

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

G-24

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

G-24

**Standing Committee on
General Government**

Anti-Racism Act, 2017

2nd Session
41st Parliament

Monday 15 May 2017

**Comité permanent des
affaires gouvernementales**

Loi de 2017 contre le racisme

2^e session
41^e législature

Lundi 15 mai 2017

Chair: Grant Crack
Clerk: Sylwia Przedziecki

Président : Grant Crack
Greffière : Sylwia Przedziecki

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

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



ISSN 1180-5218

Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

CONTENTS

Monday 15 May 2017

Anti-Racism Act, 2017, Bill 114, Mr. Coteau / Loi de 2017 contre le racisme, projet de loi 114, M. Coteau	G-389
Judge the Judges—Canada.....	G-389
Ms. Nadejda Aletkina	
Ontario Human Rights Commission	G-391
Ms. Renu Mandhane	
Ms. Reema Khawja	
Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies	G-393
Mr. Zach Potashner	
Urban Rez Solutions	G-396
Mr. Roderick Brereton	
Mr. Farley Flex	
Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic	G-398
Ms. Avvy Go	
Diversity Institute, Ryerson University	G-400
Dr. Wendy Cukier	
Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs.....	G-402
Ms. Madi Murariu	
Toronto and York Region Labour Council	G-404
Mr. Mark Brown	
Ms. Susan McMurray	
Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change	G-406
Mr. Michael Kerr	
The League for Human Rights, B’nai Brith Canada	G-409
Ms. Amanda Hohmann	
Association of Ontario Health Centres.....	G-411
Ms. Jacquie Maund	
Jamaican Canadian Association	G-413
Mr. Roy Williams	
Ontario Federation of Labour.....	G-415
Mr. Ahmad Gaied	
Ms. Thevaki Thevaratnam	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES
AFFAIRES GOUVERNEMENTALES**

Monday 15 May 2017

Lundi 15 mai 2017

The committee met at 1300 in committee room 2.

ANTI-RACISM ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 CONTRE LE RACISME

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures / Projet de loi 114, Loi prévoyant des mesures contre le racisme.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to call the Standing Committee on General Government to order. Welcome, all members from the three parties, Clerk, legislative research, Hansard, communications, ladies and gentlemen.

Today, we're here to deal with Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures. We will be hearing from 13 presenters this afternoon. Each presenter will have up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by up to nine minutes of questioning from the three parties. I shall try to spread it out evenly—three, three and three.

I'd like to advise members of the committee that there is a possibility of a vote in and around 1:15 p.m. If that is the case, we will suspend proceedings and just continue on after the vote is done. Hopefully, we'll be able to continue. We do have a few extra hours at the end of the agenda to move forward.

Having said that, any questions or comments from the members of the committee? If not, we shall proceed with first delegation this afternoon.

JUDGE THE JUDGES—CANADA

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We have, from Judge the Judges—Canada, two individuals: Ms. Aletkina and Ms. Topper. Are they with us this afternoon?

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Aletkina is here.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Is there just one?

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Just one. Viktorija Topper could not find a parking space.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. If you could just come forward and have a seat at the microphone.

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Where, here?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Yes. Clerk, could you help, please?

Thank you, and we welcome you. For the record, if you could say your name into the microphone, that would be greatly appreciated. You have up to five minutes.

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: My name is Nadejda Aletkina. I represent an organization of volunteers, victims of state crimes, called Judge the Judges—Canada. This organization is composed of the victims of the state. Today, I have great difficulty to speak because I am severely ill based on cognitive difficulties and psychiatric illness. I'll try to do my best.

Why I chose to speak here regarding Bill 114 on anti-racism is because, during several legal proceedings in the courts of Ontario and the Supreme Court of Canada, I had the growing sense that I was subjected to racism, to Nazism and to fascism and, at times, subjected to democide. Democide is when an unwanted group of people are selectively eliminated by spotted hits. I'm a victim of such treatment by the state.

I would like to say that self-represented litigants who do not have funds to hire a lawyer, who are denied any legal assistance—Law Help Ontario declined to help me without reasonable explanation. All legal clinics and community clinics denied any assistance. I went all the way from the bottom of the Ontario Labour Relations Board in 2003 to the Supreme Court of Canada application for leave to appeal in 2016. I received all denials and dismissals.

What was the main issue? The main issue is that since filing my legal claim against my ex-employer, the Hospital for Sick Children, at the end of the six-year limitation period, I became severely and profoundly mentally ill, documented by many doctors—physician, psychiatrist, psychologist. The court refused to accept the doctors' opinion of my profound mental illness as a reason for staying the limitation period until I got better or until I was assigned a public litigation guardian.

When I was profoundly mentally ill, I could not understand any of these procedures. Should I go to the capacity assessor? I did not even know the names of those assessors. Do you know what profoundly mentally ill means? A person cannot understand, cannot appreciate—and all the courts refuse to accept the opinion of my doctors of profound mental illness.

As a result, I needed to appeal, appeal, appeal, and what I observed was that the judges disregarded all medical evidence. They put themselves above qualified medical opinion and made judgments based on arbitrariness, on their discretion, instead of basing their decisions on the facts, like doctors' letters, and on legal grounds, on the law.

What the law says is that persons with mental illness, according to rule 7 of the rules of civil procedure, are protected with respect to limitation time. Limitation time doesn't run. So what the court did is they forced me to go to the court, to the trial, and didn't allow me to lead an additional or amended statement of claim having much more serious allegations.

I was able to find, through about 17 procedures, that the judges are not under the rule of law. It appears that judges are allowed to exercise political power and to cross out state laws, statute law, acts of Parliament—disregard them completely and contravene acts of Parliament.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. The five minutes is up. We'll start with the official opposition. Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Welcome to our committee. I'm sorry that you have experienced what you've experienced—

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Systemic racism.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I know all members of this committee—our hearts go out to you for the experience and the trauma that it has clearly created for you.

You talked a lot about your personal experience, particularly with respect to the court system, but also with the Ontario Labour Relations Board. I'm wondering if you've had the opportunity to read the bill before us, and if there are any changes or recommendations or anything you particularly appreciate in this piece of legislation.

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Absolutely, yes. My suggestion is to amend section 15 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by crossing out the word “under” the law. When you check the charter of human rights of the United Nations and when you read the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, there are never the words “under the law.” It is “before the law.” Everybody is equal before the law: the judge, the litigants, the criminals, whoever—everybody. So section 15 must be amended.

Second, the Criminal Code of Canada has to be amended to add a specific section on criminal charges against judges who contravene acts of Parliament. There is section 126 in the Criminal Code saying that everybody who contravenes acts of Parliament is subject to a two-year imprisonment, but it doesn't say who has to charge. It's the Attorney General who has the right to charge.

I wrote to the Attorneys General of Canada and of Ontario. What was their reply to me? They said, “Go to the police. Let the police investigate. Or write to the Canadian Judicial Council or the Ontario Judicial Council.” The problem is, those judicial councils do not operate with the criminal law. The maximum penalty for a judge who commits a crime against acts of Parliament—

1310

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: With this particular bill in front of us, we can't amend the Criminal Code, nor can we

amend the Charter of Rights and Freedoms at the provincial level. We have quite an extensive bill that would ensconce the Anti-Racism Directorate, with very specific measures—

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: Yes. I also tried to read the debates in the Parliament. The directorate will be created to list some racial profile of the government officials—all state power officials: judicial, political, executive. What I disagree with: This directorate cannot be closed; it should be publicly available on a special Web page. Everybody should be able to read it. For example—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. She has three minutes. We'll have to move to the third party. Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I don't have any questions, but I appreciate your coming here today to share your experience. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the government. Ms. Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you for coming in and sharing your experience with us—

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: You do not have questions. You are for the government. You do not have questions to me.

The Ministry of Long-Term Care explains that psychological illness, psychological assessments, forensic assessments, are not covered by OHIP. If you do not have your own funds, screw yourself and go to hell—excuse me for this, God. The government denied me funding for assessment with respect to my illness for the court.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I'm very sorry that you've had such a poor experience with the system. We're here today to try to make the system better. That's why we have you here.

We have introduced a piece of legislation about anti-racism, and we want this legislation to help people so that nobody feels that they are a victim of racism. That's why we've taken this step to introduce the piece of legislation that has been embedded—so that our minister can oversee that and you can take your complaint forward and we can look at it.

We want to know how you think that we can implement these certain steps—so that people's experiences, like your own, could be better—into this legislation. This legislation is there to do just that: to eliminate any form of systemic racism.

Ms. Nadejda Aletkina: If I went to the court knowing the racial, political, ideological profile of the judge—if I was able to find it on your Anti-Racism Directorate, I would object right away to particular judges. Why? Because my country of origin, the USSR—not the Russian Federation, not Ukraine, not Latvia; it is the USSR, by all accounts of law. It is under annexation. By who? By Nazi regimes applied by the European Union. Canada sends a military contingent to the land of the USSR to suppress our country, our Soviet people, to commit genocide on our people. This is a matter of racism. Canada is a systemically racist country. Every-

body in Canada has the right to read openly in an open directorate who a particular executive, judge, politician, government executive—belongs ideologically. Does this judge go to the synagogue and confess his Talmud? The Talmud allows religious Jews to lie against Gentiles, goys—

Mr. Mike Colle: Mr. Speaker, this is bordering on hate speech here. I'm not going to stand—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Our time is up. I'd like to thank you, Ms. Aletkina, for coming before committee this afternoon.

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to our next delegation. From the Ontario Human Rights Commission, we have Renu Mandhane, chief commissioner. Perhaps if you could—

Ms. Renu Mandhane: I'll introduce my colleague.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you kindly. The floor is yours. You have up to five minutes for your presentation, followed by nine minutes of questioning.

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Thank you for having us here today. I'll just start by introducing my colleague, Reema Khawja. Rheema is counsel at the commission.

Thank you for inviting us to share the Ontario Human Rights Commission's perspective on Bill 114. With some revisions, we believe this bill can be an important tool in identifying and responding to barriers and inequities that are embedded in the systems, policies and even the legislation that governs life in Ontario.

We have provided detailed recommendations in a submission to the minister and to this committee, and we encourage you to read those. Today, in the interests of time, I will focus on those recommendations that relate to the bill itself, though I note that several of the measures in the bill would need to be implemented through regulation. Indeed, the commission looks forward to seeing effective regulations passed as quickly as possible if the proposed legislation becomes law.

First, it goes without saying that the commission welcomes the introduction of this bill, because we have long called for broader anti-racism efforts from government and its agencies. We are pleased to see that the draft legislation binds the government to a sustained commitment to anti-racism and includes several key anti-racism measures we have previously identified. These include creating a measurable anti-racism strategy with targets and indicators; applying an anti-racism lens when developing, implementing and evaluating government policy; and race-based data collection, analysis and reporting.

For over 50 years, the commission's work has highlighted the persistent racism faced by indigenous, black and other communities. For example, earlier this month we released a report titled *Under Suspicion*, which highlights the lived experience of racialized people in Ontario, and I've brought some copies for you today.

We are pleased to see that Ontario's three-year anti-racism strategic plan recognizes intersectional aspects of racism and discrimination, and includes steps to target systemic racism. Proactive steps targeting systemic racism are especially important to deal with anti-black and anti-indigenous racism in key sectors like policing, corrections, child welfare, education and social services. The commission is also pleased that the anti-racism strategic plan includes measures to respond to a troubling increase in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

The anti-racism measures established in the bill are certainly a positive step forward, but to make sure that the bill meets its purpose, which is "to eliminate systemic racism and advance racial equity," we recommend that several issues be addressed. These relate to the interaction between the requirements of the bill and the Ontario Human Rights Code, as well as the work of the commission.

The code plays a central role in protecting people against racism in government services. The code has primacy over other laws and may require organizations to do more than is required by those laws. In short, complying with the Anti-Racism Act would not be and is not a complete defence to a human right complaint and does not impact the duty to accommodate, set out in the code.

Therefore, we recommend that the bill reference the code in the preamble and clarify the relationship between the requirements of the proposed legislation and the code by explicitly stating that requirements, standards and regulations relating to the bill are not replacements or substitutions for requirements established under the Human Rights Code. This amendment would be entirely consistent with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

For many years, the commission has called for the collection of human rights-based data to promote compliance with the code, so we support the measures in the bill that recognize the need to limit unauthorized disclosure of personal information.

The bill also recognizes that in some cases disclosure may be necessary, for example to the Information and Privacy Commissioner. However, we are concerned that the bill as drafted may become a barrier to the commission exercising its mandate to monitor and enforce compliance with the code. This includes the commission's powers to conduct inquiries in the public interest.

Under section 31 of the code, the commission has broad powers to ask organizations to produce documents and records, and to enforce human rights. We request that the proposed legislation explicitly confirm that in addition to the Information and Privacy Commissioner, a public sector organization may disclose collected public information to the commission.

Finally—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Quickly, please.

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Okay—data collection will only be an effective tool if it is analyzed and interpreted by an independent agency that understands the lived

experience of racialized people and has the power to enforce their rights.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay. Thank you very much. We appreciate it. I gave you a little bit of extra time.

At this time, there is a vote in the House, so we will suspend proceedings here until such time as the vote is finished. I'll ask everyone to reconvene shortly after, at which time we'll be able to provide you with questions from the three parties.

This meeting is suspended for a few minutes.

The committee recessed from 1321 to 1331.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I'd like to call the committee back to order. Welcome back, members. We had just heard the five-minute presentation from Ms. Mandhane, who is the chief commissioner. We'll begin with the questioning component, and we'll start with the third party. Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for the presentation, and for taking the time to come here today to speak to the committee. During your presentation, you mentioned that the analysis of the data that is collected should be conducted by an independent expert agency. Can you elaborate a little bit more on that aspect?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Thank you for the question. We believe that the data needs to be analyzed for it to be effective in terms of tackling systemic discrimination. We believe that in that context, there is room for the commission to play a role in the analysis of the data, and the data that's ultimately collected. We hope that there would be sufficient resources for the commission to do that work.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So you're thinking specifically of the commission being that independent expert agency.

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Certainly one of. I think the benefit of open data is that the data is available to academics and to community agencies. But I think that there are many people—in our talks with community—who would expect the commission to play a role in analyzing the data, particularly because we have enforcement powers if the data does reveal systemic disparities.

We wanted to highlight that there are other agencies that will need to work, to make this bill do what it's supposed to do.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you. The other question I wanted to ask is around the consultation. The bill does require consultation with affected communities. Can you share some of your thoughts about the nature of that consultation—whether what is in the bill referring to that consultation is sufficient, currently?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: We're very pleased that consultation is referred to in the bill. I think it's really important that community remain engaged with the directorate.

We would like to also have the commission named specifically for consultation. We believe it's very important that the commission, being an independent human rights agency, be consulted when the new strategic plan is debated or considered. Obviously, the purpose here

would be to insulate the requirements of the legislation from being diluted because of the political realities of that particular moment.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Any other organizations or entities that you believe should be involved in the consultation?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: I think that they have mentioned indigenous and anti-black-racism organizations. Obviously, we'd want them to consult with Muslim groups as well as groups representing the Jewish community.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: At the outset of your presentation, you talked about the fact that much of what is in the act will be included in regulation rather than legislation. Is that appropriate, do you feel, or is there more that you would have liked to see in the legislation rather than regulation?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Obviously, we always like to see as much in the legislation as possible, but I do understand that framework legislation is the way that government often moves forward.

What we are concerned about is that the framework for data collection actually be activated pretty soon after passing. All of that is left to regulation, so we would want to see those regulations passed quickly.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to the government side. Ms. Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you for your presentation. We do appreciate your feedback.

This legislation is different from anything that we've seen in terms of systemic racism in the province, in terms of legislation. This legislation binds the government to a sustained commitment to anti-racism. Can you speak to the impact of this measure in the long term and what kinds of transformational changes you think this legislation will bring?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Sure. The community, along with the commission, has been calling for the collection of race-based data for a very long time. Maybe I can give you a short example of the power of that kind of data.

We entered into a settlement with the Ottawa Police Service back in 2013 that required them to collect race-based data on traffic stops. That data, once it was analyzed, revealed disparities in the stopping of black and Middle Eastern men by the Ottawa Police Service.

That was really significant, because now we were having a conversation about why, not about whether. I think that data can get you to a point where you're actually starting to talk about the specifics and the specific measures that need to be taken rather than debating endlessly whether racism actually exists.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Any place for rooting out genetic discrimination? Because you can't separate genetics and race. Shouldn't we be taking some steps with this initiative maybe to look at ways of prohibiting genetic discrimination, which takes place every day in insurance, housing and employment?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: We understand that there is a private member's bill currently being put forward to add genetic discrimination to the code, and we support that bill. We would like to see genetic discrimination protected in the Human Rights Code in terms of discrimination, but we want to make sure that there aren't a lot of exceptions to that protection. For example, for the insurance industry, we would like to see as few exceptions as possible.

What I would say is that we've always taken the position that genetic difference is already protected under the code, primarily under the grounds of disability. There have already been successful efforts to have genetic characteristics recognized under the grounds of disability.

Ms. Reema Khawja: I would just add to that that the commission has long talked about the importance of looking at issues from an intersectional perspective too. To the extent that genetic issues engage disability, there might be intersections. We would say that it's really important that those intersections between disability, sex, age, gender etc. really be pulled out when the work is being done on racism, because you can't really understand and attack racism without looking at the intersections of other code grounds.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the official opposition. Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much for your informative presentation. I really appreciate you taking the time to be with us here today.

You talked a little bit about consultation post-bill. I just want to know a little bit about consultation pre-bill. Were you consulted by the ministry as they developed and drafted this legislation?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: We were made aware of the general contents of the bill before it was passed. We're here because obviously there wasn't sufficient time for us to get through all our recommendations, but certainly the bill was presented to the commission.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay. Were you able at that time to talk about some of the changes that you would have liked to have seen in the bill before they tabled it?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: We wrote the minister after the tabling with some of our recommendations.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay, that's great. Have you felt that it has been receptive?

Ms. Renu Mandhane: Generally, we have had a good dialogue with the directorate as we try to sort out how our mandates are going to work best together. I would say the conversations were in that spirit.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: One of my concerns with the bill is that it leaves out anti-Semitism. You mentioned it a couple of times.

I want to applaud the work that Mr. Colle has been doing with respect to genetic discrimination. That's something that I wrote down.

I'm just wondering: You talked about two communities—the black and the indigenous community are obviously very important—but the Muslim and Jewish

communities were sort of left out. Do you think that might be an important addition to this bill as an amendment moving forward?

1340

Ms. Reema Khawja: I understand the bill doesn't exclude any community; it's open. We haven't really mentioned the South Asian community, but of course they should be mentioned—and others. I don't think the bill excludes any community.

With respect to the recognition specifically of the experience of indigenous and black communities, I think it relates to the systemic and institutional issues those communities have had—institutionalized racism—that come out of government services and policies more directly. There are other forms, of course, of intolerance in our society and people are feeling that on a daily basis out on the streets.

My understanding is that the anti-racism strategy targets very much public awareness and public education, so that the Muslim community and the Jewish community hopefully will not continue to face these increased levels of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism.

Ms. Renu Mandhane: And I would just add to that, that in our conversations with the Muslim and Jewish communities, many of their concerns relate to hate crimes.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes.

Ms. Renu Mandhane: We have raised those concerns informally with the Ministry of the Attorney General, about more effective prosecution of hate crimes. So this bill is one tool, but it's certainly not the only tool to get at the kinds of issues these communities are raising.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I had more questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I know. I'm so sorry. Thank you, Ms. Mandhane and Ms. Khawja, for coming before committee this afternoon and sharing your thoughts. Much appreciated.

FRIENDS OF SIMON WIESENTHAL CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies. We have Mr. Zach Potashner, director, government and external affairs. We welcome you, sir. You have up to five minutes.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you to all the members of the committee for having me here today to address Bill 114. My name is Zach Potashner. I'm director of government and external affairs at the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center. We are a top, independent charitable human rights organization in Canada's organized Jewish community. Our mission is committed to countering racism and anti-Semitism and promoting the principles of tolerance, social justice and Canadian democratic values.

In addition to our extensive education and advocacy programs, one of our duties is countering racism through discussions with politicians and community leaders to address the problem of hate in public spaces. That's what brings me here today.

Racism, as we know, is rampant in our country, even in today's day and age, and even here in Ontario, where we pride ourselves on being diverse, inclusive and accepting of all people.

The Jewish community, in particular, experiences blatant discrimination and intolerance in the form of anti-Semitism on an alarmingly consistent basis and continues to be one of the most targeted groups when it comes to hate crimes in Ontario.

According to the 2016 Toronto Police Service report, the Jewish community was once again the number one target of hate crime offences, with 43 incidents out of 145, or 30% of all offences.

According to the Hamilton Police Service, the Jewish community was the second most targeted group for hate crimes, just behind the black community.

Just last week, B'nai Brith reported there were 1,728 anti-Semitic incidents in Canada in 2016. This represents a 26% increase from the previous year and the highest number in the history of that organization collecting this information. Of the 1,728 incidents, 490 occurred in Ontario.

I could go on all day quoting various sources and statistics on this, but my point is that countless reports over the past several years by Statistics Canada, police departments and other reputable organizations show that the Jewish population is amongst the most victimized group when it comes to hate crimes, bias and harassment. That is just a fact.

This brings me to the bill. This bill and the three-year plan that accompanies it are indeed laudable in their intent. Fighting racism is critical in our society, which is becoming more diverse every day with the acceptance of immigrants and refugees from around the world. Combatting racism against black and indigenous communities is so important and, quite frankly, is a long time coming. However, as good as this bill may look on paper, the bill does not reference Judaism; nor does it reference anti-Semitism even once, as pointed out by the critic of the bill several times during second reading debates. This is despite the fact that, as I said, Jewish people are amongst the most discriminated against and targeted in our community.

At second reading, the minister briefly mentioned anti-Semitism, but it has been left out of the text of the bill. I find this very peculiar. This is a glaring omission, in my opinion, and a bit of an insult to an organization like mine that is on the front lines, fighting anti-Semitism every single day.

If the bill's intention is to combat only racism against black and indigenous communities, then it should be titled differently. It should be called "an act to provide for anti-black and anti-indigenous racism measures." However, if the bill is indeed intended to combat all

types of racism that are most prevalent in our society, it should include other groups, including the Jewish community, and that should be stated in the text of the bill. Members of the committee, I cannot stress enough how important it is that this discriminatory omission is remedied.

I will propose the following suggestions: (1) an amendment to the bill to specifically include the Jewish community and other targeted groups that were omitted in the text; or (2) a statement from the minister, pledging to support the Jewish community and to specifically announce initiatives towards fighting anti-Semitism, like the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center's anti-racism programs, like our Tour for Humanity mobile classroom, like our workshops and events throughout the year and like our extensive Holocaust educational programs. These are the kinds of initiatives that really make a difference to combat anti-Semitism and minimize anti-Semitism in our communities.

In conclusion, it is very clear that action must be taken by the members of this committee and by the government in order to make sure that the Jewish community can get behind this bill 100%, because the current version of the bill is not inclusive, nor is it equitable, and those were two words that the minister used in his speeches to describe the purpose of this bill. As it is currently written, this bill is exclusive and inequitable, picking and choosing to name some groups while leaving others out. My concern is that by omitting the Jewish community from the language of the bill, there will be no recourse to hold the government accountable to combat anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism, as we know, is one of the most consistent, rampant and growing forms of hate in our province, and history teaches us that it must be taken seriously.

Thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Right on time—good job. We shall start with the government and Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you for making your presentation. I like your suggestion of including a reference to anti-Semitism in the bill. I'm just wondering: You said "or a statement by the minister"?

Mr. Zach Potashner: Yes.

Mr. Mike Colle: But how would that hold the ministry to account going forward?

Mr. Zach Potashner: I understand that for political reasons and other reasons, it's sometimes hard to amend bills. I completely understand that. I think, number one, the best way to fix the situation would obviously be to include the Jewish community in certain sections of the bill where they specifically mention other marginalized groups. But if that's not possible, I think that it would go a long way to making the Jewish community happy to support this bill if the minister, completely separate from the bill, made an announcement pledging to fight anti-Semitism in some other form.

Mr. Mike Colle: I agree that it is one of the most pervasive forms of racism that still exists and manifests

itself every day. I know that even on the Toronto Transit Commission, the number one racist problem they have is people either bullying people who are deemed to be Semitic, or comments made about Jewish people who may be wearing their kippahs or whatever. Every day in Toronto, anti-Semitism rears its ugly head. There's no doubt that there should be—and certainly I'm going to ask the minister why there isn't—a reference to specific acts combatting anti-Semitism in this legislation, since I assumed it was one of the main goals: to get rid of that type of too-common behaviour that exists in Ontario.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Mr. Colle, I appreciate that. I understand that the bill is focused more on the systematic and institutional side of racism, but in the debates in second reading, the minister specifically mentioned anti-Semitism, but then when you read the text of the bill, it's not there. I think that there's sort of a disconnect between the intent of the bill and the actual bill, and I think that an amendment is definitely necessary in this case.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you for bringing that forward. I think it's very important.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to the official opposition. Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Zach—an excellent presentation. As you know, I've spoken extensively about anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim bigotry in the House and was disappointed that that wasn't included in the bill.

I have spoken with the minister. I do believe we should put an amendment forward and I think that's important. As well, the strategic plan, I think, has to recognize anti-Semitism as it does in the educational opportunities and the tables that will be set for indigenous, black and Muslim communities. I believe that should happen.

1350

I want to first let every member of this committee know that the Simon Wiesenthal Center brought their tour bus for humanity to my constituency, and we did an event. This is more of a statement than a question, because you deserve credit for this. That mobile tour bus is one of the most amazing things to talk about genocide, the Holocaust; to talk about racism, even the racism that has existed in this country for as far back as we've had European settlers come here. That day, we had it at the synagogue in Barrhaven, but what was remarkable about it is that we had workshops run by our Muslim and Jewish community. The keynote address was actually given by the imam at the pulpit of the mosque. We had genocide survivors and refugees speak to us. It was a day where we brought people together from all walks of life, all different languages, all different colours, all different backgrounds. When we advanced through that and we had the opportunity to sit in and go through the tour bus for humanity—as the day went on, understanding that we have some glaring problems in our society, we actually became more proud to be Canadian because we stopped looking at each other for how we are different from one

another and, instead, for how similar we are and the values that we share.

I agree with you: The intent of this legislation is noble and it is laudable, but there is a glaring omission. I want to give you a commitment on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus that we will continue to stand up against anti-Semitism. We will work with Mr. Colle and others in order to bring forward an amendment that will be acceptable to the Jewish community.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Thank you. We appreciate your work on this bill very much.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, and I understand that there has been some hate speech here today, and I apologize for listening to that.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): No, I'm sorry. You had your time.

We'll continue. Thank you, Ms. MacLeod. We shall move to the NDP: Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation and for taking the time to share your thoughts on the bill today.

The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal, B'nai Brith and others have obviously done a very effective job using data and information collection to inform the public about the extent of anti-Semitic hate and what that means in your community. I wondered if you could comment a little bit more or elaborate a little bit further about the importance of data collection and how you have been able to use that to inform your efforts to combat anti-Semitism.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Sure. We're on the front lines every day, like I said. We have educational advocacy programs. We teach 200 kids per day in our classroom in our office in Toronto. We reach thousands of kids every week through our tour bus for humanity.

Data collection is very important. It helps us understand where the issue is, and it helps us understand that the issue is growing. I think that data shows us that even more needs to be done to educate about anti-Semitism, racial intolerance, religious intolerance and hate in our province. It would be very helpful to have government support, funding and certain initiatives and partnerships come to fruition. That would help advance our programs and programs like our organization's and other organizations' that have the same goals.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And with the amendments that you have proposed, you believe that this bill would be the appropriate vehicle to help you further the strategies that you've already put in place?

Mr. Zach Potashner: I think it's certainly a good first step, establishing the Anti-Racism Directorate into law and ensuring that there are consultations and checks and balances and making sure the program is working properly. I'm not sure what the actual program would entail and what kind of funding would be given to this program, but I think this is certainly a first step, to set it up and get the ball moving, so to speak.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, and thank you, Mr. Potashner, for coming before committee and sharing your thoughts this afternoon.

Mr. Zach Potashner: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Much appreciated.

URBAN REZ SOLUTIONS

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have, on the agenda, from Urban Rez Solutions, Director Roderick Brereton and Director Farley Flex with us this afternoon. We welcome the two of you, gentlemen, to committee. Good afternoon. I hope I pronounced that right. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Good afternoon, committee members. My name is Roderick Brereton. I'm the co-founder of the social change and conflict management group, Urban Rez Solutions. I'm here also today with my social enterprise partner, Farley Flex. We're here to support Bill 114.

Interjection.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Yes, that's us on there.

First and foremost, we'd like to applaud Premier Wynne and the Liberal government—in particular, Minister Coteau for the leadership role he has taken with regard to the Anti-Racism Act, and in particular, the black youth action plan. We are strong supporters of Bill 114 and the goal to maintain an anti-racism strategy that aims to eliminate systemic racism and advance racial equity in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Farley Flex: Now, five minutes is certainly not enough time to get into the myriad of impacts caused by racism. Rather, we'd like to focus on our commitment to the mitigation and ultimate eradication of what may be the most pervasive—and I use that word emphatically—social issue of our time and the support we intend to provide in order to achieve the goals of ending racism and advancing racial equality.

Our company, Urban Rez Solutions, has been working with racialized and marginalized youth and communities for over 15 years, and in particular, with black and First Nations communities. As we see it, the Anti-Racism Act is not only long overdue in this province, but if effectively and strategically marketed, executed and measured, it will result in a paradigm shift in the thinking and behaviour of generations to come in this province.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: We are very encouraged by the province's message of collective impact and the recognition that racism, as a social issue, can only be addressed through collaboration, and collaboration that is inclusive of all sectors, namely government, community organizations, faith communities, corporates, education, mental health and communities including youth, especially those with the lived experience.

Urban Rez Solutions has developed a proven, evidence-based framework that is fundamental to the process of societal change. This antidotal approach cuts across all sectors and serves as a tool for resolve.

I see MPP Colle here. We've done quite extensive work within your catchment area of Lawrence Heights,

and we also have people who are willing to come and talk about the antidotal approach that we bring, in terms of bringing that societal change in the approach that we have.

Mr. Farley Flex: To bring you a little bit up to speed: In 2016, Urban Rez launched phase 1 of the Just Think 1st initiative to reduce gun violence in the city of Toronto. We did so in partnership with the Toronto Police Services Board. We immediately acknowledged that there were several other organizations already working against gun violence and that it made perfect sense to reach out to them as partners.

As a result of that recognition, we developed a model that we call the collective action partnership, or CAP for short, which not only aligns stakeholders around the identified social issue but will serve to grow the capacity of those organizations to better meet the needs of the communities they serve. The CAP model is seamlessly transferable to all social issues, including racism and racial inequity. Not only will Urban Rez Solutions support this bill; so will the members of the CAP organization. Collaboration is the shortest and most effective route to broad-based societal change. Anti-racism and racial inequity are no exception.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Additionally, Urban Rez Solutions will offer branding and engagement strategies that will bring broad-based awareness and engagement around the issue of racism.

Farley and I both have music experience. Farley has obviously been the Canadian Idol judge on one of Canada's most-watched television programs. I also have a musical background and have won Juno Awards. So we are aware of the formula in terms of meaningful engagement, using a pop-culture approach to bring people in, to get that buy-in and then be able to relay and convey the messages.

In this regard, the anti-racism bill and what it stands for, we believe, has to be taken from this approach, so people will gravitate to it and start to reverberate it not just within themselves, but also within communities that they live in and in their homes. It's not going to work any other way, until people buy into it.

1400

From our experience doing the Just Think 1st campaign where we had millions of impressions from across the world but obviously specifically here in the city of Toronto, we are very well equipped to do that work in an effective and an efficient way, working with the levels of government, municipal police and communities in terms of helping, in the case of Just Think 1st, to mitigate the societal ill which is impacting black communities and marginalized social and economic communities more so: that would be gun violence. But again, bringing the approach of the pop culture formula to this action that needs to be taken is what we find most effective.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

We'll start with the third party. Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. I wondered if you had some other points

that you wanted to make. Or did you complete your presentation?

Mr. Roderick Brereton: As Farley mentioned, there is a myriad of things that need to be addressed. I think racism is the root of having that mitigated, whether it be in the education system, the criminal justice system or just in terms of awareness. Again, without having that resonate with every Ontarian, we'll be spinning wheels for the next 40 years.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: You focused a lot during your presentation on the power of collaboration in terms of addressing and getting at the root of systemic racism. In your view, do you think that the legislation as it's currently proposed enables that collaboration that you want to see happen?

Mr. Farley Flex: Yes, I actually do think it does. We attended several of the symposiums and community gatherings at which Minister Coteau spoke. He spoke heavily and quite confidently about the importance of collaboration.

As we see it, gun violence, racism and so on and so forth permeate all communities in various forms. We heard from our Jewish brother earlier. We heard from First Nations people that we work with etc. So there's a shared experience, right? To deal with it individually has never really moved the needle, quite frankly.

I think once you recognize what the common denominators are and then come with a consensus as far as the actions that are needed to be taken, then you're going to certainly gain ground to satisfaction relative to your efforts, especially in terms of data collection and all the experiential information that's necessary.

So, yes, I do believe strongly that the act speaks to collaboration and interacting with Minister Coteau's office and the folks in his office. It's been reverberated over and over.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to the government. Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you for your enthusiastic presentation. I can see the energy coming from you and your ideas. I think that's what we need: that kind of energy to engage especially our young people.

I just want to say that I agreed with you earlier. You both, I know, have musical backgrounds. That is what I've found over the years to be the common hook for young people.

Mr. Farley Flex: Absolutely.

Mr. Mike Colle: Whether they be black, white or whatever it is, that they are into music as a creative force, as a communication force and as an educational force. I really think that we need to really invest in that hook for young people, because they just get off on it and they become so engaged. As you know, we've created Reggae Lane up on Eglinton, which has connected the new generation with Leroy Sibbles and all the guys. Jackie Mittoo—you're too young to remember Jackie Mittoo.

Mr. Farley Flex: Oh, no, they're old friends of mine.

Mr. Mike Colle: The best keyboard player who ever existed. His daughter, Lydia Mittoo, is still—well, anyway, I'll get off that.

So what does this bill need, this written bill, in terms of your action in the community? What do we need to have in between here to make this bill a reality on the street?

Mr. Farley Flex: There are a couple of things. Essentially, if I say the name "Justin Bieber" in this room, everyone knows the name, not because they love his music—

Laughter.

Mr. Farley Flex: No, but he's a fantastic artist. His latest album is a landmark for his career. But the reality is, though, that we're all inundated with a pop culture approach to marketing, whether it be through social media or radio—a hit song on the radio, for instance, gets about 80 spins a week, right? People listen to the radio, obviously, in intermittent doses.

When you think about it, the reason people who are not necessarily Justin Bieber fans are still aware of who Justin Bieber is and all the different things that happen in his life and so on and so forth is because there's a marketing effort that is absolutely about that. If we treat something like anti-racism or racial inequity as a brand, as we have done with Just Think 1st—we strategically aligned ourselves with Pattison out of home, for instance, who I had done formal business with as someone running a radio station and a television station. I said to them—because I take transit and I recognized that on transit there were some empty frames of inventory that was unsold inventory. So I called my contacts there and I said, "What are you doing with this empty frame? We'd love to have a pro-social message occupying your"—what they call their remnant inventory.

Currently, the Just Think 1st initiative, although its focus is specifically on gun violence, is in 79 locations around the city of Toronto at no charge. When you sell it in that way and you speak the language that young people are speaking to each other in, then there's no communication gap, there's no ageism, there's no classism, there is no "ism." It's cool and it's engaging.

The reason you all know about Justin Bieber is because it's proliferated throughout the marketplace. We can do the exact same thing with social issues. There's no barrier. The flyers have to look like there's a party or a concert happening. The social media messages have to be in the vernacular that is most easily received, absorbed and understood. We teach our youth in our community programs that communication is message sent, message received, message understood. Oftentimes we stop at "received" and think, "Why didn't you get back to me?" It's not about that. The person has to receive and understand what you're asking or sending before they respond in the manner you're hoping they will.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

We'll move to the official opposition: Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You know what? I have a comment, then my colleague has a question.

You guys are absolutely so dynamic. You're leaders, and it's easy to follow your conversation and your recommendations. I really want to congratulate you for the wonderful work you're doing.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Thank you.

Mr. Farley Flex: Thank you. We appreciate it.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I'd really like to, after this committee or perhaps when you're finished, have a conversation with you about how I can learn a little bit more from an Ottawa perspective—

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Absolutely. We're actually going to be in Ottawa this week coming up. We're speaking at the Ontario Gang Investigators Association.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: What day is that—Friday?

Mr. Roderick Brereton: It's going to be Friday, yes.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Good, okay. We'll catch up.

Go ahead, Lisa. Two Lisas are on this thing.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Ms. Thompson.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Yes. Again, I very much appreciate the energy that you bring into the room and your commitment to getting our youth on track. You made a comment: "Working individually doesn't move the needle." Then I'm going to jump over to the fact that you brought up Justin Bieber. I represent a rural riding that is closer to Stratford than it is to Toronto. So in the spirit of finding more people to work with you throughout all of Ontario, what are your intentions? How can we make sure your message is sent, received and understood in small-town Ontario as well as the GTHA and Ottawa?

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Right. Just to get into that, for instance, we do a lot of work within small-town Ontario. We do a lot of work within First Nation reserves that are isolated. Basically, the message remains the same, and the more you hear it, the more you feel it, taste it, smell it, the more likely you are to adopt that way of life.

Our main program is called Take Back Your World—Navigate Your Life. It's specific in terms of helping people who may be living in that world who may not have their feet on solid ground to find themselves, to be a leader within themselves, and it resonates, obviously, with young, old, white, black, anybody who has a pulse. We're online. We're on social media. We have a heavy presence there. We are often contacted by municipalities or housing authorities with regard to working and collaborating.

What we don't do is we don't say, "Hey, here's what you have to do." We empower people to figure out what they need to do. Obviously, we extrapolate information very well to allow people to see, "Hey, this is what we need to do," and get people back on the track of becoming leaders and getting that performance out of potential.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: That's awesome. Do you have more of these? Because I'd like to share them—

Mr. Roderick Brereton: Yes, we do. Yes, we do. Absolutely.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You have big fans here.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: All right.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: We need to utilize that spirit.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We want to thank both of you for coming before committee this afternoon and sharing your thoughts.

Mr. Farley Flex: Thanks for having us.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Keep up the good work.

Mr. Roderick Brereton: We appreciate it. Have a good day.

METRO TORONTO CHINESE AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEGAL CLINIC

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next on the agenda, from the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, we have Avvy Yao-Yao Go. She is the clinic director. We welcome you to the committee this afternoon. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

1410

Ms. Avvy Go: Thank you. My name is Avvy Go and I'm the clinic director of the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic. I have to say I can't name a single Justin Bieber song so I'm just going to focus on the law; that's the only thing I know.

The clinic is a founding member and a steering committee member of the Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change Network, and we endorse the positions and recommendations of the network. As part of that network, we have urged the government to adopt anti-racism legislation to mandate the collection of disaggregated data, develop targeted strategies with measurable goals and timetables, and introduce measures for holding government accountable to those strategies. In fact, we presented the government with our version of the anti-racism legislation.

We are very pleased to see that a number of our recommendations have been adopted. Bill 114 is an important first step in our collective fight against racism, and our recommendations today are aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the bill. You can find all 12 recommendations in our written submission. I'm going to just highlight a few of them this afternoon.

First of all, regarding the recommendation on data collection: The minister responsible for anti-racism has said repeatedly that the collection of race-based data is one of the key platforms for the anti-racism strategy. However, there is nothing in the bill that actually requires any of the government agencies or public sector organizations to collect race-based data. Instead, you see in subsection 6(5), it states that: "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations ... requiring public sector organizations to collect" such data. Our recommendation on this point is that you change the word from "may" to "shall," and that would resolve the problem.

Secondly, the bill intends to apply to all agencies within the public sector, yet under subsection 6(7), the bill explicitly excludes from the data collection require-

ment any public sector organization which is a health organization: “a health information custodian, as defined in the Personal Health Information Protection Act.” The term “health custodian” is broadly defined to include almost all major health care institutions, including all hospitals and community health centres. As noted by the Association of Ontario Health Centres, such an explicit exclusion of the health sector will have serious ramifications, and conflicts with the very principles of conducting equity-informed, population-needs-based planning in order to advance health equity. Our recommendation is to remove and delete subsection 6(7).

Thirdly, the bill, in our respectful submission, fails to address one of the biggest challenges facing racialized community members, namely systemic racism and discrimination in the labour market, which results in racialized communities experiencing a higher level of unemployment and, therefore, poverty.

While we acknowledge that the Premier has undertaken a lot of positive initiatives in this direction, such as targeted hiring objectives for equity-seeking groups and the community benefits agreement negotiated for the Eglinton Crosstown, we believe that the Anti-Racism Directorate can and should play a bigger role in supporting all government ministries and departments to explore attaching a similar kind of equity hiring objective to all public sector investment.

We also believe there needs to be a stronger accountability framework to ensure that all government agencies and ministries actually comply with the legislation and with the strategy. For that, we recommend that the government of Ontario shall enact mandatory employment equity legislation to level the playing field for all racialized communities and other historically disadvantaged groups. You should also make it mandatory for all ministries, agencies and boards to collect race-based data, coupled with strong monitoring, audit and performance measurements attached to all the ministers and deputy ministers to ensure compliance with this requirement.

Finally, we note that while the government has agreed to establish an anti-racism secretariat and a disability rights secretariat under the Ontario Human Rights Code, to this date, the government has not delivered on its promise, so we call upon the government to fulfill its promise to institute these secretariats under the Human Rights Commission.

In conclusion, we commend the government for taking this important first step to combat systemic racism. The work done to date can be enhanced significantly by strengthening Bill 114 and by putting in place all the necessary measures to hold the government and the ministries accountable in the implementation of the strategy.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much; much appreciated.

We’ll begin with the official opposition: Ms. Thompson.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: We’re fine for now.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): You’re good? Okay. Thank you very much.

We shall move to the NDP: Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation and for your detailed recommendations. You talked about the serious ramifications around the exclusion of health information custodians. I wondered if you could elaborate a little bit more about that and what the negative consequences might be, and what we might gain if health information custodians were involved in the collection of data.

Ms. Avvy Go: Sure. There’s a notion that the health sector calls the social determinants of health. They look at the population and the demographics, and how access to health and health services impacts different populations differently. For that reason, in fact, many health institutions, including all of the Toronto LHIN network, are already collecting data based on race, gender, disability and other demographic grounds. So they are already doing that, and it doesn’t require a lot of change to ensure that they can continue to do so.

I have talked to the association of health services. I’ve talked to people who work in hospitals. Nobody has ever expressed any concern about privacy because of the way that you can basically anonymize data that you’re collecting, in order to ensure that the health institutions are able to look at the population’s specific needs.

Without that kind of data, they wouldn’t be able to do planning, for instance. They won’t be able to say, for instance, whether women are more susceptible to certain diseases, or whether there are other treatments or services that are required for specific racialized groups or specific people within disability groups. All of that requires planning, and that is based on data and science.

We have actually raised this concern with Premier Wynne at a recent meeting with her. I think she is open to the idea of this committee looking at whether or not this requirement should be reconsidered.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Do I have more time?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Forty-nine seconds.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. You mentioned in your presentation the importance of moving forward with the establishment of a secretariat in addition to the directorate. Can you talk about that?

Ms. Avvy Go: Sure. The secretariat, as I understand it, is established under the Human Rights Code, so it will be working with the Human Rights Commission—I notice that the chief commissioner is here with us today—and it is to enhance the work of the commission.

As you notice, the directorate right now, the Anti-Racism Directorate, works with mostly government bodies—the ministries—and they are required to ensure that the various agencies and so on are doing what they are supposed to do under this act.

The anti-racism secretariat will be enhancing the mandate of the Human Rights Commission. So it has, in a way, a much broader mandate than the directorate, and a different mandate, I would say. They have an advocacy mandate. They have a systemic investigation mandate. They have a mandate around public education.

So the two secretariats, whether it’s the anti-racism secretariat or the disability rights secretariat, are really

there to support the work of the commissioners in carrying out those mandates.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to the government: Ms. Wong.

Ms. Soo Wong: Avvy, before I begin the questions from the government side, I wanted to first and foremost thank you and congratulate you. We missed you last week at the Ontario Chinese women's projects awards. I wanted to say congratulations for your 25 years of work at the Asian and East Asian legal clinic, because I know you've been trailblazing that particular file for many, many years.

Ms. Avvy Go: Thank you.

Ms. Soo Wong: Let me begin. I noticed that your entire written submission and your verbal presentation focused specifically on data collection. I'm going to step back, because before I came here as an MPP—the Toronto District School Board, for many, many years, has collected data. We had data coming out the yingyang, okay? Yet the implementation of the data is the deficiency. So we could collect all the data you're asking.

You're concerned about the health information piece. Let's park that for a minute.

1420

How do we address this issue? We have a specific school board already collecting data even before the government makes it mandatory. What do we need to do? Because you could have data coming out of your ears. That's exactly what's happening right now with the TDSB.

How do you ensure that those data are better planned, with better support programming, and, most importantly, protecting those vulnerable young people? Can you provide some direction for the committee?

Ms. Avvy Go: Sure. I guess I have two responses. First of all, the Toronto school board is the only school board that is doing data collection. While it is good for them to do that, nobody else is doing that, and that speaks to the insufficiency of data collection, which is why we want data collection requirements across the board, for all the ministries and so on.

The Toronto school board is doing it as part of the equity and education strategy that the Premier herself started years ago. But it's the implementation, as you said, that is kind of falling short, which is why I think it's important to have accountability measures. We talk about that in our recommendations, and we also talk about the importance of having a strategy, which is what the minister is doing right now.

If you have a strategy based on the data that you have collected, if you come up with a strategy, then to ensure that it's being implemented, you have to make sure there are accountability measures in place. In my view, this could be attached to, for instance, a deputy minister's performance review. It could come in the form of a funding mechanism, where you provide funding specifically for the implementation of the anti-racism strategy.

You need to have goals and timetables which are measurable—again, based on the data that you collect. If you don't have data, if you don't know what you're collecting and you don't know what you're measuring, then you can't hold anyone accountable.

Data collection is the important first step, but it's not the only thing.

Ms. Soo Wong: But in terms of—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We appreciate it. I thank you, Ms. Go, for coming before committee this afternoon. Much appreciated.

Ms. Avvy Go: Thank you.

DIVERSITY INSTITUTE, RYERSON UNIVERSITY

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next on the agenda we have, from the Diversity Institute at Ryerson University, Wendy Cukier, director of the Diversity Institute. I believe we have a couple of other individuals, one in particular. Thank you very much. You have up to five minutes for your presentation, followed by nine minutes of questioning. If you'd be so kind as to introduce your guests, that would be much appreciated.

Dr. Wendy Cukier: Thanks very much. I'm Wendy Cukier. I'm a professor at Ryerson, head of the Diversity Institute. Ruby Latif and Mohamed Elmi are both PhD students and researchers with the Diversity Institute, and will be able to help with some of the questions and answers.

We didn't have a written brief, simply because we heard about the committee very late, so we will follow up with something in writing.

I usually talk in three-hour blocks, so I will try to watch my time.

I wanted to start by saying that the act is a welcome addition to the suite of policies and tools the province has in place that are aimed at creating a more equitable and inclusive Ontario.

I was particularly grateful for the preamble to the legislation, because it names the problem clearly by talking specifically about systemic racism as a persistent reality in the province of Ontario. Some of you will recall when Donovan Bailey, for instance, raised the issue of racism and got a lot of flak. Even in the last couple of weeks, I've been at events with public institutions where there's a real reluctance to talk about racism as the problem. It's often dressed up in lots of other terms, like "unfair treatment." I think naming racism is critically important, because if you don't identify the problem, you can't actually craft solutions.

We also believe that evidence is the foundation of developing effective strategies and driving social change. The legislation, which allows—in fact, demands—the collection of data from across ministries, programs, agencies and institutions funded by the province, really recognizes that what gets measured gets done.

Following up on the comments of some of the earlier speakers, I do think it's important to recognize that the

data collection has to be accompanied with a range of accountability measures.

I currently work—we've done a lot of research—with publicly funded agencies, including universities, hospitals, police services and so on. The inadequacy of data sources has been a major impediment to driving change. For example, for the DiversityLeads project, which we've been working on for the last five years, we were unable to get public sources of data on the composition of the provincial civil service and its leaders. We were unable to get publicly available data on the racial composition of the judiciary or crown attorneys. We were unable to get centralized data on university faculty or students and unable to get data on hospital leaders and patients or on police agencies. Those are huge gaps if you're trying to drive equity, and we're assuming that this legislation will pave the way to filling some of those gaps.

The research that we've done at the Diversity Institute has tended to focus on exclusion from employment and advancement and engagement in the workforce, as well as looking at issues around entrepreneurship, innovation and so on. Some of the things that, from our perspective, require particular attention that we think these new sources of data will allow us to address are the issues around—again, my colleagues have mentioned this—exclusion from the workforce. There was recently research that shows that if you have a foreign-sounding last name—many people with foreign-sounding last names are also racialized minorities—you have a 30% less likely chance of being called for a job interview in private sector companies, even if you were born in Canada and educated in Canada. That's horrifying, and we know that it's not restricted to the private sector.

The work that we've done in looking at racialized minorities in leadership roles shows that they're dramatically underrepresented, for example, in the GTA. In spite of comprising half of the GTA population, only about 13% of leaders—and this is across public and private sector institutions—are racialized minorities. When you look at racialized women, you find that even though for every white woman in the GTA, there's a racialized woman, white women outnumber racialized women 7 to 1 in leadership roles generally and by a much higher percentage in the private sector. And so—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. The five minutes is up. It goes by really quickly.

Dr. Wendy Cukier: Okay; my apologies.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll start with the government: Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: A little bit of time to wrap up?

Dr. Wendy Cukier: I would just say that I think it's critically important to make sure that the language of the legislation, which we understand describes covering program services and functions—I would like it to be made explicit that that includes employees; I think that's critical.

The second thing is that an across-all-of-government strategy, which drives these issues horizontally through every single ministry, is absolutely critical.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for your presentation and for being here today. Thank you for your work in understanding how we can improve practices inside organizations, because bias is something that's common to all of us. The result of that is racism and other things that create some really big challenges in our society and inside our organizations. So I appreciate your comments on the amendment.

The bill does, as you know, provide a standardized approach towards collecting data. I don't know if you have any thoughts on that in terms of how that will help the work that you're doing at the institute.

Dr. Wendy Cukier: The devil's in the details, so it does depend on the data. I think, as a minimum, you need data on designated groups as defined in employment equity, but because of intersectionality issues, I would encourage thinking about breaking that data down into more detail. If you take the category, for example, which is in the legislation, of visible minorities or racialized minorities, what you will find is that the experience of people who self-identify as black is very different from the experience of those who self-identify as Chinese, for instance. So having lots of granularity is important.

1430

Similarly, gender is huge, and the intersection of gender and race is important. One of the big limitations of the comply-and-explain legislation in Ontario right now is that it only looks at gender; it doesn't look at race, and intersectionality is super important.

And I think that, to earlier points, requiring standardized reporting or scorecards around key performance indicators across ministries, agencies, boards, commissions, universities, colleges and other institutions you fund is super important.

Mr. John Fraser: Great.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Ten seconds, so—

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the official opposition: Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much. We don't have any questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We shall move to the third party. Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for your presentation. Just on that point of the report cards: You talked about the importance of data collection being accompanied by accountability measures. I expect that a report card is an example of an accountability measure that you would like to see. Are there other accountability measures that you would recommend?

Dr. Wendy Cukier: I think the idea of applying not just a gender lens, but a diversity lens, for example to the budget, is a really good example of an accountability lens. If you think about some of the work that the Auditor General does, which is really outstanding, making sure that issues related to race are built into that—because I can tell you, you've identified a number of ministries where this is going to be piloted. It's hugely important, but if you exclude the economic-facing ministries, if you

exclude colleges and universities, the ministry of innovation and so on, you're missing huge opportunities to level the playing field in some of the areas that drive economic growth and innovation.

I think it's really a question of having this lens on every program that you offer and everything that you're funding, and it shouldn't be the job of the secretariat or the ministry; it should be a cross-government responsibility. Does that make sense?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes. The other question: You recommended that there be an explicit reference to employees in the legislation. Is that sufficient to allow the analysis of racism or the exclusion of racialized communities from the workforce, or are there other things that you think could be done, other improvements that could be made to this legislation that would deal with that issue?

Dr. Wendy Cukier: That's a good question. I assume that functions could be defined in a broad way to include employees. If you start to look, for example, at racialization in the Ontario Provincial Police, one piece is to look at employees; the other is to look at the applicant pool, for instance. As I said, the devil is in the detail, but I think the understanding has got to be that the employment pipeline to the provincial civil service and all of its agencies needs to be a really important part of this analysis.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the three of you for coming before committee this afternoon; much appreciated. Have a good afternoon.

Dr. Wendy Cukier: Thanks.

CENTRE FOR ISRAEL AND JEWISH AFFAIRS

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have, from the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, Madi Murariu, associate director of government relations and public affairs. We welcome you to committee this afternoon. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

Ms. Madi Murariu: Thank you so much. Good afternoon. My name is Madi Murariu, and I am the associate director of Ontario government relations and public affairs for CIJA, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon in support of this important initiative.

CIJA is a national, non-partisan, non-profit organization representing the perspectives of 150,000 Jewish Canadians affiliated with local federations from coast to coast. Promoting respect for cultural differences and eliminating prejudice towards our community and all threatened minority groups is a major focus of our work. We thank you for your diligent efforts in addressing and combatting discrimination and racism in our province.

Last November, a spike in hate-inspired vandalism hit our nation's capital, followed by a series of threats

towards the Jewish community centres and houses of worship in Toronto and London. These included racist slurs and swastikas spray-painted on the doors of synagogues; multiple bomb threats; and the forcible removal of mezuzahs, or Jewish scrolls, from the doorframes of senior residence homes. These acts create an environment of fear, raising uncertainty about safety in our community.

A 2016 hate crimes report released by the Toronto Police Service identified, once again, the Jewish community as the most frequently targeted identifiable group for hate crimes in the city. Over the past 11 years, the Jewish community, alongside the black and LGBTQ communities, has consistently been the target of hate crimes. Last year alone, hate crimes committed against Jewish individuals and community institutions accounted for almost 30% of all hate-related crimes in the city of Toronto.

These statistics are not isolated, unfortunately. In the city of Hamilton's hate crimes report for the year 2016 as well, the Jewish community was targeted in 21 out of 115 reported hate crimes, so that's close to one in five. The statistics are very similar in the city of London.

The numbers are, unfortunately, rising. Over the last few years, our community has witnessed a noticeable increase in hate-motivated crimes. This alarming trend is the impetus for our testimony on Bill 114 today, and we appreciate your time in reviewing our position and the suggestions we have to offer on the bill's outcomes.

We present two recommendations to address the rise of hate crimes committed against the Jewish community that we would like to see included.

The first recommendation is the inclusion of the Jewish community in all consultations and projects to be undertaken by the Anti-Racism Directorate. As I mentioned, the Jewish community continues to be the number-one most frequently targeted group.

Moreover, as a community that has suffered extensively from prejudice, discrimination and hate, the Jewish community can provide valuable guidance and deep insight to support the important anti-racism work of the directorate. Our community is deeply invested in combatting racism, and has dedicated a tremendous amount of time and resources towards ending discrimination in our province. The Anti-Racism Directorate would greatly benefit from the knowledge, best practices and unique experience of the Jewish community in addressing and reversing the root causes of racism.

We applaud the government for its commitment to protecting vulnerable groups within our province, and we look forward to working together to continue to advance this in Bill 114. We acknowledge that racism is an ongoing, damaging and significant barrier for the black and indigenous communities, and we praise their inclusion in this legislation. We are also hopeful that the government of Ontario will similarly release a strategy to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic hate crimes under the auspices of the Anti-Racism Directorate.

In particular, section 13 of the bill requires the minister to establish an anti-racism impact assessment

framework, and we urge the government to include a response to anti-Semitism in their assessment of next steps to advance equality. We believe the inclusion of the Jewish community is essential in consultations regarding the impact of the directorate's work, as well as in developing the data standards to assess that impact.

Our second recommendation relates to the data-collection portion mentioned in the bill. While the statistics presented above are staggering, an accurate depiction of the gravity of the situation would not be possible without proper access to data collected by hate crime units across the province. We therefore encourage the directorate to include data standards and data collection procedures for all police services and public safety organizations.

Proper definitions and clarity on what constitutes discrimination and racial bias, streamlined across the public service, would also help to accurately assess the need for systemic change.

CJIA is very appreciative of the opportunity to raise these important issues to you today in your assessment of Bill 114. We look forward to the ongoing work of the Anti-Racism Directorate as its mandate continues to unfold.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We're going to start with the Liberal government: Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Madi, for being here. I don't know if you were here, but the Human Rights Commissioner mentioned that she was supportive of expanding some of the work that she does in terms of genetic discrimination, and taking measures to do that.

I wanted to mention, on that genetic discrimination thing, just that it's also interesting to get data on whether the members of the black community who suffer from sickle-cell anemia—does that genetic marker deny them adequate health care? Does it deny them adequate employment? They ask for your medical history, and you find out you've got sickle-cell in your family. Could you see that being included in these kinds of explorations in this bill?

1440

Ms. Madi Murariu: Absolutely, and thank you very much, Mr. Colle, for the question. We have been incredibly supportive of any ongoing work to combat genetic discrimination, in Ontario in particular. The presence alone of a genetic marker does not necessarily mean a genetic disease, so we believe that there is some work to be done in advancing this and ensuring that people have the ability to get tested and proactively seek solutions for their own health without fearing any repercussions. I think, certainly, data collection would make it easier to understand the scope of the issue and understand, perhaps, the implications on any particular community.

In the Jewish community in particular, there are a number of different genetic markers that are prevalent that do not signify a disease necessarily. But of course we would applaud any initiative for people to be able to get tested without fearing repercussions in the province.

Mr. Mike Colle: Like the BRCA1 and BRCA2

genes, yes.

Mr. Mike Colle: The other thing is, the Simon Wiesenthal Center made a specific point about how there should be a specific reference to anti-Semitic behaviour in this legislation. Do you agree that there should be a reference—that whether it be in section 13, like you've mentioned, or perhaps in the preamble, it should be in there explicitly?

Ms. Madi Murariu: Yes, we would welcome any inclusion of combatting anti-Semitism in the preamble or within the body of the bill to specifically ensure that the Jewish community and targeting anti-Semitism are within the scope of the bill.

Mr. Mike Colle: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): To the official opposition: Ms. MacLeod?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Madi. I think I am so like-minded with Mr. Colle on this. He asked my questions, so I think I'll make the same commitment that I made to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and in particular to Zach, that I'll work with Mr. Colle. As you know, I've spoken extensively about this in the Legislature. We'll speak to the minister again and we'll see if we can come up with some acceptable wording to the community and to all three political parties.

I also wanted to say thank you to you for your advocacy and the work that CJIA does. Many people may not know that I do work quite a bit with CJIA. We actually dealt with, not even a month ago, a hate crime against a student from our Jewish community who was targeted. We were able to work with the school board and have that resolved. It's important that we continue to record these instances, so that people understand that it is happening.

Unless you have any final comments, I just thought I'd say thank you.

Ms. Madi Murariu: Thank you. I will add to that just how important data collection is, because some municipalities have access to the information and collect the information much more than others, and it is so crucial to be able to see that information, have access to it and have a streamlined way of collecting it.

For example, in the city of London, there is a collection of incidences that have occurred, but they do not particularly list which groups were targeted, so I think the understanding of how impactful this is for particular communities is much more difficult to achieve. We would stress and encourage any further developments in that area.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks, Madi.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): To the third party: Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm actually the MPP for London West, so I really appreciated your comment there about the importance of data collection.

During your presentation you emphasized the importance of using hate crime data collected by police services

and community safety organizations. Is it your view that that should be spelled out more explicitly in the legislation, or were you just offering that as sort of an implementation priority that the government should be paying attention to?

Ms. Madi Murariu: We would certainly welcome any further developments within the bill to encourage a streamlined way of collecting this information, because we do believe it's very important to have access to it from a community perspective, but also, we believe, from a government standpoint, in order to be able to assess properly where there is a need and where, perhaps, a situation is ameliorating or deteriorating. Any developments in including the words and including, perhaps, a method of gathering it within the bill would be welcome.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Similarly, the first recommendation that you made was around ensuring the full participation of the Jewish community in the consultations that are part of this bill. Do you feel that the language should be strengthened? Aside from the important issue of addressing or naming anti-Semitism in the bill, are there other areas where you think the language should be strengthened, in particular around the consultation process?

Ms. Madi Murariu: I think that it was raised earlier as well that quite a number of communities were consulted in the process. We were very happy, and we welcomed that consultation process. I think any inclusion of the Jewish community, as well as other communities that have faced discrimination, is very important because it does create the ability to bring them to the table and to have that consultation with them on an ongoing basis as the mandate continues to expand.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you, Ms. Murariu, for coming before our committee this afternoon and sharing your thoughts.

Ms. Madi Murariu: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): It's much appreciated. You're welcome.

TORONTO AND YORK REGION LABOUR COUNCIL

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next, from Toronto and York Region Labour Council, we have the chair, Labour Council Equity Committee, Mr. Mark Brown, and the executive assistant, Susan McMurray. We welcome the two of you to committee this afternoon. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

Mr. Mark Brown: Thank you very much. I want to thank you for the opportunity to present to you. As was mentioned earlier, my name is Mark Brown, and I'm from the Toronto and York Region Labour Council.

Ms. Susan McMurray: Susan McMurray, with the labour council.

Mr. Mark Brown: The labour council represents 205,000 workers across Toronto, and, by extension, their families as well. We have an extensive history in fighting

for social justice, economic justice, climate justice and racial justice.

In 1947, the labour council, with the strength of its Jewish and black members, created the Toronto labour committee on human rights to combat anti-Semitism. In the 1980s, the council was involved in the creation of the Anti-Racism Secretariat, and in 2016, the directorate

In late 2016, we submitted both verbal and written submissions to the province. We're pleased that the legislation has the Anti-Racism Directorate enshrined within it, as well as the collection of data and a regular reporting process.

While the government should be applauded, in our view, for Bill 114, we believe that there are a number of provisions that could be strengthened and added.

The first one: We feel that the legislation should specifically include an advisory committee with labour's voice represented on the committee. It's our view that having labour's voice at the table is crucial to the importance of the success of the work of the directorate.

Employment, as we see it, is a common denominator that ties together many of the concerns that have brought us together today. Whether the discussion ends up being one around the issue of precarious work, racism and its effect on the community, or Islamophobia, each of these concerns and more overlap between the workplace and community. With labour being the voice of both unionized and non-unionized workers in the province, we can speak to the effects that policies and decisions have on the workers and the overlapping effect that it has on those workers' communities.

In addition, having labour at the table brings tremendous resources. We have the infrastructure and the ability to talk to our members and work closely with the communities as well.

We believe that in order to make a move towards a more equitable employment strategy, employment also should be specifically named within the data collection targets and indicators set.

A recent report highlights that racialized Canadians earn approximately \$30,385 a year, compared to \$37,332 for other Canadians, or to break that down, that's approximately 81 cents for every dollar. Since employment, in our view, is basic to the participation in life in Ontario, the legislation must be clear that employment must be specifically included.

Ms. Susan McMurray: With respect to the organizations that are covered in this legislation, we believe that the private sector should be included—racism knows no boundaries—and large companies, in particular, should be covered.

1450

In the public sector, the legislation should cover the following three types of organizations, or clarify that they are included:

First, any organization that is currently covered by the definition of a public sector organization that is privatized in future—such an organization should continue to be covered by the legislative requirements.

Secondly, any company contracted to carry out work for an organization currently covered by the legislation should be required to comply with the legislative provisions, if it's not already covered. The legislation appears to be a bit hazy there. A \$1-million floor could be set there as well.

Thirdly, those companies commonly thought of as being public sector organizations but exempted from the definition should also be required to comply with the legislative provisions. This includes entities under the Electricity Act, such as Ontario Power Generation, and others. There may be others missing from coverage.

Mark mentioned employment as a sector that should be specifically identified in the legislation. We believe that there are a minimum of two others: education and justice. We recognize that these sectors have been included in the government's current Anti-Racism Strategy. However, if we hope to eliminate systemic and other forms of racism, they are too critical to leave to the whims of future governments.

Finally, there are two closing issues we urge you to consider.

We heard about the potential for inclusion of other types of racism. We think the legislation should specifically reference Islamophobia. The current preamble reflects the fact that racism is experienced differently, and includes, as examples, anti-indigenous and anti-black racism. While Islamophobia appears to have a newer history, naming it now may reduce the opportunity for it to become deeply embedded, as anti-indigenous and anti-black racism have become.

Lastly, we think that worker/management training on anti-racism should be included in the legislation. Training is a requirement of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Both of these processes have been successful, OSHA in reducing workplace injuries, and the AODA in raising awareness of accessibility barriers and needs.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much.

Ms. Susan McMurray: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the official opposition: Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, I'm just curious. I read through your presentation, and I listened to you, and I looked at some of the changes that you have to be made. You mentioned adding Muslims and Islamophobia to the preamble, and to define it, which I don't disagree with. But what I'm wondering, after listening to all of the statistics, whether it's B'nai Brith, Statistics Canada, Toronto police, Hamilton police, Ottawa police—anti-Semitism appears to be one of the most racist, evidence-based initiatives occurring across the province. I'm wondering why you would exclude them from your recommendation.

Ms. Susan McMurray: I don't think we would exclude them. Mark earlier referenced work that was done at the labour council in 1947, where our Jewish and

other racialized members collaborated to set up a joint committee to fight anti-Semitism and to fight racism.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: But you don't think it should be included in this bill?

Ms. Susan McMurray: Our recommendations are not exhaustive. Islamophobia is one that we identified because of the most recent events.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: The government has addressed Islamophobia in its strategic plan at the tables that it is setting up for consultation, as well as in terms of education. But anti-Semitism has been left out. I just want some clarity, because it boggles my mind when people don't treat anti-Semitism as the threat that it actually is to people who live in my community and across the province. I'm just wondering why that omission is so glaring.

Mr. Mark Brown: Let's just make it clear, on our end: We believe that all racism needs to be dealt with. But we also believe that they need to be specifically mentioned within the legislation, because it deals with each community differently.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: So anti-Semitism should be included?

Mr. Mark Brown: As I was saying, we're not seeking to exclude anything. We have addressed the stuff that we feel should be included, and we don't have any objection to additional items being included, as my colleague has mentioned. But we do want there to be specific recognition for each group, the ones that we mentioned. You're bringing forth anti-Semitism, and we don't have an issue with that. But we do feel that Islamophobia, given that it is quickly becoming the new norm, is something that needs to be addressed and nipped in the bud right away, before it has the time to grow.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes, and even recent statistics suggest, however, that anti-Semitism is far more prevalent, particularly in Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa. You don't have to take my word for it. The Toronto police are saying this. B'nai Brith is talking about this. It's a reality that data that exists today proves. We just hope that you would make that clear, that you believe there should be a mention of anti-Semitism in this bill.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to the NDP: Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation and for the recommendations you've made to strengthen the bill. Your comments about the advisory committee: You spent some time on that and certainly emphasized the importance of having labour representation on that advisory committee. Did you have some thoughts as to who else should be on that advisory committee, what other kinds of representation?

Mr. Mark Brown: We didn't have much discussion on who else, but more so, rather, on why labour should be part of the advisory committee. I spoke earlier about our history in fighting for racial justice. No other organization can claim to be the voice of workers in the province or in the country, other than the labour movement itself. Each and every issue that comes up that

would have brought us together affects somebody—or their family—who is also a worker, and it crosses over.

Some of the decisions that would be made by way of the directorate would obviously affect the individuals living in the province and working in the province and those decisions may also spill over into the workplace. But as we see it, it's our role to bring to the table the effect that decisions, policies and procedures have on workers in the province.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Several of the presenters who have been here today have shared the concern you raised about the need to achieve racial equity in employment, that it has got to be a key goal of this legislation. You've made the recommendation that employment, education and justice be explicitly referenced in the bill. Are you concerned that without an explicit reference the bill is not strong enough to move us forward in those areas?

Mr. Mark Brown: We're concerned that those areas may not last once there are changes in government which inevitably take place. What we are seeking is for the advancements towards equity as a result of this bill being maintained, regardless of who is in office.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the government: Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you for your presentation. It was well said, well put. On that vein, did you want to continue or expound a bit further about justice and education as key components behind the anti-racism measures?

Ms. Susan McMurray: Well, should we take employment for 30 seconds and then perhaps talk about justice and education?

Mr. Granville Anderson: Yes.

Ms. Susan McMurray: Thinking again of the AODA, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, it covers off a number of areas of employment that the procedures apply to, from the recruitment through the selection process and after hiring. Certainly references to employment and then also to various stages of employment would be very helpful.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Anything further you would like to add?

Mr. Mark Brown: Well, the view that we're taking is not a new view. Where education is concerned, we believe nobody should be left behind, nobody should be left at a disadvantage, and we're seeking for the legislation to have that fundamental view, that fundamental belief enshrined within it. While we think it's great for some of these items to be part of the strategic planning, we want to see it cemented in the legislation.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Another point you made, which I agree with, is that systemic racism occurs in all sectors. You went on to say that restricting anti-racism measures to the public sector implies that it is acceptable for racism to operate in the private sector. I wouldn't assume that. We have to address it in all sectors. Any thoughts about how you would go about addressing that in the private sector?

1500

Mr. Mark Brown: What came out of the discussions on our end is that if there are—what's the word I'm looking for?—areas that the public sector has to comply with, as it relates to the legislation, and the private sector does not, we run the risk of creating a situation where the private sector now has a competitive advantage over some of the work that the public sector is doing. We believe in public services and we stand for public services. We don't want those services to end up being privatized.

What we're looking for is a level playing field. If the public service is required to collect certain data, then large companies in the private sector should also be required as well, because at the end of the day, the percentage shows that more Ontarians work in the private sector than work in the public sector regardless. We want the legislation to have the maximum positive reach to benefit the people of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you to the two of you for coming before committee this afternoon; much appreciated.

COLOUR OF POVERTY—COLOUR OF CHANGE

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have on the agenda, from Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change, the coordinator, Mr. Michael Kerr. Mr. Kerr, we welcome you to committee this afternoon. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

Mr. Michael Kerr: Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the committee. Firstly, apologies for the three pieces that I circulated. There was a missed assignment on the stapling of the three pieces together.

I'm Michael Kerr. I'm the coordinator of Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change. In the pink handout—I won't describe it—you'll see the steering committee that cofounded the network back in 2007. This year is our 10-year anniversary of doing racial, justice-related education and advocacy work across the province and engaging at a federal, provincial, municipal and institutional level as far as moving what we think to be policy and program initiatives forward that help to redress the long-standing but ever-growing colour-coded or racialized inequality across the province.

To that end, we very much welcome the initiative of the government with Bill 114 and support all of its provisions, although you'll note in our submissions—and you will have seen pieces of it when Avvy Go presented earlier from the Chinese and Southeast Asian legal clinic as one of the cofounding steering committee members of Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change. The legislative establishment of the directorate, the anti-racism strategy, the targets and indicators, the data standards, the progress reports, the five-year review and, of course, the anti-racism impact assessment framework are all elements of the legislation that we think are critical, needed and necessary.

One thing to note in terms of inconsistent language that we noted in the bill is where, in the preamble, it makes reference—as others have noted earlier—to government policies, programs and practices, but in section 13, subsection (4), the language changes. It isn't consistent. We would hope that consistent language would be all-encompassing, such as “policies, programs, practices and procedures” as well as “structures and staffing.”

Again, several of the deputants I've heard today have spoken to that need as well in terms of ensuring that the strategy is all-encompassing and complete in terms of the different elements that need to be addressed.

The other handout that I wanted to draw your attention to is the one-page handout that has statistics and bar charts on it. One set of bars refers to the census data of 2006. Of course, with the challenges presented with the National Household Survey of 2011, we had to go to an alternative source of data—that was tax filer data with the Canada Revenue Agency—to highlight and underscore, again, that growing colour-coded or racialized inequality that is true right across the province when you look at most of the larger urban centres that we've identified in the CRA data.

Going back to highlight four areas very, very quickly: One is data collection itself. Others have spoken to the need for the data collection to be made mandatory and understood as such. Our recommendation number 1 is, in section 6, subsection (5), changing “may” to “shall,” a sort of simple but very critical amendment.

Recommendation number 2 is dealing with the need not to have the health sector effectively exempted in the framework. Of course, we've consulted with the Association of Ontario Health Centres. We've worked for many years with the Toronto Central LHIN and now some of the adjoining local health integration networks, and they're doing this without any trouble. So we were very shocked and surprised that there was a felt need to exempt the sector given that it's already being done by some of the larger actors in the field. If there are reservations, if the legislation is moving too quickly for the Ministry of Health to digest it, those reservations can be handled in regulation. It doesn't have to be embedded into the act, which we fear would be interpreted and understood as an effective exemption longer-term.

Our recommendation number 3 speaks to the need for intersectionality. Of course, our focus is certainly race, racism and racialization, but we understand the unique and different nature of how that manifests and how that gets expressed structurally, institutionally and by individuals in terms of the multiple dimensions of their identity and how any data collection regime could be made more robust to capture the nature of those diversities.

Recommendation number 4, on page 4, is the need for fair and equitable access to the data. We offer suggestions as to how that can be accomplished, as opposed to some of the more academically inclined framework that exists now, to facilitate readier, more equitable access by community-based researchers.

A very key one that has been mentioned several times already by other deputants is a huge gap in the legis-

lation, that being the labour market. It needs to be addressed, and we offer a suggestion as to how, within the current bill, that could be encompassed in terms of—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Sorry to interrupt; I gave you quite a bit of extra time as well.

Ms. Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. Congratulations to Colour of Poverty for the fine work that your organization does in advocating on these issues.

I'd like to offer you some time to complete your presentation about the importance of provisions in the bill to apply to the workforce.

Mr. Michael Kerr: Thank you very much. Yes, when we think of the labour market, we understand that through the AODA and the employment standard as part of the AODA implementation, labour market issues impacting persons with disabilities are being addressed in some way, shape or form. We've seen a number of gender-related initiatives that help to address and redress some of the gender-based inequities that are experienced by trans- and female-gender individuals in the labour market. And, although much more limited, there are certain interventions and initiatives undertaken by government to address labour market experiences of members of First Peoples communities, First Nations and otherwise.

But for some reason, we have difficulty addressing communities of colour or people of colour as a large constituency of groups in all of their rich diversity and the labour market challenges that they face. Here is an opportunity for us to do so.

Some of the studies that were mentioned earlier—the recent study done by U of T and Ryerson, looking at the racialized experienced of individuals that have non-English-sounding surnames and the differential opportunities they have in the labour market, and the recent OHRC racial profiling study, which encompassed some of the experiences of racial profiling in a labour market context—there are a lot of things that are percolating in other areas. Certainly the ever-building research shows so very clearly the labour market racism and racialized exclusion experienced by members of racialized groups, so it's critical and necessary that we engage and address that piece of the shared challenge.

1510

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Over to the government: Mr. Anderson.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Kerr, for being here and thank you for your contribution during the submissions process to this bill.

My question to you is: Colour of Change's mandate is to address the intersectionality between racialization and poverty. Bill 114 would enable the minister responsible for the ARD to standardize how we are tracking data for our racialized communities in Ontario. What are your thoughts on how we should ensure tracking and engaging those more adversely affected: those who are both racialized and poor?

Mr. Michael Kerr: I think that's where the robustness of the data-capture template becomes so very critical. We understand that there has been work done by some professors at York University and the University of Toronto to help the directorate develop a proposed data-capture template, which we look forward to seeing and having an opportunity to comment on. Assuming that it will very well address race and racialized dimensions of identity, we would also hope that it encompasses the key and multiple intersectionalities—in terms of gender identity, sexuality, disability, age—first and foremost.

With that template offered to ministries and offered to all of the public sector organizations as listed in the definitions, I think that will go a long way to making visible the inequities, and, as they are made visible, then that presents opportunity for programs and policies and interventions to be created and addressed that speak to the uniqueness of those disparities.

Mr. Granville Anderson: We heard from the Diversity Institute of Ryerson University that 30% of resumés that go out are rejected based on name or nationality or ethnicity of the prospective applicant. Any thoughts on that?

Mr. Michael Kerr: There are different strategies to address that. A simple one that we've heard about recently in the news, because of it being lifted up as part of the federal government's effort to make more robust its Employment Equity Act framework—of course, we've had that now for 31 years federally. It has done a fair job. A lot more should have been done and can be done. They've introduced a commitment to blind resumé assessment, so that you lift out of the resumés any kind of identifiers, such as surname and, in other cases, other elements of identity that could hint at certain ethno-racial or cultural background or faith background. In that way, at least through that stage of the hiring and promotion process, that will not become an obstacle. That's one strategy.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): To the opposition: Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much for your presentation and for coming in here today. I don't really have anything to ask, other than that I just wanted to make a comment, and I thought that maybe the government would have addressed it.

You raised an issue about medical data. My understanding—and I believe there must be someone here from the minister's office who can probably back me up on this. I asked the same question, and I was told that they were still working with the Information and Privacy Commissioner over the privacy laws. I believe that that's the case. Can I get a nod from somebody from the government just if I'm right?

Interjection: Yes.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes. So there's an actual reason for it. It's not that it's not being done in some aspects, and it's not that there's reluctance on the part of the government—I can't believe I'm defending the government; usually, this is not what I do. But I sat through the

briefing, and that was the question. It's not that it's taking time to catch up; it actually does require a legal change.

My understanding, if I'm right—and they'll tell me if I'm wrong, I'm sure of that—is that they are planning on bringing forward that amendment at a later date. Did I pass the written and oral exam here?

Interjection.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay; there we go.

Mr. Michael Kerr: Our concern arises from the fact that, in the 15- or 20-year journey to get institutions like Toronto Central LHIN and others to lift up that work and do it in the best way possible, still, it could be improved there. But the fear is that embedding it into the legislation—and certainly that's the response that we got from those institutions as well—is not necessary. They can be addressed in regulation. Embedding it into the act gives it a perceived sense of permanency, because a lot of those institutional actors need a little bit more of a push or a nudge. Doing it by regulation, I think, would be a more effective way to do it, providing that nudge.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): One final question. Mr. Cho.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I'm Raymond Cho, MPP from Scarborough–Rouge River. My riding is the most diverse. I often get complaints from the residents in my riding that when they apply for a job, they don't even get any response. Many of them are complaining that they don't even get an interview, mainly, they feel, because their name is not Anderson or Brown or Smith. Is it true? Has your organization run any kind of data collection? As a government, what can we do to help them?

Mr. Michael Kerr: Any research that we have seen and helped to bring about has underscored the point that, in fact, it is true. And it's not just in employment; it's in the housing market.

The Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation did a similar study with similar findings: People who were looking for an apartment were sometimes shut out of the process when they made a telephone call because they spoke with an accent. Then someone who didn't speak with an accent made a similar call, and suddenly the apartment was available again. Or when they showed up, having spoken well enough to pass that hurdle, if a person of colour then showed up in order to see the apartment, they were then told, "Oh, sorry. It has already been rented." But then subsequent approaches determined that, in fact, it wasn't.

It's labour market; it's all facets and dimensions of people's lives that this is the case. That's why this broad-based, comprehensive approach to data collection can help make it more visible. With that transparency, we can more effectively bring about change. Because it's very real.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you, Mr. Kerr, for coming before committee this afternoon; much appreciated.

THE LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS,
B'NAI BRITH CANADA

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next we have on the agenda the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada: Amanda Hohmann, who is the national director. We welcome you to Queen's Park and committee this afternoon. You have up to five minutes.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Thank you. First of all, thank you for allowing me to be here today to speak about Bill 114. I fear I'm just going to echo some of the words of some of my colleagues, but I'll try to provide some unique and different recommendations and critiques for you today.

By way of background, you see in front of you the Audit of Antisemitic Incidents, which is the major publication that we put out every year. We've been doing this for 35 years. It tracks anti-Semitism in Canada, right across the country.

When we're talking about data collection and the necessity of good data collection and being able to do something with that data, I think B'nai Brith—and myself, specifically, because this is my project—understand very deeply why that is important. I want to echo some of the comments of some of the other speakers that data collection, as it's laid out in the body of the bill as it stands right now, is probably one of the things that concern us most, for a couple of reasons.

First, I think any time you're collecting data related to racial or ethnic identifiers, there is the potential for concern there. I think, from our perspective, because we've been collecting this kind of data for 35 years, we're very sensitive to the particular difficulties that arise when you're collecting that kind of data. From our perspective, I think it's very important that the government is aware of the challenges of that. I think it's important to understand that when you're relying on, presumably, individuals to self-report this kind of information, it can be very difficult. Some people are reluctant to self-report for one reason or another. They might self-report in a category that doesn't necessarily make sense from the perspective of what it is that you thought you were trying to capture.

A very good example of the difficulty of this is the Toronto police statistics that come out every year about hate crimes. Those are broken down by ethnic and racial identifiers. Some of the difficulties that we see is what happens when somebody falls into two groups.

1520

For example, from our perspective, what happens if you self-identify as both black and a Jew? Where do you fall, and what kind of incident is this and what barrier are you facing? Is it because you're a person of colour or is it because you're a person of Jewish descent? I think that's something that needs to be further discussed and defined when you're going forward with data collection of this sort.

Our second concern is related to the development of the strategy in and of itself. Something that we find very

important is the idea of evidence-based research and evidence-based advocacy. I know there's a lot of mention in the strategy itself about it being evidence-based, but I think there needs to be more done about that. As some of my colleagues said, the Jewish community is the most targeted in Canada—by a wide margin—for hate crimes, as Ms. MacLeod pointed out. It's something that is continuing to grow. It's not getting better. It's not something that's up for discussion or debate. By every conceivable measurable and by every organization that tracks this in Canada, the Jewish community is the most targeted.

For me, and for our organization, this was a very important omission in the body of the strategy and in the body of the bill, because anti-Semitism wasn't specifically addressed. I know Ms. MacLeod brought that up, but I just wanted to echo that that was one of our concerns. While of course we as an organization feel very strongly that any discrimination or racism for any reason is very important, anti-Semitism needs, I think, particular mention within this document and within this strategy.

For us, the discussion about being evidence-based is a bit problematic, because the evidence is not there for the way that it's written currently.

The last concern that we have is the idea of systemic racism, which flows throughout the bill and throughout the strategy itself. I think the concept of systemic racism is very important when you're looking at an anti-racism strategy. Obviously it's where we're going to be focusing the majority of our work because it's where we need to combat racism the most.

The difficulty, from the perspective of the Jewish community, though, is that we often hear there is no systemic racism against the Jewish community. For us that's a very important barrier that we face when we're discussing racism as it relates to anti-Semitism, because the Jewish community doesn't look like "the other," so it's very difficult to make that argument that there is systemic racism against the Jewish community. However, we've seen on campuses across the province that anti-racism and anti-discrimination strategies introduced on campuses—I could name some; I don't need to point any out today specifically—despite very clear anti-racism directorates on those campuses, there is still a rise in anti-Semitism, and a very alarming rise.

We get calls on a weekly basis from parents not asking where can they send their child to university that they'll get the best education, but where can they send them where they're least likely to be the victim of violence. I think that is very telling. Something we need to specifically address within the strategy is campuses, because for our community, especially, campus life is very problematic and very concerning.

I'll just wrap it up—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Quickly, please.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Yes, sorry. I would just wrap it up: We absolutely all want a policy that effectively combats racism across the board for every community. We would just encourage you and encourage the government to make sure that anti-Semitism is included in any

of those strategies going forward, because that's what the evidence-based approach would dictate.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll start with the official opposition: Ms. MacLeod.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks very much, Amanda. It's so good to have you here. I do apologize. Last week I had to be in Ottawa. We had a major flood, as you know. I was supposed to be with you for your audit, but I do know it went well and I know people were talking about it when I arrived at Queen's Park the next day, and my leader, Patrick Brown, was talking about it in the House. I appreciate that.

With respect to that question that was raised in the House, and with respect to your presentation as well as the ones from the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center and CIJA, and the very real concerns you have that (1) anti-Semitism is not included in this bill and (2) that it is rarely mentioned as it is with some of the other high-targeted groups in the strategy. I think it takes 11 pages before anti-Semitism is mentioned. You're not included at the tables; you're not included in the education awareness piece.

The Premier said, "Oh, it's fine, because it's in the budget bill," and my point was that it's not in the anti-racism bill, which is where the community actually wants it. Would I be correct in saying that?

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Correct, yes.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Okay. So you would favour what the others have favoured coming forward, that we actually explicitly mention anti-Semitism as a targeted—

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Absolutely. I think if we're talking about an evidence-based strategy to fighting racism in this province, it doesn't make any sense to leave anti-Semitism out of that equation, because the evidence suggests that the Jewish community is the most targeted across the board. So I'm a little perplexed as to why it wouldn't automatically be included, because it should be.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Yes. I'll talk to the minister again. I've spoken with him before. I'm very heartened that my colleague, Mike Colle, has been very persuasive today. I think that he and I can work on something, as I mentioned to your other colleagues.

It was a disappointment for me, because I see it in my own community and it's something that we have to deal with. I and another member here, from Ottawa South—both of us had instances in our own constituencies last November. It was three religions that were targeted, but at the same time, I think it's really important that we recognize that, in particular these days, the Jewish community and the Muslim community are being targeted.

I want to just make a plug, because I really don't have a question. I think there is a model, and it's in my constituency in Barrhaven, where we have faith leaders that will go in to one another's congregations and interact. I'm going to mention Dan Guther from the Cedarview Alliance Church; Rabbi Blum, who is a close friend of mine from the Ottawa Torah Centre; and Dr. Zijad Delic,

who is with the South Nepean Muslim Community. Those three are leaders. They're doing what they can on the ground. They recognize that there is hate in all of its forms and that it exists, but they're doing it in such a wonderful, peaceful way that I think that they are the model. I'm very proud of that.

I just want to encourage you to continue to do the work that you do and know that I'm going to work with my colleagues across the aisle to see if we can get this sorted out, ironed out and dealt with in a timely fashion. Thank you very much. Great presentation.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: I appreciate it.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We shall move to the NDP: Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation and for the work that B'nai Brith has done on the audit of anti-Semitic incidents.

I thought you raised a very interesting point about systemic racism and the way that that serves to exclude the experience of the Jewish community, and how racism impacts that community. I noticed that the preamble refers only to systemic racism: every single point in the preamble is only systemic racism, and not other forms of racism.

A previous presenter, CIJA, had talked about the need to include hate crime data, for example, from police services and community safety organizations. Are there other suggestions that you would make to ensure that this specific bill addresses the racism that's experienced by the Jewish community outside of this systemic racism lens?

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Sure. Well, I agree with my colleagues at CIJA. I think hate crime statistics are important, and I think leaving that out leaves out an important part of the landscape of racism in Ontario for sure.

I also think, though, that we need to look at what systemic racism is and how it is being defined in this bill and more broadly speaking. From our perspective, as I mentioned, I've got students on campus calling me every day. And when I'm getting the same message from 200 or 300 Jewish students on one campus, all of them feeling targeted, all of them feeling unsafe and all of them having the same experience, that's systemic.

I think it needs to be a broader discussion. As many of the other speakers have brought up today, it's necessarily simply inequities in employment and access to employment or access to health care and the social determinants of health and all of those other things that people have brought up.

1530

There is overt racism as well, which can be systemic. I think it's very important that we address that. For us, campuses and some sort of inclusion about the campus experience or some metric for measuring racism on campus is an important inclusion in this bill.

From the perspective of the Jewish community, campus is where it's the front line of anti-Semitism in Ontario. It's where it begins and often where it is the

worst. From our perspective as an organization, something addressing the experience of students on campus—and certainly not just Jewish students, but there are many targeted groups on campuses, because it is an environment that encourages free expression, and for the first time in many of their lives, self-identification in a particular way. When you're working out all of those kinks, of course, there are going to be conflicts that arise. It's very important to be addressing this on campus before it spills out into the larger community as a whole.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Over to the government: Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Amanda, for being here. One of the things that I am not quite sure whether it is in the bill, but I'm just looking for it in the strategies, is—I really think a lot of good could be done to prevent anti-Semitism or racism through preventive actions and interventions early on. That's why I'm very mindful of the fact that we have to do concrete things in a preemptive fashion, because a lot of the things we do after the fact—like sometimes the charges are laid or not laid; it's very frustrating. But I see a lot of hope.

For instance, this month—you realize it's Jewish Heritage Month, right? Last night, there was the Jewish film festival going on at Yonge and Eglinton. There was the Jewish music week, which is a huge success with thousands of people attending. Right now there is the Anne Frank exhibit at John Polanyi high school. Thousands of elementary and high school kids are being exposed to this part of history that they were probably never taught. Each one of those children gets a copy of Anne Frank's book from the Indigo Foundation, from Heather Reisman.

I see some real hope, that way, of preventive actions, and that's why I am such a supporter of Black History Month, because it teaches, it makes people understand better because they never get an opportunity, right?

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: I agree 100%. I think education is tremendously important. I think that's why anybody who knows me knows that my approach to advocacy is always that I like to solve the problem through education and working together, rather than the sort of back-end charging somebody or that kind of stuff. I would always prefer to solve something through education. The vast majority of particularly anti-Semitic incidents come out of ignorance, not out of malice.

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, definitely.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: And I think that's probably the case.

Mr. Mike Colle: Oh, we had a case of it here earlier today. There was a hateful, anti-Semitic remark right in the first deputation we had, and we have to say, "No, don't say that."

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Yes, and that kind of thing happens all the time. I'm sure it didn't come out of a place of malice; it came out of a place of ignorance.

Mr. Mike Colle: Exactly.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: So, from our perspective, education is tremendously important and it stops a lot of the necessity for these sorts of—

Mr. Mike Colle: But is there enough in this legislation to put in that framework for proactive education? That's what I'm wondering.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: I don't know. No? I think it needs to be made a priority, and a very explicit priority. Rather than even tracking data and that kind of thing—

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, after the fact.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Exactly. I think you need to begin in a place of education and then, what are you tracking data on? Track data on the uptake of that education and what the outcomes are. If we're spending taxpayer money, we need real deliverables, and that's a really good deliverable.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We appreciate it, Ms. Hohmann, for coming before committee this afternoon.

Ms. Amanda Hohmann: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): You're welcome.

ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO HEALTH CENTRES

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next, from the Association of Ontario Health Centres, we have Jacquie Maund, policy and government relations lead. We welcome you, Ms. Maund.

Ms. Jacquie Maund: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm here from the Association of Ontario Health Centres. We have 107 members across the province. Some of them may be in some of your ridings: community health centres, aboriginal health access centres, nurse practitioner-led clinics and community family health teams.

Our association has a very strong commitment to health equity, so our response to this legislation is framed through that lens. Our members focus particularly on serving vulnerable members of the community, people who face barriers accessing health care. That would include people living in poverty, newcomers, immigrants, francophones, people from the LGBT community, people who are differently abled and people from rural and remote communities.

We know from our work and from academic work that racial discrimination can have a broad, damaging effect on physical health. We know that racism can shatter a person's self-esteem and rob a sense of security and the feeling of belonging, all of which are tied to a person's health and well-being, so the Association of Ontario Health Centres is very pleased to see Bill 114. We support it because it creates a framework to promote equity for racialized groups across the province. We're also pleased to see that section 6 of the bill will enable the government to establish data standards for the collection, use and management of information, including personal information, to identify and monitor systemic racism and racial disparities.

However, we're very concerned that the bill explicitly excludes health information custodians—that is, health service providers such as our members—from these

regulations requiring collection of data on the people who they serve. So our key message to this committee in reviewing the bill is to delete clause 6(7) in its entirety and require health providers and agencies to be mandated to collect this data, along with other public sector organizations under this proposed law.

Just to touch on some of the reasons for this recommendation from the Association of Ontario Health Centres: The government recently passed the Patients First Act, which requires all local health integration networks to promote health equity, reduce health disparities and respect the diversity of communities in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of health services. We would argue that the LHINs cannot carry out these functions effectively if they do not have accurate, current socio-economic data collected by health service providers on all of the people who they serve.

If Bill 114 excludes health service providers from the requirement to collect data that can help identify and monitor systemic racism and racial disparities in Ontario, then the broad goal of a health equity approach to planning as set out in the government's Patients First Act cannot be achieved effectively.

We know that racism is one of the determinants of health. It's well documented that indigenous populations, as well as black communities, experience the worst health outcomes in Ontario. This is entrenched through systemic racism, but it is virtually impossible to address systemic racism, in particular anti-indigenous and anti-black racism as described in the preamble of Bill 114, without collecting race-based data. Excluding health service providers from the requirement to collect data, including race-based data, is inconsistent with the province's own health equity mandate and indeed works to ensure ongoing inequity and entrenchment of systemic racism.

It's not clear what rationale there is for excluding health service providers from this requirement to collect data, including personal information. Community health centres, our members, are health information custodians and have been collecting race-based and socio-demographic data for years, often with the most vulnerable populations who they serve. Indeed, in the last few years the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network has mandated all health service providers to collect socio-demographic data, including race-based data, so we know that it is possible for health service providers to collect personal information without contravening privacy laws.

Therefore, we submit to the committee that you make the recommendation that section 6(7) of Bill 114 be deleted.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much for your presentation. We shall start with the NDP: Ms. Sattler.

1540

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for joining us today and for your presentation with one very clear recommendation. You have given us some context to understand

that data is currently being collected. I think you've made a very powerful case that race-based data is critical to understanding the experience of racism and the social determinants of health. Can you give us some examples of how the data currently being collected by health information custodians has been used to advance equity and why it would be so important in the context of this bill?

Ms. Jacquie Maund: Well, I think it's important, as evidenced, to look at where there's a need for interventions to address differential health outcomes. That's important on a broad provincial level, it's important for academics and it's important for health policy-makers.

At the community level, many of our members use that information to develop programs and services that specifically address marginalized populations in their communities and to develop culturally appropriate programs that serve particular food needs, programs with proper language to make that they're culturally accessible to people. It's a way to get the evidence to feed in and to design programs and policies that help promote and advance the health outcomes of particular populations that they serve.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. One of the things that has been emphasized for us today by a number of deputants is around intersectionality and the need to understand how race intersects with other characteristics. When you are talking about the data that health information custodians can collect, would that help advance that understanding of intersectionality?

Ms. Jacquie Maund: Definitely, yes. Intersectionality is key. If you don't have the data, you can't see what the impact is of those various influences that mean some people are at higher risk because of the intersectionality, yes.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): We'll move to the government: Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much, Ms. Maund, for being here today and for your presentation. I know that that feeling of belonging, of being part of the community and being acknowledged and recognized, is critical to people's health, as a social, basic human need—that you're there and that it matters—so I'm glad that you raise that.

In my community of Ottawa South, we have the South-East Ottawa Community Health Centre, and they serve a very, very diverse community of families from 125 different countries and 90 languages. I know they do some data collection as well, in terms of trying to determine how best to deliver their services, along, of course, with some of the data from the census.

My understanding is that the legislation will not prevent people from collecting that data. The reason for the exclusion, as I understand it, is to align those new rules that will be set for the collection of data with FIPPA, the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. My youngest son works in records in a local hospital, so I know how complex that piece of legislation

is and how concerned anybody who is a health custodian is about that. I wanted to offer that out as my understanding of why that exclusion was made. I don't know if you have a response to that.

Ms. Jacquie Maund: I guess it's not clear within the bill why health service providers are excluded, and we would just, again, repeat the example of the Toronto Central LHIN currently requiring all of its health service providers to provide client information or information on particular data standards.

What we would actually argue is that if that LHIN is doing it, all LHINs should be doing it, so that it can in turn inform the development of appropriate health policies. If there are constraints within privacy legislation—and I'm no expert on privacy legislation—there should still be mechanisms through the accountability agreements that health service providers have with funders, in order to ensure that they're not exempt from this very key piece of this legislation.

Mr. John Fraser: Even inside the strategy, there's talk about piloting the collection of that data as part of the strategy.

I'm not an expert on health privacy legislation either, so I appreciate your comments very much. I think that's all the questions I have for you at the moment.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): I think that's about right. Thank you, Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Oh?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Well, if you want to use your four seconds, but I think we're going to pass it over.

To the official opposition: Mr. Cho.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Thank you so much for coming out to give your presentation. I am supporting Bill 114. It's a great bill, in my view. There's more focus on our efforts for Canadian indigenous people, but I don't think the bill covers specifically the homeless people, and they're the ones who suffer most. They don't get attention unless somebody dies, and then it's a big one page in the Star and things like that.

Your organization represents 107 community government agencies. Do you have any concerns in the bill in relation to the health of our homeless people and how we could improve this bill?

Ms. Jacquie Maund: Some of our organizations serve homeless people and provide health services and other kinds of supports to homeless people. It's a challenge because many people who are living on the street don't necessarily have identification or don't have OHIP cards. I don't have any specific recommendations other than saying that many of our members are already serving those people and make best efforts to record them as they can in the data management system that we have.

So I can't offer any specific suggestions, I'm afraid, but I'd be happy to consult separately with you and see if some of our members have advice for you in that area.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: So generally speaking, there are 74 of your community health centres that are the ones working with the homeless people?

Ms. Jacquie Maund: It depends which communities they're in. For example, Queen West community health centre deals with a lot of people who are street-involved. South Riverdale Community Health Centre would deal with a lot of people who are homeless. There's Sandy Hill Community Health Centre in Ottawa and Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre.

Part of our mandate is to provide services to people who do not have an OHIP card, and that's sometimes the case for homeless people.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much for coming before committee this afternoon. It's much appreciated.

JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Next, from the Jamaican Canadian Association, we have the founding president, Mr. Roy G. Williams, with us. We welcome you, Mr. Williams. You have up to five minutes for your presentation.

Mr. Roy Williams: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): The floor is yours, sir.

Mr. Roy Williams: My voice may not be too good today, so I'm asking you to pardon my speech.

Good afternoon, committee members and community members. I am pleased to be here today on behalf of the Jamaican Canadian Association to offer support for both the adoption of Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act, and the government's efforts to address the ongoing challenges presented by racism.

The Jamaican Canadian Association was founded in 1962 by a group of Jamaicans living in Toronto, coinciding with the independence of their birth nation that same year. It began as a patriotic and social organization but quickly evolved to include an advocacy portfolio to meet the needs of the diaspora and African Canadians in general who faced discrimination as they sought to create a new life in Canada.

As the founding president of the JCA, I can tell you with authority that many of the same challenges we fought to eliminate in those days still exist. The language we now use to define and describe these problems may have evolved, but the source remains the same: systemic and institutional racism and discrimination.

From the early days of the JCA well into its modern history, the membership and successive boards of directors have advocated for change, equity and equality in matters of employment and economic opportunity, immigration, housing and policing, to name a few.

1550

On immigration, we began with letter-writing campaigns to members of Parliament, and sent delegations to Ottawa, where we lobbied for change in discriminatory immigration laws. Fortunately, under Prime Ministers John Diefenbaker and Pierre Trudeau, some changes were made.

On employment, in the 1950s and 1960s, the JCA was active within and with the labour movement, hosted workshops and conferences, and engaged with civil liberties organizations, all with the purpose of advocating for human rights legislation and better employment conditions for black Canadians and people of colour, broadly.

On housing, we were actively involved in shaping legislation to combat the discriminatory rental practices and lack of access to housing faced by black people in Ontario at that time. We partnered with York University as well as organizations in the Jewish community, such as B'nai Brith, to undertake real-life test cases that demonstrated the outcomes experienced by black people seeking housing, as compared to those of white people seeking the same housing, thereby establishing a body of evidence that experiences of discrimination were not merely claims but facts and lived experiences for ethnic minorities in the city. These efforts directly contributed to the enactment of the fair accommodations act in 1954.

I tell you all of this not to laud the efforts of, or provide profile for, my organization, but indeed to clearly illustrate that, 55 years on, we're still having many of the same conversations, facing many of the same issues—some in new manifestations—and working against the same systems of oppression.

Now, rather than discriminatory rental practices—although that still exists—the problem of housing access is more one of affordability. In the past, we fought for improved working conditions. Now we continue to fight for access to economic opportunity and the resources that can help our community build and maintain wealth.

We have long heard about, and are still hearing about, the discrimination faced by black students in the public education system, including recent reports from the Toronto District School Board on the disproportionate amount of expulsions levied against black students; an account of a six-year-old black girl being handcuffed by police in the Peel District School Board; and of course, the controversy surrounding a former York Region District School Board trustee who used a racial slur in reference to a black parent.

We have also heard about the destructive impacts of police racial profiling in the form of carding or street checks, an issue on which the government has taken action, but also on which more work remains, to ensure that police services destroy historical carding data that still has the potential to unfairly and negatively impact lives.

We know about the negative health outcomes faced by—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, sir. We're well over the time. I'm sorry to interrupt. We'll have to start the questioning.

Mr. Fraser. Oh? Yes, Mr. Anderson. Sorry.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Do you have a lot more, Mr. Williams? Did you want to finish up?

Mr. Roy Williams: Sorry?

Mr. Granville Anderson: Is there anything else you want to highlight, Mr. Williams?

Mr. Roy Williams: No, actually, I didn't. I can send copies of this to the committee.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Okay. I would like to thank you for coming here today and for all the service you have done over the years in the black and Caribbean community. It is to be commended.

As a founding member of the Jamaican Canadian Association, along with Mr. Bromley Armstrong, Mr. E.S. Ricketts and Miss Phyllis Whyte, you have an extensive knowledge in this field. We are really appreciative that you have come down to Queen's Park today to join us.

I know that, along with fostering a sense of community, the Jamaican Canadian Association has been fighting against systemic racism since its inception in 1962. Based on all of what you have seen along this journey, where do you think the directorate should look towards using its assessment of how policy impacts outcome for people in the Caribbean diaspora?

Question: I know that the JCA has experience in social service work through its affiliation with the Caribbean African Canadian Social Services. Do you envision elements of Bill 114 will help JCA and CAFCAN in the social work area?

Mr. Roy Williams: Let me put it this way: I hope so. One of the problems that small organizations like ours have revolves around funding and being able to do things that need to be done in our community. JCA is a volunteer organization that gets no stable and sustained funding and, therefore, we're at a disadvantage in being able to do some of the things that need to be done in and for the black community.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Any parts of this bill you'd like to see strengthened?

Mr. Roy Williams: We think that the bill itself is a good bill. I'm not particularly concerned about strengthening. I'm glad for the fact that there will be revisions, there will be communication with communities during the process of going through with this bill from time to time so that communities, especially the black communities and the indigenous communities and so on, will have the opportunity to have input during the consultations and the revisions that are planned for in the bill.

Mr. Granville Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Williams.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to the official opposition. Ms. MacLeod?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Well, what can I say? Thank you very much for a wonderful presentation, but more importantly, for your activism over all of these years to protect those who were vulnerable and who didn't feel that they could protect themselves. It always take leaders at the grass roots, at the community level, who stand up, be counted and make change, and I really do appreciate what you've done here.

I have no question other than simply I'm very sorry if you've encountered racism in your life, and I know all members here are, so thank you.

Mr. Roy Williams: If I may just say one thing: The thing that usually concerns us is that we work hard to get

progressive legislation, and down the road, somebody else comes in and turns the table and things get reversed. We see that happening in the United States and we worry about it. We saw it happen in the 1990s in the Harris government and so on and so forth, so we're still concerned about legislation being put in place and then reversed by another government later. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. Ms. Sattler.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Oh, sorry, sir. There's still the third party questions.

Mr. Roy Williams: I'm sorry. I thought I was dismissed.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Not yet, sir.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for what was quite an inspiring presentation, although I'm sure it must be frustrating for you to think of how hard you've worked over the decades and how little change has occurred.

You talked about the early activities you were involved in, focusing on immigration, employment and then the shift from employment more to economic opportunity more generally. A number of people who've spoken to the committee today have talked about the labour market and economic opportunity. Do you feel that this bill, Bill 114, which we're discussing, currently includes enough to allow that analysis to take place, to really understand the experience of racialized communities in terms of access to economic opportunity and labour market opportunities?

Mr. Roy Williams: Let me say that we're hopeful.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: You're hopeful?

Mr. Roy Williams: Yes, we're hopeful. As I said, we have seen things progress over time and then be reversed. We're hoping this time that this will do it.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much, Mr. Williams. We appreciate your comments this afternoon and coming before committee, and you're dismissed.

Mr. Roy Williams: Thank you.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: You can go now.

Laughter.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thanks again, sir; much appreciated.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Last on the agenda, but most importantly, would be the Ontario Federation of Labour. We have the executive vice-president, Mr. Ahmad Gaied, with us, and the director of research and education, Thevaki Thevaratnam—I hope I got that right, but I didn't. Welcome to both of you. If you want to state your names for the record, that would be great.

1600

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: Hi. My name is Ahmad Gaied, and I am the executive vice-president of the Ontario

Federation of Labour. Joining me today is Thevaki Thevaratnam, the director of research and education at the OFL.

The OFL represents approximately 54 unions and one million workers in Ontario, championing the rights of all workers in this province.

We welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act, 2017. Along with our affiliates, our allies in the community and the Ontario NDP, the OFL has long advocated for the establishment of an anti-racism directorate. The OFL believes the introduction of this bill is a necessary step in addressing racial injustice and racial inequality in Ontario. The OFL's Make It Fair campaign mobilizes labour unions across the province to fight for meaningful changes to Ontario's labour and employment laws, in solidarity with Fight for \$15 and Fairness.

Part of this advocacy involves pushing for better working conditions, for more permanent full-time work with decent wages and benefits, and for greater access to joining and keeping a union. For workers, these demands have become increasingly out of reach as the nature of work has dramatically changed in Ontario. More and more workers are finding themselves in a constant state of insecurity, holding not one but multiple jobs, often characterized by low income, few workplace benefits, little job security and no protection through unions.

For racialized workers the reality is even bleaker. Evidence shows that workers of colour experience higher levels of unemployment and underemployment, are often bypassed for jobs or promotions, and earn a lower income than non-racialized Canadians. Unsurprisingly, these labour market inequalities lead to higher poverty rates, greater health risks, lower-quality housing and more frequent contact with the justice system for racialized Ontarians. That's why it's crucial that the anti-racism strategy tackle the economic and employment disparities facing racialized workers in Ontario.

The anti-racism strategy must work towards removing the barriers that prevent the full and equal participation of all racialized workers in the labour market. Racialized workers, for example, have a 30% lower unionization rate than non-racialized workers. We know that unions provide a clear path for workers to change their working conditions and their lives outside of work as well.

Unionization is particularly vital for workers in insecure jobs. It empowers them to enforce their basic rights by providing needed resources and support. It is also key to getting better wages, benefits and working conditions beyond the minimum standard.

It is important that the Anti-Racism Directorate work alongside the Ministry of Labour in applying an equity lens on employment conditions in Ontario, and, through the Changing Workplace Review, to make meaningful changes in the Employment Standards Act and the Labour Relations Act, to create decent work for all Ontarians. The government must also introduce employment equity legislation to ensure that all Ontarians have fair and equitable opportunities in the labour market.

Strong legislative measures are needed to drive employers to remove employment barriers, establish transparent human resources policies and practices, and foster a culture of equity and inclusion in all Ontario workplaces.

I would like to now briefly echo some of the comments made by my fellow presenters, including Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change.

Stronger language is needed to demonstrate the government's commitment to addressing systemic racism and advancing racial equity. All public sector organizations, with no exemptions, must be required to collect data and comply with the data standards. As per the minister's mandate letter, the data collected must also allow for the analysis of the intersectionality of racism.

We know that racism is experienced differently by various racialized groups and within groups along intersectional lines. Although not named in this bill, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia must also be considered a core focus of the anti-racism strategy, along with anti-indigenous and anti-black racism. Recent events, such as the shooting in Quebec City, demonstrate that incidents against these groups are on the rise.

It is imperative that the collected data be more easily accessible to the public. We must not forget how quickly the Anti-Racism Secretariat and the Employment Equity Commission were dismantled in the 1990s and files were deleted. The Anti-Racism Directorate and its work must be protected through various iterations of the government.

Finally, the government must establish an anti-racism secretariat and a disability rights secretariat under the Ontario Human Rights Commission, as outlined in Bill 107, the Human Rights Code Amendment Act, 2006. It is important to understand that the secretariat serves a separate and distinct purpose, including helping with the commission's work of promoting and enforcing human rights.

We know that racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and all forms of prejudice, hate and discrimination, be it individual, cultural or systemic, divide our communities and inhibit our collective prosperity. We encourage the government to adopt our recommendations and for all three parties to support the passage of this bill.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll start with the third party, and Ms. Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. That was very helpful. Do you have specific wording for amendments that you would propose to the legislation?

Ms. Thevaki Thevaratnam: We would echo what was put forth by Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. You opened up your discussion by talking about ensuring that the strategy and the bill effectively tackle economic and employment barriers that are faced by racialized workers. Is it your view that the recommendations that were put forward by the Colour of Poverty for amendments would meet that goal of tackling economic and employment barriers?

Ms. Thevaki Thevaratnam: I think what's important is that during the consultations around the anti-racism strategy labour be brought to the table and we consult on what exactly are the barriers facing racialized workers in the workplace, whether it be unionization or being able to enforce your rights under the ESA or not having the opportunities to access secure work in Ontario. Part of the consultation would be addressing those issues and identifying them.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. On the recommendation to create a secretariat, can you talk about how the secretariat would work with the directorate in advancing racial equality in the province?

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: The directorate, as we know, is under the direction of the minister. The minister would be responsible for it, and it looks at government institutions. With the secretariat, it would fall under the Ontario Human Rights Commission and they would be able to more broadly tackle human rights issues and tackle systemic racism. They could then share data between the two organizations.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: So it's an expansion. It wouldn't be a duplication; it would allow an enhanced kind of mandate.

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: Absolutely.

Ms. Thevaki Thevaratnam: Sure. It would be complementary.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Complementary. Okay, thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to the government side: Ms. Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much for your presentation. I want to start by saying that I know that you talked a lot about the systemic barriers to employment here in Ontario. Could you talk a little bit further about how your organization could work with us to create fair, safe and secure employment?

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: We've also made submissions to the Changing Workplaces Review. I did speak with Minister Coteau about possibly having collaboration between the Anti-Racism Directorate and possibly working with the Changing Workplaces Review. I wasn't under the impression that that was going to be taking place. I know the final recommendations from the Changing Workplaces Review are happening and there hopefully will be some announcements.

We're really hoping that this government and Minister Coteau work in collaboration to see how they can work together. We know that it's racialized people who are stuck in precarious, part-time work, work that doesn't have benefits, or minimum-wage work. Out of those recommendations, we're hoping that we see an implementation of more full-time work that would be available, especially within racialized communities. Hopefully, there is some collaboration between both ministers, Minister Flynn and Minister Coteau.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. My second question is around the anti-racism assessment framework. You know that there's going to be an anti-racism assessment framework put into the legislation. It's going to be a

part of the legislation going forward, so that we could assess how this is working and what needs to be changed.

The purpose of the framework is to create a proactive, anti-racism approach to the development of policy itself in order to ensure that the government policies don't create any kind of racial inequities. The government is required to publish this framework, according to this legislation, where it will be available to any organization or workplace to use in order to look at the impact of their policies and racial inequities. Is this framework something that you would like to see the organizations and employees of your membership implement?

Ms. Thevaki Thevaratnam: Depending on what the assessment framework looks like. I do think it's something that you would expand beyond government into, hopefully, other public institutions and then private institutions. Something we should all be looking at are internal policies and making sure that we're applying a racialized lens, a gendered lens and other intersectionalities because we have to understand how public policy affects folks and what we can do to dismantle those barriers and ensure that people are able to participate equally and provide them with an equitable position going forward.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Thank you very much. We'll move to the official opposition.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: No questions.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): There are no questions, so I'd like to thank both of you for coming before committee this afternoon. It's much appreciated.

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: No questions?

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): No.

Mr. Ahmad Gaied: Oh. Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): So, having said that, Mr. Colle's motion was silent on any request for information from the legislative research counsel. Is the committee interested in having something drafted up?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Sorry, I didn't hear that.

Mr. Mike Colle: If you want any further background information from research on the bill—

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Or a summary of the—

Mr. Mike Colle: Just a summary.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Just a summary would be good.

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, that would be helpful.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): Okay, so do we have unanimous consent? Great. That's fantastic—extra work.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): So, having said that—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Grant Crack): After Ms. Malhi is done sneezing, this meeting will be adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1611.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Chair / Président

Mr. Grant Crack (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell L)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Granville Anderson (Durham L)

Mr. Granville Anderson (Durham L)

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre L)

Mr. Mike Colle (Eglinton–Lawrence L)

Mr. Grant Crack (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell L)

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers (Ottawa–Vanier L)

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky (Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest ND)

Ms. Ann Hoggarth (Barrie L)

Mrs. Julia Munro (York–Simcoe PC)

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson (Huron–Bruce PC)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho (Scarborough–Rouge River PC)

Mr. John Fraser (Ottawa South L)

Ms. Lisa MacLeod (Nepean–Carleton PC)

Ms. Harinder Malhi (Brampton–Springdale L)

Ms. Peggy Sattler (London West ND)

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes

Ms. Soo Wong (Scarborough–Agincourt L)

Clerk / Greffière

Ms. Sylwia Przewdziecki

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Sandra Lopes, research officer,
Research Services