposed to it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I am truly honoured to have the opportunity to rise in my place here this afternoon in this chamber to lend not only my voice but my very strong support for the motion that's being brought forward by the member from Thornhill.

I had the privilege, Speaker, to sit alongside the member who has brought forward this motion and also members from the Jewish community—leadership from CIJA—earlier today. I had in that opportunity the chance to read a statement with respect to the motion and some of the broader themes that are part and parcel of what this motion is all about.

There will be others from the government caucus who will be speaking on this motion this afternoon, and I look forward to hearing their remarks.

I do want to take a very quick moment, in addition to thanking the member from Thornhill for sponsoring and bringing forward this motion, to thank the leadership from the community, CIJA in particular—many who are here in the gallery with us today—for their staunch support in ensuring that all parties working on this can find a way to get it right. I think that's what we've managed to do here with this particular motion.

I know in particular there are a number of members on our side of the aisle, including the member from Eglinton–Lawrence, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and the member from York Centre—among many, many others—who have spent years working hard and working relentlessly to make sure that this particular issue is one that gets dealt with, and gets dealt with in a way that is appropriate.

Much of what we see in the discussion and much of what we see in the motion today can also be captured in comments that the Premier made when she was in Israel in May.

Really quickly, Speaker, from my statement earlier this morning—it's something I want to point out with my remaining time—I did say, and it bears repeating, "I would be remiss if I failed to recognize that our government supports the right of individuals and groups to freely express their views, without fear of discrimination or persecution, whether in Ontario or in the Middle East. Freedom of speech is something that all Canadians value and we must"—and we do—"vigorously defend" that right.

"However"—and this is the most important part to consider in the context of this discussion—"we oppose those who spread hatred and fear under the guise of free speech."

What we have seen here in the province of Ontario, and frankly beyond our borders, specifically around the BDS movement, goes right to the heart of what I just said a second ago. We all support the values and the principles that are wrapped up around the notion of defending and standing up for free speech, but we need to draw the line. We need to draw the line collectively in this chamber and beyond and send a very clear message that to do that and to confuse the notion of free speech with what the BDS movement propagates is not appropriate.

That's why, not only as an individual but as a minister and also as the member of provincial Parliament for Vaughan, I am very proud to support this particular motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you.

Mrs. Julia Munro: It is my pleasure today to rise in support of the motion brought forward by my colleague the MPP for Thornhill. This motion recognizes the shared liberal democratic values between Ontario and Israel. It rejects the concept of different treatment from Israel to other countries, including the boycott, divestment and

sanctions movement. Today's motion rejects hate and anti-Semitism and embraces tolerance.

In 1996, the then Liberal government signed the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement. Since then, trade between Canada and Israel has more than doubled to approximately \$1.4 billion annually. Recently, in 2015, Ontario and Israel signed a bilateral trade agreement worth more than \$900 million.

This year, both Premier Wynne and the mayor of Toronto, John Tory, led independent trade missions to Israel. As a direct result of the Premier's mission, 44 new agreements were signed worth over \$180 million. This created hundreds of new jobs in Ontario at a time when far too many Ontarians are finding it tough to make ends meet.

Trade is good. It is good for Canada, it is good for Ontario and it is good for Israel. Trade is an engine of growth and an opportunity to reach out from our society and culture to those around the world. Trade is an opportunity to exchange more than just goods and services. It is an opportunity to share values, culture and our way of life.

The boycott, divestment and sanctions movement claims to be a movement for freedom, justice and equality. However, the reality is that this movement is thinly veiled anti-Semitism.

BDS is discrimination. Just as boycotts have targeted Jews and other vulnerable minorities throughout history, today BDS activists call for a boycott of the citizens of the world's only Jewish state and the only liberal democracy in the Middle East. The BDS movement isn't pro-Palestinian, it's simply anti-Israel. BDS threatens the livelihood of tens of thousands of Palestinians who work side by side with Israelis. Economic co-operation, not boycotts, will help foster peace.

These boycotts take many forms: telling consumers not to purchase Israeli products; calling for Canadian universities to cut ties with Israeli professors. This is not tolerance. This is not in the spirit of globalism. It is pure discrimination. BDS undermines peace, not just in Israel but also in our communities.

Recent research shows that they have been a strong predictor of anti-Semitic hostility, and today across campuses, our Jewish students fear for their safety.

University and college campuses are intended to be a place of learning and growth, of expanding one's mind to new ideas, not shutting down their ideological opponents.

I hope members of all parties will join me in supporting this motion and support tolerance and multiculturalism.

1430

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Michael Coteau: Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I want to first start by thanking the member from Thornhill for her motion and her advocacy on this issue. I also want to thank the Minister of Transportation and the many members from our side—the Minister of Health, the member from Eglinton—

Lawrence and other members—who have been very passionate about the issue in regard to any form of discrimination and prejudice that is attributed to any group here in the province of Ontario.

Let me start by saying that, like all members of our government, we condemn any form of racism or prejudice, including anti-Semitism, here in the province of Ontario. It's completely unacceptable. We don't believe that by building walls, by boycotting, by stopping that conversation that takes place between Ontario and a place like Israel, it's something that's good for this country, let alone good for this province. So when our Premier went to Israel to build relationships, it's something that we believe is good for Canada and good for future generations of Canadians.

I had a school in here earlier today, The North Toronto Christian School, and I was downstairs talking to them about this very issue. I actually invited them in here to come and listen because I think it's important, especially for young people, to understand the issues of today that seem to divide us and to be aware that there is strength when we come together.

I want to thank members from the Jewish community here today who are here because of this motion, and thank them for their support in supporting the member opposite in bringing this forward.

I've been going around the province having conversations about racism, anti-Sikhism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism—all different forms of hate across the province of Ontario. We've probably had, I would say, anywhere between 3,000 to 4,000 people show up to these meetings. Many members on our side have been part of those conversations. I would actually encourage the Conservative Party to at least try to show up to one of these meetings. They haven't showed up to one yet, but there's one in Ottawa this week, and I invite the member from Ottawa to come and join us at the conversation.

I think it's important for us as Ontarians to have these conversations and to continue to build on the goodwill that we have with the State of Israel and continue to build a positive environment here in Ontario that does not tolerate any form of hate and discrimination.

Again, thank you to the member for bringing forward this motion here today.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I want to thank my colleague the honourable member for Thornhill for her advocacy for the Jewish people and her stand against discrimination with this important motion. It gives me great pleasure to rise today for my first speech in this House, and I'm honoured to start here where my predecessor, Tim Hudak, left off. It's definitely an honour to address this important motion.

I'm reminded of a Yiddish proverb: "The world rests on the tip of the tongue." This proverb reminds us that words matter. This motion, although just words, matters a great deal. The motion before the Legislature deals with the boycott, divestment and sanctions movement, also

known as BDS, against the State of Israel. The BDS movement is poison: poison to those engaged in it and poison to the well-being of the Palestinian people and our allies, the State of Israel. BDS is vindictive, short-sighted and fails to improve the lives of either Palestinians or Israelis.

At its root, the BDS movement is based in the dislike of a minority based on its nationality and ethnicity. At its root, this movement is steeped in anti-Semitic discrimination.

This movement is not pro-Palestinian; it is anti-Israel, it is anti-Jewish and it is anti-Semitic. It poisons whatever potential for goodwill there exists between Israel and the Palestinian people, and promotes hatred.

This is a very necessary motion. Anti-Semitism is alive and well. We need to fight against the ethnic intolerance and, to put it bluntly, xenophobia that BDS personifies, which impacts many of Jewish descent, including here in Canada. Gila mentioned that she didn't get off the university campus recently, but I did, and I can speak about the impact, the toxic environment that's being created by the BDS movement on campuses across the country and across Ontario. It's creating a toxic environment for Jewish students and their friends.

In the most recent annual audit of anti-Semitic events, co-authored by B'Nai Brith and the League for Human Rights, over 1,600 cases of harassment, violence and vandalism conducted against individuals were documented here in Canada because of hatred towards not only the Jewish people but their nation.

Don't take it from just one source. The Toronto police department released their 2015 Annual Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report and in it they found that the Jewish population is the most subject to hate crimes for their ethnic background and heritage. The reality of the matter is that anti-Semitism is egged on by enablers such as the BDS movement.

Let's be very clear about BDS: It's not only an anti-Jewish movement, but it's anti-Palestinian, by threatening the jobs of many Palestinian employees. In 2012, Israel accounted for 81% of Palestinian exports. BDS supporters want to get rid of the huge trade surplus Israel extends to Palestine and offer nothing in its place. This trade is a good thing. It builds trust, it builds understanding and it builds successes that can be built on over time. We should be encouraging dialogue and trade between Israel and the Palestinian people, not vilifying Israel, a nation with a stellar human rights record.

The BDS movement poisons rather than assists dialogue towards a peace process. The BDS movement tells those of Jewish descent and background, "You're not welcome here." It tells Jewish shopkeepers and tradespeople that they're not good enough. The BDS movement fails to promote the respectful dialogue necessary to move Palestinian and Israeli relationships forward, and we should firmly oppose it.

I'm very pleased to be supporting this motion. I urge all members on the government benches, and also those on the other opposition benches, who believe in tolerance

and inclusion to stand with me against discrimination and bigotry and support this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, tolerance, tolerance: This week, I was very proud to be part of a Legislature of all parties when we stood up for tolerance when we said no to homophobia and discrimination against gays. As you know, we've gotten a lot of hate mail this week from those who oppose Bill 28, the all parents are equal act. They said, "Do not be tolerant towards homosexuals. Do not be tolerant towards parents who have children who are gay."

We have to be consistent when we talk about tolerance. So in this motion, which I support, it really talks about the essence of Judaism, and the essence of Judaism is that they are in Israel because no one else would take them. Canada would not take Jews. The United States would not take Jews. They had to fight to go back to their land of Abraham, and they've been fighting ever since. They only make up 1.5% of all the landmass of the Middle East, yet they are under constant attack from ISIS, from Iran—always under attack.

That's why you can't separate the Jewish people from the Jewish nation. They say, "Well, it's all right to criticize Israel but you can be nice to Jews." I say hogwash. You can't separate the two. Just like you can't separate tolerance for homosexuals and gays and tolerance for everybody else. You've got to be consistent when you talk about tolerance. Here, BDS tries to manoeuvre this idea that, "We're just against Israel. We're not against the people." Hogwash. The BDS is an insidious attack on Jewish people.

Yesterday, at Ryerson University, a group of Jewish students tried to move a motion to have Jewish Education Week celebrated at Ryerson University. They were blocked from doing that. This isn't a theoretical international issue. This is happening on our campuses—at York University, at Ryerson last night. Students in my riding, grandsons and granddaughters of Holocaust survivors, are afraid to go to school—physically attacked, emotionally attacked on a daily basis. This is going on, folks. It's not just happening in Israel.

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This kind of insidious attack of intolerance is being proposed and being exposed and promoted by BDS. That's why this motion is a time to stand up and say no to this type of intolerance towards Israel and the Jewish people.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure today to support my dear friend Gila Martow and this positive motion on a very hateful initiative put forward by some on university campuses in the great province of Ontario.

Like my friend Gila says, her name is "joy," so I want to talk about something very positive. In 2014, I travelled to Israel. I have always been a supporter of our Jewish community in this province, particularly in my riding of

Nepean-Carleton, where we have a number of beautiful, welcoming and open synagogues in Barrhaven and in Craig Henry.

But it wasn't until I actually travelled to Israel that I understood what a contrast she actually is. She is a contrast of antiquity and modernity, a state that is galvanized by religion but is secular. And it's driven by democratic values: the only democracy in the Middle East that allows for a gay pride parade and the only democracy that has a functioning government. I note that in Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas is now in the 11th year of a four-year term.

But the contradictions are much more than that. When I was in Israel, I understood a little bit about the security threats that the people of Israel deal with every day.

We would often go to checkpoints. I went to Lebanon, and the corner with Hamas was as far as I am from the people in the gallery.

I went to the Golan Heights, where stray bullets were coming in, and shelling from the night, because of the conflict in Syria.

And I went to a place called Sderot, where we toured a bomb shelter disguised as a caterpillar for the children in that community.

I went to Yad Vashem, where I recognized that my grandfather fought in a war against tyranny, and at the same time, the Jewish people of this community were threatened. I saw that at Yad Vashem when I saw tiny black slippers under a glass floor, to recognize that Canada and Israel came of age at the same time—Israel as a result of World War II. But it was also one of the proudest and most defining moments of the people of this country.

I once got to meet Ehud Barak. He was the former defence minister as well as the former Prime Minister of Israel. I met him, with Peter MacKay, at a state dinner. He held up his glass and he said, "To Canada and Israel, best friends. We are, together, the largest country in the world."

Laughter.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm glad that you all had a good laugh at that. We actually felt it was quite prophetic because we are so close and we have worked so well together over the years fighting for freedom against terrorism. I would hope that, together in this assembly, we would join together to fight anti-Semitism, hatred, bigotry, and the terrorism of our students on campuses across this province.

With that, I conclude with: Am Yisrael Chai.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Very close.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I did it wrong?

Mrs. Gila Martow: Very close.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks, Gila. Anyway, I'm proud to support my friend and colleague. To the people from CIJA and from the Jewish community here today in Ontario, I will stand by you as much as I will stand by my colleague. I know in the assembly here today, we may not get unanimity, but we will get a majority.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to commend the member from Thornhill for this motion. It is a good motion and deserves support of all members in this House. I just want to say that we need to do a lot more than pass motions, though. I think the member would agree.

When I was mayor of Winnipeg, I rebuilt the relationship with Be'er Sheva and my friend Yaakov Turner, who was not just the mayor, but was, at I think 78 years old, an Air Force fighter pilot, which not too many mayors in Canada are, which gives you some dimensions of that.

We also built the Jewish community centre in Winnipeg, and we reached out, during periods of horrible anti-Semitism in Argentina, to very proudly bring more Jews from Argentina than just about any other place.

We also established the Winnipeg refugee settlement centre for Falasha Jews in Be'er Sheva, paid for both by the Asper Foundation and by the city of Winnipeg in that very strong relationship. I made many trips with the Canada-Israel Committee to Israel.

It was important to me because I'm not Jewish. My friend Gail Asper chaired all of my campaigns. With her and her father, we worked together on the human rights museum, which, with this government, put \$5 million into Winnipeg, and I'm very proud of that. When you go in there, you see the stories of Sikhs beside the stories of Jews, beside the stories of Muslims. I miss my friend Izzy so much because very few Canadians had such a global role.

It's also important that we never, ever, ever back away from our commitment to Israel. But we understand, while the member from Nepean is right—she talked about how it's often said that it is a good home in a bad neighbourhood when you talk about Israel—that the situations in Syria and situations with the Palestinians are also terrible.

I too toured many parts in many, many trips, I went into Palestinian communities and met young democratic Palestinians who are trying to achieve self-determination and remember that the Jordanian government shot 30,000 of them. I just want to make sure that we stand also against Islamophobia, and join the Israelis who are trying to work to support Palestinians as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I return to the member from Thornhill to wrap up.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise today and thank all of my colleagues who spoke so supportively.

I respect everything that the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton said, but I would just remind him that the Jewish community finds the BDS movement anti-Semitic and hateful. The Jewish students on campus feel intimidated and worse. As my colleague from Nepean-Carleton alluded to, it's almost like being the victim of terrorism on the campuses. It's a terror campaign against the Jewish students.

Maybe it's not presented that way. Maybe when you read an article or you google something, maybe you

don't feel the emotion. But the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton, as he said, is a member of a visible minority, and I know that he has experienced, in his life, some very difficult and intimidating circumstances. I would like to remind him that our university campus students aren't always as emotionally strong as he is to deal with it.

I want to thank not just the Jewish students and the Jewish community organizations that are here but all of the Christian groups and churches that are so supportive of Israel and are so adamantly against the BDS movement.

I also want to mention that, on this Monday, there's a big gala by Hasbara Fellowships. One of the honorees is here—Shir Barzilay is here—but one of the other honorees is a Muslim couple, Sohail and Raheel Raza, a husband-and-wife team. They're Muslim, and they support Israel and they talk anti-BDS.

I want to just mention that this is something we are all in together. It's not just a Jewish community issue. The Jewish community is not just focused on Israel; it's focused on everything in Ontario that we can do to make life better and a better quality of life; it's focused on disability and health and everything else that we worry about and talk about here in the Legislature.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We will vote on this item at the end of private members' public business.

Before I call orders of the day, I wanted to remind members that you are not allowed to address each other by first name. You must address each other by the riding.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I was just using the Hebrew for "joy."

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): No, no. The member knows better. That's the rule.

COLLEGES WEEK

Mr. Vic Dhillon: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should commemorate the 50th anniversary of when the Honourable Bill Davis created Ontario's public college system by recognizing April 3 to April 9 of 2017 as Colleges Week. **1450**

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: On May 21, 1965, in the very place where we are gathered today, a bill was introduced to create a system of colleges of applied arts and technology. On that day, the Honourable William Grenville Davis said the following words:

"The bill marks a major step forward in the development of our educational system ... that the proposed legislation for colleges of applied arts and technology must be viewed in the light of the economic and social demands not only of today but of tomorrow. It will be recognized, I am confident, that this expansion of our school system is imperative to meet the needs of individ-

ual citizens as well as those of society as a whole. This development is another step towards the fulfillment of our efforts to expand and re-design our system of schools and universities to meet more adequately the changing demands of challenging times.”

Today we are debating a motion that recognizes the foresight of Premier Davis in introducing Bill 153. In 2017, we will celebrate, as a province, the 50th anniversary of a college system that has been growing and flourishing for decades. So how did we travel this road, going from an idea in 1965 to where we are now in 2016, where we have 24 public colleges that make up a world-class college system?

In the 1960s, in the lead-up to the announcement of the new college system, there was a recognized gap in Ontario’s education system that resulted in significant skills shortages, and it was limiting Ontario’s growth. At the very beginning, colleges were designed to allow recent high school graduates an alternative to university and to facilitate retraining to those who were looking to take on new challenges, allowing people to shift readily from jobs within an industry or from one industry to another.

One of the main purposes of colleges was to give the people of Ontario the ability to pursue the career of their choice. The idea was that jobs in the future would require a higher level of education, and jobs requiring minimal formal training and education were declining. This idea is as pertinent now as it was in 1967. We’re often talking about the knowledge economy, experiential learning, and more closely linking education and economic opportunities.

Earlier this year, Sean Conway and the Premier’s highly skilled workforce panel tabled a report recommending how Ontario can better prepare a highly skilled workforce. This report is now shaping the thinking in the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development on how our government, in partnership with business, labour and the education sector, moves forward an ambitious plan to implement these recommendations.

Our public colleges have been filling the need for skilled graduates who are ready to take on the complex challenges our province faces. When the first colleges opened their doors in 1967, they trained approximately 20,000 students for technical and vocational fields. Today, Ontario’s 24 colleges offer hundreds of programs ranging from robotics and advanced automation to commercial beekeeping, brewmaster and dental hygienist, among many others. There are more than 900 college programs that are being offered in Ontario’s public colleges, whose breadth and variety touch on almost every area of our day-to-day lives. Even if you didn’t go to college yourself, chances are that you are helped every day by people who were helped by what they learned in college.

Since their inception, more than two million people have graduated from Ontario colleges. As Ontario’s economy has changed over the past 50 years, our public colleges have grown into playing critical roles in their

communities. Program development at colleges is done in collaboration with local employers, professional and community organizations and stakeholders to ensure academic programs are responsive to student and employer needs.

Colleges work with program advisory committees made up of employers who describe their current and future needs. For example, a large college like George Brown engages hundreds of employers through this process.

In 2015-16, over 80% of college graduates found employment within six months after graduation, and over 90% of employers of college graduates were satisfied with their employees’ preparation. Our public colleges are an incredible gateway into the labour market for our learners. For employers, colleges are a critical resource to connecting with skilled workers.

Geographically speaking, our colleges together have more than 100 campuses in communities across Ontario. As you know, in the 2016 budget, our government announced an ambitious plan to transform OSAP. A key driver of this plan was the belief that everyone, regardless of their personal or financial circumstances, should have access to higher education and the labour market. Our public colleges have been remarkable partners in upholding this principle and in helping to break the cycle of poverty through education.

Colleges have played, and will continue to play, a major role in opening up opportunities for all Ontarians to be educated and trained. Under the Reaching Higher plan announced in 2005, the government committed to investments to improve access to post-secondary opportunities for indigenous people, students with disabilities and first-generation students, and to increase access to French-language post-secondary education for franco-phones. We’ve made important gains in expanding access to these groups.

Colleges have made great progress in increasing access for indigenous students and in creating welcoming environments. They have forged an important partnership with indigenous communities to realize this success. Over 17,000 self-identified indigenous students attended Ontario’s colleges and universities in 2014-15. Colleges have served as an important access point for students with disabilities and have helped thousands of people with disabilities realize their potential through access to education.

Colleges have been vital partners with our government in providing opportunities for under-represented groups and giving them a high-quality and meaningful education. The ministry has also supported this work through major investments; for example, in 2015-16, over \$34 million to support students with disabilities, over \$25 million to support indigenous students, over \$8 million to support first-generation students and over \$29 million to support francophone students and French-language programming at colleges.

Madam Speaker, the numbers are impressive. Without our college system, much of this success would not be

possible and, quite frankly, our province may have missed out on the contributions these students have to offer their communities and our society.

Colleges also have a unique role in educating adults and those who are looking to switch their career paths. Many older people, both those who have never had a post-secondary education and those who have a university degree, find college to be the best path to gaining the skills and information they need to pursue a new dream or chase an old one.

In an economy that is rapidly changing, we want to make sure that we don't leave anyone behind. Colleges also play an important role in providing skills training to participants in the ministry's Second Career program by helping unemployed and laid-off workers train for occupations in demand in Ontario in order to find employment.

One of the key messages to come out of the presentation of the highly skilled workforce report is the need for strategic training programs to support Ontarians in the skilled trades. Ontario colleges play a vital role in the apprenticeship system, providing many apprentices with the skills they need to thrive in skilled trades careers.

About 84% of classroom apprenticeship training is delivered at Ontario's public colleges. Colleges are an integral partner in ensuring apprentices have the supports and the resources they need to succeed. Without our college system, Ontarians would have significantly less access to training programs that help to prepare them for the important jobs that make our province great.

In conclusion, in the 1960s, when Ontario had a vision for a public college system, the builders of that vision had their eye to the future. We had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Davis in preparation for this very important day, and we asked him about his recollection of this historic moment in Ontario's history. He noted that leaders weren't looking to do something traditional. They wanted to create a unique college system. He also said that we cannot underestimate how important the introduction of the college system was to creating major change and improvement to Ontario's education system.

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When we look into the crystal ball another 15 years from now, where will our college system be? I believe it will be bigger and better. I believe that colleges will continue to be the pioneers of new programs and training, and new bridges into the labour market. Our colleges are uniquely positioned to promote innovation and economic growth through the development of high-quality post-secondary programs and training that lead to a workforce ready for the future job market.

I will, if I may, end with some words spoken almost 50 years ago here in this place where we're all gathered today: "I readily admit that this concept of colleges of applied arts and technology has captured my imagination; I am enthusiastic and optimistic about this probable outcome of this new venture in education. I am confident it will go far to meet the needs of youth and adults in the future."

Well, as it turns out, this confidence was well-founded. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to our colleges of applied arts and technology. They have, indeed, captured our imagination. They have, indeed, achieved the greatest outcomes over the past 50 years.

In another 50 years, I believe the leaders of the day will be able to say without question that Ontario's public college system is the best in the world and that Ontarians are better for it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Lorne Coe: Fifty years ago, the Honourable William Davis said, "The new era is golden with promise, if only we prepare in time for it." It's within that context that I'm pleased, on behalf of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus, to support motion 23, declaring the week of April 3 to 9, 2017, as Colleges Week.

Premier Davis was a member of the Ontario Legislature from 1959 to 1985. He was appointed education minister in 1962 and added the university affairs portfolio two years later. Now, Speaker, under Premier Davis's guidance, Ontario's education system underwent major change and, among his wide-ranging accomplishments in education, were the creation of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and the establishment of Ontario's widely respected community college system. Our province owes a great debt of gratitude to Premier Davis, and I feel that all comments about the success of our community college system should be prefaced with an acknowledgement of his many great contributions.

In my role as the official opposition critic for advanced education and skills development, I've had the honour of visiting many of our community colleges across Ontario during the spring and summer, and I've heard their issues and concerns, and suggestions for improvement. I've also learned of their accomplishments.

We've had great conversations about closing the existing skills gap in this province, about funding for new programs and facilities, and about issues of concern to students' associations. But what's clear from all of these meetings is that I have come away with a renewed sense of the importance that community colleges play within the higher education framework. Ontario's community colleges produce graduates with advanced skills essential to the manufacturing sector, and the demand for business graduates from Ontario's colleges is growing.

Recently, the chief executive officer at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce said, "Colleges are vital human capital generators and human capital is Ontario's greatest comparative advantage in the global economy"—the global economy, Speaker. He went on to say that "Ontario, with its robust college system, is well placed to lead the world in career focused post-secondary education."

The accomplishments of our colleges are many, and I would be remiss, Speaker—very remiss—if I didn't highlight some of them. Students from Fanshawe College worked with a digital marketing company to create a

smartphone application that promotes tourism opportunities in rural Ontario.

Conestoga College has officially launched a new research facility in Cambridge that will drive innovation, commercialization, productivity improvement and competitiveness for Ontario's manufacturing sector.

I visited Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough and its Kawartha Trades and Technology Centre. It's an 87,000-square-foot facility, and it features smart-wired classrooms, shops and labs, ensuring that students learn on new equipment with the latest technology.

We continue to remain concerned about Ontario's skills gap, which is costing our economy \$24.3 billion a year and which means students are graduating without the skills needed for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Employers shouldn't have to search beyond Ontario's borders to find the right candidate for the job, and young people shouldn't struggle to find employment.

We believe that the government can do a better job in supporting the community college system founded by former Ontario PC Premier Bill Davis, which plays such a pivotal role in addressing the skills gap. We'll continue to advocate for an education system that graduates students for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

Speaker, let me conclude with the words of Premier Davis in his statement to the Legislature in June 1967. They were appropriate in 1967 and, as I stand here today, they are appropriate for the discussion we're having: "I believe ... that the proposed legislation for colleges ... must be viewed in the light of the economic and social demands not only of today but of tomorrow."

"Not only of today but of tomorrow": words that still stand true today.

Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak and support this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Wayne Gates: First of all, I want to welcome Fred, who is here to see his son, Jackson, who is the page captain today. He's also a principal, so he understands the importance of education.

It's a pleasure to rise in this House today to speak in recognition of the amazing work that Ontario's public colleges do. On May 21, 1965, Bill 153 was tabled. It called for the establishment of alternatives to university in the province of Ontario. Legislatures at the time saw that the options for Ontario students who graduate high school but don't move on to university were limited and set out to address that problem.

In doing so, they helped to create a new part of the education system that focuses on skills that students need to jump straight from their education into the workforce. It was a revolutionary idea at the time but now is one that we recognize as being an incredibly important part of our education system as a whole.

Madam Speaker, in my riding of Niagara Falls we have some pretty incredible folks working and going to school at Niagara College. In the 50 years since Niagara College was founded, they have done a great job. They

started with an outdoor, temporary classroom in 1967 and have evolved to run a truly state-of-the-art facility for a number of different programs. Niagara College now features leading-edge technology, labs and specialized classrooms. An on-campus spa is used for teaching.

With this incredible development, Niagara College has been able to place itself as a model of applied education for other educational institutes to try. In fact, as Niagara College enters their 50th year, I'm happy to report that, while they will certainly pause to look back and reflect, they are still moving ahead with an eye for the future.

Construction is under way for a \$50-million campus redevelopment project. The project will further modernize the learning environment of Niagara College students and enhance their overall experience while at school. As part of that redevelopment, the school has opened the Walker Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre on the Welland campus. The centre became operational as of May this year and is a 15,000-square-foot facility that specializes in engineering, design, 3D digital scanning technology, and lean manufacturing processes, right at the campus.

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Niagara College has long had the expertise and equipment to serve the advanced manufacturing sector, but until earlier this year, they lacked a cohesive, dedicated space for applied research projects in this key sector of our economy. In fact, the sector is so important that it now accounts for more than 900 companies, employing 21,000 people, and 16% of the Niagara region's GDP. That's the reason why we should never give up on manufacturing, and that's why we should never say, "Let them die."

I would like to take a moment at this point in my speech to recognize the contributions of the Walker family and Walker Industries. They made—this is important—the largest corporate donation in the history of Niagara College to get this building built. It's important to acknowledge people who support colleges.

Another part of the redevelopment project at Niagara College is the expansion of the Canadian Food and Wine Institute. This institution, located on the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus, has already positioned Niagara College as a world leader in food across the country.

Niagara College is home to Canada's first teaching brewery—this is really interesting, because I know a lot of my colleagues like to go to Niagara-on-the-Lake and try out the brews down in Niagara-on-the-Lake—and commercial teaching winery, as well as a world-renowned full-service teaching restaurant that focuses on local and seasonal cuisine.

When you combine all this with the teaching vineyards, hop yards and organic gardens, there is simply no question that the Canadian Food and Wine Institute delivers a learning environment that is unmatched in Canada and possibly the world.

Now, this 13,000-square-foot addition to the institution will help meet the ever-growing demand for the wine and brewery programs offered through Niagara College.

I've got to tell you, I am really looking forward to the completion of construction on the Canadian Food and Wine Institute in the spring of 2017. Hopefully, with all the kind words that I've been saying, they'll invite me to the opening.

This is certainly not all that the college has to boast about. Niagara College has seen their enrolment hold steady while other colleges across the province have seen a decrease. As part of that work, Niagara College has been able to ensure that of their more than 8,000 domestic students, nearly 6,000—think about that; 6,000—or 75% of their students, actually come from the Niagara region. That's a pretty incredible stat, and I think it's even more impressive when you consider that more than two thirds of the graduates of Niagara College stay in the Niagara region as they graduate. We all want to keep our kids at home with us.

As well, I'm proud to say that not only does Niagara College do a fantastic job of training our local young people and having them stay in our community, but they have also been able to make sure those young people get jobs, and that's equally important.

Of the students who graduate from Niagara College, more than 85% are employed in their field within six months of graduating. On top of that, employers report that they are happy with the graduates of the college more than 95% of the time. I think some of the credit must go to the businesses.

I've only got 40 seconds left.

It's critical that we support our local businesses, so I always do everything I can to stand up for them, and I have to say that I really appreciate it when I see them turning around and giving back to our community. This is important, in my last 30 seconds: They hire local students, they provide training opportunities through co-op placements and they work with the college and everyone in the community to make Niagara a better place to work and live.

Clearly, Niagara College and every other public college in the province of Ontario make valuable contributions, not only to the community in which they are located but also to the province as a whole.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted to be here today to speak on this bill in favour of recognizing Colleges Week, in honour of the system's 50th anniversary. Speaker, my only complaint is that they only gave me four minutes to talk, and I have so much to say.

I do want to congratulate the member from Brampton West for bringing forth this motion today. I also want to acknowledge people in the gallery who have been waiting patiently and listening to debates on unrelated items. I want to say thank you for that.

Thank you: Fred Gibbons, the chair of Colleges Ontario and the president of Northern College; Don Lovisa, the vice president of Colleges Ontario and the president of Durham College; Ron McKerlie, president of Mohawk College; Chris Whitaker, president of Humber College; and Jim Madder, president of Confederation College.

We have some student associations represented today, and I'm especially happy to see students here: Jennifer Horwath and Ciara Byrne from College Student Alliance; Egor Evseev from Algonquin Students' Association; and, of course, Colleges Ontario is represented today by Linda Franklin, Jane Holmes and Rob Savage. We also have Brent Wootton, Caroline Grech and Jean-Guy Fréchette, all joining us in the gallery. Thank you for being here for this important day.

Everybody who has spoken has mentioned Bill Davis. He reminded me that when he introduced the idea of colleges 50 years ago, there was not actually universal support for colleges. Hard to imagine, Speaker, because I think it's impossible to imagine Ontario without Ontario's colleges today, but he reminded us that the Globe and Mail actually came out against the establishment of colleges—unbelievable. He also claimed that the Liberals voted against it, and I just find that impossible to imagine. If it is true, we apologize for ever having voted against the establishment of colleges.

Of course, we have some great people in the gallery who represent the administration, but I think colleges are best judged by their graduates. We have some very notable alumni: Paul Haggis from Fanshawe College; Norm Macdonald of Saturday Night Live went to Algonquin; George Stroumboulopoulos was a graduate of Humber; Donovan Bailey is a graduate of Sheridan College; and in this House we have college graduates. I'm just going to name a couple, but I bet there are more: the member from Sudbury, Glenn Thibeault, went to Fanshawe, and Lou Rinaldi went to George Brown College. I'm sure we have more graduates than that in this Legislature.

I had the honour of attending the 2016 Premier's Awards just a couple of weeks ago, where we honoured some remarkable graduates. I am going to name a few of them.

Ron Suter graduated from Humber College. He is the executive vice-president of NBCUniversal Television and New Media Distribution Canada.

Kelly Crawford won the Community Services award. She's a graduate of Canadore College. She's from M'Chigeeng First Nation. She's vice-principal of Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute on Manitoulin Island. She has contributed to curriculum projects over the years, including that in 2015 she wrote a guide to help teachers promote greater understanding of our treaties.

A remarkable, remarkable person who won a Premier's Award that evening is Farzana Wahidy, a Loyalist College graduate and an extraordinary woman, an Afghan woman photographer who actually—and I hope my family isn't watching because they never do, but they're all getting copies of her book for Christmas because it's an extraordinary book of photography and a wonderful example of graduates from our colleges.

Dianne Martin is the executive director of the Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario.

Aylan Couchie from Georgian College won the Recent Graduate award: a sculptor, Speaker, who is a

remarkable sculptor but she also is the grand champion of the butter sculpting competition at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. That earned her a spot on the Rick Mercer Report.

Chris Gower is a Fanshawe College graduate. He is the COO of PCL Construction, the largest contractor in Canada, responsible for 4,500 employees and \$5.2 billion of work throughout North America and Australia—not bad for a graduate of Fanshawe College.

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Speaker, I could go on and on, and would love to do that, but I do want to conclude by saying that we are so enormously proud of our colleges. They provide an excellent education. They provide education to people with that practical, hands-on and technical experience as well.

It's really important to us that everybody in this province gets access to that post-secondary education based on their potential, not on their ability to pay. That's why we're making transformative changes to OSAP. The new OSAP means that 150,000 students will have grants in excess of tuition, and 250,000 students in the province will be better off and get more student aid than they currently do.

I want to say thank you to the colleges for making that happen. I know it was a lot of hard work for you, but it's an extraordinary result as these young people come to our colleges. Thank you so much.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's truly a privilege to add to the debate of this Colleges Week motion brought forward by the member from Brampton West.

Some may be wondering why a Liberal member is seeking to honour the achievements of a former PC Premier. Bill Davis, to this day, is famously known as Brampton Billy in his hometown, so it is hardly surprising to see that the member from Brampton West is acknowledging a true champion for Brampton and Ontario as a whole. Speaker, our leader, Patrick Brown, has said many times that there is no monopoly on a good idea, and I applaud the member from Brampton West for honouring a good idea, especially one that comes from a different political party than his own.

The motion states “that, in the opinion of this House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should commemorate the 50th anniversary of when the Honourable Bill Davis created Ontario's public college system by recognizing April 3 to April 9 of 2017 as Colleges Week.” I am pleased to support this motion.

Speaker, did you know that there is actually a Chatham–Kent–Essex connection to this motion? Next year, St. Clair College will celebrate its 50th anniversary. The following quote is from the college's website, honouring this milestone. The college was formerly known as the Western Ontario Institute of Technology, also known as WOIT.

“In 1965, the provincial Legislature voted on a bill introduced by the Honourable William G. Davis which,

when passed, consented to the formation of a new kind of post-secondary education. The concept of colleges of applied arts and technology was born and 19 provincial colleges, including St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology in Windsor, Ontario, became a reality.”

In 1967 the College's first building was completed, in Windsor. Four campuses were eventually opened in Windsor–Essex and Chatham–Kent with state-of-the-art facilities in health sciences, engineering technology and skilled trades, business and IT and media, the arts and design programs. I might add, Speaker, that I am a proud graduate of St. Clair College, and I might just be the first grad from that college to become an MPP representing the proud riding of Chatham–Kent–Essex.

Well, the over 9,000 full time students who take classes in over 100 degree, diploma and certificate programs may not know it, but they can thank the good work of former PC Premier Bill Davis for the quality education that they receive today. I'm very thankful that St. Clair College's Thames Campus has a home in my community in Chatham. They are a fantastic community partner that provides key training for the workplace of tomorrow.

The legacy of Bill Davis is one that is rooted in numerous projects and initiatives that were good for Ontario. If something is good for Ontario, that should be noted, regardless of which political party came up with the idea. So I want to thank the Liberal member for Brampton West for putting forward this motion to honour the work by the great PC Premier Bill Davis, who established Ontario's college system.

We must not ignore the positive example set by Premier Davis. Too often, politicians refuse to listen to others that have different viewpoints. That's truly a shame. Ontario is at its best when we work, first and foremost, for Ontario. Premier Davis realized this, which is why we are standing here today celebrating one of his most significant accomplishments.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to have a couple of minutes on the clock to speak to the motion today and follow the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex. We both share a college. St. Clair College has a satellite campus in Chatham and several other satellites in and around Essex county and Windsor, but primarily their main campus is in south Windsor, just on the border of my riding.

What an incredible campus they have here. I have heard many members stand up today and tout the benefits of their local community college but, I'll tell you, we've got the best one. We—bar none, hands down—have the best college in Ontario. It's St. Clair College—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Niagara.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: —and I'll argue with anyone here. We're very, very lucky.

I want to give a shout-out to some of the folks there who make that place work. The president of St. Clair College is Patti France. Just a couple of years ago, I think, Patti took over the helm at St. Clair College, and she has done a wonderful job in supporting innovation

and the curriculum. It's a dynamic place. It's responsive. I believe that the administration at St. Clair College have their ear to the ground when it comes to matching curriculum with the skills that are required out there in the real world.

I'll point to an article last week where Premier Aviation out of Windsor is partnering with St. Clair College to develop a new program that will see aircraft mechanics and maintenance folks trained right in Windsor. That's a wonderful way to connect the learning experience to real-world jobs that are required and needed all around our country. That's just one of over 100 programs and degrees that you'll find at St. Clair College. They're always innovating and they're always working with the business community and the public sector, the private sector, to match those skills with the students' requirements and needs.

There are over 9,000 full-time students who, as I've mentioned, take over 100 degree, diploma and certificate programs that are available at all the campuses through the network at St. Clair College. If you go to the main college campus, you'll find a state-of-the-art sportsplex that just got built a couple of years ago. It's unbelievable. It offers all the amenities that you could ever imagine for the student body there and for the faculty. They also have a state-of-the-art medicalplex, and downtown is the mediaplex, where you'll learn all the new-age and new technology that encompasses IT and entertainment and production led by some of the greatest instructors and teachers and professors that you could find in Ontario.

I want to give a great shout-out to our good friend, John Fairley. John is the biggest booster of St. Clair College. He has been their vice-president of college communications and community relations. He also hosts the television program Face to Face. It's must-see TV; right, John? You get on Face to Face and you know you've made it in local politics when you're sitting face-to-face with John Fairley on Cogeco cable.

But John also, as I've mentioned, works for the college as their vice-president, communications, and he'll tell you that this is the place where, really, students are coming and becoming successful—a whole litany, a huge list, of graduates and alumni who have become prominent folks in business and in public administration.

Speaker, Windsor and Essex county—I think everyone in the House knows that we are the automotive hub in Ontario. If you want it built right, you build it in Windsor.

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There has been a wonderful match between the educational course curriculums available at St. Clair College and that industry that exists just on the doorstep of the college. It will continue because of the leadership of the folks at St. Clair and because of the fact that we have a province that values that type of education. We support our colleges in Ontario, and I am pleased to recognize St. Clair College today.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Bob Delaney: Speaker, I think each of us, in our finest moments, are or try to be a composite of some of the leaders, role models, performers—living and past—and others that we respect and admire.

Certainly I know, having lived and worked in our three largest provinces—Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia—that there were two Premiers whose actions and whose vision and whose forethought have long inspired me and I've thought, "There's a part of me that I would like to have be like them." One was former Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed, and the other—someone that I've had the privilege of knowing—has been former Ontario Premier Bill Davis.

Bill Davis was a young guy when he was first elected in 1959, holding the seat previously held by former PC Premier Thomas Laird Kennedy. It was under Bill Davis that the provincial school system really came together and became a leader in Canada. Premier Davis, as education minister, I think, increased spending on education something in the order of 1,000%.

By the mid-1960s, then the education minister and minister of secondary education—whatever they called it at the time—Davis was the moving force behind, as has previously been described, Ontario's community college system.

I'm not sure that Premier Davis could possibly have foreseen what a wonderful gift he then gave to the province, and I'd like to talk a little bit about some of the things that came out of that community college system. I will, of course, like many members, begin at home.

In Mississauga and Oakville, we're very pleased to have campuses of Sheridan College. One day, Jeff Zabudsky, the president of Sheridan College, was talking to me and he said, "Do you know how many of the top-grossing films that feature special effects have benefited from the work of Sheridan graduates from our world-renowned program that teaches students special effects in cinema?"

I listened for a minute, and I thought, "Okay, I'm going to try something, because that sounds to me like a leading question." I tried, "All of them?" He said, "Yes, all of them."

It's also worth noting that something that's now playing, which my colleague from Oakville reminded me of, is a piece of theatre called Come From Away, which is now playing and is completely sold out as a production at the Royal Alex. It's opening pretty soon on Broadway. Come From Away is a product of Sheridan College and a product of that community college system.

Our community colleges allow students to do a deep dive in their technical curriculum in IT. Close to where I am, Cyclone Manufacturing simply can't get enough community-college-trained machine programmers.

Whether it be a hard currency earner in the way that they're able to train foreign students, or one that offers students here in Ontario a career path that is unique, our community college system is what's being celebrated by my colleague from Brampton West, and I am pleased to support his motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's an honour to be here today to declare Colleges Week—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: It should be Bill Davis Colleges Week.

Ms. Laurie Scott: My colleague from Dufferin–Caledon is right. It should be called Bill Davis Colleges Week, because we're honouring the Honourable Bill Davis, who, in 1965, brought forward legislation to create the college system. Thus, my colleague in the government is declaring Colleges Week from April 3 to April 9, 2017.

I've heard of some names of college graduates that were mentioned by the Deputy Premier. I'd like to add my name, however famous or infamous it may be, to that list of college graduates from Loyalist College in Belleville, for nursing. And welcome, our guests in the gallery, not only representing Colleges Ontario but some of our presidents.

A shout-out to the Durham College president, Don, who is with us today—Durham College, of course, services a large part of my riding. And of course the great Fleming College, which was once known as Sir Sandford Fleming College, in Peterborough, has campuses in Lindsay—the Frost campus—and in Haliburton, the renowned arts campus that we have up in the Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock riding.

There is so much to say, and I have a minute to say it. Look, when I first was elected to the Legislature, my first critic portfolio was training, colleges and universities, and I just loved it. I loved going and touring, the value that the colleges have for our students. When they first graduate sometimes they're not quite ready—when they graduate at 17 now—to go right into a big university setting. Colleges are the integral role that needs to be played out in the province of Ontario to fill our skills gap that exists. I know that the Deputy Premier is also in charge of closing that skills gap.

I know that our former colleague from Cambridge, Rob Leone, wrote a wonderful paper that maybe the Deputy Premier should look at, about higher learning for better jobs and how the college system can play an integral part in that for our skilled trades, our manufacturing, and even our nursing students going forward.

I praise the motion that's before us today and praise the Honourable Bill Davis for creating colleges in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Granville Anderson: It's really an opportunity to speak to this motion here today. I would like to commend the member from Brampton West for bringing this motion forward. It's so wonderful to be here.

I will add my name to the list of college graduates, although I'm not very famous. I went to Seneca College back in the day. I will date myself: 1981. I owe my being here today to that humble beginning back in 1981. That's how I became involved in politics.

Back in college I met Alvin Curling, former Speaker of the House. He was director of student services at the

college at the time. He decided to run back then and in, I believe, 1985. I worked on his campaign and here I am today. I got involved in the political process. So I owe my beginning to the college system as a whole.

Colleges are a wonderful, wonderful addition to this province. I listen to the radio stations, and Humber College is famous for the students from the journalism program. Colleges such as George Brown—culinary arts—and Durham College, their nursing program—and what else? Don is here today from Durham. It's a wonderful day. They add so much. I believe 86% of our college graduates find jobs. It's funny; I went to college first, but—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. I need to return to the member from Brampton West to wrap up.

Mr. Vic Dhillon: First of all, I'd like to thank my colleagues who spoke on this motion, from Whitby–Oshawa, London North Centre, Chatham–Kent–Essex, from Essex, Mississauga–Streetsville, Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock and Durham. As well, a big thanks to the leadership of various community colleges who made their way here today to witness this motion: Thank you for all the hard work that you do in creating a highly skilled workforce, which is so necessary for making our community great and for creating a vibrant economy.

I would like to also extend a personal shout-out to Sheridan College, a college in Brampton, just outside of my riding, and to recognize Ms. Mary Preece, who is the newly minted president.

Gone are the days when someone can get a diploma or a degree and enter the workforce. We live in a fiercely competitive world.

1540

From time to time, I have the opportunity to visit Sheridan College, and you can witness the footprint of many businesses at that college. It's really great to see, because those companies that participate with Sheridan College need a highly skilled workforce, and Sheridan is equipped to provide the necessary training today so that those students can hit the ground running.

Education has to be done differently. That's why our government is implementing the STEM program—science, technology, engineering and math—or STEAM, because companies need a skilled workforce near them, and I think are—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. We will be voting on this item at the end of private members' public business.

PUTTING VOTERS FIRST
(ELECTION AMENDMENT) ACT, 2016
LOI DE 2016 DONNANT LA PRIORITÉ
AUX ÉLECTEURS (MODIFICATION
DE LA LOI ÉLECTORALE)

Mr. Bisson moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 75, An Act to amend the Election Act / Projet de loi 75, Loi modifiant la Loi électorale.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, 12 minutes? How can somebody do justice to this particular issue?

The short title of this bill is Putting Voters First, and what I mean by that and what New Democrats mean by that is that it's a really strange quirk that we have in the law that a person can go to an individual and say, "I wish to offer you a bribe by way of a job, by way of an envelope of money, by way of some kind of promise," to run or not run for office, yet it's not against the law to solicit the same. It just seems to me it's kind of outrageous that on the one side you can't make the offer legally, but on the other side you can do the ask legally. To me, it doesn't make any sense.

Imagine, if you will, Madam Speaker, I go to you and I say, "You know what? I'd like you to break into the bank tonight and I'd like you to steal some money. When you have that money, you bring it over and we're going to share it," and the law would say, if we're caught, you go to jail but I'm okay because I'm not the one who committed the crime. Of course, the Criminal Code doesn't allow that. Whoever incites the crime and asks and organizes and tries to get the crime to be done and perpetrates it is treated the same way as the person who actually does it.

So why is it that we have this quirk in the Election Act that says it was okay for Madam Sorbara—well, it wasn't okay for Madam Sorbara and it wasn't okay for Mr. Lougheed to solicit Mr. Olivier not to run, but it was okay for Mr. Thibeault to ask the Premier or ask somebody, I'm not sure who exactly, for something in order to run. Why we know that, Madam Speaker, is that not only is it by way of the charges that were laid in the court, but it's also by way of discussion that we've heard from the federal prosecutor—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member needs to withdraw. He cannot make allegations against another member.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Okay. I withdraw.

Again I say, back to the point, Madam Speaker, that we know by way of what's happened in the court that the federal prosecutor, the one who is prosecuting this particular case, has pretty well said that in fact this has taken place, that Mr. Thibeault had made some requests in order to be able to run for the Liberal Party in the province of Ontario.

The question becomes, if that is the case and that was proven in the court, why should Mr. Thibeault not be any more guilty than the people who actually made the offer in the first place? I would just say—

Mr. James J. Bradley: This is sickening.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: What was really sickening for a lot of people was what came down here in the first place. But, anyway, back to the point. What we're trying to do is to say—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. I need to remind the member that the item is before the courts and it has not been proven, so be mindful what you say.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, as I was saying, this has yet to be tried through the court. All I'm saying is what has been alleged. I'm making a point here, and the point is that it seems to me that a law should be clear for both sides of the equation.

If I were the one to go and make an offer to somebody to run or not to run, I am clearly prohibited from doing that under the law. The law says, both under the Election Act of Ontario and the Criminal Code of Canada, that you can't do that. But we have this quirk in the law that says if I decide that I want to be able to try to seek office or to leave office and I ask to have something in consideration for me to do so, well, then—the point is, why should that be allowed?

I think one of the things that we need to be very conscious of is that we need to have laws that treat both sides of the equation the same way, that what we end up with is a system where, on the one side, the person who makes the offer, if charged and found guilty, gets penalized under the law—and it should be the same if a person is making the request on behalf of themselves.

We know what happened. What happened in this particular case is there was a young Mr. Olivier, who was the Liberal candidate in the previous election. He decided, and it was his choice, that he wanted to stand for nomination at a contested nomination in order to run in the next election. Now, we do know, not because I'm saying so, but because it was on tape—Mr. Olivier, as a result of the way he works, given his situation, put everything on tape rather than writing it down, and the tape was made public. We all heard it on the radio and on TV. We have the transcript.

What was clear in what happened there was people from the Liberal Party—and in this particular case, the ones who were actually charged under the law, under the Election Act, Mrs. Sorbara and Mr. Lougheed, were charged for having approached Mr. Olivier not to run in that election. That is clearly a violation of the law. That is something that we know by way of the Election Act that you're not allowed to do. So that matter will be dealt with in the courts.

I respect what you said earlier, Madam Speaker. The court will decide now that the case has been investigated and the charges have been laid on both Mrs. Sorbara and Mr. Lougheed—that issue is going to be tried in court. But the thing that is, I think, leaving a lot of people in Ontario, and specifically those people in the Sudbury area and the Sudbury basin, with a little bit of a bitter taste in their mouths is that Mr. Thibeault, it is asserted, actually asked to get something in exchange to run under the Liberal banner. All I'm saying is that—

Mr. James J. Bradley: How do you know that?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —under the law here, we should certainly have a law that is fair, that's—

Mr. James J. Bradley: He did not.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. I have reminded the member already—this is the second time—that he cannot allege. Okay?

I also need to remind the member that he cannot address members by their first name, only the minister's title or by riding. So you need to withdraw.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Okay. I'll withdraw, but I would ask you to keep that guy under control as well.

I would just say, again, that I'm not saying the outcome of this is going to be X, Y or Z; I'm just stating fact. There was a tape that clearly said that two people, Mr. Lougheed and Mrs. Sorbara, approached Mr. Olivier in order not to run. Clearly, there were charges that were filed under the Election Act of Ontario to that effect as a result of the investigation that took the better part of eight, nine or 10 months to come true, and now that matter is going to be dealt with in the courts. How the courts decide—I'm not the one who knows that the court is going to do X, Y or Z. The only point I'm making in this debate is if Mrs. Sorbara and Mr. Lougheed have been charged under the act for allegedly having done this, it should hold true that the person who allegedly did the ask in the first place, in the name of the member from Sudbury—you should also have to live to the same consequence of the law.

It seems to me a bit odd. It's like I was saying earlier, if I go to you and say, "Listen, I've got a great idea. If you walk into the bank tonight and steal a bunch of money, we're going to go out and share it"; you go out and steal the money, and we get caught a few months later because they tracked down who did the stealing. You go to jail and I get to stay home because I wasn't the one who actually walked into the bank? That doesn't work under the criminal act. The criminal act would say, "Well, no, you're the one who incited this crime to happen, so therefore you will be penalized under the Criminal Code for having been part of that conspiracy that led to the theft."

All I'm saying in this particular case—I am asking for an amendment be done to the law so that a person who solicits either for a person to run or not run in office, or a person who solicits to run or not run in office—on both sides of the equation—be treated the same. Another way of being able to say it was, "What's good for the goose should be good for the gander." It shouldn't be a question where it's illegal on one side for somebody from the public or somebody in politics to ask somebody to run or not to run, but then it's not illegal for a person who's wanting to run to go ask for a job, to ask for some kind of consideration. That should not be allowed either.

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Part of the problem is that when we allow these types of gaps to exist within legislation, I think it gives the public the sense that, "There they go again. It's yet again the same. The politicians are getting away with it, and the rest of us are treated by a different set of rules."

What we're attempting to do as New Democrats is to say that the rules should be the same for everyone. It should be the same for the politician, the would-be

politician or the person who is the political operative working on behalf of a candidate or a political party. The rules should be the same, because in our democracy, and especially so as we move forward, there's less and less confidence in our system of democratic institutions. Part of it is that when the public sees the types of things that happened around the member from Sudbury, people get a little bit dissuaded from being involved in politics at all.

We just saw, for example, in the by-elections that we had in Ottawa-Vanier and in Niagara-Glanborough, I think—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Niagara West-Glanbrook.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Niagara West-Glanbrook. Thank you.

The voter turnout was low. The voter turnout is normally low in a by-election—I get that; I've been around for a while. But part of the reason that people don't engage in the political process is that they sometimes don't have the confidence in the process to do the right thing.

So my bill, Madam Speaker, the bill that is put forward on behalf of New Democrats here today, is a very simple one. It says the rules should be the same. There needs to be clear transparency in the law, so that the law says if you're making an offer to have somebody stand or stand down from office, it is illegal—as it is now, both within the Election Act and within the Criminal Code—and it should also be the case if somebody is soliciting a job, soliciting money or soliciting a favour of some type in order to stand or to resign from office. It should work both ways. It just seems to me that it's the fair thing to do.

That's why we have put this bill forward. It's not a question of just a "gotcha" kind of politics. I know that's what the Liberals would like to call it. The reality is that this is about providing transparency in the system and making sure that people, in the end, can have some confidence in our political system and know that politicians will not be treated differently than those people who are part of the general public.

We need to give the voter, we need to give citizens, the confidence to understand that the rules that are in this province apply to all. It's not one set of rules for the politicians and another set of rules for the public. I think that if we're able to do that, it instills some sort of confidence in the public to say, "Okay, finally they've done something right."

So I'm hoping that the government will see this for what it is and allow this bill to go forward so that we can finally put in place a system that allows people to be treated the same, be it the politician or the person from the general public.

With that, Madam Speaker, I want to thank you, and I look forward to the support of all members of this House for this particular bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti: As was previously said, and as the other parties are fully aware, we will allow this

to proceed through the normal process. No matter what is said, this proposed amendment is nothing more than a very thinly veiled attempt by the member from Timmins–James Bay to score cheap political points.

The NDP knows that there is a case that is going before the courts. As members of this Legislature, we all have a responsibility to ensure that we don't influence the outcome of this case in any way. It would be inappropriate for any member of the Legislature to comment, question or speculate on any matter of this case, including this legislation. This is a very simple principle, and it shouldn't need to be repeated over and over again.

The Chief Electoral Officer understands it clearly. As he was reported saying a couple of days ago, "I will not respond to hypothetical questions about a ... situation that is currently before the courts.... I need to respect the justice process on that. I will continue to do so." That was stated just yesterday—on November 29, 2016, actually—

Interjection: Two days ago.

Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:—two days ago.

On this side of the House, we respect the courts and the sub judice rule. We also do not make up legislation on the fly without analysis. On this side of the House, we strive for and are proud of the well-reasoned and measured approach we take to drafting new laws, and that approach is not going to change. Moreover, it's abundantly clear that the member from Timmins–James Bay has still to do his homework when he wasn't able to answer basic questions from the media during his press conference.

This is not the way to go about proposing legislation. The NDP are engaging in Donald Trump-like political attacks on a respected, hard-working member of the Legislature who is not facing any charges. We utterly reject this style of politics. It's not worthy of this House and it's not worthy of the people of Ontario. People are sick and tired of these old political games. We don't believe that attempting to besmirch the character of an elected official in this matter should be tolerated by anyone. That's what this bill is all about, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Steve Clark: I am pleased to join in on the debate on Bill 75, Putting Voters First (Election Amendment) Act, 2016. We will be supporting this legislation, which closes a pretty glaring loophole in the Election Act. The only suggestion I have for the member for Timmins–James Bay is that a catchier title for the bill might have been the "Bribery is a Two-Way Street Act."

Despite the outrageous efforts of this government to continue to muddy the water, we all know why we're here this afternoon. It's because of this quote from federal crown prosecutor Vern Brewer: "Our allegation is that Mr. Thibeault sought certain benefits, offers, jobs or employment as part of his condition to run as an MPP.... The section makes it an offence to offer, not necessarily to receive."

That is the issue we have before us today, Speaker. Don't let the government members try to distract us from any facts other than this:

(1) A federal prosecutor speaks to reporters after a court appearance in a bribery case involving Premier Wynne's former deputy chief of staff and a top Liberal operative.

(2) The prosecutor alleges the energy minister, while an NDP MP, "sought certain benefits" before agreeing to quit his job and run for the Liberals in the February 2015 Sudbury by-election.

(3) Because of a loophole in the law, no charges can be laid against the minister.

These are the facts that Ontarians must know about this incredible situation.

In preparing for my few remarks today, I wanted to reflect on the time when I was our party's House leader, as this story was breaking. I recall writing to both the commissioner of the OPP and the Chief Electoral Officer, asking them to investigate. That led to the bombshell report from Mr. Essensa in February 2015 that included his "unprecedented" finding of an apparent contravention of the Election Act. That is the word he used: "unprecedented." The OPP commissioner also noted that his subsequent anti-racket squad investigation was "unprecedented."

Through it all, this government's contempt for the public and our democracy has also been unprecedented. So I am pleased that we are now, today, with Bill 75, attempting to restore the public's confidence in our electoral system, but I sincerely regret that the Premier and the energy minister have utterly failed in their responsibility to do the same.

An editorial this week in more than 15 Ontario newspapers, including the minister's own Sudbury Star, noted the following: "In any previous government, the slightest whiff of scandal caused ministers to quit. To have one mentioned in an Election Act trial is unprecedented."

However, this government has lowered the bar on ethics to—I'm going to use that word again—unprecedented levels. Only on Kathleen Wynne's watch do you only resign when you have charges laid, even if a prosecutor says the only reason you weren't was because of a loophole. The headline of that same editorial says it all: "Honour Demands Thibeault Step Down."

1600

Speaker, I hope we pass this bill. I hope we fix this loophole. But if we're truly going to restore the public's confidence in the integrity of this place, government members must do more than vote for Bill 75: They must join the chorus demanding that the energy minister do the right thing, do the honourable thing, and step aside.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm happy to support the bill put forward by my colleague, An Act to amend the Election Act. I can tell you what happens on the ground when you don't have this kind of legislation.

We have those papers where Mr. Lougheed and Mrs. Sorbara are charged. I'll read the charge because it says, "And further, that Patricia Sorbara, between the 19th day of November, 2014 and the 6th day of February, 2015, in

the city of Sudbury and elsewhere in Ontario, did directly or indirectly give, procure or promise or agree to procure an office or employment to induce a person, to wit, Glenn Thibeault, to become a candidate, contrary to ... the Election Act.” This is how the charges read.

So what happens when the people of Sudbury—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I need to remind the member, the item that you just referenced is before the courts.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you, Speaker.

So what happens in a community when things like this are read in court is that people lose confidence. I can tell you that my riding happens to be all around the riding of Sudbury. The riding of Sudbury is the downtown of Sudbury and Nickel Belt is all the way around. The people of Sudbury live in Sudbury, they work in Nickel Belt; they live in Nickel Belt, they work in Sudbury. They have families in both ridings.

What’s happening now is that even in the core of Copper Cliff—think of Copper Cliff as—you will all remember, Rick Bartolucci. Rick Bartolucci was of Italian descent. Most of the people who live in Copper Cliff—we call it Little Italy—are of Italian descent. This is a really core, Liberal bastion, I would tell you, of Sudbury. Those people are now coming to my office when they need to apply for the energy savings grant, if they qualify. Those people now come to my office if they have a problem with their birth certificate.

I have no problem helping the people of Nickel Belt, but I would much rather the people of Sudbury reach out to their own MPP, which they feel right now they’re not able to do. They have lost complete faith in our electoral system and they would like our laws to be changed so that the person who is named in the court paper has to do the honourable thing.

The member from Sudbury used to attend a ton of events. Now, for a lot of events where I expect the member from Sudbury to be, I’m alone because if he comes to those public events, things don’t turn out really good for him, or for that event, for that matter. This is wrong. We can do better than this.

We can have members who do the honourable thing and respect and put our democracy on top of everything else. Putting our democracy on top of everything else means that you do the right thing.

I know that I have many members from my caucus who want to talk to this bill. I think this bill would allow us to restore a little bit of confidence. For sure, for the people of Sudbury, it would help, and for the people of Nickel Belt. It would help to reassure them that we do take our responsibilities seriously, we do take a court document seriously, and if there are loopholes, we close them. It is for the good of our democracy and it is for the good of our province.

Thank you, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Yakabuski: I’m honoured to join the debate today. It’s unusual that we’d be having a debate

like this, because until Vern Brewer made the allegations against the current Minister of Energy—he said, “Our allegation is that Mr. Thibeault sought certain benefits, offers, jobs or employment as part of his condition to run as an MPP.” He further says, “The section makes it an offence to offer, not necessarily to receive.”

That’s the crux of the matter here. I dare say that most people in this Legislature, if not all of us—there may be some people who have studied legislative law and the Election Act inside out, but most would have been completely shocked that there would be such a loophole in the law that allowed for the request to receive but not the offer to give.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: Is Garfield surprised?

Mr. John Yakabuski: It’s just incredulous that that would be part—

Mr. James J. Bradley: How about Laurie?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

Mr. John Yakabuski: —of the Election Act. Vern Brewer brought our attention to that. What the member from Timmins–James Bay has done is—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member knows that when I stand, he sits.

The next time I hear from the government side, you’ll be warned. I’ve already called for order numerous times. It’s never too late to be warned and to be named.

I return to the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Mr. John Yakabuski: He brought this bill to close a loophole that most of us believed didn’t exist.

Under this bill—I’ll read the text of it. I think it’s a very clear, very simple bill. It says:

“Section 96.1 of the Election Act is amended by adding the following clause:

“(f) apply for, accept or agree to accept any valuable consideration or office or employment in connection with agreeing to become a candidate, refraining from becoming a candidate or withdrawing his or her candidacy.”

This would in fact close the loophole so that both parties in an allegation of bribery would be viewed and treated exactly the same.

Speaker, it’s amazing that we can have something like this, such a discrepancy in the Election Act. I like to know the rules of a game that I’m playing. For example, in the game of golf, it is a two-stroke penalty to seek advice from another player, but it is also a two-stroke penalty to give advice to another player. The two parties in that exchange are treated exactly the same.

That’s what we’re talking about here with this change in the section of the Election Act. All parties in the equation would be treated exactly the same under the law, so it would be an equal offence to seek to receive a bribe as it would be to offer to give a bribe.

That’s what we’re talking about here. I think every one of us, as legislators, owes it to ourselves to ensure that any law that we’re working with treats both parties in the exchange exactly the same. That would be accom-

plished by allowing this change in the Election Act to pass today.

I would say to the government members: I understand. This is not about a trial of one of your members or anybody else. I'm speaking at the highest level here about how important it is to change the Election Act so that we would be treating every person in those situations exactly the same.

I think it's a reasonable bill brought forward to the House, and I would hope that all members of the Legislature would vote for it today. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Mantha: What is there to really debate here? This act to amend the Election Act is something that, so far, everybody assumed was common sense. Everybody assumed that this was automatic. How could we possibly imagine that if someone offered you a bribe, you weren't the one at fault by accepting it?

I guess common sense doesn't apply to everybody in the same way. Luckily, my colleague from Timmins—James Bay is offering our great province a simple clarification of the law so that nobody—nobody—ever again ends up not being sure if it's okay to accept a job in exchange for not running for a seat.

1610

While preparing to speak to this bill, I looked up the definition of "bribe." It says, "The act of taking or receiving something with the intention of influencing the recipient in some way favourable to the party providing the bribe." It goes on to read, "Bribery is typically considered illegal and can be punishable by jail time or stiff fines if authorities find out about the bribe."

As the act reads now, we know that bribery is illegal. But can someone please explain to me why bribing is not permitted but accepting a bribe is okay? I don't understand that one. Why shouldn't those accepting the bribe be held to the same standards as those offering it? Anyone involved in the act of bribery should be held equally responsible. They should not be exempt from punishment or penalties.

Whether it be an elected member or any other position within this government, we all hold a responsibility to the people of Ontario and those who voted for us to be here. Being elected is a privilege. Being elected should not be about enhancing your resumé or advancing your personal career simply because you were bribed or promised a special position within government. It should not be about that. When have we ever seen good come from something that is driven by personal gain? It has not happened and will not happen.

So I leave you with this: If bribing is punishable by law, why should accepting one be okay?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's my pleasure to bring words to Bill 75, the Putting Voters First Act. As we all know, its aim is to close a loophole in the Election Act that allows candidates to accept or agree to accept a benefit in

exchange for becoming a candidate. This bill amends the Election Act to make it an offence to accept a bribe in exchange for seeking a nomination or running for public office. This, again, is in addition to the current law that makes it an offence to offer a bribe.

I trust that all of us democratically elected members agree that offering a bribe is as wrong as accepting a bribe, that we'll move quickly to ensure the laws of our province recognize that, and that we can hold wrongdoers accountable for their actions.

The change to the act is being prompted by a number of problems that are plaguing this tired, old Liberal government, a government that is today as far removed from transparency, accountability and integrity as it can be. The fact that we have to legislate bribes both ways is a concern, Madam Speaker.

Regrettably, one of our colleagues was alleged by a federal prosecutor to have accepted a bribe so he would resign federally and run provincially—again, an alleged bribe, which all of us agree is wrong but should also be made illegal under the Election Act. Yet we find ourselves in the midst of this debate because we do not feel comfortable knowing that a colleague in a high cabinet position has this cloud of doubt hanging over his head, and that no one on that side of the House wants to acknowledge that this is bad governance.

I've spoken at length in this honourable chamber about my deep disappointment over the Liberal Party's pattern of this laid-back ethics attitude. It's a shared concern. Voters in my riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound want to see our government put emphasis back on the people, on our laws and values, on trust and integrity, and on the word "honourable" back in this chamber.

After seeing the Premier's unwillingness to come clean about what happened in the Sudbury by-election even after bribery charges were laid against her top party operatives, they are yet again questioning the judgments of this government's ethics. This Premier and her government have been under five OPP investigations and we have seen four senior operatives charged. How many more senior Liberal operatives need to be charged before the Liberal Party takes personal responsibility?

Ontarians want the government to lead with integrity. They expect to be able to trust their government to put the best interests of the people and the province before any political self-interest because that is integrity: the ability to sacrifice those personal political interests for the greater good.

I recall the honourable member from Sudbury giving his first speech in the chamber, which I listened to with great interest. I recall him making references to a play called *No Body Like Jimmy*, which was showing back home in his Sudbury riding that same day. *No Body Like Jimmy* is a farcical story about things going very wrong when political candidates and their less scrupulous funders collide.

Sadly, for a minute we can surely conclude that those who choose the unscrupulous give-and-take in politics are why things that shouldn't happen do happen. It is also

why we need to close this loophole and put it into law that giving bribes is as wrong as taking bribes.

Madam Speaker, I do want to close with one final thought, and it comes from the heart: We all got here with the best of intentions in our hearts. As we continue to serve the people who have elected us, we should remember that having the right intentions and doing the right thing are the most important tenets of good governance.

We need to ensure that we have trust and integrity in all of our government, and today we have the ability to actually make that happen.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to stand in this House and usually I really enjoy it, but today it's kind of a sad day. I fully support this bill, but the reason it's sad to have to debate this is all in the explanatory note: "The bill amends the Election Act to prohibit a person from accepting or applying for a bribe to become a candidate in an election, to refrain from doing so or to withdraw as a candidate in an election."

I think most people would have thought that this is already part of the legal code. It's against the law to offer a bribe but, under our current system, not to accept one. To people from all walks of life, that just would not make sense. It doesn't pass, as they say, the smell test. There's a saying: It takes two to tango. Well, it takes two to be involved in bribery. And parties, if it is found to be so in court, should be equally guilty. That's what this law, this proposed change in the legislation, is trying to bring forward.

The reason that we're actually here discussing this is that there are from time to time—and we're going through this right now; there is a situation that is before the courts. It shouldn't be here, and it isn't. But what has precipitated this is that usually, in the past, when a member of this Legislature or a member of cabinet was involved or named in any type of situation like this, the tradition has been for them to step back while the situation, the investigation, is continued until their name is cleared, or not. That would give people throughout the province much more confidence in the system.

This has happened before under many different governments of many different parties. Quite frankly, I think that to people of this province, there's no shame in that because ministers especially are expected to make decisions, and decisions are sometimes controversial. That's part of being in government. Sometimes people question the legality of these decisions, and if that is questioned, and if people are charged—and in this case, let's be clear: There were no charges against the minister, but he is involved in the investigation. He is named in the charge, not charged.

So it would behoove, you would think, an order that the minister can continue to do his job and that the government can continue to do their job without question, because that's very important, that the minister would step away. The fact that the minister hasn't or that the

Premier hasn't made this happen is the reason why we're standing here today.

In all our previous jobs—and many of us have been municipal councillors—there's always talk about conflict of interest and that the perception of conflict is as damaging as the actual conflict. Well, in this case, the perception of involvement is as damaging as the actual involvement to the integrity of the government. For the sake of the integrity of the government and for the sake of the confidence of the people of this province, the Premier should have asked the minister to step aside long ago. That is what's precipitating this. That's how we even found out about this loophole; because if the government had actually done what is regularly done, we wouldn't be here. We wouldn't be searching for this. That is why this debate is such a sad thing to have to do.

1620

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. James J. Bradley: There's only one reason this is before the House today. It's to smear the reputation of the duly-elected member for Sudbury. That is why it's here: because he left the New Democratic Party and joined the Liberal Party. Otherwise, this would not be before the House. Make no mistake about it.

I have a favourite Biblical quotation. It's from John 8:7—"Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."

Let me deal first of all with the New Democratic Party on this particular issue. You have sitting in the front row beside you the member for Bramalea-Gore-Malton. It was well known he was heading to Ottawa. He was being courted, heading off to Ottawa.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

Mr. James J. Bradley: He was sitting in the second row. He had no particular high position in the party—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, stop the clock. I already warned people that the next time—I already warned the government side. I respectfully ask the opposition the same. It's never too late or too early to name and warn members.

I return to the member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: When he left, in this particular case, and decided, "Well, I'm in the second row. I don't have a particular title"—there he is now as deputy leader. One could deduce, if one had wanted to—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Chatham-Kent-Essex.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Point of order, Madam Speaker: I believe that the honourable member from St. Catharines is not actually referring to or talking to this particular bill; he's referring to something completely different. So as a result of that, I would ask that the respectful member would in fact address the bill that is being debated. Okay? That's all I'm asking.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to remind the member to stay to the bill that is before us.

Mr. James J. Bradley: I'm addressing the bill and the implications of that particular bill, because that's what the bill is about.

The member was heading to Ottawa. He didn't go to Ottawa; he became the deputy leader of the party. And that's within the purview of the leader. I have no objection to that.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Look at this. You guys can't take it. You're great pitchers and bad catchers. You can throw the accusations—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Excuse me. Okay, stop the clock.

The member from Timmins—James Bay?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you. I appreciate you stopping the clock.

My point of order is this: I was ruled out of order for trying to impugn motives about another member, and he can do it with impunity? I don't think that's right.

Mr. James J. Bradley: You weren't ruled out of order for that.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I want to remind the member for St. Catharines to stick to the bill before us.

Mr. James J. Bradley: So that's one instance. And then we had a situation in the Scarborough riding where there was a by-election—

Interjection: Guildwood.

Mr. James J. Bradley: —Guildwood—going on, and the party leader wanted to have Adam Giambrone as the candidate. That's her business. So they shoved aside Amarjeet Chhabra so that Adam Giambrone could run. That's the purview of your party and your leader. Nobody phoned the OPP. Nobody went to Elections Ontario or anything to do with that.

Now, there are other instances that have been raised in the House—because the member who represents the city of Brockville raised an issue. We had a member who I happen to like very much, the member who is known in her riding as Laurie Scott. She is a person who is highly respected in this House—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I've already reminded the members. Everybody in the House knows the rules: You do not address each other by first name; it's by the riding. So would the member from St. Catharines please refer to her by the riding.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock is the riding.

Now, the leader of the party, who at that time was John Tory, needed a seat in the Legislature. That's quite acceptable, that he wants a seat in the Legislature. So Laurie Scott, as she's known in her riding—

Interjection: Come on.

Mr. James J. Bradley: The member I know as Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, what she did was she gave up her seat and she got a job with the party—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Stop the clock. All right. Members, please stick to the bill before

us for debate. I'll remind the member one last time, or else I'm going to move to the next speaker.

The member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: So the person I made reference to from a riding, a person I happen to like, stepped aside from her particular seat. There would be some people who would say, "Well"—as they use the term "bribe" in here—"it was a bribe." I didn't use that, and the reason I didn't was that normally—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, you've got to remember that words do matter.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Let's not make inference. Please withdraw. The member from St. Catharines, please withdraw.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'm here to calm you down, Jim.

Mr. James J. Bradley: She gave up her seat—

Interjection: Withdraw.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. This is not appropriate behaviour and conduct. I want to remind the member who just walked in, from Nepean—Carlton, to please take your seat.

I'll return to the member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: She gave up her seat and the leader ran in that riding. I didn't hear anybody in this House object to that. She got a job with the Conservative Party of Ontario, which was fine. Nobody said anything about that. I keep saying, let he who is without sin cast the first stone.

The Leader of the Opposition needed a seat in the Legislature. So a gentleman who's now known as Garfield Dunlop, a person I happened to like very much when he was a member of this Legislature, stepped aside so the leader could run, and he now has a nice-paying job as a result of that. Nobody objected to that. What I'm saying is, what is good for the goose is good for the gander.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. I'm going to warn the member from Nepean—Carleton.

The member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: I've been reading about an exchange of emails that took place, where some said, "We better not tell the media what's really happening here, whether he's got this job or not, whether he's paid or not."

Interjection: That was in the Toronto Star.

Mr. James J. Bradley: It was right in the Toronto Star, in the story, and he has a job now with the Progressive Conservative Party. I don't object to that. I don't object to that, but it's a little rich when they make accusations about people over here when they themselves—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to warn the member from Simcoe—Grey.

Member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: —when they themselves are engaged in activities that allow their leader—in both cases it was their leader—to come into the Legislative

Assembly. None of us objected to that at the time. There were some headlines saying that one's leaving a job for another job and so on that I could quote, if I happened to have them in front of me. But I don't want to really get into that, because I'm simply saying that this has been happening for years in this Legislature and elsewhere. But all of a sudden, the finger is pointed at one side of the House or one particular individual, and we have the member—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Leeds–Grenville is now warned.

Member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: We have the member from Leeds–Grenville siccing the Ontario Provincial Police on a situation that existed in the riding of Sudbury—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I understand from the Clerk that the member from Leeds–Grenville was warned this morning. He is now named.

Mr. Clark was escorted from the chamber.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

The member from St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: Then there's the smearing of the name of Gerry Lougheed in this House.

Mr. Jim Wilson: He's a criminal.

Mr. James J. Bradley: I happen to know—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member from Simcoe–Grey has been warned already, so if he wants to be named—I return to the member for St. Catharines.

Mr. James J. Bradley: I happen to know, in Sudbury, what the Lougheed family has done for that city over the years—and to see his name dragged through the mud in this House by people who know better. He's referred to as a “Liberal operative.” I looked in the last election: Joe Cimino received a \$500 donation; Paula Peroni, a Progressive Conservative candidate, a \$500 donation; the member for Nickel Belt received a \$500 donation from Gerry Lougheed. He has made other donations to both parties and to this party as well.

But put that aside, folks. This is a gentleman, this is a family who has given so much to the city of Sudbury. I happen to know that. I used to live in the city of Sudbury. The school across the street, St. Albert, became a surplus school. The population had dropped in that part of the city. That has been converted, as a result of the work of the Lougheed family, for poor people to be able to access, people who don't have a place to go. I hear people in this Legislature and outside this Legislature going after Gerry Lougheed and the Lougheed family, and that is absolutely disgraceful on your part—absolutely disgraceful that you would do that to the Lougheed family, to a person who has given so much.

All I'm asking is that the same rules apply to everybody, that what's good for the goose is good for the gander. I go back to, in this House, my favourite Biblical quotation: John 8:7, “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.”

1630

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Please be seated.

I return to the member from Timmins–James Bay to wrap up.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I think the member from St. Catharines professes a little bit too much.

This is a really simple issue. Every citizen in the province of Ontario, every Canadian citizen in this nation, when it comes to the criminal law, lives by a certain set of rules. If you're either the one perpetrating the infraction or the one who is counselling to perpetrate the infraction, you are treated equally. It's as simple as that.

As I said earlier, if I said to you, “Madam Speaker, please go rob the bank,” and you came back with a bagful of money, and we get caught two months later, would it be right for you to go to jail for having stolen the money and for me not to be penalized for having asked you to do it? The Criminal Code is quite clear. It says that you have to be able to make sure that those who are perpetrating the injustice and those who actually did the action are treated the same.

All this amendment does to the act is to say that it's wrong to ask for a bribe and it is equally wrong to offer a bribe. That's all this says. It's as simple as that. It's not imputing motive on anybody. It's to say that we need to restore confidence in our electoral system to make sure that the people of Ontario, when they look at legislators and they look at people who want to stand for office—that there's a set of rules that is equal on both sides of that equation.

That's all this particular bill does. For the government to get as worked up as it is tells me they're a little bit too sensitive to this for whatever reason, which they're going to have to figure out themselves.

All that the New Democrats are trying to do here is to say that we need to make sure that we restore confidence to the people of Ontario. We have to have rules that say it is wrong to either offer or to accept a bribe on either side of that.

When it comes to the results of the by-election in Sudbury, we accepted that a long time ago. The people of Sudbury spoke. We accepted that and we moved on. I would ask the government to do the same. Let's move on. Let's move this bill forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The time for provided for private members' public business has expired.

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We'll now deal first with ballot item number 25, standing in the name of Mrs. Martow.

Mrs. Martow has moved private member's notice of motion number 36.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I heard a no.

All those in favour?

All those against?
In my opinion, I think the “ayes” have it.
We’ll deal with the vote at the end of this.

COLLEGES WEEK

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Dhillon has moved private member’s notice of motion number 33.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?
Carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Congratulations.

PUTTING VOTERS FIRST (ELECTION AMENDMENT) ACT, 2016 LOI DE 2016 DONNANT LA PRIORITÉ AUX ÉLECTEURS (MODIFICATION DE LA LOI ÉLECTORALE)

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Bisson has moved second reading of Bill 75, An Act to amend the Election Act.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?
Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I need to turn to the member from Timmins–James Bay. Where is the bill going? Which committee?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, I would like to refer the bill to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The member has asked that the bill go to Legislative Assembly. Agreed? Agreed.

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Call in the members. It will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang 1634 to 1639.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Members, please take your seats.

Mrs. Martow has moved private member’s notice of motion number 36. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bradley, James J.
Brown, Patrick
Chan, Michael
Coe, Lorne
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dickson, Joe
Fedeli, Victor
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jones, Sylvia
Leal, Jeff
MacLeod, Lisa
Malhi, Harinder
Martins, Cristina
Martow, Gila
McDonell, Jim
McMahon, Eleanor
McNaughton, Monte
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Moridi, Reza
Munro, Julia

Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Nicholls, Rick
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pettapiece, Randy
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Scott, Laurie
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vernile, Daiene
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakubski, John

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Bisson, Gilles
Mantha, Michael

Natyshak, Taras
Singh, Jagmeet

Tabuns, Peter

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 49; the nays are 5.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members’ public business such that Mr. Brown assumes ballot item number 29 and Mr. Nicholls assumes ballot item number 32.

Orders of the day? I recognize the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Leal has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the wish of the House that the motion carry? I hear “carried.”

The House is adjourned until December 5 at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1642.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Hon. / L'hon. Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiles et de l'Immigration
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Hon. / L'hon. Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	Minister of Housing / Ministre du Logement Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of International Trade / Ministre du Commerce International
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism / Ministre délégué à l'Action contre le racisme
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires des personnes âgées Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement économique et de la Croissance
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Hon. / L'hon. Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister Responsible for Accessibility / Ministre responsable de l'Accessibilité Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development / Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Formation professionnelle Minister Responsible for Digital Government / Ministre responsable de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Municipal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires municipales
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Hon. / L'hon. Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McMahon, Hon. / L'hon. Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research, Innovation and Science / Ministre de la Recherche, de l'Innovation et des Sciences
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Indira (LIB)	Halton	Associate Minister of Education (Early Years and Child Care) / Ministre associée de l'Éducation (Petite enfance et Garde d'enfants)
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Attorney General / Procureur général Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint de parti reconnu
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Hon. / L'hon. Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation / Ministre des Relations avec les Autochtones et de la Réconciliation

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor
Bob Delaney, Cheri DiNovo
Joe Dickson, Han Dong
Michael Harris, Sophie Kiwala
Arthur Potts, Todd Smith
Monique Taylor
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Ann Hoggarth
Yvan Baker, Toby Barrett
Han Dong, Victor Fedeli
Catherine Fife, Ann Hoggarth
Cristina Martins, Peter Z. Milczyn
Lou Rinaldi
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lou Rinaldi
Yvan Baker, Mike Colle
Grant Crack, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Harinder Malhi
Jim McDonnell, Lou Rinaldi
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Présidente: Cristina Martins
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Daiene Vernile
James J. Bradley, Raymond Sung Joon Cho
Wayne Gates, Monte Kwinter
Amrit Mangat, Cristina Martins
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Mike Colle
Bob Delaney, Randy Hillier
Michael Mantha, Arthur Potts
Shafiq Qaadri, Laurie Scott
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Steve Clark
Granville Anderson, Robert Bailey
James J. Bradley, Steve Clark
Vic Dhillon, Sophie Kiwala
Michael Mantha, Monte McNaughton
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
John Fraser, Ernie Hardeman
Percy Hatfield, Monte Kwinter
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi
Peter Z. Milczyn, Julia Munro
Arthur Potts
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Ted McMeekin
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Grant Crack
Joe Dickson, Jennifer K. French
Ted McMeekin, Mario Sergio
Bill Walker, Soo Wong
Jeff Yurek
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh
Granville Anderson, Lorne Coe
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow
Ted McMeekin, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch