

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

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**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

No. 98

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

N<sup>o</sup> 98

2<sup>nd</sup> Session  
41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

Wednesday  
27 September 2017

2<sup>e</sup> session  
41<sup>e</sup> législature

Mercredi  
27 septembre 2017

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Speaker: Honourable Dave Levac  
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Dave Levac  
Greffier : Todd Decker

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Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



ISSN 1180-2987

Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
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111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
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Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Wednesday 27 September 2017

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Mercredi 27 septembre 2017

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prayers.*

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES  
AND CONSERVING WATERSHEDS ACT,  
2017 / LOI DE 2017 VISANT À BÂTIR DE  
MEILLEURES COLLECTIVITÉS ET À  
PROTÉGER LES BASSINS  
HYDROGRAPHIQUES**

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 26, 2017, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 139, An Act to enact the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 and the Local Planning Appeal Support Centre Act, 2017 and to amend the Planning Act, the Conservation Authorities Act and various other Acts / Projet de loi 139, Loi édictant la Loi de 2017 sur le Tribunal d'appel de l'aménagement local et la Loi de 2017 sur le Centre d'assistance pour les appels en matière d'aménagement local et modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire, la Loi sur les offices de protection de la nature et diverses autres lois.

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

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Like many in the Legislature, I come from a background of serving as a regional councillor, for the better part of 13 years. Eleven of that was as the chair of the planning and development committee.

Bill 139, the Building Better Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act, 2017, if passed, will clearly fundamentally change Ontario's planning and appeals process. This bill proposes changes to several pieces of legislation, including the Planning Act, the City of Toronto Act, the Ontario Planning and Development Act and the Conservation Authorities Act. Finally, it would also replace the Ontario Municipal Board with a newly titled Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

Speaker, I intend to speak to the proposed sections of this bill that deal with official plan policies and the Ontario Municipal Board reforms. The proposed changes included are significant, and we should not underestimate the task of transitioning from the Ontario Municipal Board regime to a Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

One of the central components of Bill 139 is that it seeks to introduce new official plan policies to the Planning Act. These new policies would align with separate new policies in the provincial growth plan and require all municipalities to include in their official plans climate change policies and "may include policies that identify the area surrounding and including an existing or planned higher-order transit station or stop as a protected major transit station area..."

Now, provincial plans generally use purposefully broad language and directions in conjunction with other provincial planning policy statements. However, Speaker, there have been substantial changes made to provincial plans that you're familiar with, through other recent co-ordinated provincial reviews.

Given that the test for the success or failure of an appeal under the proposed Local Planning Appeal Tribunal will be judged based on how the case conforms to provincial plans and, by extension, municipal plans, much greater definition in the details and guidelines are necessary to distinguish what constitutes conformity to provincial plans. For example, there is a significant lack of detailed guidelines for the measurement and achievement of density targets around major transit station areas. How are climate change policies going to be implemented by regional, or single-tier, municipalities, juxtaposed to how these policies may impact the lower-tier municipalities?

Because there is a lack of detail in the form of policy or guidelines, it will be challenging for the proposed tribunal to establish and refer to precedents during the resolution of particular issues that are under appeal. I would add, Speaker, that any transition policies, regulations or directives are not currently available to review, so it's difficult for municipalities to ascertain the full impact of Bill 139's proposed changes to the land use planning system.

However, what is clear is that if Bill 139 is passed in its current form, significant changes to the planning and development system in Ontario will result. For example, there will likely be a lengthy transition period where some matters currently under resolution by the Ontario Municipal Board regime will continue to be so, while new matters will be considered under the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal regime. But there is also concern about how individual appeals will be treated, specifically under the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

Because provincial plans are deliberately broad in language and oftentimes do not provide a sufficient level of detail, it will be further challenging to measure an

appeal's consistency to its requisite provincial plan. Municipalities—of which I have eight in Durham region—which will benefit from significant transit investments, such as Toronto or other municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, have to grapple with the measures in Bill 139 that relate to height and density of major transit station areas. This raises a challenging question on transit stops and major transit station areas in municipalities throughout Ontario. For example, will all transit stations meet the definition in the growth plan and the Planning Act of “higher-order transit”?

Speaker, in answering that question, what methodology will be used? It's not evident when you read the legislation. How will the methodology assess existing versus proposed future development of major transit station areas? Again, it's not evident in the reading of the legislation, particularly with regard to height and density. I'm especially curious as to how municipalities will issue guidelines for the measurement and achievement of density targets in areas surrounding major transit stations. There simply aren't any guidelines in the existing legislation.

Now, in the region of Durham, the planning community and councils are concerned about some specific issues that they feel will affect them more greatly. For example, knowing that a council must base their decisions on conforming to a provincial plan, municipal plan or other related policy, how can a council make a decision without the fear or, conversely, the protection of an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board or Local Planning Appeal Tribunal? If approvals and amendments made in the future are restricted from appeal once the new plans and policies are in force, how will the municipal consultation process for stakeholder engagement change as a result? The legislation is silent in that regard.

If there's a backlog of files under the Ontario Municipal Board, what happens if these files no longer conform with the latest iteration of a growth plan? Again, the legislation is silent in that regard. In addition, both the planning community in Durham region and I are concerned that the details of the transition from the Ontario Municipal Board to the proposed Local Planning Appeal Tribunal have yet to be released—they haven't been released yet. This is a critical issue which requires further consultation, alongside the timeline for transition and how existing appeals currently before the Ontario Municipal Board would be handled.

**0910**

On a related point, the proposed measure in Bill 139 to create a Local Planning Appeal Support Centre lacks details regarding its implementation, in addition to the functions of the support centre such as its location, the timing for its establishment and the eligibility of support services. In order to ensure that there's a meaningful participation in the appeal process, it's absolutely crucial that this support centre receive adequate resourcing.

In closing, Speaker, if approved as it's currently printed, Bill 139 represents a significant change—a significant change—to the planning and development

process that you and many others in this Legislature who have served with distinction on municipal councils are well familiar with, in the way the land use planning industry operates.

The successful passage of this bill will fundamentally alter, for several years and beyond, how all of the stakeholders in the planning, development and conservation sectors interact with each other. As such, all those who will be directly or indirectly affected by Bill 139 would no doubt benefit from some additional time to consider this bill and all of the complexities contained within.

We know from our experience here in this Legislature that when you have a very complex piece of legislation that takes into effect close to 18 different pieces of legislation, the best result is when you extend the consultation period related to this piece of legislation. I, as a member of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus, certainly look forward to a continuation of the robust consultation that's necessary on Bill 139.

Thank you for the opportunity, Speaker, to speak on this legislation today.

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

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to join the debate this morning and I appreciate the comments from our colleague the member from Whitby–Oshawa.

I was part of the debate last night. It was more like a discussion; it was quite refreshing. I think that type of discussion lends itself quite well to creating a better bill.

I heard questions around—of course, the consensus in the room, I think, is that most definitely reforms to the Ontario Municipal Board need to happen. The powers that they hold over municipalities when it comes to interfering with their official plans are something that municipalities don't want and certainly have fought against.

Proper planning is integral to the creation of liveable communities, and it's evident by the discussion that we heard on this bill last night and this morning.

I was particularly happy to learn some things. I learned last night that the member from John Yakabuski's riding—

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Renfrew–Nipissing.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** That one—doesn't have a conservation authority in his riding. That's interesting; I learned that last night.

I learned that the member from—jeez, I should get my list out—Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington had some concerns around the powers of conservation authorities to do inspections without a warrant.

Now, I have had some experience with conservation authorities in my riding. They were incredibly helpful. They went onto my property to assess the changes and the work that was required. I don't think they need a warrant, especially if their jurisdiction and the rules under their jurisdiction aren't indictable offences. I'm not sure that the law requires someone to have a warrant in that type of scenario.

But there are questions that are out there and they certainly are valid questions. I think the more we debate and discuss, the better the bill will be.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Scarborough Southwest.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I listened carefully to the remarks from the member from Whitby–Oshawa. Our government supports this bill and wants to get it on to committee.

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

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to rise this morning to give a few thoughts on Bill 139 and the presentation from my friend from Whitby–Oshawa, Mr. Coe, who did serve a number of years on Whitby council and did an outstanding job representing his constituents on a number of different boards in Whitby, and obviously made a good impression on the folks in Whitby because he's now our colleague here at Queen's Park. We're happy that he is because he brings a lot of experience when it comes to municipal planning and some of the challenges that they face, especially in a growing community like Whitby.

Whitby is a growing community. It's one of those communities that's probably only about five kilometres wide, but it's quite long north-south, and there are a lot of intricacies there, going from the shores of Lake Ontario all the way up into farm country, into the Oak Ridges moraine. So it's a very diverse riding, and he brings a lot of expertise when it comes to that.

This bill does contain some significant changes, and a lot of people will say that a lot of these changes are long overdue when it comes to land use planning. I know every municipality is different. Not just the geography of the land or the makeup of the land, but the way the community feels about planning is different in every community. I know I can say the same thing in Prince Edward–Hastings. There are communities in my riding that are very, very pro development, and then there are those that aren't so pro; they want to see things stay the way that they are.

But planning, development, the conservation authorities and the reach of conservation authorities are all addressed in this bill, and I think, as the member from Essex just said, there has been a healthy debate and a very useful and educational debate on this subject so far, and I appreciate the fact that the member from Whitby–Oshawa brought his expertise to the table here today.

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to comment on the remarks from our colleague from Whitby–Oshawa. I think he touched on a lot of the difficulties that we're going to see in this bill, a lot of ambiguities. Overall, I think it really is critical that the OMB be reformed; frankly, that it be taken apart and something be put in its place. I was pleased that he noted that in future, official plans are going to have to have policies regarding climate change. As we've seen in

Windsor, there is no doubt that the impact on our cities—and rural areas—of a regime of much greater rainfall is going to have a huge impact on people's lives.

But, Speaker—and I'll get a chance later to enlarge on this—there's an awful lot in this bill that is just being left up to regulation. I think we, as legislators, are going to have substantial questions about exactly what is going to happen and what is not going to happen, because we aren't actually going to have the details of what has come forward put before us.

It's unfortunate that this government took 14 years to act on this problem—14 years. Speaker, I'm not sure if it happens in your riding, but certainly in my riding many a time city planning decisions which are consistent with provincial policy statements have been completely overturned—ignored—by the OMB, so that we get decisions on development that don't reflect the considered thought you need to build a community, make sure that it's planned right and operates properly. So I don't think there's any question the OMB has to go. The question all of us have is going to be, is there enough detail in this bill to understand what we're really going to get in exchange? That's the question before us.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Whitby–Oshawa has two minutes to respond.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I'd like to acknowledge the considered and well-put comments from the members from Essex, Scarborough Southwest, Toronto–Danforth and my esteemed colleague from Prince Edward–Hastings, in particular.

What's clear, Speaker, as I look at this bill—and I read the legislation—is that there needs to be a commitment on the part of the province to work with local planners within the municipalities to discuss the application, as I indicated in my 10 minutes, of provincial interest as amendments to Bill 139 are processed. What's clear within that context is that the provincial interest must be responsive to local circumstances—the member from Toronto–Danforth made this point—and there needs to be a shared understanding of how they are reflected in local planning documents, official plans and amendments. The province needs to give a clear indication as we move forward of their priority or if the local council can choose among competing priorities.

**0920**

I'd also like to recommend that the evaluation of the outcomes of the new tribunal process take place every two years to assess where improvements can be made. This is really a business-like approach to the planning exercise that's been lacking and I think would bring a feature to the new tribunal that is not in place at the present time.

I think, in summary, that the changes proposed in the bill, Speaker, bring out a more streamlined process with less administrative burden and clearly shorter time-frames. But, having said that, I'd like to emphasize that there's still a need for additional consultation as we move forward to ensure that we get this right; after all, we've waited 14 years.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I'm very proud to rise today to speak on this bill as the member from London–Fanshawe, living in London, on how important this is to the London Plan. I'm echoing some of what the members have said already about the need to establish the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and implementing much-needed reforms to the OMB, something the Liberals have been promising, really, since 2003.

London is one of the first cities in the province to come together with an urban plan, and it's the only plan currently sitting under the developer-friendly OMB awaiting approval. So it's sitting under the old, existing legislation. The London Plan was a collaboration between the city council, community organizations and thousands of Londoners. The plan is the result of over 100 different meetings in the community, and imagines what the future of London will be in 2035. You can see how far out this plan goes.

The plan focuses on building the city upward and inward to protect vulnerable farmland, decrease our carbon footprint and make our city attractive for future investors. This approach to city planning will cut down on the cost of growth and urban sprawl. It is conducive to strong neighbourhood-building and is friendly to our vibrant seniors' population. The plan, which was conceived over a two-year period, also aims to preserve our cultural heritage, protect the natural environment and make new use of the urban environment. So, you see, this plan is very comprehensive. It touches many areas of what a city should be like in 2035, those long-term goals.

The fate of the plan, however, of the London Plan—which has been meticulously laid out by thousands of Londoners—may rest in the hands of only a few if it isn't allowed to transition and to be reviewed under the new rules laid out in this bill. The people involved in authoring the London Plan fear that the essence of the plan will be gutted if it's left to be reviewed by the OMB. If left under the OMB for review, the original ideas for the plan may never see the light of day.

The government needs to start listening to municipalities and improving the hearing process. Promoting an atmosphere that's focused on resolution and mediation, instead of fostering a climate of conflict like that of the OMB, is a key part of a healthier hearing process.

There are 42 complaints currently under the OMB and Londoners want to see their plan, which they have worked on so hard, be transitioned to the new system for review. People have been asking for a new system, something other than the archaic OMB, to be put in place, again, for 14 long years. But the transition must be real, a tangible one, and have substance.

The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal must live up to the terms defined in this bill, such as:

- improving the hearing process at the tribunal so that the possibility of settlement, resolution and mediation are the norm instead of the exception. That's the good thing.

That would take the conflict out of this OMB process that we have now;

- establishing a planning appeal support centre that provides affordable legal guidance at different stages of the appeals process: That's also a good thing because it's engaging the public, the person who doesn't know how to get through the system and how to file that complaint and concern. This is a good step; it's supporting them;

- access to plain-language summaries of available options. We all know that we need to have plain language when it comes to terms around specialized areas. Not everybody is a legal beagle, Speaker;

- reducing, or eliminating, the ability of the tribunal to overturn municipal decisions. That's very important because we want to give the process meaning. If you go to this process and you're expecting an outcome and all you know is that they're just going to side with developers, then that doesn't help decisions that are being made for the betterment of the community;

- giving municipalities greater control over local planning; and

- sheltering major planning decisions from appeal.

The city of London has created an initiative, called ReThink London, which will lay out the work of the official plan. So you see how in-depth London has put their thought into this plan; they've actually had a ReThink London group. Over 10,000 Londoners have participated in ReThink London. Those people come from a diverse range of backgrounds and represent the diversity of the city. So why should the survival of their grassroots plan be subject to the whims of the ancient OMB, a regulatory body that even the government admits must be dismantled?

ReThink London identifies eight key points that would make the London Plan a reality:

- fostering a prosperous city;

- connecting the region;

- building a mixed-use, compact city;

- providing transportation choices;

- building a greener city;

- supporting a culturally rich and diverse city;

- building strong and attractive neighbourhoods; and

- making wise planning decisions, careful management.

This government owes it to the 10,000 Londoners who have built this plan together to give them a chance to see it through.

A central part of the London Plan is to capitalize on the city's culture. Through the ReThink process, Londoners identified several ways to culturally enrich the city through the London Plan, such as:

- creating more spaces for artists to create and showcase their work. I think that's a great idea, Speaker, because we have so much talent in Ontario that we forget to showcase and brag about the work that we have in arts and culture;

- creating affordable, mixed-use spaces for both artists and residents. I think it's a wonderful thing to

bring art into our neighbourhoods and for people to experience that;

- investing in a downtown arts centre;
- better promoting London's music scene; and
- designing more public spaces for better community interaction.

It was really important to Londoners, when they did the ReThink London for the London Plan, to make sure that we incorporate arts and culture into our everyday lives and enrich our knowledge and our history with the art and culture that's been happening throughout civilization.

The London Plan goes beyond the important arts and cultural aspects of London and focuses on building a greener city. London is situated in an urban forest with a diverse ecosystem and is surrounded by rich, fertile farmlands. Amendments proposed by Bill 139 to the Conservation Authorities Act are potentially beneficial to London if implemented properly.

Speaker, This bill is really important to London and it's a long time coming. If this government looks at its history—and they had proposed different bills before that were really not meaningful and did not reform the OMB. They proposed Bill 26 in 2004, they proposed Bill 51 in 2007, they proposed Bill 73 in 2015, and none of these bills gave municipal councils significant control or sway in decisions, as they had promised, and the OMB continued to reserve little or no regard for municipalities. They were ineffective.

I think this is the right bill to move this forward. But, again, we have to have debate on it. When it goes to committee, we need to ask the questions; we need to hear from people coming forward, from stakeholders.

Bill 139 presents several opportunities to modernize Ontario's aging infrastructure, protect our watersheds and ecosystems, and ensure our children and grandchildren are protected against climate change. It also presents the opportunity to abolish and redefine the OMB, instead of just renaming it and allowing it to continue in the same capacity.

Speaker, there are several questions posed by Bill 139. OMB reforms come into effect upon proclamation and not royal assent. Will the proclamation be before the next election? People are waiting for change when it comes to municipalities, and London is one of the first cities to actually have an official plan. Their forward-thinking deserves that this government pay attention and help them transition from the old, archaic OMB system, which we know is developer-leaning, to this new system, to Bill 139, where there's going to be a process where a community can feel engaged and supported, where it's not going to be arbitrary and conflicting, where people can present and understand that there's going to be mediation at the table. Because when you come together at a table and you hear the other side, things actually get resolved. It's when there are lawyers and all kinds of legal beagles getting in the mix that the conflict continues and it perpetuates, and nobody really knows what the other person wants.

I think it's a good step. There's still work to be done on it. I'd like to see it go to committee and I want to make sure that municipalities' voices are respected.

**0930**

I'd especially like the minister to consider the fact that London is asking something that's really reasonable: Take it out of the old OMB appeal process, their London plan, and put it in this bill where they're going to have a chance to have further community consultation at the planning process, so that citizens who live in London—this is going to affect their lives gravely—are going to have a voice at the table, not just an archaic, developer-leaning OMB, where everybody knows what the outcome would be; it's developer-friendly, and that's where they go to.

I'm happy that we're talking about this bill. We're happy to support the bill. I look forward to having more debate on it this morning.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** A point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I would like to take this opportunity to correct my record. During question period yesterday, I stated that we've built 760 new schools across the province and have had extensive renovations and additions to over 860 schools. We've actually built 820 new schools and over 800 additions and renovations, so I'd like to correct my record.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member is allowed to correct her record.

Questions and comments?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's a great pleasure to stand in this House and also support the bill, Bill 139, Building Better Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act.

The bill has my full support, and I urge all my colleagues in this House to support this bill.

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

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** After 14 years, it is good that we're finally getting around to seeing this come to the floor of the Legislature, but I wanted to talk a little bit about the entry provisions for the conservation authority officers. We're repealing a clause, where "the entry is for the purpose of enforcing a regulation" etc. and "the authority or officer has reasonable grounds to believe that a contravention of the regulation is causing or is likely to cause significant environmental damage and that the entry is required to prevent or reduce the damage."

Now, the new clause doesn't require that the officer have grounds to believe there's a contravention or that such a contravention is causing environmental damage. That is concerning. It raises questions. The bill proposes to say that they may enter "land situated in the authority's area of jurisdiction for the purposes of determining compliance" and regulations "or with the conditions of a permit."

We will look to some amendments, perhaps. There may be wording we can propose that will address this.

Again, it's been 14 years, as the member from Whitby–Oshawa so aptly presented in his 10 minutes and his two-minute summary. This is a long time coming. Some may even say it's too little, too late. We're saying part of it may be too much. We'll be looking forward to that opportunity to look at the amendments.

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's always a pleasure taking my place on behalf of the good people of Algoma–Manitoulin.

I want to commend the member this morning for really highlighting what her issues are for the London area. The member from London–Fanshawe talked about the positives of this being a really substantive answer to what the public demands have been with regard to reform and to rein in the OMB decision-making.

The bill is a step in the right direction. It's never too little, too late to actually improve the lives and the opportunities that are there for municipalities and within our cities across this province.

What the member touched on in a lot of her comments this morning is that it actually establishes a true process of meaningful engagement so that your local decision-makers, which are your community members and the municipality, have an opportunity to have a discussion and hold to that decision, and to move forward and not have a third party come in and overrule those positive engagements, that local decision-making, so that everybody seems to be happy moving forward. I think a lot of her comments were based on that.

I want to give her a little bit more credit. Her city, down in London—being thoughtful, thinking forward, preparing for the inevitable and doing the steps that they require shows an eagerness to address some of those issues that have always come up when a decision is put in front of the OMB board.

I loved her comment when she said “the legal beagles,” when they come out, and she's absolutely right. When you have individuals who speak from their experience, as far as what's happening in my community, versus municipal leaders who absorb those comments from the leadership perspective, they know how to relate to each other. When we do bring in others, or third parties, it does at times confuse the issues. It's nice to see a clear process that is going to be done. It is a step forward.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Chris Ballard:** Thank you, Speaker. I have nothing more to add other than I wholeheartedly support Bill 139.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from London–Fanshawe has two minutes.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I didn't get a chance to elaborate—10 minutes goes by so quickly. I had to really cut down on some of the things I was going to say.

One of the things I wanted to address was the Conservation Authorities Act. It was originally implemented

in 1946 in response to extensive flooding and erosion, and its purpose has never been more important and pertinent than it is today. We have flooding in Windsor; across Ontario; in Peterborough, I remember, a few years ago; and also in Quebec this summer. The conservation authority piece in this act is extremely important and maybe should have been separated and debated separately from the planning piece.

Having said that, the Conservatives have really focused on the conservation piece, which is good, but we have to remember that when the Conservatives took power in the 1990s, they gutted the conservation authority, the ministry. They went from \$52 million down to \$8 million. With this new piece under the conservation authority, and their new powers and the new structure, the restructuring of it, I hope there's going to be some funding available so that they can actually do the job that they are given under this bill.

I want to wrap up by saying that the government is proposing to completely redefine one of Ontario's most complex and powerful regulatory bodies, but much of this bill is left up to regulation and ministerial direction. Whether or not Bill 139 delivers the accessibility, accountability and oversight it promises remains to be seen.

I think that's when we want to make sure, when it goes to second reading, that we do the real nitty-gritty work at committee and make sure that this bill is going to deliver on the promises it has made. Municipalities, constituents, people who live in cities and people who live up in the north are depending on these things, so that when they have their plans set out, they're going to have a fair chance and a voice at the table when making local decisions in the place that they live.

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

**Hon. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I think it's time to get right to the point. This bill has seen more than nine and a half hours of debate, and we've had many of our members of the Legislature speak to the bill.

As a result, Speaker, I move that this question now be put.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Ms. Naidoo-Harris has moved that the question now be put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow the question to be put in this House, after nine and a half hours.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question now be put, please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion that the question now be put, please say “nay.”

I believe the ayes have it.

This will be voted on after question period.

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Orders of the day.

CONSTRUCTION LIEN AMENDMENT  
ACT, 2017 / LOI DE 2017 MODIFIANT LA  
LOI SUR LE PRIVILÈGE DANS  
L'INDUSTRIE DE LA CONSTRUCTION

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 14, 2017, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 142, An Act to amend the Construction Lien Act /  
Projet de loi 142, Loi modifiant la Loi sur le privilège  
dans l'industrie de la construction.

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

**Mr. Ross Romano:** Before I start by speaking to the specifics within Bill 142, I just wanted to take this opportunity to say a few brief words that, I guess, are long overdue.

0940

I'm very proud of the opportunity to stand and join everyone in this House. I decided to run for this office because I wanted to have an opportunity to do something meaningful to help my community—like everyone in this room. I'm sure you all had the same feeling when you decided to take that shot at running in an election. Obviously, everybody here knows how difficult it is on your personal life, your family life and your professional life to try to do something like this. You all, I'm sure, like I, have these great aspirations of what you hope to achieve on behalf of the constituents within your riding.

Growing up in Sault Ste. Marie as a young person—born and raised there—I always felt that we in northern Ontario, and specifically in the Soo, had a lot of challenges, challenges imposed primarily by our geography, certainly, which is interesting, because when Sault Ste. Marie was first created, it was our geography that was our strongest point. Now, many years later, it certainly has us so far removed from Toronto central and the GTA in general that it makes it very difficult for people in the north to have the same advantages as those in the southern jurisdictions.

But the motives that I had and the motives we all have are always very simple: We want to do the best for our community. While I stand before this House, whether it is in opposition to the government on any specific matter of the day or in agreement, I trust that we all appreciate that, ultimately, we're all here trying to represent the people of our riding and the people of Ontario.

I want to take a brief opportunity as well to thank those who made this opportunity for me possible. I was blessed and am blessed to have a very strong family network. I have a wife, Heather, who, oddly enough, encouraged me to jump into this role, knowing full well what that would mean for our family life. I have three young children at home who are about to be three, four, and five—currently two, four, and five, all boys—so we are on our way to creating our own hockey team. It is a challenge, but one that I would not have been in a position to take if I did not have the support of my wife and all of our extended family and my children as well,

even given their age. They're excited all the time. We run to events in Sault Ste. Marie, and they're quite happy to participate and do things within the community—in fact, quite excited. I'm sure, for all of you out there who have had young children while you've been through this process, it's nice to be able to participate in events in your community and abroad. When you can include your family in them, it gives you the opportunity to sort of have a two-tiered approach, where you can do your job and also exercise your role in a meaningful way as a parent.

I'm also very blessed: Not only within my own home, but my extended family played a huge and critical part in me coming into this role. My mother was actively at doors. In fact, I had to shoo her away sometimes. It was quite comical: She'd come in to the office some days sick during our campaign, and I'd say, "Mom, you've got to go home. What are you doing here? Just get out of here." It got to the point that I would ask the people on the campaign not to give her material to go to the doors, because she just wouldn't stop. She was so passionate and excited to participate.

Both my parents are immigrants from southern Italy. It was incredible for them, I know, and for me, and for our entire family, to be able to participate even in the campaign itself, let alone what has flowed from that. It is a very exciting endeavour. Certainly, for a guy like myself and a family like mine, that came from the sort of background that you sometimes hear about—you know, "I came to this country with nothing but the shirt on my back and a suitcase"—who tried to make a life and tried to provide something for their children, as my parents did—I owe them so much gratitude for bringing me to this point. And really, my community, because if it wasn't for them instilling the fire in me that I have, I would not be able to do what I hope is effective representation of my community.

Of course, as we all know, it doesn't stop there. I had the love and support of so many extended family members who came and knocked on doors with me and helped me throughout the campaign, making phone calls and all those sorts of things. I want to extend so much thanks and love to all of my family and friends who participated in my campaign, and certainly also to those who participated in the campaign executive, if you will, as we like to call it.

My campaign manager, Ian MacKenzie, is a Scottish immigrant who was quite a ball of fire himself and did a great job of helping me out throughout the process. Our former CAO of the city, Joe Fratesi, was great and helpful towards me.

We had within my campaign Bill Freiburger, who took on our financial role in the campaign, and he was incredible. To have someone as meticulous as he throughout the process to make sure that all the i's were dotted and the t's were crossed was so beneficial to me and helpful.

John Coccimiglio, a personal friend, also helped us out in our executive. He was such an incredible person, doing everything from accepting my phone calls early in the

morning, late at night, grabbing trucks and trailers and going out for signs. We all know, again, how much effort these people put in.

It was funny—I digress for a moment—but at the conclusion of the campaign, I had no idea what would happen the night of the election and the days that followed. As I'm sure you all are aware—most people maybe are not, because I certainly wasn't—you are inundated for about three or four days after the election with so many text messages, Facebook messages, phone calls and emails that it didn't matter how quickly you typed on your phone, how quickly you responded to calls, you'd answer 30 and you'd see 60 more on the phone. And for three or four days you're just completely consumed and overwhelmed and essentially almost living in a cloud thinking the whole experience is so surreal. In the meantime, while you're doing that, all of these people are out collecting your signs and working their butts off for you.

I think in my situation, I was so surprised and so caught in the moment that I didn't immediately run to these people and thank them. I felt bad that I wasn't out grabbing signs with them. And so to all of you who did that in Sault Ste. Marie for me, thank you so much. You have no idea what it means to me, the support that you provided to me, to my family, to our campaign and, of course, most importantly, to the people of Sault Ste. Marie. It's incredible what you've done. Thank you.

I listed some names and I know I've not listed them all; I'm still in the process of speaking to people individually, but thank you so much for everything you all did for me. It was incredible.

Just a few other names: Helene Groulx was in our office every day trying to keep me sane. Thank you so much, Helene. Again, the names go on and on and on. I said I wouldn't say specific names, because I knew I would miss others, and I'm sure you've all been in this role before, but there are just certain people I really wanted to recognize. By no means at all does that dismiss all of the other individuals who provided so much help and support. Don Mitchell, Jamie Caicco—the list goes on, so many people who helped us out.

**0950**

There is a point of interest that is a touchy subject. When I first got here, the one thing I did not appreciate—I've been a lawyer for the last 12 years and I'm used to a certain protocol. It's funny—I'm still learning. Every time the Speaker in the House gets up, I stand, you'll notice, a lot of the time, and then I quickly sit down, because I'm used to, when the judge stands, you stand, so I'm trying to get used to this new atmosphere.

But in the courts, I've always felt—as a lawyer, as a professional—that you owe, as a person within that profession, a great deal of respect to that profession, one of the most historical professions, certainly, we have. I feel no less passionate about this. In fact, the bar is elevated significantly.

My first day, as I walked into this chamber back on September 11, just a few weeks ago, I walked in and I

looked around. I saw the beauty in the carvings and the history of this building, and I thought of the 1,800-plus members that have taken this role before me. I walked in with this incredible sense of passion and love and desire to serve my community, to serve the province of Ontario, and to show not only myself but everyone around me, I hoped, within my community the level of respect I believed the role we are in deserves.

I recognize we are all partisan. We are driven by our partisan agenda. But I think we all inherently feel that we are driven by the people within our communities, and that is our principal objective every day and every minute we step into our working shoes. I recognize that across party lines there are going to be divisive issues, there are going to be moments where we clearly will not be seeing eye to eye, and there is going to be opposition, to put it mildly. I think there is a time for fierce opposition, there is a time for passive opposition, and there is a time for agreement and a joining of hands when something is positive for the province, positive for the people within our community.

Over the last several days, I've struggled a great deal with what I've seen. I've struggled with how I feel we, as a group, are demonstrating our level of respect for the profession and for the roles that we're in. I don't question anybody individually. I include even myself within that discussion and that comment, regardless of anything that led to where we find ourselves today.

Yesterday I spoke from the heart, while reading notes or not, about people within my community who have done incredible things to serve my community, people who have put Sault Ste. Marie on the map, people who the community of Sault Ste. Marie loves, who are named in our walk of fame, who our community is proud to call members of Sault Ste. Marie and who, when we go out to the communities at large within the province and the country and the world, we're proud to tout as members of Sault Ste. Marie. And to hear the kind of heckling that was happening simply while saying those names really caught me off guard, and I thought we should be better than that. There is a time for the partisan lines to be drawn and there is a time for us all to embrace what each of our individual communities provides to our great province.

Every day when I come into this House, I look at these young persons we have, our pages, sitting—often as confused as I am as to when to stand and sit—and I look up in our gallery and I see classrooms of children, and I think about my three boys, three, four and five. I think about how we talk about bullying and those types of discussions and how we don't want our children to be subject to that kind of an atmosphere in schools, sports teams etc. We always want to tell them how to deal with these types of issues. While I sit in this room some days, I look at these young children and I look up at the other classrooms and I think, “How are we doing any better? Are we really demonstrating the type of environment we want them to see, grow up in, learn from? Are we setting the example for them that we ought to?”

It really does strike a nerve with me. I really do struggle with it. I certainly don't want to set that example for these children or for mine. So with the greatest respect to every single person in this room, I will pledge to you that while I will hold my role dear and I will always fight for the people of my community, I will never diminish or disrespect yours or the people within yours.

Now, I'm going to transition at this point into Bill 142, and I will say, in the same line of thought that I just concluded, last week I stood before this House speaking to the northern boundaries act bill. I said that our very leader, Mr. Brown, has said there's no monopoly on a good idea. I stood before you all and said that the northern boundaries act, the creation of two new ridings in the north creating enhanced representation in the north for indigenous people, is a good idea.

I want to say here, with respect to Bill 142, I think it's a good idea. I met with the construction association last week in my office here at Queen's Park. Of course, looking at one of the principal stakeholders referred to in this bill, they feel it's a good idea. If I had to criticize, I would say that it's long overdue, but they are motivated by it and, in my review, I think that it's a good thing. There are some areas of concern with respect to perhaps a little bit of lack of teeth, if I can put it that way—enforcement mechanisms—but I believe that looking at it, on the whole, in terms of its pith and substance, I agree with what's being proposed and I think it does wonders to improve the system for construction workers at all levels, from the smaller operations, the guy who just makes cabinets, kitchen cabinets or something along those lines, or who does restoration of a bathroom, right up to your large-scale construction groups doing major government projects, building hospitals, schools etc. It remedies something that, back in my professional career, I used to see on a regular basis. Perhaps, as opposed to speaking on a very, very—and I will summarize very quickly—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'm being kind; I have to cut you off.

1000

**Mr. Ross Romano:** Okay. Well, if—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You're way over.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** I thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may just have 30 seconds to wrap up?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You may not. I'm sorry.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** I may not. All right. Well, I support the bill. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I'm happy that I was here to listen to the member from Sault Ste. Marie deliver his maiden speech. He will learn very quickly to observe, for leniency, who is actually the Speaker in the chair.

My friend, I want to congratulate you on your successful campaign because, if you remember, I was one of

those individuals knocking on the doors in your area as well. I know you've already reached out to me, and I'm going to reach out to you, in regard to how we can work together to better the lives of individuals in our area. I look forward to meeting your staff, as you look forward to meeting mine.

The one thing that I will tell you is: Don't forget your family. Because after this is all done, your three-, four- and five-year-old—potentially, that's your forward line; you'll need two more defencemen, if you're going to put your wife in net, with you being the coach of that hockey team—you're going to need a few more on that campaign team. Because guess what? In just a few more months, we're getting back to that campaign trail.

I'm really happy to have you on board. Your passion, your loves and your desires are pretty much everything that everybody else shares in this House. For myself, I choose to do things differently. I'm going to hold you to your word, and I will remind you of your maiden speech when the time is right so that you continue on that path. I think we're all here for the right reasons. What makes us different is our priorities. I don't look at them as divisive issues; I look at them as priorities for Ontarians. I think we could do some good things together. When you're frustrated, get out of your seat, walk across to either opposition members and work with them in order to accomplish your goals.

I know most of those prominent leaders in your community, even those gold medallists that were there. I too, as you were, was surprised by the reaction that this assembly had towards them. I take my hat off to you for recognizing them again this morning.

The bill that we're talking about here this morning, Bill 142, the Construction Lien Amendment Act, 2017, is long overdue, and it's time we move it forward and at least get it to committee to have some discussion.

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

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to welcome the member for Sault Ste. Marie to the Legislature. I certainly enjoyed his maiden speech today.

Sault Ste. Marie has had some very distinguished MPPs in the past. I note the late Russell Ramsay, who was the MPP for Sault Ste. Marie from 1978 to 1985 and served so ably as the labour minister in the Davis government from 1982 to 1985. Like the current member, go back in Hansard to read some of the speeches of Russell Ramsay to really feel the passion that he had for that community and his ability to build that community.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, we forget that we truly do stand on the shoulders of others, those political leaders that have served in the past and that helped build the community. We, today, have that obligation to continue with that baton and to continue to build a community.

Of course, just recently, David Oraziotti served here. His family, like the current member, had long-time roots in Sault Ste. Marie. David's dad was a very distinguished member of the legal community in Sault Ste. Marie. It does seem, through the member's comments today, that

he will continue on in that fine tradition. I know we in Peterborough were so fortunate that, when Roberta Bondar was the chancellor of Trent University, she spent a lot of time in our community and not only shared her experiences from Sault Ste. Marie but her work in the Canadian space program.

It was, as I said, a delight to hear from the member this morning. We wish him well as he continues his role here. I know what it's like: When I was elected in 2003, my son was five and my daughter was three.

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

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I appreciate the comments this morning from the member from Sault Ste. Marie—a very thoughtful 20-minute presentation in his maiden speech, acknowledging those who helped get him here, and the commitment that he has received from his family in Sault Ste. Marie to help him get here as well.

I've been here now for six years, and I've had the opportunity to go out and help certain candidates in by-elections and even in the general elections. I'll tell you, when I arrived in Sault Ste. Marie in February of this year, the snowbanks were probably twice as high as I am, and I'm fairly tall.

I could sense immediately—I can usually tell, and probably a lot of veteran members of the Legislature can tell, when they go and meet a candidate for the first time, whether or not they're going to be successful in achieving their goal. I can tell you that the first time I met Ross Romano, I said, "This guy's a winner; he's going to win," because he was committed to it. He was insanely committed to it, as a matter of fact. I think at times it wasn't his mom who needed to be restrained; it was Ross who actually needed to be restrained and take some time off, away from the campaign trail.

It was an excellent maiden speech. Your first two and a half weeks here obviously have been very impactful. I think you've made a difference already in standing up for your community, as you pledged to do.

I know, from being in Sault Ste. Marie, the community passion that exists in that community, being a former broadcaster with the Belleville Bulls and going into Sault Ste. Marie for Greyhounds games. They're fiercely loyal to their Greyhounds, they're fiercely loyal to their community, and I can tell that the newest member of the Legislature is fiercely loyal to the community that he grew up in, in Sault Ste. Marie.

I congratulate him for a great speech here this morning.

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

**Miss Monique Taylor:** It truly is always a pleasure to be in the House when new members make their inaugural speech. I'd like to congratulate the member from Sault Ste. Marie on his speech today and having the opportunity to talk about his community and his campaign. We don't always get those opportunities to talk about our campaign volunteers. Sometimes we can bring our family into our debate, but today is the day when you get to

shine and you get to really have that conversation and talk about who you are.

The moment when you talked about the first time you walked into this House brings me back to the time when I first walked into this House, and I'm sure it does the same for everyone, because you just get this feeling of elation that you can never forget. Remember that feeling every time you walk into this House, regardless of the conversations that are going on.

I also felt times of, "Wow. What is going on here? There are children in this House, and this is how we behave." Unfortunately, you kind of get used to it. We'll see how you are in a couple of months.

It really is nice to hear your story and what brought you here. I am sure that you will serve your community well. It won't be long before you're back out there knocking on those doors, talking to the community all over again.

The other thing that I liked about your speech was when you talked about your mom and having her in the campaign. My dad is one of those campaign guys. My dad says, "I used to be Mike Taylor. Now I'm Monique Taylor's father." That just shows the pride that our family has in us for being here.

Congratulations. Congratulations to your family and the team that worked so hard to bring you here today.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Sault Ste. Marie has two minutes to reply—two minutes only.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** Thank you. Most people who have gotten to know me over the last while know that you have to hold me to the clock, usually.

Again, thank you. I really appreciate all of your comments, every one of you, and I look forward to thanking you personally after today's process concludes.

It is very exciting for me. I think I've said just about everything I can say. I know I've missed names and that has gotten me really, really worried. I had asked my staff to give me my volunteer list as quickly as they could, and it's not here, so I know I'm going to miss names. But that's all right. I will have to make it up to those people when I speak to them individually after this.

I appreciate your comments, to the member from Algoma-Manitoulin, and I look forward to keeping my promise. I expect that if you see me go outside of it, you will let me know, because I am certain that in time it will be—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Ross Romano:** Thank you.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I don't think you're going to get to it.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** I don't think I'm going to get to it, but I'm certain that there will come a time where it will be difficult. It can become something that gets forgotten, and those lines, I'm sure, will become skewed, but I look forward to anybody calling me on that because it is something that I don't want to lose sight of the importance of.

Thank you to the people within this House. Thank you for the indulgence, Mr. Speaker; now I know to look at the clock.

Thank you so much to my family, my whole team and everybody who made me being here possible, and I hope to do you proud.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Being close to 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1011 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It gives me great pleasure today to welcome the family of page captain Ariana Hadjiyianni: her mother, Helen; father, Jim; brother Andreas; grandparents Toula and Larry Konstantinidis; uncle Nick and cousin Georgina. Thank you for being here today. These are proud parents of our page captain today. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** It's an honour to be able to stand today and recognize the mother, sister and brother of Duncan VanPagee, the page from Niagara West-Glanbrook: Louise VanPagee, Victoria VanPagee and Austin VanPagee. They will be in the public gallery this morning. Welcome.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Today I have the pleasure of introducing Rosemary Fiss, Krista Schneider, Kai Hildebrandt and Marjorie Brown, who are visiting us at Queen's Park today on behalf of the Alzheimer Society of Windsor and Essex County.

I would also like to introduce some OSSTF executive officers: Martha Hradowy, Karen Littlewood and Paul Caccamo. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** I would like to welcome Dr. Nav Nijhawan, who is here today with the Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, as well as Brian Joyce, Denyse Newton, and Penny and Alex Vanderzand from the Alzheimer Society of Durham Region. Welcome.

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** I'd like to introduce Bob Yaciuk, who is the leader of the Trillium Party, and John Grant, who is the director of political operations for the Trillium Party.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I'd like to introduce Tammy Bellamy from the Alzheimer Society of Sudbury, who is here today for the Action for Dementia Day.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Representing the Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, I'm pleased to introduce Dr. Jordan Cheskes, Dr. Kylen McReelis and Mrs. Marcia Kim. They are visiting us today to represent ophthalmologists and visually impaired patients ahead of World Sight Day on October 12. Welcome to Queen's Park. They have a reception tonight at 5 p.m. in rooms 228 and 230.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to Queen's Park two of my constituents from Sault Ste. Marie, Vicky Roy and Carol

Gunn. They are here with their colleagues from the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. Welcome, Vicky and Carol.

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** From OSSTF, I would like to welcome Paul Kossta and executive officer Karen Littlewood, who is my constituent, my friend, and from the riding of Barrie.

I would also like to welcome Debbie Islam, president of the Alzheimer Society of Simcoe County, and Ed Harper. Ed is a former MP for Simcoe Centre and the only Reform candidate elected east of Manitoba.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I would like to introduce in the gallery today Christine Wright from the Alzheimer Society of Sarnia-Lambton. She's at Queen's Park today as part of the Action for Dementia Day.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I'm not sure if he has made it to the galleries yet, but visiting Queen's Park today with the Alzheimer Society representing Thunder Bay is executive director Randy Moore. I'd like to welcome him to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** We're always pleased to have members of the Egg Farmers of Ontario here, and many of us had an omelette this morning: zone 3 director and my director for Norfolk, Dan Veldman, and zone 4 director Roger Pelissero.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Please help me welcome two delegates from the Alzheimer Society of York Region, Loren Freid and Peter Smith.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I would like to welcome to the House today, Speaker, a birthday boy: Jeff Yurek.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I would like to welcome some guests who are here from the Alzheimer Society. Today we have JoAnne Chalifour, who is the director of operations at the Alzheimer Society of Brant, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton Halton; as well as Phyllis Fehr, who is a dementia champion from Hamilton and a member of the Ontario Dementia Advisory Group. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Marie-France Lalonde:** I had the great pleasure this morning of meeting some great individuals from the Alzheimer Society. On behalf of the Ottawa caucus, I would like to welcome to the House Mike Marta, executive director, who actually just started; Chris Dennis, chief executive officer; Matt Boudreau; and, not least, Frank Palmer, who has been a caregiver for his wife for 11 years. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Please join me in welcoming, from Dufferin-Caledon, Tracy Koskamp-Bergeron, the executive director for the Alzheimer Society of Dufferin. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I would like to welcome Vicki Poffley, the executive director of the Alzheimer Society of Kingston—welcome to her for the Action for Dementia Day—as well as Bob Haynes and Laurel Haynes. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I would like to introduce two friends of mine from north Perth, where I live, Bill and Pat Berfelz; and Emma Jean Weber, who is all the way here from Germany to see our House.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I would like to recognize members of the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance who are here today, an alliance of 21 non-governmental groups that have been working together for 15 years to promote collaboration on chronic disease prevention. Welcome.

**Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho:** I would like to welcome Lauren Rettinger, public policy and stakeholder relations coordinator for the Alzheimer Society.

**Mr. Harinder S. Takhar:** I would also like to welcome the members of the North American Sikh League. They're not here yet but they should be here shortly. I want to recognize their annual fundraising efforts under the leadership of their president, Surinder Singh Sandhu. Their fundraising efforts have helped very many humanitarian causes, including hosting eye camps in India for the most vulnerable in the society. They also raised enough funds to donate a medical ambulance to Prabh Aasra, an organization that looks after people who are mentally/physically challenged, orphans and unclaimed missing persons.

I want to welcome them to the Legislature. They should be here shortly.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** I'd also like to welcome to the Legislature three newly elected provincial executive officers from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation: Paul Caccamo, Karen Littlewood and Martha Hradowy.

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** J'aimerais accueillir à Queen's Park Pam Waeland, Lisa Salapatek and Laura Greer from the Alzheimer Society, who I had the pleasure of meeting this morning.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to introduce some people here visiting from the Alzheimer Society of Muskoka. That includes Karen Quemby, who's the executive director; Cheryl Amos; and Michael Provan, who's the chair. I look forward to meeting with them later today.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I'd like to extend my warm welcome to three newly elected members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, provincial executive members Paul Caccamo—I have a very special welcome also coming from the member from Thunder Bay—Atikokan, so welcome to you, Paul; Martha Hradowy—welcome, Martha; and Karen Littlewood.

And of course, always welcome is Paul Costa. Thanks for being here.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I would like to welcome, from the Alzheimer Society of Peterborough, which also services Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, Leslie Parham and Dan Davis.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I just wanted to welcome a couple of members of the Alzheimer Society of Toronto, Laura McGill and Frank Palmer. Welcome to Queen's Park.

1040

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to recognize the board members and staff from the central Alzheimer Society of Ontario. We have with us the chair, Pam Waeland; vice-chair Keith Gibbons; board members Ted Wheatley and

Wendy Horbay; the CEO, Chris Dennis; and Lisa Salapatek, Gagan Gill and Lauren Rettinger—all from the Alzheimer Society of Ontario.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'd like to welcome my friend Maureen Corrigan to the Legislature today. She's the executive director for the Alzheimer Society of Hastings-Prince Edward.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'm delighted to welcome members from the Alzheimer Society of London and Middlesex: Lorraine Pare, Jill Butler and Bruce Wray. Welcome to the Legislature.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In the Speaker's gallery today are guests and friends of mine from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory: a Vietnam veteran, elected councilman Mr. Bob Johnson, and another friend of mine, a treaty expert and special adviser to elected council, Mr. Phil Monture.

#### WEARING OF BUTTONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs on a point of order.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that members be permitted to wear buttons to raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister is seeking unanimous consent to wear the buttons. Do we agree? Agreed.

#### MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I just have a point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a point of order from the member from Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you, Speaker. I just wanted to wish, on behalf of every member here, a happy birthday to my colleague Jeff Yurek. He doesn't look a day older than 51.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I hope this isn't an indication.

Therefore, it is time for—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Therefore, it is time for question period.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** My question is for the Premier.

I want to start off by apologizing, as yesterday I assumed that the Premier had air conditioning in all of her offices. I want to again offer my apologies for the huge inconvenience it must have been for the Premier to move her meeting to another, air-conditioned room.

Unfortunately, when it's 30 degrees out, and schools are sweltering and children can't learn, they don't have the opportunity to just move to another room. There are not rooms at the end of the hall that are blasting AC, like the option the Premier has. Many of these classes don't have air conditioning or even working windows.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier really think that moving to another room is an option for these schools without air conditioning and without operational windows?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that when a classroom is too hot, it's a problem for staff and for students. It can be very uncomfortable. It is unseasonably hot right now, and the reality is, we are seeing more warm and hotter days at times of the year that we wouldn't expect. I understand that. It is exactly why we have made such a huge investment in schools in the province. It's why \$1.4 billion has been allocated to school boards. School boards need to make these decisions, and many of those dollars are being invested in renovations, where air conditioning is part of that.

We will continue to work with school boards. I think it's perfectly reasonable to expect that boards and individual schools would have a plan for days that are very, very hot, just as they would have a plan for days that are very, very cold.

We will continue to work with school boards and continue to make investments to make sure that classrooms are appropriate for staff and students.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Premier: Yesterday, I mentioned that most of the schools in Toronto don't have air conditioning. I just want to say that it's not just a Toronto problem. In my riding of Simcoe North, I heard a story just yesterday. Orillia Secondary School has been impacted fairly significantly. Temperatures inside the school exceeded 27 degrees.

Principal Jim Sammon said, "Twelve classrooms that are experiencing tremendous amount of heat. It's a little frustrating, but we're working with it." A grade-12 student said, "There are students who don't want to go to class" because of the heat. These people can't find another room. They don't have that option, like the Premier does.

A very straightforward question: Will the Premier mandate a maximum temperature for our schools? Yes or no?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Again, I absolutely understand that, with a hot-weather event like we've had for the last number of days, there are schools in the province, there are classrooms in the province that get very, very warm. I understand that.

I also know that the investment that we have made—\$1.4 billion, which is on top of the \$2.7 billion that has been provided over the last two years. School boards need the flexibility to make decisions based on the region that they are in the province. Because the Leader of the Opposition is right: This is not just a challenge for Toronto, this is a challenge in different parts of the prov-

ince. But there are different challenges in different regions.

We are committed to working with school boards. I have a lot of faith in educators, in directors of education of the 72 school boards, to work with us to accommodate and to adapt to the new reality that we are having unusual weather for the times of year.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Back to the Premier: The government is bragging about their \$1.4-billion investment. But let's put that into context. The repair backlog is \$15 billion. We are talking about 9%: They're proud and they're bragging about attending to 9% of the repairs. We have leaking roofs, broken windows, broken boilers, schools with asbestos, and this government is bragging about attending to 9% of the problems.

For 14 years, they promised us that they're going to invest in our schools and they have not. It seems that, at wintertime, we hear about conditions where it's too cold to learn. When it's warmer temperatures, it's too hot to learn.

Rather than bragging about the 9%, my question to the Premier is: When are we going to get to all the repairs? When are we going to make sure that children in this province have schools that they can learn in?

*Interjections.*

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

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** You know, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity just last week to meet with the president of Ukraine with a delegation. They were here to meet with businesses and to take part in festivities with the Ukrainian community. But a particular interest of the president of Ukraine is the way in which we have integrated special-needs students into our classrooms.

So when the Leader of the Opposition proposes that I am bragging about something in education, here's what is critical: We have built an education system that is the pride of this province and is looked at by people around the world. We have increased the graduation rate from 68% to 86%. Every young child in this province in the year that they turn four has access to full-day kindergarten. We have built an education system that's—

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

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** A third of the kids didn't even graduate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Children and Youth Services, come to order.

New question.

## HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. I want to share with you the concerns of the co-owner of First Choice Supermarket in Markham.

They've been open since 1995. They employ 30 staffers. They have over 100 spotlights in their store. They now have dimmer lights and have switched to 60 watts from 80 watts and 100 watts. They also have a large number of refrigerators and water tanks for seafood. In their last year's hydro bill, the increase went up another 15%. This means that their bills are over \$30,000 a month. They thought they were going to get relief from this government based on the promises this spring, yet their bills continue to skyrocket.

1050

What message do you have for that small business in Markham? When is their relief coming? When can they have hydro bills that they can afford?

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

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** I appreciate the Leader of the Opposition raising the question, because our government has brought forward new supports for many small businesses. We continue to work to additionally find more programs to help small businesses.

When it comes to grocery stores, Mr. Speaker, while I don't know all of the details of that particular store, there are other grocery stores that have been working with their local utilities to find out which programs they can qualify for through the saveONenergy program. One grocer in my riding is able to save 22% by actually utilizing the saveONenergy program, implementing many of those programs and then seeing those reductions.

We also have seen a modest decrease for all businesses, as well, by taking some of the social programs that we had on the rate base before. We now have that on the tax base because those are social programs and that's where they should be.

I'll have more to add in the supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Premier: A lot of businesses expected, after all the hyperbole in the spring, that there was going to be relief. There were all these TV ads saying there's going to be relief.

It's not just the one restaurant in Markham. I have a letter here from another restaurant: Rol Jui Seafood Restaurant in Toronto's Chinatown. They're saying, where is their relief? Where is their hydro relief? In four years, their hydro bill has doubled. This is despite the fact that they have actually reduced hours in recent years. They're reducing their consumption, and their bill is skyrocketing. The Premier promised relief; they did not get it this summer.

My question is this: When can Rol Jui Seafood in Toronto expect the relief that you promised in the spring?

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** Again, I'm very happy to rise and talk about the fair hydro plan. That's a 25% reduction for 500,000 small businesses and farms right across the province.

This government recognizes that through the fair hydro plan, which is our plan, Mr. Speaker—something that I know the opposition is still trying to search for. On this side of the House, we've made sure that the saveON-

energy program actually will provide relief to many of these small businesses. I encourage these small businesses to reach out to their local utility to find out which programs they can qualify for. That's why we continue to talk about these programs and encourage them to apply.

When I go to community to community to community and we talk about these programs, many of the small businesses that I talk to are saying they didn't know that these programs exist. When I'm doing that, I'm usually in an opposition riding, which just shows the fact that they're not talking to their constituents about what they can do to reduce their rates. That's something we'll continue to do on this side of the House.

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

**Mr. Patrick Brown:** Again to the Premier: The two restaurants, the two businesses I just mentioned, were in Liberal MPP ridings. The reality is that businesses are struggling with hydro.

Let me say, the co-owner of First Choice Supermarket in Markham isn't confused. The owner of Rol Jui Seafood Restaurant isn't confused about their bill; they see it skyrocketing. But two days ago, the President of the Treasury Board said, "People find the (hydro) bills quite confusing."

What people find confusing is that this government has allowed hydro bills to skyrocket by 300%. What people find confusing is the Liberals can charge you \$100 for using no power. What people find confusing is the fact that the government shut off thousands and thousands of Ontarians from power last winter.

Maybe the Premier can answer this: Who really is confused? Is it our hard-working small businesses, or is it the Liberal ministers?

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

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

Minister?

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** There is no confusion when a 25% reduction is coming on everyone's bill—and 500,000 small businesses and farms right across the province.

But let's talk about what's confusing, Mr. Speaker. Is that party in favour of sex education or not? We've seen lots of notes about that; we have no idea. Are they confused about what to do with energy or not what to do with energy? We're at over 200 days now, and we're waiting for a plan, an iota, something that they could do to actually help people. But do you know what, Mr. Speaker? All they can do is vote against a plan—

*Interjections.*

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

The member from Stormont, come to order. The member from Niagara West, come to order.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** Mr. Speaker, they voted against a plan that even the Ontario Chamber of Com-

merce has highlighted that they have the importance for small business and the challenges that they face—that regional chambers are getting the support from the Ontario chamber to work with small businesses specifically.

They continue to vote against helping the people of Ontario; we'll continue to work and benefit the people of Ontario.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question to the Premier: This morning we learned from news reports that the government is scrambling in the face of an overcrowding crisis in hospitals and seniors care. Now it's considering reopening the Finch Avenue site of Humber River regional hospital to warehouse seniors waiting for long-term care. This hospital has been shuttered for years, a victim of Conservative and Liberal cost-cutting.

Will the Premier explain how a facility that wasn't good enough for patients two years ago will be good enough for vulnerable seniors now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** It is true that the ministry is actively considering a plan to reopen the Finch site of the Humber River Hospital, the former Humber River Hospital, in order to provide what I view as a tremendous opportunity in this city, where we are facing a growing population and we have capacity challenges.

Perhaps the member opposite missed it in the budget where we allocated \$24 million specifically for interventions and activities such as this, where individuals who are occupying ALC beds in hospital but can be better served and prefer to be out of hospital. This gives them an environment which is more specific to their needs, conducive to their improvement, and it may be that this is an important transitional step for them to return home.

I can't understand how the member opposite could possibly be against—

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

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Again to the Premier: The last Conservative government fired 6,000 nurses, closed 28 hospitals and slashed over 7,000 hospital beds. For 14 years, the Liberal government has either underfunded or frozen hospital budgets, creating the crisis in care that we're facing now. The Premier has refused to even admit that there was a problem in hospitals. Now she's scrambling.

Warehousing some of the most vulnerable people waiting for long-term care in a hospital that won't have any specialized service for years won't fix the real problem. The Premier has known about the desperate state of our hospitals for years. Is this the best she can do?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, I hope this is a five-part question—and I'm happy to answer all morning—because I can't believe that the member opposite is suggesting this is anything but a positive development in our health care system. It's supported by many hospitals.

It's supported by the community. This is a former hospital that was—

*Interjections.*

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

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** This is a former hospital that provides this opportunity because we just recently opened a \$4-billion, brand new Humber River Hospital. This gives us an opportunity to actually treat these individuals in hospital, in ALC beds. They can be better cared for in a better transitional environment with high-quality care, in a hospital. It was a hospital up until a year ago, and I can't for the life of me understand why the member would oppose this.

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

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Beaches–East York, come to order.

Final supplementary.

1100

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Again to the Premier: Hospitals are desperately overcrowded. Patients are being left in hallways for days. People are waiting in emergency rooms for 12 hours or more. Wait-lists for long-term care are now years long, and we have a government that's scrambling to find a solution after years of making the problem worse. Even the Ontario Hospital Association has said that without immediate action from the Premier and her Liberal government, our hospitals will face a dangerous capacity crisis as soon as this winter.

Will the Premier finally admit what people all over Ontario already know: that without drastic, immediate action from her government, our hospitals will no longer be able to deliver the health care that Ontario families need and deserve?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Would the member finally admit that he should have chosen a different opening question? Because it was the NDP, by the way, that closed 9,000 hospital beds, 24% of all acute care beds and 13% of mental health beds in this province. That's their record.

We're doing precisely what the OHA, hospitals, Torontonians, the community and the seniors themselves who would be better cared for—these are non-acute patients who are better cared for in this environment, and this, to be honest, Mr. Speaker, absolutely mystifies me. It was a colossal mistake for them to specifically oppose this development.

#### HEALTH CARE FUNDING

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My question is to the Premier. Families today are worried and asking themselves, what will it come to for their dad, their mom and their grandparents? Will the plan from the Premier be to

force their loved ones into a shuttered building just to get them out of the way?

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, they're asking. The overcrowding crisis stretches around this province. I'm from London, and just last week, we learned that the CEO of London Health Sciences Centre begged the government for emergency funding to open 24 additional beds. He said that their hospitals were seeing "unprecedented ER levels" and that they need extra funding just to keep up.

Can the Premier tell us what she plans to do in London to begin undoing the mess she and her government have created in health care?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, only the NDP would demand more capacity and then complain about us creating capacity, and only the NDP would see utilizing resources, consultation with the community, consultation with the hospitals and creating that capacity they've been asking for in helping patients as a problem.

This will create 150—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** This will create, Mr. Speaker, 150 beds for non-acute patients currently residing in hospitals, in an environment which will be even more supportive and appropriate, with appropriate staffing to their specific needs.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, hospitals are overcapacity and overcrowded in Windsor, Sudbury, Brant, Kitchener-Waterloo and all over the province. The Premier's desperate stopgap measures will force vulnerable people, mostly seniors, into mothballed facilities to try to relieve the pressure on Toronto hospitals. That's what's happening.

I know she's scrambling to save Toronto votes, and that's true, but the Premier has a responsibility to every single Ontarian. Will the Premier finally listen to hospital CEOs, hospital associations and thousands of Ontario families demanding better health care in Ontario, and do something about the overcrowding and the hallway hospital medicine crisis that they've created?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, I remain shocked at the NDP position with regard to what we're looking at for the Finch site of the former Humber River Hospital. To describe it as warehousing, to describe it as mothballing, is an insult to the hard-working hospital officials. Really, since day one of that new hospital opening, we have been looking at this as a positive opportunity to free up capacity in a number of hospitals, not just Humber River. There are a number of hospitals in Toronto and the GTA that are contributing to this plan. In fact, the idea came from them themselves as an appropriate, high-level, high-quality decision that will provide the best possible care for individuals who do not require acute care in hospitals. They are not acute, and this is a highly preferable environment. I know both members

have not even visited the site, have not talked to hospital officials and have not talked to the OHA about this, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** The Ontario Hospital Association has said that one of the main causes for this crisis is that frail, elderly patients are being forced to stay in hospitals because there aren't enough long-term-care beds. The wait-list right now for long-term care has 30,000 names on it, yet this government stubbornly refuses to even look at the long-term-care system to identify why so many sick seniors are being forced to wait in hospitals for months, and in some cases years. Will the Premier expand the scope of the Wettlaufer inquiry and finally commit to fixing the long-term-care system that you helped throw into crisis?

*Interjections.*

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Fix the long-term care system. Stop shuffling our patients around.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from London-Fanshawe, come to order, please.

Minister?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the NDP plan. We have seen it before. They closed more than 9,000 hospital beds, 24% of all of the acute care beds in this province and 13% of the mental health acute beds in this province. I know they promised to cut \$500 million from the health and education budgets in the last election.

That is not a path we're prepared to go on, and it's an absolute insult to the hard-working front-line health care professionals, the CEOs of the many hospitals involved in this proposal, the Toronto Central LHIN, the OHA, the communities and all of the myriad of partners who we're working together with on this solution, which will be a solution that addresses the very need they are asking us to address.

## AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** My question is for the Premier. Early Monday night, an email was sent by Air Quality Ontario—which is a branch of the ministry of the environment—to some Hamilton residents, just south of my riding, advising them that hot and humid weather conditions were creating elevated pollution levels. It said that a special air quality statement was in place due to the high levels of air pollution at that time and that people needed to know that, "Exposure to air pollution is particularly a concern for children, the elderly and those who have underlying medical conditions such as lung or heart disease."

Mr. Speaker, we know that the government has set aside millions of dollars for their self-promoting, self-serving pre-election ads. In contrast, will the Premier inform this House how much money was spent by Air Quality Ontario to inform Hamilton residents of this vitally urgent and potentially life-saving information?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

**Hon. Chris Ballard:** Thank you for that important question, which allows me to highlight some of the important work that our government and specifically my ministry have been doing for a number of years, among the least of which is the closing of the electrical-generating coal-burning plants across Ontario. That alone has saved the Ontario health care system an estimated \$4 billion.

I can tell you, Speaker, that ongoing monitoring in Hamilton has shown that air quality has improved significantly since the mid-1990s, with a large reduction of pollutants in the air. I'll tell you as well, Speaker, that Hamilton remains on the cutting edge of air pollution control research and practical applications with regard to collaborative approaches to continuing to improve air quality there.

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

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Mr. Speaker, again to the Premier, because that response in no way answered my question. The minister neglected to point that it was our environment minister, the Honourable Elizabeth Witmer, who first announced the closure of the Lakeview Generating Station in Mississauga.

1110

Again, the email from Air Quality Ontario said, "Children, seniors and those with cardiovascular or lung diseases such as asthma are especially at risk." When the government does very little other than sending out an email blast—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, they're laughing like it's some sort of joke.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You carry on, and you'll find yourself leaving. When I get things quiet, I don't need you to add.

Please finish.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** When the government does very little other than sending out an email blast to inform residents of this kind of potentially life-threatening situation, yet they budget millions of dollars on pre-election ads, people rightly question their priorities. It appears the government is more concerned about its own re-election than public health.

How many people sit at home looking at government websites? There will be many thousands of seniors in Hamilton who don't use email and are not on a government email list. Will the Premier explain why the government failed to get this important information out to a broader audience?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister?

**Hon. Chris Ballard:** President of the Treasury Board.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I want to talk a little bit about advertising, because I really don't think that what you're talking about is advertising. You're talking about the process for having a formal ad on television or a formal ad on digital media, something that there's some production value for, which goes through a very extensive approval process which would never allow you to respond to anything of an urgent nature in an urgent manner.

The processes that we are talking about here have nothing to do with government advertising. You're conflating two topics that are totally unrelated, and the issue that we have here for the Ministry of the Environment is, how in the modern world do you effectively, instantly notify people? One of the ways is with your email distribution lists.

## GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, the Premier stated that the \$5.5-million hydro ad campaign, which was designed to boost Liberal polling numbers, was important because people in the province needed to know the details about government programs that are in place.

Can the Premier tell us: Do these ads inform Ontarians that under the Liberal hydro plan, a government program, their hydro bills will begin going up shortly after the next election?

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

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** I'm pleased to rise and answer the question, because it's important to state that Ontario remains the only jurisdiction in Canada to enact legislation that bans government-paid partisan advertising. We passed this historic legislation because we are against government using taxpayer dollars for partisan advertising.

As you know, I had the honour of sitting in the House of Commons for six years, when the Leader of the Opposition stood up and supported his government's action plan at the time. He would defend that, Mr. Speaker. That's why, that said, the Ontario government has a responsibility to raise awareness and communicate information about programs and services that affect the people of Ontario. This includes informing Ontarians of changes to their electricity bills, so that they can use this information to plan for the future. All ads direct Ontarians to a dedicated website where they can learn more about these changes and lower their bills even more.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again to the Premier: Perhaps the government should think about informing Ontarians, so they can plan for their future, about all of the details of the programs. Can the Premier tell us why the ads fail to mention that Ontarians will spend, over nearly two decades, a total of over \$21 billion more than they would without the Ontario hydro plan?

**Hon. Glenn Thibeault:** Again, when it comes to all of the programs that are being offered, the Ontario Electricity Support Program is one of those programs. There are many that you can find on this website. This offers significant support to low-income households across the province. We've been doing everything we can to get enrolment even higher on this. We've put inserts in people's bills. We've created these advertisements and more.

But the NDP's support for this program is less clear. When you're talking about advertisement—and we said it's a government responsibility to communicate information about programs and services that people need. Let's go through some of the largest advertising spends of 2015-16. Our sexual violence and harassment campaign, #WhoWillYouHelp, challenged existing attitudes and sparked international discussion. We've communicated to Ontarians about vaccines for children. We do many, many things to make sure that we let Ontarians know about the programs and services available to them.

#### DEMENTIA CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée. We know that approximately 175,000 people in Ontario live with dementia, and the number is expected to grow with the aging population. My own father lived with dementia for over seven years and I know first-hand how much it affected him, my mother and our entire family.

With the 2017 budget, the government announced an additional investment of \$101 million over three years for a dementia strategy. This will improve the coordination of care that is critical to help people with dementia. I think it will also continue to invest in health care providers' education, in-home support, better trained PSWs and patient navigation for people with dementia. Certainly, it will strengthen Alzheimer Society chapters across Ontario.

Can the minister expand on what this investment will do?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I appreciate the question. Let me once again welcome and acknowledge the courageous, hard-working, passionate and compassionate individuals who are here today from the Alzheimer Society of Ontario and the associated branches.

Mr. Speaker, our investments in dementia will ensure that everyone living with dementia in Ontario, their families and their care partners have the right supports, the right funding and the right tools in place to make those important and informed decisions about their care, and that they particularly continue to be treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

These investments include a \$10-million additional investment in Behavioural Supports Ontario. It's a key component of our \$100-million dementia strategy. It goes to specialized services for residents with cognitive

impairments who are exhibiting challenging and complex behaviours.

These are the sorts of investments that are necessary, and I'm proud to announce them.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** Thank you to the minister for his answer, for his vision of health care and also for his support for this very important issue.

Dementia touches the lives of so many in Ontario. It affects the person who lives with the disease, but also his or her family. With a growing aging population, the burden is rising on people who provide care for people with a physical or a cognitive condition, injury or chronic illness.

Can the minister please tell this House about some of the other important investments this government is making to support the families and caregivers of those who live with dementia?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** It is absolutely critical we do respond effectively to the needs of both patients but also care partners. That's why we're making sure that we're providing more care for people living with dementia while also looking after their care partners.

We're increasing access to adult day programs for people with dementia. We're adding additional hours of care and transportation to help people travel to their local program location. We're enhancing care partner respite services, both in-home and overnight. We're investing an additional \$20 million this year alone for respite care for care partners of people receiving care at home, bringing the three-year commitment for respite alone to \$120 million.

By increasing funding for approximately 1.2 million more hours of respite services, caregivers and care partners can schedule breaks for rest, family commitments or other priorities.

1120

#### DISASTER RELIEF

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Minister, over 600 homes in Constance Bay suffered flood damage in May when the Ottawa River rose to its highest level in over 100 years. Many people had to move out of their homes. The damage was extreme. The stress levels were extreme. People have applied to the Ontario disaster recovery program for badly needed financial help to repair their homes. They are waiting and they are waiting and they are waiting.

Minister, could you encourage the people administering the Ontario disaster recovery program to please speed up the approval process?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Thank you very much to the member from Carleton–Mississippi Mills for the question. I congratulate him as a member of the Trillium Party. It's my understanding that this is your first question since

you've joined the party. You welcomed your leadership to the galleries today.

As the member has mentioned, this is an incredibly difficult situation for people when they experience these very significant flooding events. That's why we've had actually 35 municipalities in Ontario this year in which we have had to activate our Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program.

I would tell the member to ensure that he is letting his constituents know that they have until Friday, October 27 to apply. The deadline is open until then. If they have not applied yet, ensure, please, that they do and ensure that they're working as closely as they can with the adjuster. If people are not receiving the assistance they need, if they're in the geographic boundary and if they are eligible, sometimes it may mean that their applications to the adjuster are not complete. I'd encourage them to work with the adjuster, stay connected with the municipal services office—

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

**Mr. Jack MacLaren:** To the Minister of Municipal Affairs again: Thank you for your answer, Minister. Four homes in Constance Bay have been condemned as unfit to live in because of severe flooding damage. Jeff and Christine Smith, Kara Shaw and Diane Floyd don't have homes they can live in. They all need to build a new home. But they don't have flood insurance or the cash. They have applied for funding from the Ontario disaster recovery program.

These people are desperate and they are stressed out. They have been told that they will probably qualify for funding. Minister, could you put a special rush on processing their application forms?

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Let me, in terms of the timing of the program, just say to the member and to the House: I want to congratulate, if I can, our member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, Ted McMeekin, our former minister. When he had carriage of the file, he brought in two very significant changes to the program about two years ago. There used to be the requirement that local communities would have to fund-raise a significant amount of money even before the program could begin. There also was a requirement at that time for some local administration in terms of administering the claims.

The former minister, when he had the helm and carriage of this file, changed this program in a very significant way. It has enabled the assistance from the disaster recovery assistance program to get to the people who need the help—if they're in the geographically defined boundary and if they're eligible—to receive the assistance much faster than would have been the case.

I understand that it's very serious. I understand how distressed people can be. I can only tell you that we have already changed the program to get the money out the door as quickly as we can to those people that are eligible.

## ROAD SAFETY

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** My question is to the Premier. Everyone in this Legislature knows that it's illegal to pass a school bus when it is stopped with lights flashing and stop arm extended. Last February, my bill—short form, the school bus systems act of 2017—passed unanimously at second reading. But unfortunately, your government continues to dismiss this bill as what—insignificant? We tried to move it forward before the session's end by asking the government to include it as part of the safe schools act. Sadly, this request was denied.

Premier, it has been 216 days. All this government proposes to do about blow-bys is call for more and more consultation with municipalities. We all know that consultation is code for doing nothing. Government claptrap won't solve the problem.

Premier, will you see to it that my bill be sent to committee and passed?

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

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex for his question. He and I have had not only the course of debate here in the Legislature but also conversations here in this building. I do acknowledge, and I have acknowledged to him directly, that I recognize the importance—our government recognizes the importance—of making sure that we are in the strongest position possible to make sure that our most vulnerable road users, including students, including those that are near school buses, are protected at all times.

So when the member talks about the consultation process that we have committed to undertake—in fact, in my conversations with that member, I've offered him the opportunity to participate in these consultations.

It's not simply about delaying—it's not at all about delaying, in fact, Speaker. It's about making sure that we get it right. There is what I'll say is an evidentiary burden that is required in order for the technology to work appropriately, and in order for us to be able to make sure that whatever is drawn from those cameras can be entered into evidence without the need for a stand-alone, independent witness.

We need to make sure that we're getting it right. That's why we are going to do the consultation. I'm happy to include that member in the consultation process, and happy to have a conversation about it as well.

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

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Back to the Premier: Last May, we missed a golden opportunity to get my non-partisan Bill 94 passed into law before the summer recess. People are outraged that this didn't happen. I have letters from municipalities throughout the province supporting this bill, and hundreds of signatures on petitions calling the government to action.

Recently, a blow-by occurred in Tecumseh. It was captured on a home security system. It recorded a mother's horror as she went out to meet her children and

saw a car passing on the shoulder of the road just as her children were about to get off the bus. Luckily, no children were hurt, but it could have ended in tragedy.

Premier, and Minister, the longer your government dismisses Bill 94, the greater the chances are of tragedy. Will you take action today and expedite Bill 94 before it is too late?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member for the follow-up question.

I didn't say this in the opening answer. I will say it very clearly: There is nobody in this House—frankly, I can't believe there's anyone in the province—who would in any way, shape or form not want to move forward aggressively, to make sure that we stop the blow-bys from happening, as that member has said and as members of all sides of the House have said.

But a couple of things I do want to point out: There is nothing that currently stops video cameras from being used on school buses. In fact, there are some places in the province that have gone forward, looking at some of the pilot opportunities that exist with respect to the technology. What we are consulting on, not just with municipalities, not just with the member opposite if he chooses to participate in the consultation, but also with our road safety partners, is making sure that whatever is produced by way of the camera itself can be entered into evidence in a way that does not necessarily require a third party being there to verify the offence in question, as has been pointed out, like red-light cameras.

We're not quite there yet, Speaker. I hope to be there soon. I can assure that member and all members that as soon as we are there and can satisfy the rest of the elements of what's required, we'll be the first ones to make sure that it happens.

#### OPIOID ABUSE

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** My question is to the Premier.

Ontario is in the midst of an opioid overdose emergency, and it's only getting worse. Last year, at least 865 people lost their lives to overdoses. In my riding, people are overdosing every single day. Front-line harm reduction workers are doing heroic work to save lives, but they're still not getting the resources they need on the front lines.

Toronto's board of health is calling on the Liberal government to officially declare this an emergency. When will the Premier recognize the urgency of this epidemic and declare a public emergency? Because that's actually what it is.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The member opposite is absolutely correct: This is a public health crisis. We can never forget that 865 individuals—sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters—lost their lives to overdose last year.

The crisis is getting worse, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have a very substantial, almost-\$300-million response

to this crisis at every possible level. That includes here in Toronto, where we are providing 100% of the funding for the three safe injection sites. We are providing naloxone free of charge around the province to more than 200 different localities—1,600 pharmacies—where we're providing test strips to test for fentanyl, including at the safe injection sites and the pop-up sites across the province. We're making those investments at every touch point of this crisis so that we can be confident we will turn the tide.

1130

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

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** People in Toronto know there's an emergency. The Toronto Board of Health is asking the Liberal government to call it an emergency. It's claiming more lives every day. Toronto's medical officer of health says a declaration of emergency could trigger "a smoother flow of dollars" to the front lines. Front-line harm reduction workers say we need a declaration of emergency so we can start to see an end in sight to this epidemic.

When will the Premier listen to Toronto, declare an emergency and get the resources that front-line workers need right now to save more lives?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Our mechanism to declare a provincial emergency is for events that are expected to be of a time-limited nature. In fact, we are able to do it for a 14-day period, which is then renewable.

I think we all realize this is not a finite crisis. This is a crisis that has been going on for some time; regrettably, it will be going on for some time into the future. That's why we're making multi-million dollar investments.

I know that individuals are looking to BC, where they've had to declare such an emergency in order to compel hospitals to provide ER data and in order to compel officials, including the police, to coordinate with the government and with the Minister of Health. We have that ability without having to declare such a crisis. I'm actually confident in saying that the declaration of a provincial emergency would not give me any additional tools to do other than what I'm already doing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is the minister finished?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Yes.

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

#### INVICTUS GAMES

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** My question is to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. I can't stress enough, Speaker, how excited I am that Ontario is hosting the Invictus Games this month.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, yes.

We are hosting such a talented group of athletes and service people, both from Canada and around the globe, and this has showcased a level of co-operation that inspires and motivates all of us. Just last week, I had the pleasure of participating in the kicking off of the games

with the raising of the Invictus flag at Nathan Phillips Square, and tomorrow I will be attending the Invictus/Barrick Gold career fair.

I've had the opportunity to meet some of the inspirational athletes, the coaches and their families, and I have been so moved by this experience and by the presence of all these different athletes from 17 nations. I feel lucky to be part of these games and I will continue to watch closely.

Speaker, through you to the minister, can she tell the members of this House what we can expect from these Invictus Games?

**Hon. Eleanor McMahon:** I want to thank the member from Beaches–East York for his question and for participating in the Invictus Games here in Toronto.

Thanks to all the hard work of our volunteers and everyone involved, we can now say that Ontario has hosted the largest Invictus Games held to date, and they are to a standard that athletes from around the world are noticing.

Just yesterday, I had the honour of presenting medals to competitors at the women's hand bike competition in beautiful High Park. While there, I spoke to athletes from Italy, France, the United States and Great Britain, and they were highly complimentary of the games, the volunteers, and the welcome they received. Indeed, at that event, I had the pleasure of meeting His Royal Highness Prince Harry. He was kind enough to thank me and our government for our support of the games, and he had nothing but praise for them.

More importantly, Speaker, he talked—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Gentlemen, the Speaker is standing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you, member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Really? During the Invictus questions?

Finish, Minister, please.

**Hon. Eleanor McMahon:** Thank you, Speaker.

It speaks to the dignity of the games and the athletes they are helping. We are delighted to support them and honoured to host them here in Ontario.

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

New question.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, sorry; supplementary. Sorry.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Well, thank you, Speaker, for that supplementary, and thank you to the minister, whom I often affectionately refer as the minister of fun and fitness, for her response.

The reality is, this minister has done incredible work to promote sport, tourism and culture in our province, and we're absolutely delighted with her work in that regard.

It's amazing to see how wide-reaching and how impactful our government's investment in the games has been: \$10 million from the people of Ontario. Their contribution to these games will have enormous payoffs to the athletes, the volunteers, the spectators and the overall economic benefit of our province.

The games truly represent the power of sport to challenge, inspire and overcome limitations.

Speaker, through you again to the minister: Can she speak to how we can all now get involved in these games?

**Hon. Eleanor McMahon:** I'd like to thank the member from Beaches–East York for that question.

While attending the games and visiting the athletes' village, I've had the pleasure and honour of meeting Team Canada members and witnessing first-hand the camaraderie they share, the care and attention they're receiving from their loved ones, and their physicians and caregivers, and their friends and colleagues, and hearing countless stories of personal courage and determination.

While there, I also met dedicated volunteers, many of whom volunteered at the Pan Am/Para Pan Am Games, just one of the many legacies of those games.

I want to share with the members of this House and all Ontarians that admission to many of the competitions has been and continues to be free and open to the public, including the archery event held today at the Fort York National Historic Site.

Finally, I'd like to thank the coaches. It's National Coaches Week, and we all know what a valuable role they play. I'd like the members of this House to know and thank all of them for the wonderful role that they play in coaching our athletes.

## SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** To the Minister of Education: The Liberal government continues to be out of touch with the needs of parents and students in communities across this great province. In east Aurora, for example, the population has grown by 30%, and the community needs a new public high school. Because the minister has ignored the needs of this local community, parents in east Aurora are forced to pay—forced to pay—to bus their children to a school over 30 minutes away.

Minister, how long will families in east Aurora have to wait before you accept their request to approve the construction of a new public high school?

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I'm very pleased to rise in this House and to talk about the investments that we're making in Ontario's publicly funded education system.

As I said yesterday, we have made unprecedented investments in education in Ontario. When you look at our new schools that have been built in this province since 2003, 820 new schools have been built and over 800 extensive additions and renovations have been made.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, come to order.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** We have invested in the capital needs of our schools: since 2003, \$17.5 billion. That has gone into communities and is providing excellent learning environments for our students.

With these new facilities—just before the first week of school, I visited a school in Brampton: state-of-art, 21st-century learning facilities for our students so that they can get the best education possible.

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

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Back to the Minister of Education: East Aurora parents have repeatedly raised this issue with the Minister of Education. This government has not responded and done absolutely nothing about the proposed construction of a public high school. Not only that, but this minister has closed schools in communities elsewhere in Ontario that desperately need them to stay open.

When will the Liberal government finally take action and the listen to the community needs of parents and students in east Aurora?

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** Let me be very clear: We are very committed to our public education system. Since 2003, we've increased education funding in this province by 66%.

It would be very good for the member opposite, given that he is the education critic, to really recognize the growth in schools even in his own riding of Whitby, where we have built or improved significantly 11 schools since 2003.

1140

We're making these investments because we know that Ontario students deserve the best education possible. Our Premier talked about that this morning, talked about how these investments are providing a return to our students. Our graduation rates are now at 86.5%. That is an increase of 17 percentage points since 2003—

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

## HOMELESSNESS

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier. Last week, the city of Windsor was dealt a devastating blow. Our community support services found out that they will not receive one cent of the \$200 million in funding that the province allocated for tackling homelessness this year.

Ministry officials said that our proposal was very good. There is no excuse to deny Windsor a portion of this funding. We just found out from Statistics Canada that among all cities in Canada, Windsor has the highest rate of children living in low-income households—almost one in four. That's over 16,000 children in Windsor.

I recently visited our downtown mission, Victoria Manor, and the Welcome Centre Shelter for Women and families in Windsor. It's clear that they, along with other community organizations, are stretched thin and in desperate need of resources. Speaker, will the Premier

please explain to this House why her government does not think Windsor's homelessness and domestic violence services deserve their support?

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

**Hon. Peter Z. Milczyn:** I want to thank the member for the question. Our government is committed to investing in affordable housing across this province and housing to support people in transition to escape a chronic cycle of homelessness by putting them on a road to having a long-term home and a dignified life, with the supports they need to sustain themselves.

Our government has invested \$200 million through the Home For Good program across the province to assist communities to develop the kind of housing that will help break the cycle of chronic homelessness. This program was very well received by housing providers and municipalities, and I'm happy to give more information in the supplementary.

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

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Back to the Premier: I understand that many cities in Ontario applied for this funding because, just like in Windsor, families across this province are struggling too.

Under this Liberal government, hydro bills have gone up 300%, and important public services like health care continue to be cut. What has this government done to respond to families in crisis? We recently found out that one in 10 shelters in Ontario closed between 2011 and 2016 because of funding cuts.

Municipalities like Windsor have fewer and fewer resources for homelessness prevention, even though the number of people whose primary residence is a shelter has increased by 10%. Windsor's community supports for our most vulnerable are operating well over capacity, and yet this Liberal government denied them the funding they desperately need—this, while spending \$5.5 million on advertising to repair the damaged Liberal image.

Speaker, when will the Premier get her priorities straight and support Windsor families in need?

**Hon. Peter Z. Milczyn:** On this side of the House, our priority is to break the chronic cycle of homelessness and to help people get into long-term housing. Since 2013, we've helped over 103,000 people who suffer from homelessness to break that cycle.

Since 2003, the city of Windsor has received over \$106 million in funding for affordable housing. We've created 305 affordable units. We've repaired 5,944 affordable units. We've provided 305 Windsor households with down payment assistance, and we've prevented 1,235 evictions. We've invested \$57.4 million in the city of Windsor as part of our Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative, on top of the other investments.

We're committed to breaking homelessness in this province. We have a plan to do it.

*Interjections.*

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

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Education.

Schools in my riding of Davenport and across Ontario are incredibly diverse places to learn. In fact—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Windsor–Tecumseh is warned.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services, second time.

Please put your question.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** My question this morning is for the Minister of Education.

Schools in my riding of Davenport and across Ontario are incredibly diverse places to learn. In fact, the nearly two million students in our province come from many culturally diverse communities. We know that children and youth deserve a school system that listens to their voices and responds with programs that mirror their needs.

I know our government is working hard to address systemic barriers to student achievements, equity and well-being in schools, but there is always more that can be done.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What is the Ontario government doing to make schools fairer and more inclusive for students in Davenport and across the province?

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I want to thank the member from Davenport for her question. I have repeatedly gone out into her community and I see how dedicated she is to the students and to the families in her community.

**Interjection:** A real leader.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** An absolute real leader.

Equity is a central part of Ontario's renewed vision for education. We have to move beyond the status quo. Just this month, our government announced plans for making our public education system fairer for all students by identifying and eliminating systemic barriers, discriminatory practices and biases to support student success. We know that existing structures, policies, programs and practices may unintentionally disadvantage some student populations.

That is why I announced our government's road map to equity in Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan. Our plan will help fulfil Ontario's vision for an education system that is welcoming and inclusive for all students, regardless of their background.

## VISITORS

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** I want to take this opportunity to welcome the seniors from North American Sikh League in Brampton, a charitable foundation here today. They wanted to come see how Queen's Park works, so welcome to Queen's Park.

## NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member from Whitby–Oshawa has given notice of his dissatisfaction of the answer to his question given by the Minister of Education concerning a public high school in east Aurora. The matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

## DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES  
AND CONSERVING WATERSHEDS ACT,  
2017 / LOI DE 2017 VISANT À BÂTIR DE  
MEILLEURES COLLECTIVITÉS ET À  
PROTÉGER LES BASSINS  
HYDROGRAPHIQUES

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 139, An Act to enact the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 and the Local Planning Appeal Support Centre Act, 2017 and to amend the Planning Act, the Conservation Authorities Act and various other Acts / Projet de loi 139, Loi édictant la Loi de 2017 sur le Tribunal d'appel de l'aménagement local et la Loi de 2017 sur le Centre d'assistance pour les appels en matière d'aménagement local et modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire, la Loi sur les offices de protection de la nature et diverses autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on a motion for closure of the motion for second reading of Bill 139, An Act to enact the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 and the Local Planning Appeal Support Centre Act, 2017 and to amend the Planning Act, the Conservation Authorities Act and various other Acts.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1149 to 1154.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All members, please take your seats.

On September 11, 2017, Mr. Mauro moved second reading of Bill 139, An Act to enact the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 and the Local Planning Appeal Support Centre Act, 2017 and to amend the Planning Act, the Conservation Authorities Act and various other Acts.

Ms. Naidoo-Harris has moved that the question be now put.

All those in favour of Ms. Naidoo-Harris's motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

## Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor
Anderson, Granville	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted
Baker, Yvan	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Moridi, Reza
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira

Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Colle, Mike	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Takhar, Harinder S.
Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Mangat, Amrit	Vernile, Daiene
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Martins, Cristina	Wong, Soo
Dhillon, Vic	Matthews, Deborah	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dickson, Joe	Mauro, Bill	Zimmer, David
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	

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

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Nicholls, Rick
Arnott, Ted	Gretzky, Lisa	Oosterhoff, Sam
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy
Barrett, Toby	Hatfield, Percy	Romano, Ross
Bisson, Gilles	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Laurie
Brown, Patrick	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	MacLeod, Lisa	Taylor, Monique
Clark, Steve	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Coe, Lorne	McDonnell, Jim	Vanthof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Fedeli, Victor	Miller, Paul	Yakabuski, John
Forster, Cindy	Munro, Julia	
French, Jennifer K.	Natyshak, Taras	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 50; the nays are 37.

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

Mr. Mauro has moved second reading of Bill 139, An Act to enact the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal Act, 2017 and the Local Planning Appeal Support Centre Act, 2017 and to amend the Planning Act, the Conservation Authorities Act and various other Acts.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1157 to 1158.*

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

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Miller, Norm
Anderson, Granville	Forster, Cindy	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Fraser, John	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	French, Jennifer K.	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Gates, Wayne	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Baker, Yvan	Gretzky, Lisa	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hardeman, Ernie	Natyshak, Taras
Barrett, Toby	Hatfield, Percy	Nicholls, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Oosterhoff, Sam
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Potts, Arthur
Brown, Patrick	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Jones, Sylvia	Rinaldi, Lou
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kiwala, Sophie	Romano, Ross
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Coe, Lorne	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Smith, Todd
Coteau, Michael	MacLeod, Lisa	Takhar, Harinder S.
Crack, Grant	Malhi, Harinder	Taylor, Monique
Damerla, Dipika	Mangat, Amrit	Thibeault, Glenn
Del Duca, Steven	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Vanthof, John

Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Wilson, Jim
Dickson, Joe	McDonnell, Jim	Wong, Soo
DiNovo, Cheri	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Yakabuski, John
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David
Fedeli, Victor	Milczyn, Peter Z.	

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

#### Nays

MacLaren, Jack

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 86; the nays are 1.

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

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I would ask that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** So ordered.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1201 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I would like to welcome Olivia Hannigan to the Legislature. She's here today to participate in the Legislature and we want to welcome her. This is, I think, her second time here.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome, and thank you for being here.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to introduce Carol Gunn from Bruce Mines; Frank Palmer, split between Toronto and Manitoulin Island; Vicky Roy from Sault Ste. Marie; and Tammy Bellamy from Sudbury. I met up with them and we talked about the dementia strategy this afternoon.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### SIR SANDFORD FLEMING COLLEGE

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm proud to rise today to mark 50 years since the founding of Sir Sandford Fleming College. Established as a result of the government of Ontario's passage of Bill 153 in 1965 under then-education minister and later Premier Bill Davis, Fleming College has become a vital educational institution in our province.

While the first cohort of students numbered at only 235, Fleming College has since grown to host 6,000 full-time and 10,000 part-time students, enrolled at four campuses in four different communities, two of them in my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

The Haliburton campus is renowned for its school of fine art and design, the sustainable building design and construction certificate program, and is home to a remarkable outdoor sculpture gallery, often referred to as the Banff of the North.

The Frost campus in Lindsay is known for its pioneering School of Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, the Centre for Alternative Wastewater Treatment, and state-of-the-art programs like GIS training. What an amazing story of growth and of innovation in post-secondary education in rural Ontario.

This Friday, September 29, I will be at the Frost campus to celebrate Fleming's 50th anniversary with the administration, faculty, staff and alumni who have helped to build the college into the amazing institution it is today.

Once again, congratulations to everyone at Fleming College on this important milestone, and best wishes for the future.

#### SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I'm sharing today a personal story about my constituent Roger, in hopes of highlighting the need for better patient-guided programs in our health care system.

Roger was born with a neurodegenerative disease and used to receive home care through the Supports for Daily Living program. For a time he received suitable care, but the agency's interference resulted in a decreased quality of care and Roger experienced severe mental health trauma. As a result, he was admitted to a mental health wing of London hospital, where he has resided for 19½ months.

While in hospital, Roger took his care into his own hands and began an application for direct funding. He soon found out that the South West LHIN does not manage direct funding applications and was forced to apply through the Toronto Central LHIN and the Centre for Independent Living.

Roger went through a scrutinizing application process and was ultimately denied. His appeal of this decision was supposed to take two months. It has now been six months and he has not heard back.

In 2016, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care responded to an inquiry my office sent on behalf of Roger, indicating he had every confidence these organizations would come together to help him reach a conclusion and "a resolution that will provide him with appropriate, safe care that reflects his preferences."

Minister, when will you intervene to finally enable your Patients First legislation to provide straightforward access to self-directed funding options for those who need it, like Roger, so they can finally return home?

#### CANADA-INDIA JOINT STAMP ISSUE

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** This past Thursday, Canada Post and India Post unveiled Canada's and India's joint stamp issue to celebrate Diwali and Canada 150. This joint stamp issue signifies the growing social, cultural and economic relationship between Canada and India, and the importance of recognizing and celebrating our diversity, inclusiveness and democratic values.

The joint postal stamp issue is really an excellent way of demonstrating and appreciating our mutually shared political and social experience as nations. It is in this context that I see the issuance of a Diwali stamp by Canada Post and India Post.

Diwali, the festival of lights, is celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and many other communities all over the world. This year, Diwali will be celebrated on October 19.

The unveiling of the Diwali stamp issue at this time is a fitting tribute to the ongoing bilateral co-operation between Canada and India, and the significance of our diverse and inclusive democracies in the global village.

#### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** They call it Carnage Alley for a reason. The stretch of Highway 401 between London and Tilbury is one of the most dangerous roads in Ontario. About a month ago, on August 29, a pickup truck crossed the centre median of the 401 near Dutton, and smashed into a van on the other side. The two people in the van were a mother and her five-year-old daughter. They died of their injuries, and the driver of the pickup has been charged.

Sadly, there was yet another tragedy before that one. On July 31, this summer, two people were killed and two more were seriously injured in a collision involving a tractor-trailer and six cars. Those cars were stopped because of another collision farther ahead.

A median barrier would do a lot to prevent needless deaths and accidents like these. In 2009, the Ministry of Transportation received environmental clearance to expand this strip of highway, known as Carnage Alley, to six lanes and to install a median barrier. But when I last checked, the MTO claimed that it wasn't worthwhile to make Carnage Alley safer, because of a lack of traffic on that stretch of the 401.

The government's position, Speaker, is appalling. There may be a little less traffic on Carnage Alley than before, but there's no shortage of accidents and death. Has it occurred to the MTO that a lot of drivers might be avoiding Carnage Alley precisely because it's so dangerous?

I have a very simple message for the government: If you won't expand the 401 to six lanes, then pave the grass and build the barrier. Build the barrier.

## TAXATION

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Recently, the federal government announced income tax changes for private corporations. These are companies that do not publicly trade shares.

These changes impact thousands of family farms in Ontario. Many farms have incorporated in order to facilitate succession planning and intergenerational transfer of the family farm. These farm families, and many others caught up in these changes, are not tax evaders.

Farm businesses are built up over many years, and succession planning also takes many years. A successful plan needs to take many factors into account, including the income tax system. Sudden changes like the ones proposed by the federal government could have a domino effect and cause many unintended, tragic consequences.

It is within the government's mandate to make changes to the tax system, but it is also their duty to truly consult and work with the stakeholders involved to develop a policy that will make sure that everyone pays their fair share for public services, but that does not destroy small businesses across the country.

In this case, the federal government did not fulfill that duty. I urge the Wynne government to contact their federal colleagues and request that these changes be put on hold until their full impact can be assessed with real consultation.

Farm families want to work with all levels of government to ensure that together they continue to grow quality food, provide employment and, yes, pay their fair share of taxes. It's extremely frustrating that government continues to take that "We have all the answers" attitude at the expense of the people who are actually the long-term stewards of the land.

## NEWCOMER KITCHEN

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I rise today to speak of a Davenport success story.

Last year, Canada opened its doors to families escaping war-torn Syria. Families flooded into Toronto, leaving behind their homes, their possessions and their families for a new and uncertain life. They often came without strong language skills but with a desire to come and contribute to their new home.

In this time of turmoil, and as people across our country looked for a way to help our new friends, Len Senater and Cara Benjamin-Pace had a wonderful idea. Len's Davenport restaurant, the Depanneur, opened its doors to a small group of women to come and use its kitchen to prepare a home-cooked meal to break up the tedium of hotels and prepackaged food. The event was an immediate success, and soon these women were preparing extra meals to cover the costs to the restaurant.

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Operating out of the Depanneur, Newcomer Kitchen is a not-for-profit social enterprise that invites newly arrived Syrian refugee women to cook a weekly meal in their kitchen. The meals are sold online for pickup or

delivery, and the proceeds shared among the cooks. This model works, as it allows for the money to get into the hands of the refugees who need it and who aren't ready for part-time or full-time work. It also helps newly arrived Syrians with a new set of skills to help them bridge the gap between the life and career they left behind as they try to rebuild their lives in Canada.

Over the past year and a half, Newcomer Kitchen has been able to sell over 2,500 Syrian suppers to supporters across the city, and they proudly claim they are just getting started. This organization has been a force for good in our community, and I was proud to nominate them this summer for a BIG on Bloor award and bring the story of the good they do to this House.

## DAIRY FARMERS

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I stand today to recognize some farmers from Bruce county who I've spoken about before in this House. But they've done it again and therefore this repeat achievement needs recognition. Mark and Josh Ireland, owners of Albadon Farms, just outside of Teeswater, and their families have been once again given top recognition by CanWest DHI for their dairy cattle's milk production. CanWest DHI is an organization responsible for monitoring milk production and output of individual cows.

In the category of milk value per cow, Albadon Farms were the cream of the crop again. This year, the Irelands' 186 cows produced a whopping 14,294 kilograms of milk, the highest in both Bruce county and the province.

Murray Wilken's herd in Ripley was second for Bruce county, while Ernst Gubelmann had top honours in Huron county, followed by Glen and Curtis McNeil near Goderich. Adam Hodgins out of Kincardine also received recognition for the udder health of his herd.

Dairy production is such an important industry in Huron-Bruce. It's great to see so many cattlemen being recognized for their efforts and care of their livestock.

Congratulations to all who were recognized by CanWest DHI. Don't stop what you're doing. We need good-quality, local food close to home. Congratulations.

## ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I rise today to recognize Armenian Independence Day, celebrated on Thursday, September 21 in the Republic of Armenia and by the Armenian community in Ontario. Twenty-six years ago, Armenians voted in favour of independence. Shortly thereafter, the Republic of Armenia was proclaimed a sovereign state by their Parliament.

This occasion commemorates Armenia's rich culture and heritage, and also allows Ontarians to reflect on the country's journey to independence.

Since 1950, Canada has seen a wave of Armenian immigration. Many bear the burden of the Armenian genocide, and have chosen to call Ontario home to preserve and enhance their ethnic heritage.

Armenia's independence day represents an opportunity for Ontarians to commemorate the courage and perseverance of Armenians fighting for freedom and the right to democratically self-govern.

Mr. Speaker, almost half of Canada's 55,000 Armenians live in Ontario. We need to recognize the contributions made by the vibrant, dynamic Armenian community in building a diverse and strong Ontario. Just last month, the Minister of Research, Innovation and Science visited the Republic of Armenia to further strengthen the relationship between Ontario and the Republic of Armenia.

In my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt, I have a thriving Armenian community and I'm proud to represent them here at Queen's Park.

On behalf of the residents of Scarborough–Agincourt, Mr. Speaker, I would like to send my best wishes to all Armenians celebrating this landmark occasion.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** We ought to always be cautious when debating business and passing legislation in this House. We must take the utmost care to avoid hasty reasoning, and ensure our words and intentions are unambiguous. It is of paramount importance to each member of this House that we all understand the words we choose and their potential to be misapplied, misused and even abused.

Recently, I shared correspondence with the elected members of Tay Valley township over the disproportionate amount of complaints regarding their building and planning officials. My constituents were concerned that if they spoke up themselves they would be subject to retribution by these officials, so they came to me instead.

At a meeting on the matter, the reeve and the CAO suggested I make a representation to council on behalf of my constituents to air their concerns. Both my confidential correspondence and my public presentation to that council on behalf of the people I represent are now subject to a vexatious allegation of workplace harassment.

I am confident that nobody in this Legislature expected that the Occupational Health and Safety Act would be misused as a tool to prevent public participation, but that is an unfortunate and troubling reality.

It's shameful, and I find it abhorrent and a direct attack on representative democracy. It flies in the face of this very institution and the expectations that all citizens in a free and just society have.

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

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

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

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum):** Your committee begs to report the following bills without amendment:

Bill Pr68, An Act to revive James Guy Limited.

Bill Pr69, An Act to revive Silver Merle Corporation.

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

*Report adopted.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### SIMCOE DAY ACT, 2017 / LOI DE 2017 SUR LE JOUR DE SIMCOE

Mr. Barrett moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 159, An Act to proclaim Simcoe Day / Projet de loi 159, Loi proclamant le Jour de Simcoe.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The bill proclaims the first Monday in August in each year as Simcoe Day, unless a bylaw of a municipality specifies otherwise for the municipality.

##### STRENGTHENING QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PATIENTS ACT, 2017 / LOI DE 2017 RENFORÇANT LA QUALITÉ ET LA RESPONSABILITÉ POUR LES PATIENTS

Mr. Hoskins moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 160, An Act to amend, repeal and enact various Acts in the interest of strengthening quality and accountability for patients / Projet de loi 160, Loi visant à modifier, à abroger et à édicter diverses lois dans le souci de renforcer la qualité et la responsabilité pour les patients.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

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

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The Strengthening Quality and Accountability for Patients Act, 2017, includes 10 pieces of legislation that are in alignment with Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care.

If passed, the bill will increase transparency, strengthen oversight, and regulate some health programs and services to ensure quality control.

## MOTIONS

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

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

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that the requirement for notice be waived for ballot item number 72 in the order of precedence on the ballot list draw of September 8, 2017, for private members' public business.

1520

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader moves that the requirement for notice be waived for ballot item number 72 in the order of precedence on the ballot list draw of September 8, 2017, for private members' public business.

Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding tonight's late show in the name of the member for Whitby—Oshawa.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I move that the adjournment debate scheduled for this evening, Wednesday, September 27, 2017, be rescheduled for next Tuesday, October 3, 2017.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader moves that the adjournment debate scheduled for this evening, Wednesday, September 27, 2017, be rescheduled for next Tuesday, October 3, 2017.

Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition entitled "Nurses Know—Petition for Better Care."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Implement a moratorium on RN cuts;

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

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

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

I agree. I'll sign it and give it to Javan to bring up to the front.

### HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in 2009 the Ministry of Transportation received environmental clearance for six lanes of the 401 between Tilbury to Elgin county;

"Whereas the 401 between Tilbury and London was already known as Carnage Alley due to the high rate of collisions and fatalities there;

"Whereas current work being done on the 401 between Tilbury and Ridgeway will reduce the road to a single lane for up to three years thus making this stretch a serious safety concern;

"Whereas there have already been four deaths, nine serious injuries requiring hospitalization and over eight collisions this summer within the one-lane construction area;

"Whereas the government of the day pledged to invest \$13.5 billion in highway improvements and has sharply increased the fees for driver permits and licence renewal fees which are used for highway maintenance and improvements;

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

"To commit to upgrading the 401 from four to six lanes and install a median barrier from Tilbury to Elgin county."

I approve of this petition, sign it and give it to page Will.

## EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** “Whereas a growing number of Ontarians are concerned about the growth in low-wage, part-time, casual, temporary and insecure employment; and

“Whereas too many workers are not protected by the minimum standards outlined in existing employment and labour laws; and

“Whereas the Ontario government is currently reviewing employment and labour laws in the province;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change employment and labour laws to accomplish the following:

“—ensure that part-time, temporary, casual and contract workers receive the same pay and benefits as their full-time permanent counterparts;

“—promote full-time, permanent work with adequate hours for all those who choose it;

“—offer fair scheduling with proper advance notice;

“—provide at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave each year;

“—prevent employers from downloading their responsibilities for minimum standards onto temporary agencies, subcontractors or workers themselves;

“—end the practice of contract flipping, support wage protection and job security for workers when companies change ownership or contracts expire;

“—extend minimum protections to all workers by eliminating exemptions to the laws;

“—protect workers who stand up for their rights;

“—offer proactive enforcement of the laws through adequate public staffing and meaningful penalties for employers who violate the laws;

“—make it easier for workers to join unions; and

“—all workers must be paid at least \$15 an hour, regardless of their age, student status, job or sector of employment.”

I couldn't agree more, I'm going to sign my name and give it to Cole to be delivered to the desk.

## GO TRANSIT

**Mr. Han Dong:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Cambridge, Ontario, is a municipality of over 125,000 people, many of whom commute into the greater Toronto area daily;

“Whereas the current commuting options available for travel between the Waterloo region and the GTA are inefficient and time-consuming, as well as environmentally damaging;

“Whereas the residents of Cambridge and the Waterloo region believe that they would be well-served by commuter rail transit that connects the region to the Milton line, and that this infrastructure would have positive, tangible economic benefits to the province of Ontario;

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

“Direct crown agency Metrolinx to commission a feasibility study into building a rail line that connects the city of Cambridge to the GO train station in Milton, and to complete this study in a timely manner and communicate the results to the municipal government of Cambridge.”

I support this petition. I will sign it and give it to page Duncan.

## ENERGY STORAGE

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas there are significant concerns raised with the procurement and environmental vetting of the NRStor CAES project in Goderich; and

“Whereas, despite all precautions, energy plants are inherently dangerous and should not be placed in urban areas, close to residential homes and a municipal daycare building; and

“Whereas the government is spending taxpayers' dollars on additional energy projects despite the energy minister's proclamation that Ontario has an abundance of energy; and

“Whereas this money could instead be used to provide health care, keep rural schools open, increase long-term-care needs and other services for the people of Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to call on the government to cancel the NRStor CAES project proposed for Goderich.”

I'll affix my signature to this petition and send it to the table with Cole.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to see you here in the Chair this afternoon, sir.

I will present a petition. I will edit it for time. It's entitled “Protect Ojibway Prairie” and it says:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ojibway Prairie Complex” is within a system of five parks totalling more than 330 hectares, which is half of the remaining natural areas in the city of Windsor; and

“Whereas Ojibway has 160 species at risk” and is “Canada's ... most endangered ecosystem; and

“Whereas over 4,000 species exist on the site”—represented by more than 100 rare plants, more than 230 bird species “and 16 mammals; and”

Whereas there is a proposed development adjacent to the complex; and

Whereas some of the areas within the Ojibway Prairie Complex include “environmentally significant areas ... a

provincially significant wetland (PSW) and an area of natural and scientific interest...;

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

“To designate this land with provincial importance and prevent any development on or adjacent to this” property.

I fully support the petition. I will sign it and give it to my friend Duncan to bring up to the front.

#### BRUCE POWER

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

“Whereas Bruce Power provides 30% of Ontario’s electricity production at 30% below the average cost to generate residential power;

“Whereas extending the operational life of the Bruce Power energy units will ensure families and businesses have long-term, low-cost stability and clean air to breathe;

“Whereas the Life-Extension Program (LEP) will secure an estimated 22,000 jobs and an additional 3,000 to 5,000 jobs annually throughout the investment program, injecting billions into Ontario’s economy;

**1530**

“Whereas BWXT contributes approximately 1,000 high-skilled, high-paying jobs to residents of Cambridge, Peterborough, Toronto, Arnprior and Dundas and their surrounding areas;

“Whereas BWXT generates over \$90 million in payroll and procures over \$100 million in Ontario goods and services annually across its five major operating locations in Ontario;

“Whereas BWXT contributes back over \$50,000 annually to worthy charitable organizations and celebrates a strong engineering co-op program to support the mentorship and development of local engineering students;

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

“To support the vital role that nuclear power plays in delivering clean, affordable electricity while contributing to a prosperous, well-employed regional economy and across the province.”

I support the petition and I give my petition to Will.

#### ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It was great to have all the folks here from the Alzheimer Society today.

This is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking, memory and physical functioning to become seriously impaired;

“Whereas there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias also take their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners; and

“Whereas Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias affect more than 200,000 Ontarians today, with an annual total economic burden rising to \$15.7 billion by 2020; and

“Whereas the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges; and

“Whereas there is work under way to address the need, but no coordinated or comprehensive approach to tackling the issues; and

“Whereas there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

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

“To approve the development of a comprehensive Ontario dementia plan that would include the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, in caregiver support and investments in research.”

I agree with this and will sign it and send it to the table with page Ariana.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I’ve got petitions here from Toronto, Ancaster, Ottawa, Aurora and London on \$15 and fairness.

“Whereas a growing number of Ontarians are concerned about the growth in low-wage, part-time, casual, temporary and insecure employment; and

“Whereas too many workers are not protected by the minimum standards outlined in existing employment and labour laws; and

“Whereas the Ontario government is currently engaging in a public consultation to review and improve employment and labour laws in the province;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement a decent work agenda by making sure that Ontario’s labour and employment laws:

“—require all workers be entitled to a starting wage that reflects a uniform, provincial minimum, regardless of a worker’s age, job or sector of employment;

“—promote full-time, permanent work with adequate hours for all those who choose it;

“—ensure part-time, temporary, casual and contract workers receive the same pay and benefits as their full-time, permanent counterparts;

“—provide at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave each year;

“—support job security for workers when companies or contracts change ownership;

“—prevent employers from downloading their responsibilities for minimum standards onto temp agencies, subcontractors or workers themselves;

“—extend minimum protections to all workers by eliminating exemptions to the laws;

“—protect workers who stand up for their rights;

“—offer proactive enforcement of laws, supported by adequate public staffing and meaningful penalties for employers who violate the law;

“—make it easier for workers to join unions; and

“—ensure all workers are paid at least \$15 an hour.”

I support the petition and will affix my signature and send it with Benjamin, the page.

### SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I have hundreds of names on my petitions with regard to Bill 94.

“Whereas Bill 94, Highway Traffic Amendment Act (School Bus Camera Systems), 2017, will make it easier to get convictions for drivers who do not stop when lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended on a school bus; and

“Whereas responsible governments must update laws as new technology is developed; and

“Whereas numerous states and provinces are already leveraging new technology to convict drivers who put children in danger while Ontario falls behind; and

“Whereas municipalities including the city of Mississauga have passed resolutions in support of Bill 94; and

“Whereas municipalities including the city of Mississauga have passed resolutions in support of Bill 94; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Transportation has had three years to conduct consultations after a similar bill was initially introduced in 2014 and thousands of children are put in danger each day due to low conviction rates;

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

“To call Bill 94 to committee so it can be strengthened with input from the Ministry of Transportation and other experts engaged in ensuring student safety and to pass Bill 94 into legislation in order to protect our children from motorists who disobey school bus safety laws.”

I approve of this petition, will sign it and give it to page Nicola.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition that was sent to me by Dr. Lesli Hapak, a periodontist in Windsor, to update the Ontario fluoridation legislation.

“To the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

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

“Whereas recent experience in such Canadian cities as Dorval, Calgary and Windsor that have removed fluoride from drinking water has shown a dramatic increase in dental decay; and

“Whereas the continued use of fluoride in community drinking water is at risk in Ontario cities representing more than 10% of Ontario’s population, including the region of Peel; and

“Whereas the Ontario Legislature has twice voted unanimously in favour of the benefits of community water fluoridation, and the Ontario Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Municipal Affairs and Housing urge support for amending the Health Protection and Promotion Act and other applicable legislation to ensure community water fluoridation is mandatory and to remove provisions allowing Ontario municipalities to cease drinking water fluoridation, or fail to start drinking water fluoridation, from the Ontario Municipal Act;

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

“That the Premier of Ontario direct the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Health and Long-Term Care to introduce legislation amending the Health Protection and Promotion Act and make changes to other applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario.”

I will sign this and give it to Greg to bring up to the front.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### CUTTING UNNECESSARY RED TAPE ACT, 2017 / LOI DE 2017 VISANT À RÉDUIRE LES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES INUTILES

Resuming the debate adjourned on September 25, 2017, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 154, An Act to cut unnecessary red tape by enacting one new Act and making various amendments and repeals / Projet de loi 154, Loi visant à réduire les formalités administratives inutiles, à édicter diverses lois et à modifier et abroger d’autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** If I remember correctly, Mr. Hatfield had the floor.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** In the interests of full disclosure, I should inform you that I have been hoisted with my own petard. The other day in the House, I read into the record a few lines of simple poetry. They were directed at the Minister of Economic Development and Growth. I was urging him, when cutting red tape, not to tamper with Ontario’s health and safety regulations. Well, he has responded in a letter that he hand-delivered to me, and he isn’t a bad poet himself. Here’s what I said:

All this talk about cutting red tape sounds like it could be fun...

But only if you want to risk ending up with another Walkerton.

It would be awesome

If I could offer some words of caution.

Speaker, I anticipate there's temptation...

Caused by a pent-up frustration...

That could lead to red-tape strangulation.

Not all red tape is bad or no-good...

So to Minister Brad Duguid...

Don't allow your new bill's creation...

To in any way diminish our health and safety regulations.

Minister, we may need a caped crusader...

To be our health and safety persuader...

If it's good policy you wish to create...

Don't cut any of the health and safety red tape.

Some of the debate may appear half-baked...

But this isn't news that's faked...

It's simple logic you can't escape...

Red tape has a place in this nation

When it comes to health and safety regulations.

Now, in all likelihood

My words will be misunderstood...

But either listen to me

Or risk a huge increase in claims filed at the WSIB.

Speaker, here's the minister's response:

I am a champion of red-tape reduction.

To say otherwise would be an incorrect deduction.

But Hatfield's advice must be heeded

To avoid unintended results that we know are not needed.

So I say to my good friend, "Come on,"

Impacting health and safety would not be on.

Some regulations are very important

And sometimes even need reinforcement.

The key, of course, is to cut regs not needed,

But do so ensuring that Hatfield's advice is actually heeded.

Speaker, we know Minister Duguid is not seeking re-election...

Perhaps becoming Ontario's poet laureate could be his next vocation.

#### 1540

Now back to the bill, Speaker: For people in my area, perhaps the best example of red tape plugging up the system and grinding progress to a halt could very well be the circumstances around the historic Canadian Club

brand heritage centre. You may remember this, Speaker: I have a private member's bill that passed at second reading. I thought it would be a simple solution. Hiram Walker's Canadian Club brand of whisky has been made in Windsor since 1888. It's still made in the same place. The brand centre was Walker's headquarters. It's a magnificent building, modelled after Italian palaces. It's up for an architectural award this week. Some 15,000 people a year have been touring this facility, but it's expensive to maintain.

Ownership of the Canadian Club brand changed a few years ago. The distillery is still there, and Hiram Walker's products are still made there. But there is a glitch in the regulations, a technicality—a little piece of red tape, if you will.

In Ontario, no matter if you are a micro-distiller or a world-famous distiller such as Walker's, Corby's or Wisner's, you can sell your products on-site right where they're made, but—and here's the red tape—if a distiller makes a product under contract for someone else, that product can't be sold, even if it's next door in a heritage building, the Canadian Club Brand Centre, where we celebrate our Canadian distilling history and where we show 15,000 visitors a year our colourful history: the prohibition days, the rum runners, Al Capone and the boys. It's all part of Windsor's history.

Hiram Walker was a visionary. He made good whisky, whisky aged in oak barrels that sold well in the United States and around the world. But now, since it's bottled under contract, it can't be sold at the brand centre where we celebrate our history of fine whisky.

My PMB attempts to change that—to cut the red tape. It says that as long as it's sold within 500 metres of where it's distilled, it can be sold, since it's still made by the same people in the same vats in the same precinct on the same block.

The owner of the brand, Beam Suntory, ended the public tours in March, and no weddings are being booked for next year. Our mayor has been working with the owners of the brand to come up with other ways of paying for the upkeep of the building—maybe, for example, to move the tourist board in there, if it reopens. But if we cut the red tape and allow Canadian Club whisky to be sold at the brand centre, the owners will open its doors to the public again; they've told me that. Some 15,000 visitors a year, our second biggest attraction after Caesars—this is big stuff in my community. This is an example of how red tape can have a major impact on a community.

I must say, it is disappointing to me that to date the government has been unable to find a solution. Sometimes we wrap ourselves so tightly in red tape, it overwhelms us; it cuts off the oxygen to the brain; it stifles clear thought and leaves us helpless to go to seek solutions, simple answers, common sense—and I think that is what has happened in this case.

No one on the government side wants to take the scissors and cut the red tape, the red tape that is holding us back, that is harming our tourism industry, that is

blocking our access to one of the most beautiful buildings in North America, a building with a colourful history where the father of John Fitzgerald Kennedy would come to buy his whisky, which he turned into a fortune during prohibition; where Al Capone was a frequent visitor; where Hiram Walker made his fortune and created a worldwide distribution system for the whisky made in Windsor. Okay, the label says Walkerville, and Walkerville was created by Hiram Walker. He paved the streets, built the sidewalks, put up the streetlights, hired the police officers and the firefighters, built schools and a hospital. That is our heritage; that is our history, and the doors have been shuttered because of government red tape. It makes no sense, absolutely no sense, to anyone living in my area—none at all.

If there is another example of reducing red tape, it's making forms easier to understand and having fewer forms.

Let's take a look at the Ontario Disaster Recovery Assistance program. It's 12 pages long, that form—12 pages. Compare that, Speaker, to a form for basically the same purpose in other provinces. In Nova Scotia, for example, that form we're talking about is one page—one page in Nova Scotia, 12 in Ontario.

The independent insurance bureau has been trying to convince the government to change the form. Maybe, finally, we will see some positive results; maybe, just maybe, we will develop a form that is simple and to the point and supported by the insurance industry. If we change the form, we might as well update, revise and change the guidelines of what is covered during brutal rainstorms, including, yes, sewer backups. That is one of the biggest complaints from my area.

Mother Nature is angry. Climate change hits us with storms so severe that our sewer systems, no matter if they're separated sewers and not the old combined sewers—the sewers just can't keep up anymore. Sewage backs up into our homes. The insurance industry is overwhelmed. Some homeowners are finding it difficult to find private insurance; make no mistake about that. They're finding it difficult because of sewer backups. They look to us, here, in the Legislature, all 107 of us. They look to us for help with our disaster recovery assistance program. It's Ontario's program.

Because the terms of the plan were written sometime in the last century before what we know today is the effect of climate change, before regular storms of this magnitude—what used to be once-in-100-year storms are now slamming us every year or two—we need to come to terms with this. We need Ottawa and the municipalities to partner with the province to have that conversation and to agree to new terms. We can't allow our private homeowners to shoulder this cost alone. We are downloading the impacts of climate change onto the backs of ordinary citizens.

We can do better. We must do better. Photo ops in neighbourhood streets with soggy furniture piled in heaps

no longer cut it. These are peoples' lives—heirlooms and family treasures.

We need leadership. We need solutions. We need an acknowledgement that the old system isn't working. We need to cut the red tape. That is what this bill is about: cutting red tape.

We need to write legislation that provides relief for those whose homes are in flood-prone areas. This isn't a replacement for private insurance. We still need—as the minister reminds us—private insurance. But we need to find ways to close the gap between what the private industry will cover and what role can be played by our federal, provincial and municipal orders of good government.

Sometimes, Speaker, the private industry will provide insurance for sewer backup, but most of us just can't afford it. The premiums are too high. I, for one, am convinced that this can be done. I, for one, don't think Ontario will go bankrupt when we do so. I, for one, believe that our homeowners need others to step up to provide the leadership that is needed and change the guidelines to cut the red tape and fashion a system that is fair to all concerned—just as long as that red tape doesn't deal with health and safety regulations. Leave those provisions alone.

I think that flood insurance continues to remain either not available or unaffordable for Canadian property owners with high flood exposure. I'll give you that quote. It's from Balz Grollmund. He is the head of underwriting for Canada and the English Caribbean at Swiss Re. Swiss Re, as you may know, is the leading wholesale provider of insurance, reinsurance and other insurance-based forms of risk transfer. He says:

“Flood insurance continues to remain either not available or unaffordable for Canadian property owners ... with high flood exposure.” He says that—and he was saying this a year ago—“9% of the homes in Canada are ... in a 100-year flood zone and can be considered at risk for severe flooding. For these homes, and especially the ones located within the 10- to 50-year flood zone, which affects 3% of all homes, flood insurance is either not available or the premium is preventively high.”

**1550**

That same article quotes Minister Mauro: “Policy makers ‘need to look more closely’ at government programs intended to help people recover from natural disasters, and these programs ‘may evolve’ in the coming years.”

I certainly hope that Minister Mauro is right and these programs will evolve in the coming years. I've been advocating for that, and many of us from all across the province in this chamber have been advocating for that. I see the Insurance Bureau of Canada, just yesterday or the day before, is saying that “climate change is causing severe weather events ... to happen more frequently and with greater intensity,” especially storms involving floods. Speaker, when it comes to cutting red tape, that's another area we could look at very closely.

Thank you for your time.

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

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I want to start off by thanking the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for his poetic prowess here this afternoon in the House. I'm not going to be poetic at all this afternoon, but I do want to thank the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for actually putting a spotlight on the safety involved with this notion of reducing regulations.

As you know, we are in a great place here in Ontario. Ontario is open for business. We want to continue to bring to Ontario the jobs and the businesses that we are bringing here today, and we want to make sure we are doing it in a responsible way and that we're making it easier for these businesses to come and do business in Ontario. That's why we have introduced this particular piece of legislation to reduce unnecessary red tape.

Our approach has never been to deregulate. We, as a government, strongly believe in the role of regulation to protect the community, the public, workers and the environment. It is also true that strong regulation can be good economic policy as well. But we know, as the member from Windsor–Tecumseh said earlier, that we do not want another Walkerton. We want to make sure that we continue to have in place the appropriate regulations that make workplaces safe, that we have protections in place for the community and for the workers.

I came from the pharmaceutical industry before I came into politics, and let me tell you, if there is one industry that is really regulated, it is the pharmaceutical industry. Do things get done efficiently? You know that they did. We had to follow the regulations. We had to make sure that they were there and they worked. So regulations do work.

And oftentimes we have to deregulate things because they are unnecessary. They are going to hinder and not allow us to progress the way we need to and how we need to continue to do so here in the province of Ontario.

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

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate here this afternoon on this red-tape reduction bill. Congratulations to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for bringing some local red-tape issues to the table here for us today. He always speaks very eloquently about things that are affecting him, his local riding and his residents.

I've been involved with red-tape reduction since I got here, trying to reduce red tape. When our former leader was here, my first critic's portfolio was small business and red tape. I spent a lot of time travelling across the province hearing from businesses, industries and institutions that were bound up in red tape and just couldn't move forward.

We know how much red tape is costing business. It's estimated at about \$14 billion each year, and this government continues to add new layers of red tape every time they bring forward legislation. This bill is a small step to try and reduce the burden that has been created.

The member talked about the beverage alcohol sector and some of the ridiculous red tape that exists in that sector. I brought Raise a Glass to Ontario, a private member's bill, to the Legislature, and the government has moved on some of it, but very little of what was being proposed. What the member was talking about with the heritage district just makes so much sense. I know we've reduced some red tape in the real estate sector. The Attorney General is here, and he and I co-sponsored a bill reducing red tape in the real estate sector a while back. But it moves so slowly to reduce this red tape—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Todd Smith:** You got it passed; I'll give you credit. You did, but it was one thing, and you keep adding layers all the time.

In closing, what I would say is this:

Liberals are red,  
Tories are blue,  
Orange is Percy.  
Reduce the red tape.  
Lord have mercy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** That's impressive. You're a poet, and you know it.

The member from London–Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's always a pleasure to be in the House when bills are being debated by our legislative poet here. I think we should crown Mr. Hatfield, from Windsor–Tecumseh, as the poet laureate for the Legislature, because he's always entertaining when he debates bills.

He did talk about the Windsor flooding. My background, of course, was insurance. For this government to say that people can buy insurance for sewer backup is really misleading. There are areas in the province of Ontario that are specifically zoned, where you cannot buy sewer backup because the risk is too high. The insurance companies would then have catastrophic losses, and that would dig into their pockets, and that means their profits would be lower. So they won't have that available for people who experience those catastrophic sewer backups.

By the way, flooding is never covered; that is a catastrophic loss. If there is truly a flood in the province of Ontario, no one will be safe with insurance, because that is a catastrophic loss, and insurance companies could not pay for all of those.

I understand and I hope that—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** They don't want to pay for them.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** That's right. We don't want those things. And that's right: Insurance companies don't want to pay for them.

The member from Windsor–Tecumseh is a strong advocate when it comes to the rights of the Windsor–Tecumseh area, and he has been pushing this government to do the right thing and provide some relief for people.

Can you imagine going home, or getting a phone call, and your whole basement is full of water? In some cases,

there's sewage coming in. That destroys your home, and it displaces you for a very long time.

I think that cutting the red tape is a very good step forward to looking at how we can reduce red tape, and helping businesses and helping people access services. But we have to do it in a way that we make sure that doing that isn't offsetting something else, isn't creating another problem. The public interest has to be first and foremost when we talk about cutting red tape.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Etobicoke North.

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** To continue the poeticism and lyricism, what I would say is this:

When I was younger,  
So much younger than today,  
Businesses never needed help in any way,  
And that's why we have to support this bill to cut  
unnecessary red tape,  
The act before us.

But now those days are gone,  
They're not so self-assured.  
And now they find that those businesses have changed  
their mind,  
They've opened up the doors.

There are five principles, Speaker, as you know. Costs will be offset. With, for example, any regulation that is introduced, whether it's for health or safety or regulatory purposes, a greater amount will be offset in terms of regulations being removed.

We will of course attempt to harmonize with other jurisdictions so that businesses are not always running, attempting to conform to rules from different jurisdictions, whether it's city, municipal, provincial, federal and, even now, international.

We will also, of course, consider the unique needs of small businesses, who may not have the economies of scale to actually juggle the myriad regulations that come their way.

We're now also going to fully digitize access of government forms and regulations through digital media, which of course is really part and parcel of the modernization.

I would say that in this changing business climate, we do appreciate their "being 'round," and help them "get their feet back on the ground."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Back to the head of the poetry club, from Windsor–Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker.

I must compliment my friend from Etobicoke North.

He was quoting words from Ringo, George, John and Paul,

Attempting to entertain us all.

Not bad, not bad at all,

Repeating words from Ringo, George, John and Paul.

I appreciated the political pasting

I got from the member from—oh, what's that riding?

What's that riding? Prince Edward–Hastings.

Here is a member who always sees his glass as half full

And that's because he used to be the announcer for the Belleville Bulls.

It's a tough, tough job, trying to entertain up here, Speaker.

**1600**

I was talking about slashing red tape and getting back to trying to change the government's disaster recovery assistance program. The minister knows—he has told us here in the House—that he has activated that relief plan. Thirty-five municipalities this year have had extreme weather events, and that 35 compares to the period between 2010 and 2015 when it was activated just 43 times. Forty-three times in five years; it's already 35 this year. We need changes. We need leadership. We don't need time splitting hairs on the difference between overland flooding and sewer backups and whether insurance is readily available and in what form, at what cost. We need to cut the red tape, and we need to develop a new plan that works for everyone in Ontario.

The minister was quoted in a magazine article as saying that program will evolve. Well, make it evolve. Make it happen sooner rather than later. Allow the thousands and thousands—we had 6,000 flooded basements in my community alone. All across Ontario are looking for change and looking for leadership. Sadly, it's not being put forward.

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

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me. I will say this at the outset: My strength is prose, so I'm going to stick to that. Don't expect any poetry from me in my 10 minutes or so.

Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga–Brampton South. I look forward to hearing her comments as well.

I'm pleased to rise in the House today to talk about Bill 154. This is an important bill, which makes a number of small, but vital, changes to several pieces of legislation across government, including the Ministry of the Attorney General. I will spend my time today talking about the changes that relate to the Ministry of the Attorney General.

The justice system is one of process and tradition which can sometimes result in delays. Bills like this one are critical for improving efficiencies. From my perspective, this is especially true for the justice system, as people now more than ever need efficient services because of the landmark Jordan decision.

Speaker, I have spoken in this House about the impact of the Jordan decision and things that we need to do to move our system in a more effective and efficient manner. There's a tremendous amount of work that is happening right here in Ontario in that regard, but also at

the federal level in collaboration with provinces and territories so that we are able to make structural changes to our justice system, especially the criminal justice system.

That's why I'm proud of the work that the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth has done on this bill, which includes key efficiencies in the justice system, and has added to this very important piece of legislation.

Our government is always looking for ways to advance and improve the justice system, no matter the size of the change, and making sure that locally, in communities, people have access to good facilities because we know that results in the better relaying of justice. For example, in my hometown of Ottawa, in my community of Ottawa Centre, I was very excited to announce just in March earlier this year about \$350,000 in funding for the County of Carleton Law Association, the CCLA, as they are embarking on renovating the law library in the Ottawa Court House.

The library is located in the courthouse. When I practised law in Ottawa, I of course used the library. It's very often and frequently used by the local bar and by the lawyers. This renovation will go a long way in terms of making sure that lawyers have the kind of facilities they need to be able to represent their clients. The CCLA provides invaluable library and research services, as well as offering its members advocacy, legal education and guidance. These new facilities are going to play an important role in that, and I'm excited that the Ministry of the Attorney General was able to provide this grant to make this project move forward.

As my colleague the member from Davenport mentioned when outlining the bill the other day, this bill includes a wide range of measures to reduce unnecessary red tape. We would, if this legislation is passed, be amending a number of pieces of legislation, such as the Courts of Justice Act, the Interjurisdictional Support Orders Act and the Provincial Offences Act.

However, Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity today to highlight for you three other key pieces in this legislation that we are proposing to change.

First, I would like to explain some of the important amendments we are proposing to make to the Charities Accounting Act. Social impact investments are relatively new, and I know members in this House have spoken about those and some of the unique things that are happening in their respective communities, including mine of Ottawa Centre. These types of investments are made with the intention of generating social or environmental benefits. However, the current rules were not designed to address these types of investments. The changes we are proposing in this bill would clearly authorize charities to make social impact investments, while at the same time establishing important safeguards surrounding this activity. We would like to amend this act to clarify that investments that directly further a charitable organization's purpose are excluded from the prudent investment rules in the Trustee Act, which would help charitable organizations further their purposes and achieve a financial return.

Our government consulted broadly with the charity sector before preparing these amendments, and we are pleased to propose these legislative changes to support innovation in this area. These proposals would give charities another tool to manage their assets more effectively, and would position Ontario as a leader in facilitating social investment activities.

I'm sure many of the members of this House have met with charities who wanted to do social impact investments and have spoken about the red tape that has existed in terms of the rules which prevent them from doing so. In consultation with our charities, these changes are an important part of Bill 154, making sure that those charities are able to do that important work in terms of the social benefit and the social impact they generate.

In addition, we are also proposing to make a number of changes to the Juries Act, to make it easier for the public to participate on juries. I can tell you, Speaker, that one of the things that I have learned a lot about since I became Attorney General is that you become quite of interest to your friends. A lot of my friends have been sending me photos of the notices they receive for jury duty with my signature. Either they ask me why I didn't call them personally and tell them to go, which I can't, or if I can get them out of jury duty, which I cannot do either. But it has allowed me to get in touch with a lot of old friends who have been getting letters from me with my signature.

But it also highlighted to us that our jury duty system is a bit antiquated, and we need to modernize the system, which we are proposing to do with changes in Bill 154. Every year, over half a million Ontarians are sent a jury questionnaire, and for many people, this is the first interaction they've had with the justice system. Our government is dedicated to modernizing the process for potential jurors, because we want to make the experience simpler, faster and more convenient.

Under the current process, Ontarians often experience losses in productivity and earnings because they have to take time off of work to attend a summons to be excused or deferred from jury duty. To help save people time and money, we are proposing to allow many of these interactions to take place electronically, as opposed to their going to the courthouse, waiting for their time and then presenting the reason why they cannot participate in the process, or defer. We are trying to see how we can do this more efficiently through electronic means, which means that people could one day receive a summons online or by text. It could also mean that potential jurors spend a lot less time travelling to and waiting at the courthouse, which, unfortunately, is the reality for many jurors.

And we are taking another step to make participating in jury duty easier. We would like to give the public more time to adequately respond to jury questionnaires by extending the time to respond from five days to 30 days, so that they don't feel the kind of pressure that is faced today—not to mention that we all live busy lives,

and we want to make sure that everybody is accommodated.

In fact, Speaker, this proposed extension was a recommendation made by Justice Iacobucci in his landmark report, *First Nations Representation on Ontario Juries*. As members may recall, this committee, struck in response to the report, consulted extensively with First Nations, individuals and organizations, which endorsed giving the public more time to adequately respond to the jury eligibility questionnaire.

These changes, while they seem minor, will go a long way to helping Ontarians perform their civic obligations in a way that is the most convenient for them and, ultimately, will help make the public's experience with our justice system a lot better overall.

**1610**

Speaker, I would also like to bring to your attention some important changes we are proposing that will impact individuals wanting to become a notary public in Ontario.

Currently, individuals must be a Canadian citizen to qualify to be appointed a non-lawyer notary public. Many individuals who would otherwise qualify to be a notary public are unable to be appointed because of their citizenship. This not only impacts those individuals but the individuals and businesses that would benefit from their services. It only makes sense that we help reduce barriers for these individuals, which is why we are proposing to eliminate the requirement for non-lawyer notaries to be a Canadian citizen.

To be clear, our proposed amendment will not change the rigorous qualifications that need to be met in order to become a notary public. An individual wishing to become a notary must still submit an application and pass an exam, to ensure that they are qualified. We are simply proposing to remove the citizenship requirement in an effort to help ensure that more people in Ontario, such as permanent residents, are eligible to apply to become notaries.

Before closing, I would just like to quickly mention that I have only highlighted three key pieces of legislation that the Ministry of the Attorney General is proposing to change through Bill 154, but really, there are in fact many others. I won't go into too much detail here about these additional amendments, but I would like to mention that, overall, they are important changes that will serve to ensure that our laws are up to date and reflect the best interests of Ontarians.

This includes updating the wording in several pieces of legislation in English and French to improve accessibility, as well as amending 13 pieces of legislation to ensure that when laws are posted online on government websites, they meet the highest web accessibility standards, so that anyone can access and read them online. This would help ensure that Ontario laws are accessible, and that the government of Ontario is meeting its obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Speaker, when people think of government, it is unfortunate that they sometimes associate it with red tape. I hope that the people of Ontario who learn about these proposals in this legislation will see a government delivering on its commitment to Ontarians to make government work more effectively and more efficiently for them, and a government that is always striving to serve its people better, because these amendments, however small, will help to break down barriers and, as the name of this bill suggests, cut the unnecessary red tape.

In closing, I encourage members to support this important piece of legislation. I look forward to hearing from the member for Mississauga–Brampton South in the remainder of the time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Mississauga–Brampton South.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** My colleague the member from Ottawa explained very eloquently why this bill is important. I'm really pleased to add my words to the debate on Bill 154.

We need to open Ontario for business, and we want Ontario to stay competitive. That's why we are taking this step.

We know that as societies evolve, realities change; technologies change. There were times—20 years, 25 years, 30 years ago—when everything was done by paper. We were using paper, paper, paper. With advancements in technology, we need to bring those changes. That's why we are doing it.

I heard my colleagues talking about reducing red tape. Reducing red tape is just one part of that plan. We have a strategy in place to make Ontario one of the easiest places in North America to do business.

Because we live in a knowledge-based, globalized economy, we want Ontario to be competitive. We know that our plan to grow our economy is working, as we all know that we are a leader in GDP growth, outpacing Canada and all other G7 countries, and we are seeing that consistently.

We have the lowest rate of unemployment, at 5.7%, which is below the national average. We have added more than 750,000 jobs since the recession and we have seen massive investments into Ontario in multiple sectors—

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member knows that we can't talk to the gallery when we are in session. And the member up there knows that too. Thank you.

Continue.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have seen massive investments into Ontario in multiple sectors; it may be automotive or ICT.

We also know that our economy is changing. It's no longer a resource economy. It's brainpower, and innovation is very, very essential in today's economy.

When I look into innovation in my local community at Sheridan College, I have seen that we have a state-of-the-art manufacturing sector where everything is done by

artificial intelligence. With the advancement in technology, we need to bring those changes.

We are not eliminating regulation; we are updating it. Always, with the passage of time, regulations become obsolete and we need to change them. Why we are doing that, secondly, is that we are reducing regulatory costs by doing so. For every dollar of new administrative cost imposed on business due to new regulations, the government will be required to offset this cost by \$1.25 by removing unnecessary costs somewhere else.

When enacting new regulations, the government will look to harmonize with other jurisdictions as well, where possible, so businesses won't have to juggle different standards.

The government is committed to considering the unique needs of small businesses. While we are updating regulations, we are also looking through a small-business lens. We will recognize and reward businesses that maintain a good compliance record. Businesses will be granted the option to submit any documents electronically to the government instead of wasting time and money doing so on paper.

It will be done through collaboration and co-operation. If this bill is passed, more than 40 statutes and further support will be provided to make Ontario the best place to do business. Many different ministries, such as the Ministry of the Attorney General, the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, will all be collaborating on this.

Now the question arises of how this works with Ontario's economic strategy. The three pillars of the Business Growth Initiative include creating a strong, innovation-driven economy. We will be lowering business costs through modernized regulations.

The annual burden reduction bill helps foster an innovative and dynamic business environment by removing unintended regulatory burdens, modernizing government lines of business, and making complementary housekeeping amendments to reduce the uncertainty caused by outdated and obsolete legislative requirements.

A smarter regulatory system will enable Ontario—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I don't believe we have a quorum.

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

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim):** Speaker, a quorum is not present.

1620

*The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.*

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Valerie Quioc Lim):** Speaker, a quorum is now present.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Continue.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** We are making complementary housekeeping amendments to reduce the uncertainty caused by outdated and obsolete legislative requirements.

A smarter regulatory system will enable Ontario to lower the cost of compliance for businesses and help build a competitive business environment supportive of investment and exports. We know that we have one of the best—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Stop the clock. Are you two gentlemen finished yelling across the floor at each other?

**Mr. Han Dong:** Just having a conversation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You don't have a conversation across the floor. You know that.

Continue.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Ontario is a competitive jurisdiction in this changing global economy, and we know we have one of the best, highly skilled labour forces in the OECD. This makes us fiercely competitive with all other jurisdictions and is an incentive for American companies to invest in Ontario. We continue to see large investments from American companies into Ontario, such as Ford, IBM and Thomson Reuters.

We are committed to keeping our corporate income taxes competitive, something even the Leader of the Opposition has acknowledged. Ontario's corporate income tax rate is almost 13% lower than the average combined federal-state corporate income tax in the US.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the CFIB are both supportive of this legislation, so I urge all members to support this bill.

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

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I want to respond today to the member for Mississauga South—

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** Brampton South.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Brampton South—for her comments on the bill. I'm pleased to respond to the member on Bill 154.

I'm always happy to see legislation coming forward from the government to reduce red tape. I've run, I think, three elections on the need to reduce red tape. I'm glad to see something come in that manner. I hear from business people and farmers on an ongoing basis about being fed up with having to deal with government bureaucracy and compliance instead of being able to build their business and get on with running their business. Resources and attention are diverted from seeking new opportunities, innovating products and processes and finding efficiencies, to trying to figure out, for example, cap-and-trade, the government's various energy schemes, tracking proposed labour changes or handholding inspectors through redundant or superfluous evaluations.

The cost of this red tape, according to many economists, is estimated at \$14 billion a year, so this is a real and significant issue. It's not only an impediment to business, but the Progressive Conservatives support reducing burdensome red tape, eliminating redundancies and streamlining regulations. Businesses in this province

have a lot going against them because of this government: high energy costs and a chaotic regulatory environment, to start with. We need to be taking real action to help them be competitive.

The CFIB conservatively estimates that the cost of regulation in Ontario has grown from \$12,800,000,000 to over \$14 billion from 2005 to 2014. So it's safe to say that this is not an area where this government has excelled. Unfortunately, once again, we have a pretty humongous effort from this government on burden reduction.

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

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** This bill is going to be making quite a few amendments to a variety of acts—let me try to do it: the Business Corporations Act, the Business Names Act, the Corporations Information Act, the Extra-Provincial Corporations Act, the Limited Partnerships Act, the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, the Corporations Act, the Charities Accounting Act, the Farming and Food Production Protection Act, the Courts of Justice Act—you're getting my point, right? A lot of these acts are going to be streamlined, and part of the process that they're going to be doing is making these available through the Internet in order to provide better services.

I heard the Attorney General talk about individuals who have been contacting him because of notices that might be available online later on so that people can extend from a five- to a 30-day process in order to respond to a request for jury duty.

The member from Mississauga–Brampton South also brought up the streamlining, making it easier for people to access. But guess what? Most of my communities don't have reliable broadband Internet. It's a challenge not only for our municipalities, but it's a challenge for our schools. It's a challenge across northern Ontario. It's great that we're going to be streamlining a lot of these and making them available, but it raises a lot of other questions. We've had this discussion and I've raised it numerous times—when we were looking at streamlining services through ServiceOntario, taking away some of the red tape that is there. Well, the reality is, it's creating more barriers, and that's what people in northern Ontario are facing. You sit down at your computer and you get that dial-up noise, and it's 15 minutes, half an hour, 45 minutes later before the page comes up or the application comes up. It's got to be taken under consideration when we're eliminating red tape.

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

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I just wanted to acknowledge the member opposite, the member from—

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Algoma–Manitoulin.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Algoma–Manitoulin. Merci beaucoup, mon collègue.

He is correct: This bill is going to address a number of statutes and amend a number of statutes—40 in total, actually—that will further support our goal of making Ontario the easiest place in North America to do business, Mr. Speaker.

The bill will work with numerous ministries: the Ministry of the Attorney General; the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services; the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

We know, Mr. Speaker—and as has been said in this House already many times by the speakers who have stood up to talk about this bill—that reducing red tape is one of the pillars of Ontario's global competitiveness strategy. This annual burden reduction bill will help foster an innovative and dynamic business environment by removing the unintended regulatory burdens and modernizing our government lines of business, while at the same time making complementary housekeeping amendments to reducing the uncertainty caused by outdated and obsolete legislative requirements.

I believe the member opposite spoke about making available to businesses the electronic means for people to submit applications and submit documents. We are, after all, all on our smart phones. This is definitely one of the ways that we are ensuring that our businesses will become more competitive, will continue to be competitive, and that we'll continue to attract the types of businesses here to the province, growing the jobs that we need, growing the economy, and continue being an attractive place to do business in the world.

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

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I feel it's very important to stand up and paint the reality that is happening in Ontario today. While we have 380,000 pieces of red tape that burden Ontario business and municipalities, we can't reduce red tape fast enough, but we have to do it smartly and we have to do it where it makes the biggest impact.

The sad point of it all is, while we have a huge number, 380,000 pieces of regulation, the reality is, we've got a government that can't be trusted to get it right. Over and over again, they've given us many reasons to distrust their attempt to get things done, and to get it done properly.

**1630**

I'll give you an example. Just this past year, we had a brand new business start up in Blyth, Cowbell brewery. It's a craft brewery. It's going to be a destination brewery, and it has already received rave reviews. But they had to jump through so many hoops. They were pulling at their hair. They were so frustrated with the red tape that they met.

Another business, in Walkerton: Price Schonstrom. They make amazing products. A lot of their customer base is based on word of mouth, and, unfortunately, it's all the red tape that restricted the easy flow of their product from Walkerton down to Port Huron that caused them to not have repeat business. To paint the picture in more real terms, Price Schonstrom developed a great product. It had to travel to its end-user in the States. It had to travel through three different states. It took 10 business days to get the proper paperwork for that

product to move through three states. Guess how long it took for the MTO to generate the same paperwork? Six months—totally unacceptable. Ontario has to do better.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Mississauga–Brampton South has two minutes.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I appreciate the comments from the members from Sarnia–Lambton, Algoma–Manitoulin, Davenport and Huron–Bruce.

The member from Huron–Bruce commented and talked about Walkerton. Yes, we do not want to see another Walkerton happening. That’s why we are updating these regulations. It is all about reducing outdated, unnecessary regulation and helping businesses to stay competitive so that Ontario remains open and our economy can grow and we can stay a leader in this globalized economy.

As I said earlier, and I’m going to reiterate, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the CFIB are supporting this bill, and I am also going to support it. I encourage all members to support it because it’s a win-win situation. I don’t think anyone can lose by updating regulations. We are not eliminating; we are just updating. As we evolve, we need to update our regulations.

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

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, the debate on the unnecessary red tape—it’s a pleasure to speak to it for a short period of time today.

I listened to the debate yesterday and I’ve been listening to the debate today, and clearly I think it needs to be stated and emphasized that members on the government benches have been attempting to conflate and confuse terminology and phrases. Let me put it clearly: Regulations are not the same as red tape. They can be, but they are not necessarily the same thing. Red tape, by its very definition, is—let me just state a few of the definitions of red tape: the bureaucratic practice of hair-splitting or foot-dragging; rules and regulations that are unnecessary and prevent things from being done quickly and easily; excessive routine or procedures marked by excessive complexity, resulting in undue delays and inaction. These are some of the definitions of red tape. So, by its definition, red tape is unnecessary. So I don’t know how you only focus on the unnecessary unnecessary regulations.

So it is not regulations; it is unnecessary regulations. And we do have a few. We know in this province, by this government’s own admission, that we have about 400,000 regulations. I don’t think anybody believes that they are all necessary. I don’t believe anybody believes that some of them or a great member of them don’t cause undue delays or are used in a manner to foot-drag and to split hairs. How many are there that are red tape? Well, we know that independent analysis has shown that the regulatory burden in this province is somewhere around \$14 billion per year. We know that this bill is, by the government’s own admission, going to reduce that regulatory burden by between \$6 million and \$9 million. I think I could say that you won’t even notice the hair-

splitting of that \$14 billion in burden with a \$6-million-to-\$9-million reduction.

I just wanted to clearly emphasize that there are regulations that are not red tape. I think everybody would say that having a posted speed limit under the Highway Traffic Act is not red tape. It’s a regulation, but it’s not red tape. It serves a purpose and doesn’t unduly impede, impair or restrict people’s movements. There are a great many regulations that are worthwhile. But 380,000 or 400,000—I’m not sure if we need quite that many.

I do also want to state—and I have heard this time and time again from the government members of the House: Whenever it’s talked about regulations, they raise the spectre of Walkerton. What they fail to mention when they raise the phrase “Walkerton” is that there were two government-paid employees who were charged and convicted of negligence. It wasn’t that there was an absence of regulations; it was two individuals convicted of negligence. Also, the evidence bore out that there was a significant level of—well, sobriety wasn’t their hallmark, those two brothers. There was a level of impairment while on the job and a fudging of numbers.

I just want to state that for the record so that the members on the opposite side do know that there were—how shall we way?—extenuating circumstances that had nothing to do with regulations.

I want to also make mention, Speaker, that there is nothing in this bill that the government is not already presently authorized to enable and to enact. They have the full statutory authority from this House to make any of the changes without tabling this legislation. They could have just made this happen without any discussion or debate. They have the statutory authority already, even though it’s amending about 100 different acts, or thereabouts.

I want to illustrate my comments today. This book is the Consolidated Statutes of Ontario from 1892. Every law, every regulation, including the budget from 1892, is contained in this one book. It’s about 900 pages and it’s in a big font, easy to read. That’s all the laws that were present. For illustration and comparison, Speaker, this is the pocket edition of only the provincial offences of 2016 in Ontario. It’s very small print, and it’s 3,500 pages in length. So here is a good comparison and contrast on how the growth of government—and again, this is just the provincial offences. It’s not the consolidated statutes. It’s not the full body of law; it is just the pocket edition. I would like to see if any of the members in the House who have deep enough pockets could put the pocket edition in their pants. But it’s just for comparison.

**1640**

A couple of years ago, during the 40th Parliament, I tabled a number of motions in both the Standing Committee on Regulations and the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. Some of those motions were adopted by the regulations committee, but they have not been brought forward to the House for debate or discussion. As a result, I did compile and provide all members of the Legislature with a booklet called Con-

stituents First: Empowering Local Legislators, back in the 40th Parliament. Let me read briefly from a page about the Standing Committee on Regulations:

“With almost 500,000 regulations in Ontario today, elected representatives are often inundated with concerns with a variety of different regulations and how they affect people’s prosperity and pursuit of happiness. Though Ontario had many fewer regulations in the 1960s than it does today, Chief Justice McRuer recommended”—through the inquiry into civil rights—“that debate be allowed ‘on the merits of any particular regulation.’” That’s important. The recommendation from the chief justice of this province said that the merits of a regulation ought to be debated. He went on to say, “Because subordinate legislation could affect someone’s life as much as legislation can, the commission thought it right that elected representatives be able to debate the merits of a regulation.” That recommendation was not enacted, and it hurts the ability of all members to discuss regulations that are injurious to their constituents.

We have a Standing Committee on Regulations in this House. All regulations are permanently referred to the committee, but it is prevented from discussing or debating the merits of a regulation. If this government was sincere about reducing unnecessary regulations, sincere about reducing red tape, they have the ability to have 107 members of this House participate and bring forth regulations that they find injurious, and allow them to be debated. That motion, although adopted by the regulations committee, has never been acted upon.

Speaker, I think I should share a number of examples of unnecessary regulations that are indicative of red tape that aren’t included in this bill and that could be discussed and debated at the committee, should the government really take red tape seriously.

Health Care Connect: That’s the mechanism to help individuals who don’t have a family physician find a family physician. I’ve had a number of occasions this summer where—a doctor in my area was retiring. He informed all his patients that he’s retiring and that they ought to go looking for a new family physician.

Health Care Connect prevents people from looking for a new doctor until their family physician has already retired. That is red tape. That is a regulation which is preventing people from doing things that are beneficial to themselves, but it’s not included in this bill.

How about another regulation in the health care system? Again, for people who don’t have a family physician, this is important, because you can’t get a referral to a specialist unless your family physician gives you that referral. People without a family physician have significant difficulties, and significantly greater times, trying to access a specialist.

Here’s another one. Six years ago, a long-term-care facility in the South East LHIN shut down. That long-term-care facility had 78 beds licensed by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. I just got a letter from the Minister of Health, because I have asked him on a number of occasions, when are these 78 beds going to be

reallocated and permitted to be used in this province? The minister sent me a letter back, saying they are working closely with the LHIN to allocate those 78 bed licences. I don’t know how close they’ve been together, but in six years’ time, they have not been able to permit those beds to be utilized.

When you hear that they have 20,000 beds in Ontario in long-term care, take it with a grain of salt, because not all of them are permitted to be utilized, in large part because of red tape. This bill does nothing for those 78 unallocated beds.

I had the pleasure of dealing with a constituent, a fabulous fellow, who faced a very tragic situation. It’s hard to believe that somebody could be so upbeat. His name is Paul Pelletier, and he contacted my office this year because he had his leg amputated and he was having care. They have what is called a vacuum-pump bandage, which is a requirement to help drain the injury where the amputation was.

But the LHIN and the CCAC had a requirement that you can only use a vacuum-pump bandage for no more than 28 days. That’s the regulation. His doctor said that he must keep this vacuum-pump bandage on. Serious infection would occur if he had to remove this vacuum pump.

It took a lot of effort. The CCAC dug in their heels: only 28 days. We went to the media. We made a stink about it. Finally, we got Paul Pelletier able to continue with his vacuum pump and, thankfully, he never developed any further infection. But it’s another example of red tape, Speaker.

I had another one just recently with a gentleman who owns an engineering and consulting firm in my area. His engineering and consulting firm provides drawings and consulting on roofs and roof construction.

The WSIB has informed this gentleman that because the word “roof” appears in his business title, he must be a roofer, and he is subject to WSIB premiums for his consulting business. They’re charging him \$15 per \$100 of payroll, as if he was on the roof shingling, as if he was on the roof tarring, but he’s in his office doing plans. The WSIB says that if the word “roof” appears in your business name, you must be a roofer. It’s another example of costly, inefficient, ineffective red tape which serves no purpose, serves no benefit. The gentleman is not going to fall off the roof from drawing roofing plans in his office, I can assure you.

#### 1650

There are so many others. Here’s another one: A good friend and an acquaintance, an elderly couple, want to adopt another adult. I won’t get into all of the family circumstances, but there is a blood connection, and the parents want to adopt this adult into their family. The adult, the daughter, wants to be adopted as well. Every province in this country permits that to happen, for adult child adoptions. In Ontario, you actually have to live in the same province for that to happen. The adult child would have to uproot and move from Alberta and to Ontario for this to happen.

We spent much time with the various ministries trying to facilitate this family coming together after so many years, but so far, no luck, no success. Is that red tape? I think it may be. Is it in Bill 154? No.

Let me also talk about Ed Embry. Ed Embry has a nice farm in the riding, nicely graded. It's a nice-looking farm. The MOE came onto his farm and said, "You must remove this berm." Ed said, "Well, that's not a berm. That's the way the topography of the farm has always been." The MOE said "No, no, whether it has been like that or not, we think that that soil is a berm, and you have to remove it."

Anyway, Speaker, I could go on and on. I do encourage and hope that there's further discussion and that we actually remove red tape in this province.

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

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Thanks to the member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington—that is quite a handle.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** There's some red tape.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Yes, there's some red tape, that's for sure.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I've been trying to get the name reduced.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Anyway, I'm going to speak directly to schedule 9, because originally, it was an ex-NDP MPP for Sault Ste. Marie, Tony Martin, who was instrumental in requiring many of the disclosure requirements in the Arthur Wishart Act that were in the original legislation. It seems that some of the stakeholders have raised the issue that perhaps we're removing some of those disclosures. The definition is going to be changed so that the definition of a franchise is that an entity is deemed a franchise if the franchisor has the right to exercise significant control over a business, even if they choose not to exercise it. It also puts in some amendments that would reduce the amount of disclosure that a franchisor gives to a prospective franchisee. I don't think that that is actually being more transparent; it's probably being less transparent.

When the member from Davenport talked about how all of these red tape amendments are to improve and support business—in fact, I don't believe that this is going to actually support people who are perhaps interested in buying or getting into a franchise if they're not getting appropriate disclosure from the franchisor. It prohibits the use of any of the information provided. It requires confidentiality around the information. It even designates a location, site or territory for the prospective franchise.

Those concerns certainly have been raised with us. I'm sure we will be doing a little more work, going into committee, on this particular schedule.

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

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I want to thank the members opposite for their debate and discussion here this afternoon and for raising some things that they feel are very

important to raise in this House. That's exactly why we're here and why we're currently debating the merit of regulations here right now.

The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington was doing just that, speaking about the 400,000 regulations we currently have in this province and how he was looking forward—is what I understood—to this piece of legislation passing so that we can reduce some of the regulations that we currently have in place and so that we can make it easier for businesses to do business here in Ontario. We're trying to do that right here, right now, and we're trying to do this in a safe and sensible manner to reduce red tape.

Instead of talking about how we should be debating very specific regulations, I just wanted to highlight for the House once again some of the things that are in this bill that we should be talking about here—in particular, from the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and some of the proposed amendments that they are making to the Pesticides Act. These proposed changes would transition the pesticide licensing program from paper-based to online service delivery. I believe one of the members earlier spoke specifically about pesticides.

Our partners at the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services have a number of amendments that they are making to the Land Registration Reform Act, to the Land Titles Act, to the Corporations Information Act. All these amendments are making it easier and providing greater consistency across business law statutes and enabling future business law reform agenda.

Mr. Speaker, we're taking a sensible and responsible approach on how we're cutting red tape, making sure that we continue to be an attractive province and an attractive location to do business here in Ontario.

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

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I just have to say that, unfortunately, Ontario is not an attractive place to do business today, in 2017.

I want to take a step back to 2009. At that time, I was general manager of a dairy co-operative, and I attended a commodity meeting, and the local Huron–Bruce MPP was there. I will never forget a stat that she shared. She assured us that for every new regulation her Liberal government was going to be introducing, nine regulations would be taken off the books. That was in 2009. No one believed her then—and certainly gave many reasons for people not only in Huron–Bruce but across the province to not trust this government now to get it right when we're looking at upwards of 400,000 regulations on the books.

It's interesting—I appreciated the member in the debate distinguishing between unnecessary regulations and regulations that are necessary. I want to touch on that a little bit more, because I find it passing strange, Speaker, that when this Liberal government cites why regulation is important, they omit an incident that actually happened on their watch. I am compelled, right now,

to talk about that particular incident. Could it be they don't want to talk about it because it happened while they were in government? If that is the case, I'm going to talk about it right now, because it's another incident that needs to be on the record.

Andrew Livingstone of the Star reported about this on January 9, 2013. The fact of the matter is, under the Liberal government, a former West Elgin county system operator had been sentenced to 30 days in jail and fined \$15,000 for falsifying records for a period of five years and failing to report dangerously low chlorine levels.

Things happen; we have to take care. Let's get regulations right, but for goodness' sake, let's get rid of the unnecessary red tape, much like the member mentioned.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from London–Fanshawe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** It's ironic, because there are many pieces of legislation that we want to come to this House so that we can debate them, but then they're made through regulation. Now we're debating unnecessary regulations in the House, and we would hope that those would be things that governments would be able to look at and adjust without coming to us.

1700

But it's a good thing, because we need to look at the regulations that they are proposing are red tape in order to make sure that we agree with them and to make sure that, when we're taking the regulations away, they're not offsetting something else, which would cause a downhill spiral into a bigger problem.

I have to say that I'm glad it is in front of us. The objective, of course, is to try to lessen the burden of red tape on businesses. But as we do that, we want to make sure that taking those burdens away, cutting that red tape, isn't creating another problem and snowballing it.

I have to say that the member from Lanark—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Frontenac—

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Frontenac—

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Lennox and Addington.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:**—Lennox and Addington did a good job of bringing his constituents' concerns forward. We all have examples of this red tape in our offices.

When people lose their licences, are suspended for medical reasons especially, there are a lot of hoops that they have to jump through with the Ministry of Transportation. This is a concern. People who have jobs can lose their income because they don't have a place where they can be on desk duty or whatever the case may be. They're waiting for months and months and months. Because of that process, they lose their employment; their bills are backed up; they have a financial burden. So there's something that we need to do to actually lessen red tape but then make the process better in other ways in other ministries—and one of them, I have to say, I experienced with the Ministry of Transportation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington has two minutes.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Thank you, Speaker, and thanks to the members from London–Fanshawe, Welland, Davenport and Huron–Bruce for their comments on my debate.

I do want to just re-emphasize once again: If the government was serious and committed to reducing red tape, we have the mechanisms available—except for the red tape that they've added into the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills. We have that standing committee. Every regulation—all 400,000 of them—is permanently referred to that committee. But this government has prevented and prohibits that committee from debating the merits of a regulation.

Why not have all 107 members of this House be the eyes and the ears and bring forth the concerns of their constituents all the time? Instead of the one minister spending months and months with the bureaucracy to come up with a bill that deals with very few in the grand scheme of things, why don't we actually use the tools and the mechanisms that we have available and actually empower all members of the Legislature to represent their constituents?

When you hear of an unnecessary piece of red tape that is causing harm or injury to a constituent, let them bring that forward and have it discussed and debated in that committee. Wouldn't that be more effective, less onerous, less red tape in the improving of the operations of the Legislative Assembly? That comment is mostly for the member for Davenport.

There are things that can be done much more effectively here in this House. I do look forward to this bill getting passed, but I do look forward to seeing significant improvements down the road.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Before I move on, I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Ms. Hoggarth assumes ballot item number 33 and Mr. Qaadri assumes ballot item number 50 from the draw on August 14, 2017.

Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to start my comments today in regard to comments that I made last week. Constituents back home were observing some of the recordings that were done, and they questioned the process about the engagement that you do with the Chair and actually respecting the Chair and the Speaker that is sitting there, and I wanted to give that explanation before I started.

It's a long-standing tradition that you acknowledge the Chair because it's the Chair, and the individual who is sitting there, who bring order to this House. It's a matter of tradition as to why you do that. I wanted just to start today by giving that explanation to the people back home because some people look at it as a waste of energy. It's never a waste of energy addressing you, Mr. Speaker. And to all other Speakers that sit in that chair, I always enjoy your leniency and how you are extremely engaging

in bringing us all to order and making sure that we are always kept on topic.

Having said that, it's always an honour for me to stand here in my place on behalf of the good people of Algoma-Manitoulin.

Today we're talking about unnecessary red tape. The bill itself is to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses and to achieve cost savings for government. The new act would require the government to provide some kind of offset to businesses if the government enacts any regulation that causes an administration cost to businesses, as well as additional requirements to ensure regulations meet international standards and to impose lower cost requirements to small business whenever possible.

I look forward to having some further discussions along with some of the small businesses across Algoma-Manitoulin and some of the chambers over these decisions in the upcoming weeks. I'm actually looking forward to meeting up with the Algoma District Municipal Association this weekend to talk about them, about some of these changes, because they see that it's—some of these might be reflected on their agenda.

I think everyone in this House, Mr. Speaker, wants to pass good, substantive reform, and I think we'll be able to do that with Bill 154. It took a long time to get through it. You're looking at it, and here's the bill. It's a hefty one, pretty intense, over 40 statutes and acts that are going to be touched in one way or another, that are going to be changed. So let's just say it was a big task in going through it.

Overall, I didn't see anything really problematic in regards to what is being proposed in there. Of course, you have to do your homework and look at it from one end to the other. I was pretty happy about it, is my honest opinion. I was even a bit surprised: Even though it's a heavy bill, it stays pretty straightforward all the way through.

When you're looking at this, you really want to find ways of reducing the regulatory burden on businesses and achieving cost savings; that's what this government is attempting to do. But as my colleague the member from Kitchener-Waterloo, who gave her one-hour lead on this, mentioned in her notes during her hour lead, does cutting unnecessary red tape also mean that there's necessary red tape? It's just a friendly reminder that not all regulations are bad.

As you know, businesses in the north sometimes have a harder time to grow. There are less people, meaning less demand. Opportunities are often more difficult to find. Hydro prices are much higher. I'll get back to the hydro prices a little bit later in my comments.

Of course, anything that can reduce the burden of the northern Ontario economy is something I will certainly support.

There is also this mention that the government will provide some kind of offset to businesses if it enacts any regulation that causes an administrative cost to business, as well as additional requirements to ensure regulations

meet international standards, and to impose lower costs in requirements to small businesses whenever possible.

Honestly, that sounds like a pretty sweet compensation that will help the northern economy to stay competitive, but let's be clear: We need to do much more for northern Ontario's economy. I strongly believe that when northern Ontario's economy is doing well, so is the rest of this province.

When you do look around down here in Toronto—you look at the structures that are going up. A lot of the economic opportunities and the businesses and the companies that are within those structures are mining companies, financial companies and forestry companies. That is because the resources that we have in northern Ontario are moving forward. That is because the opportunities that are there are bringing this province forward. I've always said it, and I will always say it: When northern Ontario is healthy and working, so is the rest of this province.

#### 1710

Most people don't realize that the wealth created in the north greatly benefits southern Ontario, but we should never forget that the investment and big gains come with the development of northern communities. These communities also depend on small businesses thriving and reinvesting in their communities. We need a government that understands the realities of all of Ontario. We need to make sure small businesses can thrive, grow their communities and attract investment. Then, and only then, can we grow our province and reinvest in communities that have a harder time to survive and be competitive. We need to actually think of policies and reforms that will create growth and benefit everyone.

Although Bill 154 seems like a good start, we need to consider other things as well. I'm talking about a job creation tax credit. That was in our platform in 2014. It's not because it's 2017 that the proposal isn't valid anymore; it just makes that much more sense to have it. We need to have a practical approach to create jobs. That means rewarding companies that create jobs in Ontario.

Just like Bill 144, it's a pretty straightforward way to help businesses. After reducing the burden on businesses and saving costs, the government will have money to reinvest. Why not reinvest that money with targeted policies that help job creation? I want to see our economy grow so we can actually improve our underfunded programs. It's simply a virtuous circle.

A job creation tax credit is a plan that will help real people. I don't want to see a tax cut for big corporations. I want a tax credit for small businesses that would actually grow our communities. It makes sense. There are so many people in the communities I represent who are trying to grow their businesses and make their towns a better place and a nicer place. Not only are they trying, they're actually giving back to the community by providing them with sponsorships. Whether it is hockey teams, community events, engaging suppers, they're always there and they're looking at those opportunities to make it grow.

Mr. Speaker, I see young, creative entrepreneurs on Manitoulin Island and across my riding creating jobs, new opportunities for their communities. I'm talking about microbreweries, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, coffee shops and art galleries—all of those becoming community hubs, places of gathering where people can exchange ideas and actually grow their communities even more. What they're doing is really amazing. A little boost here and a little boost there could actually make such an important difference. Create a job; get a credit. It's as simple as that. It just makes sense.

We also talked about the manufacturing tax credit as well. In the same mindset, you want companies to invest in themselves. A manufacturing tax credit would make it more affordable for companies to purchase machinery and equipment and reinvest into their workers. Bill 154 will show our willingness to companies that we want to make it easier for them to operate in Ontario, but a tax credit will actually convince them to stay in Ontario and invest here in Ontario. The moment we start focusing on reducing the burden on business, invest in job creation and truly prioritize growth, we will be able to do a heck of a lot more. When you start saving money here and there in ways Bill 154 is trying to do, it also allows us to reinvest here in Ontario where we can best serve Ontarians.

Now, growing our economy shouldn't mean tax cuts. All that money should go back into our health care system, our education system, pharmacare, child care and all the great things that make Ontario a fairer and more affordable place to live.

Just today, meeting up in—and most of you did meet with them. We had people here from the Alzheimer Society on dementia strategy. They were looking at ways as to—“Where we can be of benefit to you in helping the people we're representing here is by finding additional dollars.” Where are those additional dollars going to come from? Well, from initiatives like this where you can invest those dollars into preventative care; where you can have the vision, that the investments that you're putting in today, you're not going to see the benefit of it tomorrow or next week or next year. You've got to have a longer vision. Five, 10, 15, 20 years down the road is where you're going to be able to recoup and see the benefits of those initial investments.

Needless to say, when people are not worried about being able to pay for their medication or if they don't have to pay crushing student debt, they are more willing to spend or even to invest into small business here in Ontario.

The same logic applies to hydro prices, Mr. Speaker. I'm not even sorry to talk about this again, because people in my riding and all across Ontario are suffering from the mismanagement of consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments on the hydro file. I will use every chance that I get to talk about hydro and how we can fix it in this province. I mentioned it last week during some comments that I made in regard to the plan that we put forward. I'm proud of that plan. You know what? Not everybody agrees with it. That's fine. At least it's gener-

ating a discussion and at least we have a plan put out there where we can actually help and assist Ontarians going forward.

If we're talking about unburdening business, let's talk about having some of the highest electricity rates in northern Ontario. I highlighted that story as well last week. Big companies want to come to Ontario and invest, but they end up going elsewhere because they can't afford the high hydro rates that are here in Ontario. That's a lot of money not invested in our province. That's a lot of jobs that could be lifting individuals out of poverty. That's a lot of communities that would benefit from the investments and the small businesses that could be created from true investment in Ontario.

Lower hydro prices would also mean that businesses wouldn't have to constantly downgrade. I talked last week about a small family-owned sawmill on Manitoulin Island and the Taylor family who owns it. They went from 20 or 25 and now they are down to 12 employees, because they couldn't afford it. Their hydro bill during peak periods went from \$4,500 to \$6,000 in just over two years. You can't continue to operate when your costs keep going up. You can't invest into your business when your costs keep going up.

For many, the reduction in employment doesn't sound like a lot, but to a small community like M'Chigeeng on Manitoulin Island, those eight jobs, that's eight families. And that's a lot of economy that comes into that small area.

People are hurting, Mr. Speaker, while this government is privatizing Hydro One, and the official opposition is staying silent on the privatization of Hydro One. We are losing billions in potential revenues that could be reinvested in our services. Goodness knows we need investment in public services in the north. We need transportation services in northern Ontario.

You want to talk about red tape? Try getting to a doctor's appointment, when you're living in Elliot Lake, either in Sault Ste. Marie or in Sudbury. You're a senior and you live alone in your condo up in Elliot Lake. You have to travel first from Elliot Lake to Highway 108. Then you have to wait there for the bus to come in. Guess what? The scheduling on those bus routes: They come in at 12 or 3 o'clock in the morning. Now, that's one thing when you're talking in the summer months when it's nice outside and you have that shelter or that car that is there with you. But when you don't have that shelter and you're being dropped off because the bus was delayed, or you don't know if the bus is going to show up and you're out there in the morning—those are the investments that we need in order to see true, meaningful transportation corridors when we're talking northern Ontario.

A rail system we once had that was really one of the biggest highlights that we had in northern Ontario, where it could have been expanded and really had a true transportation strategy for northern Ontario, the one train that we had, the ONTC, is now gone. Gone—more challenges, more red tape for northerners in regard to getting to and from their destinations. School kids that were

relying on that bus getting from northern Ontario to southern Ontario have lost that ability.

So the challenges are somewhat different, but the red tape still exists and we need to see more of that red tape being removed, but also removed prudently so that it doesn't impede Ontarians.

1720

I'm happy that the Liberals—who, by the way, cancelled the Red Tape Commission when they formed government in 2003—finally decided to introduce these amendments. I know the Conservatives appreciated this commission because, for them, it was about making government smaller. But personally, I like efficient government. I don't want to downsize government per se; I want a "restructuring" that will help us become more efficient and find more savings to reinvest into public transportation, into schools, into hospitals, into front-line workers to care for our seniors.

I think it appears to be clear that businesses— and people as well, for that matter—are tired of dealing with a government that bounces them from one department to another department and never seems to have an answer for you.

From a lot of my constituents—the member who just spoke to the bill earlier about the challenges that are there for an individual who is looking at securing employment but is being told that he has to go through a battery of visitations for getting his proper class of driver's licence. The challenges that you have with first just getting through that process and the delays that are there—an automatic delay for when you file for that driver's licence and your application goes from on top and you're going to have to wait 30 days. It doesn't matter if a job is available to you as soon as you get your licence. Well, you know what? You're going to lose out on that opportunity and you're not going to get that job. That's the red tape that we're looking to fix. It's an immediate opportunity for those individuals.

The thing is that Bill 154 will give more power to the minister as well. That's not something new under this government. But I raised this point before: Maybe the minister is a great administrator and an expert in the field, but will the next one be? That's going to be an important question as well. The centralization of power can be a tricky thing, especially if you don't have enough experts in your bureaucracy to make the best decision possible.

In the north, that centralization of public services results in cuts. It really affects people on a daily basis. We've seen it when there was an attack on public services and ServiceOntario offices in northern Ontario and across this province, where we were successful in getting this government to reconsider some of the decisions that were made and those centres were maintained and kept open. These services are a much-needed service across this province, particularly in northern Ontario where the communities are spread far and wide. It's part of our tourism and it's part of our economy. They're much-needed services that we need.

It's a fine line between too much and too little bureaucracy when it comes to helping people and businesses. I think people expect their government to make changes in their bureaucracy. To streamline, update and modernize are good things from time to time.

Another potential problem with that is that, already, this government has been outsourcing and privatizing government agencies, supposedly to save money. The reality is that now we get poor-quality service, and it's costing everybody a little bit more at the end of the month. This bill will actually allow more of that to happen.

That, again, is a big concern for us in northern Ontario, where we see a lot of these services that we're going to be potentially losing, where the individuals who were there—by cutting this red tape, what's going to happen is that it's being passed on to the private sector, and those individuals have to come back in order to fix the errors that were there. I've had many opportunities to have many discussions with individuals out of those centres, particularly out of the ServiceOntario offices, who are experts and who go out of their way to assist community members in order to make sure their application is properly done; in order to make sure that that transportation permit is there; in order to make sure that that load leaves the yard on the Monday morning.

There's a lot of red tape that can be used, but we have to make sure that it's being removed properly so that it doesn't hurt Ontarians and that it actually helps the good people across northern Ontario.

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

**Hon. Marie-France Lalonde:** Certainly, it's a great pleasure to respond to the member for Algoma-Manitoulin. Just last year, I was in his riding, making some great announcements in Espanola for a wonderful environment, where not only did we enhance capacity, but we invested in his brand new emergency room in Elliot Lake—

**Mr. James J. Bradley:** Good news, good news.

**Hon. Marie-France Lalonde:** Good news.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure, because I was the parliamentary assistant, actually, when we introduced the first bill that was passed that made significant improvement to our business. As a former business owner myself, this is something that resonates very well.

After being the parliamentary assistant for economic development, I became the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. We worked very, very closely with the minister in the ministry of economic growth to bring forward aspects where we can improve and continue improving.

I know the member is referring to a few things that, hopefully, I'll have more of a chance to talk about, regarding the electricity rate and everything.

What I want to say is that Ontario is open for business. When you look at our economy and the signs of looking for jobs, everywhere dans la province, je vois des affiches qui demandent des gens; on cherche des gens

pour travailler. It's reassuring to see that our economy is growing. Certainly we can do better, and this is why this bill is so important.

I'm going to highlight a few things, coming from the great riding of Ottawa—Orléans, where we do have a bridge between two jurisdictions, Quebec and Ontario. By harmonizing some of our regulations between jurisdictions, we are also improving our business sector immensely.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The member from Prince Edward—Hastings.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me again here this afternoon. It's a pleasure to bring some comments on the presentation by our friend from Algoma—Manitoulin, who talked about some of the frustrations in his own riding that his residents are facing when it comes to development and many other things.

I think we can all relate, as MPPs across the province, to some of the frustrations that exist when it comes to development. I know that in my riding, people are always coming to me complaining about the time it takes and the regulations involved and the lack of response time from the Ministry of Transportation, for one.

I had a meeting a couple of weeks ago with our regional adviser in our neck of the woods in eastern Ontario, and brought some of the concerns that I've been hearing from developers in the Quinte region, and Hastings and Prince Edward counties, to his attention. Little things are taking six weeks, eight weeks to get a response from MTO, so it's very frustrating. Now, that's more customer service than it is red tape, but certainly there's a lot of red tape that goes along with that as well.

Over my six years here, I've heard from every single sector about all of the regulations that are in place, that are holding back business in Ontario. The minister across the way talks about the fact that Ontario is open for business. That's great, but Ontario should be open for business at lightning speed—and they could be, if they just took out the scissors and started to cut away at some of these regulations.

This bill is okay. The bill is okay. I mean, it's a nice start. It's a good attempt. It gets a few positive headlines out there. But it could have been so much more.

We've seen the number of regulations explode over the last 14 years in Ontario. Then they'll get out the hedge trimmer and just trim a little bit back instead of mowing them down. So there's some better work that they could do.

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

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm pleased to join the debate. I want to thank my colleague and my friend from Algoma—Manitoulin. He did a great job in relating some of the challenges from folks in his riding as they relate to red tape or regulation or a burden of regulation.

He talked about some of our ideas, as New Democrats, to support small business and economic growth in all

parts of the province—mainly a job creation tax credit, where if you create a job, you get a tax credit. That's how the government should work in partnership with small businesses—and not try to overly burden them and make it complicated to hire workers and to train them.

However, I've been in this game for a little while here now. I always am shocked at the way in which the Progressive Conservatives talk about red tape when, in fact, in all the years that I've been here so far—six years—I've seen multiple times when the official opposition puts forward bills that are indeed regulation. I remember the member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke brought forward a bill that would require truck drivers to clean the snow off the top of their trucks in the winter. That's a regulation. That's a regulation that is safety-oriented, but that would require truck drivers and operators to get out of their trucks and clean their trucks. That's going to add time. It's going to cost money. That's one regulation that you put forward. It's reasonable.

**1730**

When you reference 400,000 regulations in the province of Ontario, be specific. Tell us which ones you're actually going to cut, and tell us which ones you're not. That's a lot of regulation that has come on board since the advent of the province, and some of them are warranted, but to lump them all in is a mug's game. This bill is an attempt at addressing some of them. It's an omnibus bill to go through all of them. It's important, and it's something that the government is making an attempt to do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The Minister of Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I'm pleased to enter into the debate and offer a few remarks in regard to the statement by the member from Algoma—Manitoulin.

I think all of us in this House do share frustration when there is unnecessary red tape.

As some of the members have pointed out, very often regulation is very important. It's there for health and safety reasons, and we have to look at each piece of legislation and regulation to ensure that in eliminating it, we in fact do no harm.

I'm glad to see overall that there's a positive response to this bill.

I think it's worth remembering just how well Ontario's economy is actually doing. Ontario is really competitive in Canada and globally. We know that our plan for the economy is working. We're growing the economy. We're a leader in GDP growth, outpacing Canada and all other G7 countries, and so we also have the lowest unemployment rate since 2001, at 5.7%; we have been below the national average for some 29 consecutive months.

This bill is going to prove to be exactly what it says. It's going to lessen the burden on business. It's going to create more efficiency, and it's going to save businesses money. As we know, in the most recent report in 2017, which was issued just this year, we have found an estimated savings of \$152 million and 6.5 million hours to businesses since 2011. That's really quite—

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Pretty remarkable.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** —remarkable, and we intend to proceed in this way, to ensure that businesses can be efficient and effective, and also save time and money.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Algoma–Manitoulin has two minutes.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I want to thank the members from Ottawa–Orléans, Prince Edward–Hastings, Essex and Oak Ridges–Markham. Thank you very much for your comments. I appreciate you participating in the debate this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the government has always been notorious for holding up that shiny object while something else is coming in at the bottom of the order. I'm really watching this one, and I'm going to be looking forward to the discussions that are going to be happening at committee.

When you look at the potential savings that are here, the \$6 million to \$9 million that is going to be here—I guess what small businesses are looking at as we're having this debate is, "How are those savings going to be able to come back to us and assist us? What are those savings going to look like? Is it going to come in as we have proposed, as far as what we have as far as an idea of a job creation tax credit or a job training incentive? What is that going to look like, and how is that going to benefit us?"

When you say that Ontario is open for business, I'm sorry, but as the critic for northern development and mines, it's certainly not the message that I'm getting from industry when I go out and talk to them. They're looking at Ontario and saying, "You guys figure out your framework. You guys figure out what you need to do. But in the meantime, the resources that you have there are fine. They're going to stay in the ground, or they're going to stay standing up in the forest. When you guys have an actual plan going forward, we'll come back, but in the meantime, we're going to take our dollars, we're going to take our investments and we're going to go into other jurisdictions as you guys figure it out here in Ontario."

That's the message that I'm hearing from industry. I'm not sure where this government is getting their information from, but there is a lot of investment and a lot of opportunity that we're missing out on because of the red tape that we have here in Ontario.

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

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be sharing my time with the member for Trinity–Spadina and the member for Ottawa South.

I'm really pleased to be able to speak to this piece of legislation because I know a lot about this. I come from a business background. I studied business in my undergrad, and I studied business in my graduate studies. I was a commercial lender, and I worked for a management consulting firm where we advised businesses on how to overcome a range of challenges: some of the more complex problems businesses face, the kind of problems that they didn't have the internal expertise or experience

to solve themselves. So I know a lot about this. I know a lot about the impact of government regulation, and various forms of government regulation, on businesses.

I also know a lot, as a result of providing businesses with that advice, about how businesses actually make decisions: everything from when they choose to expand, how they do that, how much risk they're willing to take, how they finance that expansion and how they choose which jurisdictions to operate in and to expand into.

As I was listening to the debate and listening to the member from Algoma–Manitoulin talking about how businesses are choosing to go elsewhere because of regulation, or because of the amount of regulation in Ontario, I think that, with all due respect to the member, he shows a strong misunderstanding of how businesses actually make decisions.

Businesses make decisions as to which jurisdictions to invest in and which jurisdictions to expand within based on a number of factors. Those factors include things like a skilled workforce, and for most businesses, that's the number one consideration.

They look at infrastructure. Can they move their goods to and from their manufacturing facilities? Can they move their people from where they're living to where they need to work? That includes all kinds of infrastructure: highways, transit, airports etc. All those things are important.

As part of the consideration around how they attract the best-quality talent, they think, "Does the city or the community or the region that I'm in offer the quality of life that the people I want to have employed by my business will want to live in? Does it provide those kinds of living conditions?" A lot of cities, and a lot of municipalities and communities of all sizes, invest a lot of resources to attract that talent, because by attracting that talent, they attract the investment from businesses to hire that talent on.

Regulations and taxes are part of that consideration set, but when you think about all of the things that businesses consider—and I've just listed a few, but I've certainly listed the top ones. Businesses think about how they invest; they think about if they can attract the talent and workforce that they need, the people that they need, now and in the future. Does it have the infrastructure and supports that they require to operate their business? Is it a stable business environment and banking environment? What are corporate taxes like? How high are they? How low are they? How does that compare to other jurisdictions? And then they also think about regulations. When you think about all of those things, those are some of the things that businesses consider when making a decision.

Unfortunately, when you listen to the debate here in the Legislature, sometimes you hear from members saying, "The regulations in Ontario are scaring away business," and that's just not true. That's just not factual or accurate. I know it's not factual or accurate because I used to advise those businesses on those decisions, number one, and number two, that's just not how

businesses make decisions. There are other factors that are more important.

That's not to say that regulation isn't important, and that's not to say that we shouldn't minimize the cost on business when we can. As a business person who had to help companies navigate regulation, I know how important that is and how impactful that can be to a company's bottom line.

That's what this bill is about. It's really about making sure that government reduces the regulatory burden on business, and it's also about making sure that if we do have to impose regulations, that we're offsetting them. That's one piece.

The second piece is about making sure that we're remaining competitive when it comes to regulation, so that our regulatory regime is aligned with the regulations in other jurisdictions, and that's a helpful measure to make sure that we remain competitive in this regard. That's just going to further reinforce the fact that when people stand up and say, whether it's in this Legislature or elsewhere, "Businesses aren't investing in Ontario because of regulation"—this will help ensure that that doesn't happen and that argument doesn't hold water.

1740

We're going to consider the unique needs of small businesses in this legislation. As we move forward with regulation, we'll recognize and reward businesses that maintain a good compliance record. We should be focusing our inspection and enforcement resources on those businesses that are not complying, rather than those that are. That's just good business sense. That's a good way of rewarding those who are good actors, and it also helps to make sure that we invest the enforcement resources where they're most needed.

I've talked about four of the measures in this bill, Speaker. Ultimately, what I think we have to remember is that Ontario's economy is performing well, that businesses make decisions as to where they locate and where they invest based on a range of factors, of which the regulatory regime is one, and this government is making sure that we're minimizing the regulations in place. This bill does that, and I urge all members to support it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Todd Smith):** I recognize the member from Trinity–Spadina.

**Mr. Han Dong:** It's my pleasure to lend my voice and my support to this bill. It's named Cutting Unnecessary Red Tape Act, 2017.

As you know—I think I've shared this story with the House in the past. A little bit about my family background: I came here when I was 13 with my mom. My dad was already here, and he was a film producer before we immigrated to Canada. Like many immigrants, when they first landed here, it would be very difficult for them to actually put their knowledge and their skills to use. So, like many of his peers, he tried a few small businesses.

With our arrival, with additional hands in the family, he decided to invest in a coffee shop business. I remember I helped out. I got the pleasure of doing the graveyard shift after school for, I think, almost two or

three years. I enjoyed it. It really gave me an opportunity to learn more about the society and the community that we lived in. It also gave me a good understanding of what a small business details.

To me, looking back, I think there were three aspects to the business, if you have to categorize them. One is the back operation. It includes inventory. You've got to order your product and your merchandise. You have to deal with the bank and the finances, doing your daily book-keeping as well as looking at other business clients to potentially negotiate a better deal.

Then, it's the front service. You've got to talk to your clients. You've got to make sure that they get the right product and that they're happy with the quality of the product.

As well, in those three years, we learned and adapted to the regulatory requirements that every business operator is facing, such as the fire codes and the regular inspection of that equipment. We also had a tobacco licence—so you want to make sure that everything is up to date. Health inspections: They may arrive at any time, so we want to make sure that everything is up to standard. If we want to do some renovation, we want to make sure all the building codes and all the requirements are met. It's quite a bit, although the business is small. But still, it's quite a bit for a newcomer family to realize, to keep up with the regulations of the day.

That's just a bit of my understanding of small business.

Let's put that aside for a minute. I heard this afternoon a lot of talk about the history of this government. I think we have a very proud history. In the last 14 years, this government has done a lot to reduce the cost of doing business in this province. For example, the introduction of HST: In that process, we were able to save businesses hundreds of millions of dollars every year in the filing costs in the paperwork. Of course, unfortunately, we didn't get the support from parties across the floor—but that's a real saving of administrative burden.

We introduced online service. Now you can incorporate a business online. It saves time; it saves money. People are so used to it that they tend to have forgotten about it.

As you know, there was a time when everything had to be done with paper and all that process. Even birth certificates took up to six months to complete. It is this government that got that digitized. I think that at the time, we put out a promise that if you don't get your birth certificate in 15 days, you get your money back. I think that guarantee is still in place.

That's the reason why we are seeing great economic growth in this province. We're leading the G7 nations in GDP growth for two and a half years. That is very significant, and I have to say that it has something to do with this government's policy on supporting businesses and their growth in this province.

When I was going through what this bill potentially could do, I was very pleased. There are five areas I see that you'll be looking to realize. One is that for every

dollar of new administrative cost imposed on business due to new regulations, the government will have to find \$1.25 to offset that cost on business. This has a prolonged effect to the businesses in this province. They have a guarantee from this government that if we're going to introduce new regulations, we'll find offsets to save business 25% more.

The other thing I cite out of the five—well, of course, the harmonization of regulations with other jurisdictions is very important. Consider the unique needs of small business. I think this is very important. When we design policy and regulations, we look at industries; we look at the economy. But this bill, if passed, will be looking at the specific needs of small businesses. As you know, the ministry of small business was newly created to work with other ministries to cater to the needs of small business. This is very important.

My favourite is that we will recognize and reward businesses that maintain a good compliance record; for example, by potentially reducing the number of inspections for business. Again, having had experience with small businesses, I remember waiting for the inspector to show up, and going through those inspections. You know that you've done everything up to the standard, but there is additional anxiety. You don't know what the inspector may say. Let the record show that if you are a good operator, you should be awarded with less inspections and less burden on your business.

Lastly, business will be guaranteed the option to submit any documents electronically to the government instead of having to waste time and money by doing so on paper. That's what I said before on online incorporation of businesses. This is to go further on that.

I think this bill is going to reduce red tape for small business, and business across the province. It's going to have my support. I urge all members of this House to give it a look and consideration, and consider supporting it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Todd Smith):** I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. It's good to see you in the chair.

I would like to start by saying that I fully support Bill 154. I'm pleased to hear the debate that's going on in the Legislature right now. I hear support, I think, from the other side as well, and a recognition about the significance of regulations in doing things like protecting public health; how we protect hospitals and schools; and consumer protection. Regulations are critical to how we ensure that we can deliver the policies and the things that people need in an effective way.

Having said that, I spent 22 years running small businesses in the grocery business, so I get that the burden of reporting, for the value of what you're getting out of that reporting, is sometimes onerous for the business person, and there's a limited return on that.

I know that my colleagues mentioned the offset, and harmonizing with other jurisdictions, and the unique

needs of small business, and being able to send in documents electronically.

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But one of the things that I think is critical—what we've been doing a lot in the legislation is trying to roll back or take out those regulations that are old, outdated, not responding to the needs of the day.

So as we go forward with this legislation, it's really focused on trying to put a filter on new regulations to make sure that they're modern, efficient and effective, and minimizing the impacts on business, recognizing that we do have to regulate for the things I talked about, like public health, consumer protection and workplace protection. All those things are really important. But we also need to ensure that we're not putting an unfair reporting burden for a minimal benefit to the things that we're trying to do for people.

I'm really pleased to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Todd Smith):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I'm pleased to lend what's left of the day here, two minutes, on this particular bill.

You know what? I'm not going to get poetic as some have earlier today; I'll leave that for others. But I will say again that it's one of the more pressing issues that I hear from job creators in my community—the fact that government seems to always have another form, have another knock at the door—a variety of different things when it comes to regulations. For the most part, the ones that I talk to at least—job creators and small businesses in my community—want to go to work. They want to employ people. They want to provide a service or a good, of course. But too often, there's government constantly in their way—constantly.

I can think of a variety of different issues. I was at a lunch a few years ago and I heard the then governor, Nikki Haley, talk about her state and how they really sat down at the table and said, "Look, how can we get you here?" in terms of a new business. "How can we get out of your way and do the things that we need to do to create those jobs?" We hear the opposite here. They bring you into a room and they're like, "Here are all the things you need to comply with. Here are the taxes, the fees, the costs," and they somewhat have it backwards.

It's due to that mentality that we see companies leave our great province of Ontario for other jurisdictions—because they're being sought after in high demand, frankly. That's something that we have to get back to. I know back in the day, our government—the Red Tape Commission did a lot of great work.

Listen, I'm sure I'll have more to say, but thanks, Speaker, for the two minutes.

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

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** This is a very important bill. The title is catchy—cutting red tape. We all know that small businesses in our local economies are really the meat and potatoes of what drive our communities, so

we do need to make things more workable for small business. They don't want a lot of rules to entangle them in process; they just want to get to the business of doing business so that they can hire people, grow their neighbourhoods and make sure that they are also creating jobs and have a viable business themselves.

The member from Trinity–Spadina talked about the HST. One of the things that we know can help small businesses is the cost of hydro. It's exorbitant, and many small business owners have talked about their unaffordable hydro rates. Yes, the government has put in some credits. Again, that's red tape in itself. You have to apply for these programs, you have to know where you're going; you have to know they exist to get there.

It really speaks to the fact that when we're talking about red tape—why don't we just make hydro rates affordable and forget all these extra systems to bring down the cost of hydro? That would be great. It would be a direct path to get your bill. You could actually read your bill, so it's not convoluted.

Encouraging small business in any way we can help them that makes sense, so that they can create employment, so that they thrive in our neighbourhoods, is a good step. If cutting red tape is going to mean that we're going to help businesses move forward, become more successful, grow businesses and take the ambiguity out of doing something in a small business, then absolutely.

It is a big bill, Speaker, and I hope we have in the future and going forward enough time to debate the bill, because I notice some of the government MPPs were taking snippets of the 20 minutes. Hopefully we're going to keep debating this bill, because it's a big bill.

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

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I want to thank the members from Etobicoke Centre, Ottawa South, Trinity–Spadina and, of course, the members from across the floor for weighing in on this afternoon's debate, the Cutting Unnecessary Red Tape Act, 2017.

I want to start off by thanking all of the small businesses that we have, not only in my riding of Davenport—that's really the bread and butter of the business spectrum that I have in Davenport, the small businesses—but all small business owners across Ontario for the great work that they do to ensure that our economy continues to grow and that they are creating the jobs that we need to have here in the province of Ontario. So kudos out to them.

It is very true that it is the small business owners, the ones who are the backbone of our economy, that perhaps are enrolled a little bit more in this red tape business. We need to make it easier for them to do their day-to-day. The small businesses are very important to us. I totally agree with that. They are the backbone to our economy. We need to make sure that we have a smarter regulatory system that will enable Ontario to lower the cost of compliance for businesses and help build a competitive

business environment that is supportive of investments and exports.

I think it was the member from Kitchener–Conestoga who said that he has heard people speak to him about government constantly getting in the way. This is a way that the government is getting out of the way, so that businesses can actually do the work they are supposed to do, versus having to fill out too many forms or having to mail an application in. Now we are making it easier and they can email that particular application or form, making it really easier for them. We are getting out of the way. I hope that the member for Kitchener–Conestoga votes for this bill.

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

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's a pleasure to add to the debate on this particular bill.

It's interesting: When we were reviewing everything, we noticed that this particular bill was affecting roughly 141 different acts. Did you know that the CFIB conservatively estimated that the amount of red tape, the cost of red tape to Ontario businesses has grown substantially from 2005 to 2014, by roughly \$2 billion? That is an incredible number. Basically, that is an increase of roughly 16% to 18%.

They talk about small businesses. They are the ones that have been hurting tremendously over the last 14 years that this government has been in power. It's just more red tape after red tape, and they're struggling to stay on top of everything. They're saying, "Why are we doing what we're doing? Because it seems like the harder we work, the behinder we get."

They talk about the growth in the economy in Ontario right now. They're talking about all of these businesses coming into Ontario. I'm not seeing headlights, Speaker; I'm seeing tail lights. Businesses are leaving at an incredible rate.

One of the industries that is hurting a lot is the dairy industry. We heard earlier a little poem from our friend in the NDP, and I have a little one that ties in with the dairy industry:

C-O-W spells a cow.

A cow is the one who chews up grass.

That's how milk gets in your glass.

C-O-W spells a cow.

Speaker, we need to do something tremendously huge in order to cut all this red tape that this government has in fact created over the last 14 years. It's about time now that they're starting. I wonder why—oh, I know why. Next June there's an election coming. I get it now.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Etobicoke Centre has two minutes.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Thank you very much, Speaker. We were both eager to get up. There is so much to say and two minutes won't do it, certainly not for both of us.

I want to thank all of the members who have spoken to this bill for their thoughts.

Once again, just to summarize, I think the first thing to remember is that our economy is performing incredibly well. We are leading the G7 in growth. We're leading Canada in growth. We've created over 600,000 new jobs since the depths of the recession. Ontario's economy is performing well. Sometimes, when you listen to the members opposite—if you listen just to the members opposite—you'd think that the opposite was true. I think it's important that we remember that the economy is performing well and that this government has done a lot of things to support that growth and to ensure that that happens.

That said, there's more to be done, and that's what this bill is about. It's really about making sure that we minimize the amount of unnecessary regulation on business. When I say "unnecessary"—it's important to remember that some regulation is necessary. That's how we protect workers. That's how we make sure we protect our environment. That's how we make sure that businesses pay their fair share of the taxes that they owe. Those are the kinds of things that are important. That's how we protect our natural resources, for example. Those are the kinds of things that are important to making sure that we live in a society where people can prosper

economically, but also where the quality of life is protected. That's the balance that we're trying to strike here.

This bill is, I think, really thoughtfully designed. It's designed to make sure that, first of all, every time a regulation is imposed, we reduce the burden by at least that much—in fact, one and a quarter times that. That's a strong incentive for government to make sure that if we're imposing regulation, we're really thoughtful about it, knowing full well that we'll have to reduce regulations to offset that.

We're harmonizing with other jurisdictions. That ensures that we're competitive in this regard, that we consider small businesses and that we recognize and reward those businesses who are complying. These are all important, common-sense measures that will make us even more competitive.

But let's remember: Ontario's economy is performing well, and there's a lot to be proud of.

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

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** It being after 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1802.*





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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
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Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
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Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
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<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Municipal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires municipales
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Natyshak, Taras (NDP) <b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Essex Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
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Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint de parti reconnu
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
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