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Mardi
31 juillet 2018

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Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 31 July 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 31 juillet 2018

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us pray.
Prayers.

NOTICES OF REASONED AMENDMENTS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(b), both the member for Scarborough–Guildwood and the member for Toronto–Danforth have notified the Clerk of their intention to file notice of a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 5, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. The order for second reading of Bill 5 may therefore not be called today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT POLICIES POLITIQUES DU GOUVERNEMENT

Resuming the debate adjourned on July 30, 2018, on the motion regarding government priorities.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to start the morning off by finishing off my speech from yesterday in regard to this motion.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to reiterate what I was sharing yesterday, that in the first couple of weeks of the 42nd Parliament, our Premier and our party are proud to have started to move forward for the people with a clear mandate to pursue policies that put more money in people's pockets, create and protect jobs, address the hydro crisis, reduce hospital wait times, and restore accountability and trust in government.

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to see you in the chair.

Truly, I believe we're getting right to action; we're getting right to work. We got rid of the hydro CEO, which the Premier said he would do—promise made, promise kept. We're lowering the price of gasoline, which again will put more money in people's pockets. He's already been to see governors in the United States to make sure the border stays open and that Ontario is "open for business," as he said. Fifteen thousand long-term-care beds have been committed over five years, and 30,000 over 10 years. Mr. Speaker, that is going to get rid of some of that hospital health care hallway wait time. He is doing what he said would be done. On behalf of our

party, he's certainly stepping up and doing those things. He is making people accountable. He's putting trust and accountability back into everything we do. We're going to go through a line-by-line audit of the finances to ensure, where money is being spent, that it's value for money.

All of these things are on behalf of the people of Ontario. It's what we campaigned on. We have 76 seats as a result of that. Some of the members of the opposition yesterday were speaking and challenging that mandate, Mr. Speaker, but at the end of the day, 76 of us were elected. We have a majority government and we're putting those actions into place as quickly as possible to give benefit to the people.

What we have certainly heard of across our ridings is the hydro crisis that the Liberal government created. We're starting already on that, Mr. Speaker. We want to have those rates lowered so that we again are the most competitive jurisdiction in North America, like we used to be. Ontario should be the economic engine of Confederation. By lowering those rates, making sure taxes are lower and putting more money in people's pockets, allowing them to go out and be that economic driver, we believe we can do that.

We want to ensure that we create and protect jobs. By doing that, we will again have a thriving economy where everyone can have a better quality of life. We want to make sure that we have health care, the best education systems in the world, and we want to help those less fortunate so that they have a better quality of life as well.

At the end of the day, I am proud to say that we're part of that government moving forward. In our first couple of weeks of this 42nd Parliament, we're taking action. We're trying to make life better and more affordable for people. We're putting money back in their pockets. I'm proud to say that with all of my colleagues, with all of what we're doing, a number of things have already been achieved. We've made promises. Promise made—

Interjections: Promise kept.

Mr. Bill Walker: Promise kept.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, monsieur le Président. Premièrement, je voulais vous dire comment la chaise vous va bien.

Monsieur le Président, il est un privilège et un honneur de me lever pour faire mon discours inaugural. Je veux premièrement reconnaître les territoires traditionnels des Premières Nations de Haudenosaunee, Hurons-Wendat, Anishinaabe et des Mississaugas de la rivière Credit.

Je veux prendre l'opportunité de me présenter. Je suis Guy Bourgouin, Franco-Ontarien, Métis et je suis le fier député de Mushkegowuk–Baie James.

Le 7 juin dernier, j'ai eu la chance et le privilège de me faire élire dans la belle circonscription du nord-est de l'Ontario où je demeure, à Kapuskasing, depuis 21 ans avec ma femme, Manon Gagné, et mes deux enfants, Anabel et Jérémy.

Ma circonscription est l'une des plus grandes, longue l'autoroute 11, de Smooth Rock Falls à Constance Lake, et comprend de nombreuses communautés de Premières Nations de la Baie James.

Je veux prendre l'occasion de remercier tout le monde qui a travaillé sur ma campagne, car nous savons tous que sans les bénévoles qui travaillent sans arrêt pour nous faire élire, rien ne serait possible.

Je dois avouer que le député sortant, maintenant mon collègue et mon ami Gilles Bisson, a fait un travail exemplaire et qu'il était aimé par les gens de mon comté. Je reconnais que j'ai des grands souliers à remplir. Je veux le remercier pour son soutien et son encouragement de me présenter comme député.

Je suis né à Dubreuilville, un petit village francophone dans le nord de l'Ontario, du comté d'Algoma, avec une population de 1 000 personnes. Dans ma famille, nous étions six enfants, dont j'étais le cadet. Mes racines forestières sont profondes, car Dubreuilville était un village où tout le monde travaillait dans l'industrie forestière.

Mon père travaillait pour la compagnie Dubreuil Forest Products. Comme superviseur, il avait le numéro de badge 11, donc il était le 11^e employé de la compagnie. Mon frère, lui, travaille toujours dans l'industrie forestière, dans les pâtes et papiers, comme électricien. Mes soeurs ont travaillé d'une forme ou d'une autre dans l'industrie forestière.

Moi, j'ai commencé à 18 ans ma carrière comme journalier dans l'usine de sciage. Je me souviens encore de mon numéro de badge : 4258. Plus tard, je suis devenu un homme de métier mécanicien industriel.

Un président de IWA Local 2995, un dénommé Normand Rivard, a vu en moi quelque chose et il m'a engagé comme représentant syndical, ce que j'ai fait pour 21 ans. Monsieur le Président, 16 ans plus tard, je suis devenu le président de la section locale des Métallos 1-2010. J'ai eu de la chance de représenter 2 500 travailleurs dans différents secteurs de travail. La juridiction que je représentais était de Sudbury à la frontière manitobaine, tout le nord de l'Ontario. La section locale avait un bureau à Thunder Bay et un à Kapuskasing, où je demeure.

J'ai négocié des conventions pour des travailleurs forestiers, des travailleurs d'usines de sciage, des usines de contreplaqué, des casinos, des conseillers d'addiction, des centres de santé, des magasins et des travailleurs d'entretien hospitalier. En tout, la section avait 67 unités.

Je peux vous dire que l'expérience et l'apprentissage syndical m'ont bien préparé pour représenter ma circonscription de Mushkegowuk–Baie James. Après 21

ans, je peux vous dire que ç'a été dur de quitter un travail que j'aimais et que j'étais privilégié de faire.

0910

Plus de trois quarts de la section locale était composé de compagnies forestières et 2 000 travailleurs travaillaient dans la forêt ou dans les usines. L'économie forestière est un des gros aspects économiques de ma circonscription. La plupart des communautés dépendent d'une forme ou d'une autre de l'industrie forestière.

La plupart du monde ne le sait pas, mais la forêt boréale est l'une des forêts les plus certifiées au monde. Les compagnies forestières doivent se conformer aux normes les plus strictes de la planète. C'est pour cette raison que les travailleurs, les compagnies et les communautés de ma circonscription sont fiers de leurs produits, que ce soit le bois, les pâtes ou le contreplaqué. Nos usines sont des plus performantes et compétitives du monde et les salaires et les conditions de travail le reflète aussi.

La forêt, pour nous, c'est notre passé, notre présent et notre futur. Nous travaillons dans la forêt, nos loisirs sont dans la forêt et on se nourrit de la forêt, car les communautés de ma région en dépendent et ça fait partie de notre quotidien.

Mr. Speaker, in recent weeks when we dealt with a bill to legislate workers back to work, I can tell you it hit home. And we never hear of our government legislating employers back to the table, as it is way easier to legislate workers back and erode workers' rights.

As mentioned, after 21 years of negotiating experience, I don't know of one worker that wants to go on strike. Workers sometimes have to go on strike, as this is the only tool they have to gain working conditions that they believe they deserve. It's only a small percentage of all negotiations that end up on strike. The process works. The parties get the deals done. But in some cases, a small percentage do end up on strike, and that's part of the process. It's the constitutional right of unionized workers. It's part of the balance of power. Legislating workers back to work removes that balance. Why would an employer negotiate when they know that the government will legislate? No sense in negotiating; 15 minutes is enough. The only message that this government is doing is, again, eroding the constitutional right of workers to strike.

Mr. Speaker, during my campaign I had the chance to travel and visit some First Nation communities along the James Bay coast. I can tell you that First Nations are one of the proudest people I have ever met. They are proud of their beautiful, rich culture and language. But I can tell you that how the First Nation communities are living would be unacceptable in other communities in Ontario. My colleague Sol Mamakwa, the MPP for Kiiwetinoong, described it best: The normalizing of the poverty and lack of service should not be normal in this great province, and yet it is.

It is unacceptable to me, and I will work hard and relentlessly with the leaders of these communities to address these issues, such as lack of clean and drinkable

water, and lack of housing. In Attawapiskat, the leaders of the community were telling me that they need 320 houses in a community of close to 1,600. We find some houses where two to three generations are living in a house that was built to house a family of four or six.

The reserve wants to grow. They have identified a parcel of land beside the reserve, and 95% of that land has been accepted. But a small portion, the closest to the reserve, has not been accepted because of a road that crosses the section which goes to the port. The mine has put a protest on this section, and the federal government is not releasing that small section. The government should have told the company to get the deal done with the First Nation. It's unacceptable that the federal and/or provincial government continue to play these games of back and forth, because it's the First Nation communities that pay the price.

Again, in the community of Attawapiskat, there is a problem of illegal drugs and alcohol. They know who sells the drugs and alcohol. The chief says it's like going to the Tim's for coffee. People line up. The First Nation police can't do anything, as they need a search warrant and it takes a week to get it. The justice of the peace is in Sudbury, so they have to wait, and by then it's too late. There used to be justices of the peace in some of these communities, but they were eliminated by previous governments. Last month, the Mushkegowuk tribal council declared a state of emergency on illegal drugs and alcohol. Grand Chief Jonathan Solomon said, "This pandemic has reached serious levels where it's clearly destroying our people and communities."

Chief Ignace Gull, following the state of emergency triggered by a spate of youth suicide, took things into his own hands. Tired of waiting for others to do something, the chief and four other local officials now search everyone who lands into the fly-in community airport, including local police officers. Mr. Speaker, tell me: Where in Ontario is it acceptable to take the law into your own hands to get things done? It sounds like the Far West; instead, it's the Far North. We all know it's not acceptable.

I have spoken to the Attorney General and we have discussed the justice of the peace issue. I have followed up with Chief Ignace and we are working together to find a solution to this issue. That's why my predecessor, Gilles Bisson, worked so hard and was so passionate about these communities, and that is why I am committed, myself, to do the same.

This weekend, numerous people from my riding spoke to me of the Ontario Northland bus service. Ontario Northland have changed their service hours. These changes are recent. A normal trip by vehicle takes about nine to 10 hours from Kapuskasing. Now the Ontario Northland takes 26 hours to get to Kapuskasing.

One of my constituents had to leave Barrie and come back to Kapuskasing. She told me that she left Barrie at 4 p.m., arrived in North Bay at 8 p.m., and there was no connection until 6 a.m. the next day. You have to rent a room or wait in the station. Once you get to Timmins the next day, you have to wait another four hours for your

connection. This is not acceptable. Another option: You have to leave Barrie at 11 a.m., and you arrive in Cochrane at 10 p.m. You'll say, "Well, that's not bad." But there's only one problem: There's no connection from Cochrane to Kapuskasing or Hearst or others.

The people in my riding need the Ontario Northland. We need better accommodation.

We lost the train—which, by the way, the Conservatives in the last election promised to bring back. We have not heard anything yet. For some people in my riding, it is the only way they have for transportation for visiting family or attending medical appointments. The Northland needs to return to the previous hours or have more connections for the residents of the north. The Minister of Transportation said, "We will get people moving again." Well, that should include the people of my riding.

0920

J'ai mentionné que je suis franco-ontarien, et je suis fier de l'être. Comprenez que mon comté comprend 60 % de francophones. La route 11 est très francophone. Mes enfants ont fait toutes leurs études en français : le primaire, le secondaire et le collégial.

La région a des beaux festivals dont nous sommes fiers. Le monde ne le sait pas, mais la plus grande Saint-Jean-Baptiste en Ontario est à Kapuskasing, où de nombreux artistes francophones viennent fêter la fierté franco-ontarienne.

On a aussi le Truck Fest de Smooth Rock Falls, les tirs de camions lourds, où les camionneurs de partout viennent compétitionner. C'est tout un spectacle à voir, les tirs des camions lourds.

On a aussi le HOG fest de Hearst pour les amateurs de moto. Tous les amateurs de moto de la région viennent fêter. Aussi, on a le Carnaval de Hearst, qui est incontournable. Le Pow-Wow de Constance Lake, on a le « Groundhog Day » de Fauquier, et on a le Carnaval de Moonbeam.

Ma région est une des meilleures pour la motoneige. J'invite tous les amateurs à venir expérimenter nos sentiers, qui sont les meilleurs de la province. C'est un paradis pour les amateurs de pêche et de chasse. En fin de semaine, j'étais au Festival des bûcherons de Kapuskasing. J'invite tout le monde à venir expérimenter une communauté forestière qui est à Kapuskasing.

Je suis fier d'où je viens et de ma région. La fierté francophone est vivante en Ontario et il est de notre devoir de maintenir notre langue et nos droits.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Lindsey Park: I rise this morning to give my inaugural speech in the Ontario Legislature. My name is Lindsey Park and I'm honoured to be the member of provincial Parliament for the riding of Durham in the 42nd Parliament.

I want to take the opportunity this morning to share with you a bit about my personal journey that led me to this seat in the Ontario Legislature. I want to share with you a snapshot of my riding of Durham and the issues my community cares about. Finally, I want to share a few thoughts about our duties as public servants.

First, I want to say a few thank yous. I'll never be able to thank everyone enough who supported me throughout the campaign that led to my election to this place on June 7, 2018. As I know that my colleagues on all sides of this chamber appreciate, campaigning for a nomination and then a general election can have many highs and many lows, and we certainly went through a turbulent time in Ontario politics over the last year. I'm forever grateful for my family, friends and supporters, who have been so faithful to stand with me over that time. So many spent countless hours volunteering their time to help elect new representation in Durham.

In particular, I want to thank my mom and dad, Joan and James Park, who have been great sources of strength and support. I want to thank James Burnett, my nomination campaign manager, and Jessica Maga, my general election campaign manager. It's worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that Jessica gave birth to her first child, Elizabeth, during the general election campaign. Some would say that we ran a very progressive campaign in Durham. I want to thank Sheryl Greenham, my GOTV chair. Sheryl is with us this morning in beautiful pink over here. Anyone who knows politics in Durham knows all things run through Sheryl's office, and she takes great pride in being one of the first people to vote in the riding in every general election.

I want to thank the whole team that was with me day in and day out, all the volunteers and supporters. There are so many of them that if I start naming them all, I am sure to miss somebody, and I don't want to do that. Instead, let me simply say thank you to everyone who encouraged me to seek office and contributed to my campaign.

I just want to name, specifically, the particular volunteers and supporters who are here in the Legislature today.

We have, in the members' gallery, Charles Stevens, chair of the Ontario Apple Growers.

We have David Prashad, who was an exceptional and faithful door-knocker, on rainy days, cold days and sweltering hot days. Thank you, David.

We have Brenda Virtue, one of the very first people to support me, way back, on my nomination. Thank you, Brenda.

We have Neil McAlister, a doctor of internal medicine, who sits on our board in Durham.

We have Howard Brown—again, an early supporter. Thank you, Howard.

Also, it's worth mentioning the support and guidance I received from former member of provincial Parliament for Durham John O'Toole, former member of Parliament the Honourable Bev Oda, and the current member of Parliament, the Honourable Erin O'Toole. During this election process, their support and guidance was incredibly valuable, and I'll be forever grateful to them.

Okay, Mr. Speaker, now that all the thank yous are done, a little bit about my journey: I did not grow up in a political family. In fact, most days, politics was the furthest topic from our hearts and minds. A more likely

topic of conversation was the Toronto Maple Leafs' latest trade or this year's contenders for Lord Stanley's cup. I grew up in a hockey family. Hockey was what we discussed at the kitchen table. Hockey Night in Canada was one of the focal points of the week. Saturday night there was only one place to be and that was with Don Cherry.

Dad was a professional hockey player—a goaltender, in fact—in the World Hockey Association. Some of you in this chamber remember that it was a competing league with the NHL in the 1970s and 1980s. While dad retired from professional hockey before I was born, his passion for the game of hockey was contagious and captured our family for the decades to follow.

I guess it's no surprise that I ended up picking up the sport myself, and, yes, I am a goalie too. I started playing hockey late by Canadian standards, picking up the sport at the age of 11. Looking back, I'm grateful for the opportunities that were starting to boom in the GTA for young female hockey players at that time. Without so many girls' hockey leagues in the GTA, I may not have been able to start playing, and it would have been difficult to join the league if my only option was to join in with boys at the time.

Durham, the community I now represent in the Legislature, has a special place in my hockey journey. It was a Durham coach who gave me the opportunity to play the top level for the first time. It was a Durham coach who saw my potential. It was my success in Durham that enabled me to later get a scholarship away to play the highest level you can in university in the United States.

0930

Now, when my degree came to an end—you can tell me, Mr. Speaker, if you think I made the right decision—when many girls I played with were going on to train for Team Canada, I decided to become a lawyer. I moved back to Canada to pursue law, and it was while I was getting my legal training, actually, that I had the privilege of getting involved in politics and working for the Honourable Peter Kent. He was then the Minister of the Environment in Stephen Harper's federal Conservative government. It was by working for Peter Kent that I got a heart for public service in this way and saw the difference that you could make from a political office when in it for the right reasons.

Before being elected, I was a courtroom lawyer based in Durham with a client base I had grown across central and eastern Ontario. I fought hard for my clients in the courtroom, I fought hard for my teammates on the ice and now I'm here to fight hard for the people of Durham at Queen's Park. As I said at my campaign office in Bowmanville, after a more than 9,000-vote victory on election night, I'm looking forward to being Durham's voice at Queen's Park, not Queen Park's voice in Durham. I will work hard day in and day out to represent the people of Durham and bring their issues to this provincial Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you for a moment about the issues that are most important to the people of Durham.

Over the past year, across the riding, whether in Greenbank, Courtice, Bowmanville, north Oshawa or Port Perry, I heard the same thing: The cost of living is going up and salaries have not been rising to keep up. People want a government that is going to clean up the hydro mess, that is going to put money back in people's pockets and bring jobs back to Ontario.

I also heard, whether it was about health care, transportation or economic development, that many people feel that while funding has often gone west of the city of Toronto, the east has been left behind. Well, I'm here to fight for Durham and for its fair share at this critical time of growth for our region.

Whether you're looking to move to Clarington to start a family, or as you enter retirement, top-quality health care in the area is a big consideration. I was clear in my campaign that I would support and fight for the redevelopment and expansion of Lakeridge Health, Bowmanville, and the long-term-care beds that our region needs.

Clarington residents also deserve better when it comes to transportation. That's why in our election platform we committed to two-way, all-day GO service to Bowmanville. This project is long overdue, and I'm eager to get to work on it with our Minister of Transportation.

In Durham, we have a diverse population and workforce. So many of the sectors that are key to the future of Ontario touch on the Durham riding in significant ways. We have a robust agricultural industry that produces corn, wheat, beans, fruit, milk and livestock. Agriculture is still one of the largest industries in Durham. While I'm not a farmer, I've had the chance to spend time with so many incredible farming families over the last year, and I look forward to being a voice for them in this place.

We're also home to Darlington nuclear generating station, which supplies nearly 20% of Ontario's electricity. That's enough to serve a city of two million people. We have exceptional nuclear professionals who live and work in Durham. It's these professionals, many of them my neighbours, who ensure that critical baseload supply of electricity for our province. Beyond that, you will find a variety of manufacturing, engineering and service businesses in Durham.

We also have many students. In north Oshawa, we have both the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Durham College. In Durham, we are training people for the jobs of today and the jobs of the future.

Mr. Speaker, it's an exciting time for our riding. The areas of Clarington, north Oshawa, Scugog and surrounding communities are growing quickly. I'm in awe every day that I get to stand in this chamber and be the voice for such a dynamic community at such a critical time in its history.

One of the things that attracted me to politics is that it's the ultimate team sport. It's about working hard together to deliver the best results possible for our communities. That means we can't bring the change that is needed in Durham or the change that voters across this province told us they need unless we work together. I look forward to working not only with my colleagues on

all sides of this chamber, but also with the many staff who make this place function and all of the hard-working public servants who serve our government every day. Together, we can make our government work for the people. And it is only by working together that we can make sure that Ontarians in all parts of this province are not only heard, but served. We have a duty to our constituents, we have a duty to each other and a duty to the people of Ontario.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I close, I want to take a moment to speak about these duties we have as public servants at this critical time in Ontario's history.

I grew up in a family in Ontario where a young girl was given every opportunity that a young boy was given, if she wanted it. I received an education where female students were given the same opportunity as male students, if they wanted it. I worked at a law firm in Ontario where young female lawyers were trained and promoted just the same as young male lawyers, if they wanted the challenge.

Mr. Speaker, this is true freedom. This is the freedom we were all born to enjoy. Yet still, some are not able to enjoy these freedoms because of the country they were born in or perhaps the family they were born into. We must be diligent every day to work together to stand for and protect this freedom—all of us. We must defend this freedom whenever it is challenged—whether in dark, hidden places or in broad daylight, whether at home or abroad.

I am inspired by the freedom that the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker talked about. He said, "I am Canadian, a free Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship God in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, free to choose those who govern my country."

Mr. Speaker, we are privileged to be beneficiaries of this freedom and we have a responsibility as public servants to pass this freedom on to our successors. To my colleagues in this chamber or who can hear my voice while listening to this from some other location, may we fight together every day we are in this place; fight as our predecessors did for an Ontario where freedom prevails and where justice rules. It is our privilege and our responsibility.

0940

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I thought I'd start my speech off by reading the motion of the Conservatives, and then I'll do my speech: "That, in the opinion of this House, the current government is a government for the people with a clear mandate to pursue policies that put more money in people's pockets; create and protect jobs; address the hydro crisis; reduce hospital wait times; and restore accountability and trust in government."

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to rise and speak on this motion. Frankly, I don't even know where to start.

Let's begin with the first line: that somehow this motion assumes that this government is for the people.

I'd love to know what people are included in the eyes of this government, because I can tell you right now that they don't mean everyone.

We know that unionized workers aren't included. They made that clear in their first week when they unconstitutionally stripped away the bargaining rights of workers at York University.

I know it doesn't include racialized folks, after the minister and this government decided to use racial stereotypes right in this House.

We know it doesn't include LGBTQ communities, after they decided to listen to their radical, right-wing, social conservative friends and stripped our sexual health curriculum of any mention of same-sex relationships. They do go on in this province; I just thought I'd let you know that. We're very proud of that.

Let me remind everyone in this House that when this government says they're for the people, they don't mean everyone. They mean their rich insider pals and their social conservative friends. That's who they are.

This government has already lost its way. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you a story of the history of the term "for the people." I'll repeat that so my Conservative friends can listen: Let me tell you a story about the history of the term "for the people" and what it really means to work for every person in the province.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, who Adam Beck was? You can nod if you like. It's important that we talk about him in this place, not just because he has connections to Niagara Falls—although, if you get a chance, I invite all of you to come to Niagara Falls and see the Sir Adam Beck generation station. It's truly incredible. There's an incredible history behind it, not just because he has a statue up the road here, which many of the members in this House pass every single day—put your hands up if you know where it is. I rest my case. But because he is—

Hon. Sylvia Jones: We're just ignoring you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, that's okay. You can do that.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Order, please.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I like it when you take control.

Adam Beck fought tirelessly so that Ontario could have a public power system that was designed to keep rates down and ensure that residents and businesses had cheap electrical power to use. Do you know what happened from that? Ontario became the manufacturing capital of Canada, whether it be in auto, whether it be in steel, whether it be in plastics, or whether it be in forestry. Do you know what it did? It created jobs right across the province of Ontario—jobs in my community of Niagara, in Oshawa, Toronto, up north, and Windsor. That's what happens when you make sure you have a publicly funded hydro system, which you guys have decided to destroy.

His plan worked for a century—not a couple of days; not a couple of years; a century. Beck's plan worked, and

allowed us to enjoy some of the cheapest hydro rates in North America. That's why businesses came to Ontario: because they knew they could access a good workforce and electricity that was cheap. If you talk to anybody who has been involved in business, they will tell you that.

Sir Adam Beck had an ability to draw news in his time. During the struggle for public hydro, they organized an event as they electrified the town of Kitchener. A little history lesson for those who want to listen: On October 10, 1910, Sir Adam Beck flipped a switch which slowly lit up the town. This is 1910. The electricity went through each home and business, turning on lights where they had them until it reached a town square and lit up a sign. Do you know what that sign said? I'll ask anybody. Does anybody know what the sign said? They're not listening; maybe my colleagues might know.

Interjection: I don't know.

Mr. Wayne Gates: "For the people." That's where "for the people" came from, because electricity was for all the people. It wasn't for a select few; it wasn't for our buddies. It was for everybody. Mr. Speaker, that sign was Sir Adam Beck talking to residents about a publicly owned and operated hydro system that provided for people across the province.

When I see this motion take that wording, I get very confused. Now, some people say I get confused very easily, but having said that, this government refuses to commit to a publicly owned hydro utility. In fact, it was them who said to sell Hydro One in the first place. We know that; it's going back into the Harris days when he decided to sell hydro, and he was going to do it until he ended up in court. We have to thank CUPE for taking that issue on, on behalf of all Ontarians.

How dare they take Sir Adam Beck's words and use them for them? Sir Adam Beck was talking about owning a public utility and using it for the benefit of all, meaning all the people, Mr. Speaker—all the people. This government was talking about taking our public utility and using it for the benefit of a few shareholders who own the stocks. Think about that. Their friends are making money at the expense of us, at the expense of seniors, at the expense of small business and big business, so that a few people, a few shareholders, could get rich. Sir Adam Beck wasn't looking at getting rich, because he was really for the people. He was for our communities. Make no mistake about this history; it isn't hard to find, Mr. Speaker.

Think about this: This motion says that this government is for the people and focused on keeping money in residents' pockets. If that was the case, why wouldn't they tell us how much the former CEO of Hydro One, Mayo Schmidt, walked away with? Everybody in this House knows I talked about Mayo Schmidt a number of times. Maybe for some of the new members, the ones who did a great job today telling us why they got involved, what it means to be an MPP in their community, and the job they're going to do—that's all good stuff.

But I remember Mayo Schmidt when he was making \$6 million. He had a press conference. Do you know

what he said at the press conference, as our hydro rates went up 300% because we sold it off? Do you know what he said? He's making \$6 million, and he felt our pain. He felt the pain of seniors. He felt the pain of the small business owners who were losing their businesses because they couldn't afford their hydro rates. That's the type of individual he was, so I am not sticking up for Mr. Schmidt the CEO, let me tell you that. He didn't feel anybody's pain except his own. Do you know where his pain was, Mr. Speaker? In his wallet. See, the Speaker got it. It was in his wallet; absolutely, that's where it was. That's where his pain was, every Friday when he got that big cheque that wouldn't fit into his wallet.

Doug Ford said he has received nothing after being let go from Hydro One, that he's not getting anything. Let me think about this. The guy was making \$6 million, and he was going to walk away and wouldn't get anything? You know what? I don't think this guy is a stupid man. I think he's probably a pretty sharp man. He's not walking away with nothing, trust me. He didn't take all that heat for all those months and walk away with nothing. He didn't.

To his credit—give the guy credit, because I bargain and I know how bargaining works; it's all about power—he had some power to walk away. People won't admit that but he did. He walked away from being the six-million-dollar man, and do you know what he became? The 10-million-dollar man. The same guy who feels the pain of everybody in the province of Ontario—he feels our pain, but he said, “You know what? My pain is really hurting today and I'm going to walk away with \$10 million. And whatever happens to Hydro One doesn't matter because I got my wallet”—to your point, Mr. Speaker, filled with cookies. Or money.

We have no idea what the process is going to look like going forward. I think this is fair, by the way, on my part: Again, I'm left asking: Does that sound like it's for the people? Can anybody tell me that sounds like it's for the people? The senior today who can't get dental care, the senior today who is on a waiting list who has issues in a hospital, or sitting in long-term care and can't find a bed, or in the hallway in a hospital, like my colleague just said. And don't tell me they're not sitting in a hallway in our hospitals for 10, 12, 14 hours.

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Some can't be admitted to a bed because we've closed so many beds in the province of Ontario. Do you know where they end up? They end up in that hallway for four and five and six days. Think about it. It could be us. There are a few old people here. But it could be our parents or our grandparents who are sitting in that hallway, and that's where they die. Somebody tell me that's with dignity. It's not. We have to fix that.

Let's talk about another part of this motion: The ability to trust the government. You know what one of the major criticisms of the last Liberal government was? You know what it was, Mr. Speaker? It was the fact that they didn't run on a platform of selling Hydro One, and then proceeded to do it anyway. We know the Conservatives wanted to privatize it, so we knew where they were.

But, quite frankly, the Liberal government did not tell anybody they wanted to privatize hydro. Somebody said to me, “Well, how do you know that?” I'll tell you how I knew: I ran in a by-election.

Some of the new members might know exactly what a by-election is. That meant I did a number of debates. Do you know who was at the debates? The Liberal candidate. Not once in the by-election did they raise that they wanted to sell Hydro One—not once. And then—and you guys can clap if you like—I won the by-election. Four months later, guess what happened? Two things could have happened, Mr. Speaker. I've told you this story. We had another election in four months. Two things could have happened: I could have been the shortest-term MPP in the history of Ontario politics, and the shortest. So two things could have happened there; I would have been short on both ends.

We ran in a general election. What happens again? As we all know—we all just went through it—you go to debates. You have debates and you're asked questions from the floor. Not one Liberal person stood up and said, “I want us to privatize hydro.” And then they did it. That's what happened with them. And, quite frankly, I think—and I've said this a hundred times right in this House—that one of the major reasons, if not the biggest reason, that they saw the result that they did in the last election—they did a standing ovation the other day and nobody heard them. Do you remember that? They stood up and clapped. You couldn't even hear them in here. They went back to seven seats. It was because you sold off hydro. Because it hit everybody. Because you can't be for the people if you are going to raise their hydro rates. You are going to hurt business, you're going to hurt seniors, you're going to hurt our hospitals and our recreation facilities. It hit everybody.

So this government comes in, and what's the first thing they do? What's the first thing you do? You cancel elections. I'm glad you didn't cancel mine. I wouldn't be here. Not once, not twice, three times. If you had cancelled any of them I wouldn't be here, so I'm glad you didn't have power then. Who knows? You might have cancelled my election, because you cancelled the regional chair's election in Niagara, which makes absolutely no sense and hopefully I'll get to that. I've only got a couple of minutes left, but I'll try and get to that.

I might as well get to it right now. You cancelled the election in Niagara region. By the way, there is probably no other area in all of Ontario that needs to have an election for regional chair. We've had all kinds of issues in Niagara. And Mr. Ford, the Premier of Ontario, was in Pelham a week ago with the member—

Interjection: Oosterhoff.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes. I can't say his name. But, anyway, the member from the PC Party. And do you know who he is standing there getting a picture with? Think about this: He's getting a picture with the two guys who are running for regional chair, Mr. Augustyn and Mr. Caslin. Do you think he would have said to them, “Take a good look at this picture because you guys aren't

having an election”? He didn’t do that. He got a nice picture with them. I think it was even in one of the papers. It’s all over Twitter, it’s all over Facebook. These two guys are running against each other, and guess what happens? They cancel their election. No disrespect to Mr. Caslin and to Mr. Augustyn, but do you know what they had already done? They had already bought time in the paper; they were campaigning.

But here’s the thing, and I’ll ask everybody in this room about elections: You don’t make a decision to run for MP or for city councillor or for president of a local union without having some kind of dialogue with your family. I’ve said this a hundred times: The most important part of our lives is our family, our kids and our grandkids. When you put yourself forward, you’re open to criticism. That means there may be articles in the paper that people say you’re not a good guy or you’re not doing your job. You’ve got to prepare your family for that. When you put your name forward and you do all that, you’re not expecting on the last day of registering for an election to have your election cancelled. It shows total disrespect for democracy and total disrespect for the candidates who have done all that work with their family and their friends.

It was absolutely disgraceful that just a week before, he gets a picture with the two guys who were going to run against each other. Think about that: They were running against each other, but they had no problem getting a picture together—because you know what? They both wanted to be regional chair. And do you know why? Because they both think that they would do what’s in the best interests of Niagara. And that’s fair, for the people.

Let me tell you—and I’ll tell the Premier as well—cancelling the election in Niagara is not for the people, not at all. Yesterday, you spent an hour and a half here in question period: one mention of Niagara, because it was never about Niagara; it’s about Toronto. But to Mr. Augustyn and Mr. Caslin for putting their name forward, I congratulate them. It’s unfortunate what happened.

In Niagara—I’ll tell you this just quickly—we had four people running for regional chair. Four candidates—I’ll go over this again—who spent money, who came to the decision after months of deliberation with their families and who have worked hard to reach out to the new communities. The Premier cancelled their election. How is that possible? How can you trust a government that cancels your right to vote on your elected head of government? Your elected head of government; we weren’t voting for the captain of the hockey team—something which I’ve never been, by the way, Mr. Speaker. I’ve never been the captain of my hockey team. I was a goalie, just for the record.

Mr. Speaker, people in Niagara have been preparing for an election, and five hours before the deadline, the Premier cancels that election. Explain to me how that instills trust. How is that for the people? It’s no different than what he’s doing in the business world by cancelling contracts without warning. He’s breaking the trust that

this province must build to attract businesses, the trust that, by the way, has gone on for years. Who will enter into a contract with the province of Ontario if they know the Premier can just tear up those contracts anytime he likes?

I signed a lot of collective agreements in my day: 150. My colleague talked—I think he said 67. I would never think after I put my name on a contract, I’d rip it up. It’s not what you do. You look across the table at the party, you talk to your membership, and when we all sign our name, it’s there. Whether it’s a three-year contract or a five-year contract, it means something to that relationship and that trust that you have to build.

But in the province of Ontario, “Yeah, just sign here and if I don’t like what we did in a year, we’ll just rip it up.” Think about that. We just rip it up. That’s what it is. They just pick it up, and they just do this: Watch, Mr. Speaker. That’s what they do; they rip it up. Does that make sense? Does that put trust in the government? Is it for the people? Absolutely not.

I’m going to have to tape that back together, I guess, so I can read it.

Laughter.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It looked good, but it’s harder to read now; I’m just saying.

Mr. Speaker, what was that contract? A renewable energy project in a member’s riding. Just an example of how this government doesn’t care about protecting our environment. And I want to get to the environment.

Protecting the environment is the single most important thing we can do as members of this Legislature. Every time I go into the classrooms to speak—and I don’t go just to high school; I go to grade 3, grade 4, grade 5. I talk to them all. I like to go to grades 3, 4 and 5 because I’m taller than the kids there. But having said that, a politician coming, you’d think they’re not going to be engaged. But do you know when they get engaged? When you talk about the environment.

Young kids, as early as grades 2 and 3, understand the importance of the environment. They understand that we can’t survive in this world without clean drinking water. And you think about clean drinking water, and they talk about clean air. But think about clean drinking water, as we all get water here, given to us right here. Look at it, it’s nice and clean. Go talk to the First Nations reserve in Brantford where for 14 years they’ve been boiling their water in the province of Ontario. Think about if that went across the province. Up north, it’s the same way. Nobody in the province of Ontario should have to boil their water, but it’s happening.

Across the world, one of the most important things we have is our water. We’d better start protecting it.

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I’ll finish up by saying that in Niagara Falls, we had raw sewage in our rivers. We can’t put raw sewage in our rivers either.

Thank you very much for giving me part of your time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you, Speaker. You'll know from your experience in this House that it's sometimes helpful to restate the government order that's under debate. I'm just going to do that because I think it's going to refocus the dialogue in the House, as it should:

"That, in the opinion of this House, the current government is a government for the people, with a clear mandate to pursue policies that put more money in people's pockets; create and protect jobs; address the hydro crisis; reduce hospital wait times; and restore accountability and trust in government." That's the order we've been debating for the last couple of days—longer than we would have anticipated due to some of the procedural approaches that the opposition has taken.

John F. Kennedy, the late American President, once said this: "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or the present are certain to miss the future." For too long, people in my riding, the great riding of Whitby, and other parts of Ontario have worked more, paid more, but gotten less. Those days are over and help is on the way.

The days ahead will build on the achievements the government for the people have already made, such as freeing taxpayers from the cap-and-trade carbon tax scheme, fixing OHIP+ and reining in government spending, creating and protecting jobs. Promises made, promises kept.

Speaker, not unlike many of the members, including you, in this House, I meet regularly with the Whitby Chamber of Commerce and, up until the last election, the Oshawa chamber of commerce as well. Whether it's agriculture, food, service, retail, or construction, the message is always the same—and I'm not being critical in that. What they're telling me is that it's time for a government that listens to local business owners, and a Premier Ford-led government will do exactly that. Together, we'll create unprecedented jobs and prosperity and send a message to the world that Ontario is open for business.

What's clear is that, once again, we can put Ontario on a healthy financial footing and ensure that we can afford to maintain and strengthen our hospitals and other vital public services. We can rebuild the trust between the people and their government based on a shared and simple principle.

Ontario residents should not be forced to pay more. You heard it at the doors; I heard it at the doors during the last election. Instead, the government should be working harder, smarter and more efficiently to make life better for you and your family. The government for the people believes that no dollar is better spent than a dollar that is left in the pockets of the taxpayer. Promises made—

Interjection: Promises kept.

Mr. Lorne Coe: That's why our government will take action to reduce gas prices and lower Ontarians' hydro bills.

Speaker, you'll know from the recent introduction of the bill by our Honourable Minister of the Environment

that we're scrapping the cap-and-trade carbon tax. The orderly and transparent legislation is going to wind down the cap-and-trade carbon tax in a way that minimizes the risk to taxpayers while offering support for eligible registered participants in the previous program.

Eliminating the cap-and-trade carbon tax will save the average family \$260 per year. You'll know, again from going to the doors, people can't pay any more. They're looking for relief. They're looking for help. Help is on the way. Eliminating the cap-and-trade carbon tax is a necessary next step to reducing gas prices by 10 cents per litre.

We are going to be using every tool at our disposal to fight the federal government's plan to impose a punishing carbon tax on Ontario families, including supporting Saskatchewan's court challenges. Promises made, promises kept.

In my introduction, I talked about the importance of and restated the order that we're debating. It also talks about protecting jobs. We've already taken action. We've taken a lot of action, including on thousands of jobs across Ontario that depend on the continued operation of the Pickering nuclear generating station. There are many members in this Legislature, including my colleague who spoke so well earlier from the riding of Durham, who have residents in their riding who work at the Pickering nuclear generating station, including from the great town of Whitby and from Oshawa as well.

The Premier Ford government's commitment to keeping open the Pickering plant, which began operations of its A station in 1971, will save and protect 4,500 local jobs in addition to 3,000 other jobs that are dependent on the nuclear industry in Durham. Promises made—

Interjections: Promises kept.

Mr. Lorne Coe: The move to preserve the operations at OPG's Pickering facility makes sense from a power generation standpoint, too. Speaker, you will understand this from your experience as a critic in this area earlier, before I arrived in the Legislature. The station adds to energy security within Ontario by providing power for 1.5 million homes every day, and is responsible for 14% of the electricity in the province. Pickering represents a large block of energy production that would be hard to replace in the short term; it really would. It's certainly necessary for the ongoing refurbishment at the Darlington station, as the member from Durham can speak so well to.

The government's commitment has huge ramifications for the entire province, not only the region of Durham. An impact analysis on Ontario's economy which was completed in partnership with the Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Centre for Economic Analysis, and which was sponsored by Ontario Power Generation, found three major benefits to continued operations in Pickering until 2024. Listen carefully: \$1.54 billion to Ontario's gross domestic product per year—that's per year; 7,590 full-time-equivalent jobs per year; \$290 million in government taxation revenues, \$155 million federal and \$135 million provincial.

The Pickering nuclear plant is a win-win situation, obviously, when you look at that independent analysis, for the workers for Ontario Power Generation and for Durham region. Speaker, not unlike yourself, I had the privilege of serving as a regional councillor on the Durham regional council. I know how instrumental, how critical, this power generation plant is to the economic viability of the region of Durham and to the families across that region of Durham.

This government believes in made-in-Ontario electricity and made-in-Ontario jobs. Promises made, promises kept. Meanwhile, too many people, as I go through my riding—as you would expect, I go to other parts of the region of Durham, not unlike the member from Oshawa and the member from Durham. In our discussions and engagement—because we're not here at Queen's Park alone; we're in our ridings—too many people that we engage with are feeling excluded from a system that too often seems tilted in the direction of insiders and the elite. The Doug Ford government intends to tackle this problem root and stem by calling, as we already have, a commission of inquiry into the financial practices of government to identify ways to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's public finances. It includes—and it has already started—a thorough, line-by-line audit of all government spending that will identify and eliminate duplication and waste.

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Speaker, what's clear is that we've acted swiftly to restore public confidence in Ontario's electricity system. Ontario ratepayers will benefit from \$790 million in savings. Just stay with that for a moment, Speaker: \$790 million in savings, thanks to the government's decision to cancel and wind down 758 renewable energy contracts. Promises made—

Interjections: —promises kept.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Promises kept.

We clearly indicated during the campaign that we would cancel these unnecessary and wasteful energy projects as part of our plan to cut hydro rates by 12% for families, farmers, and small businesses. In the past few weeks, we've taken significant steps towards keeping that promise. All of the cancelled projects have not reached project development milestones, and terminating the projects at this early stage will maximize benefits for ratepayers. Even after all the costs are accounted for, ratepayers can expect to benefit from \$790 million in savings from this one decision over all.

I'm conscious of my time, Speaker, so I just wanted to move on to another area, related to health care.

During my time on regional council, I chaired the health and social services committee, I was the president of the Ontario association of non-profit health agencies, and chaired several other health care-related and social services committees going forward. At one time, I worked here at Queen's Park as a civil servant in the Ministry of Health and several other ministries and crown agencies. So I bring a perspective that I think perhaps rounds out the discussion on health care and social services, moving forward, and correlates to the govern-

ment order before us—not straying too far from that intent.

Ontario residents can also count on the government to respect our doctors, nurses, and other health care practitioners by working collaboratively with them to ensure we have a system that treats everyone fairly by putting the interests of patients first.

The member from Durham, in her inaugural speech, spoke about long-term care and the impacts in her particular riding. But there's an underpinning to that, Speaker: The underpinning to that is failed Liberal health care policies. You know that; I know that; everyone seated here this morning knows that; people watching know that. More than 26,000 people are on wait-lists for long-term-care residency in Ontario—shameful; absolutely shameful. With an average wait time of over 100 days, seniors' organizations and advocates for the long-term-care-home industry say that those figures are only going to grow. And that makes sense, doesn't it? When you look at the demographics that are issued every six months by the Ontario Ministry of Finance, they show, increasingly, an upward trend of seniors growing across Ontario.

That is why we'll be investing in 15,000 long-term-care beds in five years and 30,000 new beds over the next 10 years. Promises made—

Interjections: —promises kept.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Promises kept.

Speaker, our parents, grandparents and others within our communities across Ontario deserve more than long wait times and out-of-date homes. They deserve much more.

Yes, I'm wrapping up.

In closing, I just wanted to draw attention to some of the delaying tactics that have occurred with the opposition related to this particular motion and other particular motions that we have coming forward, some of which we'll be discussing later today. I alluded to the fact that we're all in our ridings on a regular basis and we're listening very carefully to what the demands are from the residents we have the privilege of serving. They've made it very clear in articulating them. They are reflected in this government order 2, and they will be reflected in other government orders coming forward. I would hope that the opposition will listen carefully to the intent and purposes.

Promises made, promises kept.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The time for debate this morning has expired.

Debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): We will stand in recess until 10:30 this morning.

The House recessed from 1016 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'd like to introduce my family that's here today. My wife of 33 years, Silvana, is

present here today; my children Michael and Mercedes; my mother-in-law, who has lived here for the last 65 years, Delia Sicilia; and my aunt-in-law, who is here as well. Both have lived in this country for the last 65 years.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to welcome Perry Goldberg from Toronto, here with our mutual friend the former MPP for Thornhill, my riding, the wonderful Peter Shurman.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Yes, indeed. We welcome the member for Thornhill in the 39th and 40th Parliaments. It's great to have you here.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: There's no greater bounty and treasure than family, and today I have an abundance here and/or on the way.

I have, of course, my wife—the deserving soul—of 48 years; Carol Ann will be here. I have three wonderful daughters, Kari, Taryl and Shelby; wonderful sons-in-law—my sons-in-law; their husbands, of course—Brad, Geordie and Tadum; seven grandkids who will be here—and, might I add, formidable campaigners—we will have Ky, Annabelle, Tori, Ainsley, Reese, Henry and Kash. Thank you. Love you all.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I'm very, very happy to introduce a resident from my riding, Geoff Spilar. He worked so hard during the election. We've been friends for years. He's an excellent person. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm pleased to welcome today a recent graduate of the Toronto Catholic school board and a resident of my riding, Alexandra Kurtesi.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I have the pleasure to introduce today a couple of visitors in the members' gallery: two high school teachers, Catalina Diaz from Hawthorn school and Catherine Gay from the Foundations academy; and law student Laura Rodriguez from the university of Carlos III in Madrid. Thank you very much for being here today.

Ms. Lindsey Park: I had the privilege this morning of giving my inaugural speech in the Legislature. Later today will be my ceremonial swearing-in, so I have a bunch of guests in the gallery today from the riding. We have David Prashad, Brenda Virtue, Neil McAlister and, from our constituency office, Sheryl Greenham—everyone in Durham politics knows Sheryl. Of course, I'll also introduce Howard Brown in the members' gallery today.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I have the honour to introduce Eduardo Harari, my guest. He's a Hispanic community leader and founder of various not-for-profit organizations enhancing the contributions of the community across Canada through cultural and education events. Thank you. Welcome.

REPORT, OFFICE OF THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that the following document has been tabled: a report from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario concerning the review of expense claims under

the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expenses Review and Accountability Act, 2002, for submissions received in April 2018 and complete as of July 27, 2018.

DECORUM IN CHAMBER

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I ask for oral questions, I would remind the House that when you are speaking in the House, especially during question period, you are to address your remarks to the Speaker, through the Chair, at all times.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question is for the Premier. The Premier had an entire election campaign to look people in the eye and tell them exactly what he was going to do. But instead of being straight up with the people of Toronto, Peel, York, Niagara and Muskoka, he deliberately kept his plot from millions of voters.

Why didn't the Premier tell the people about his secret plan to rip up Toronto's wards and cancel regional elections?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: We have big issues in this province. We need to fix health care. We need to create jobs. We need to lower hydro rates and lower taxes. But clearly the Leader of the Opposition doesn't care about these important issues that matter to the people of Ontario. She only cares about protecting a bunch of politicians' jobs. This is the second day in a row that the Leader of the Opposition stood up, again, saving politicians' jobs.

Our party is trying to save the taxpayers money. I'm trying to make a government work for the people, and the opposition is trying to elect more politicians. That's where their priorities are. I just wish—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: People see exactly what this Premier is doing, and they don't like it one bit, Speaker. He's stealing power away from voters, cancelling elections that were already under way and ripping up Toronto's wards in the middle of a campaign. There was no consultation and no fair process, but the Premier is barging ahead anyway and inflicting his own will on millions of people, millions of voters.

Why is this Premier treating the people of Ontario with such complete and total contempt?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I wish the Leader of the Opposition would spend half the amount of time focusing on priorities that matter to the people of Ontario, that matter when it comes to hospital wait times, when they open their hydro bill every single month and see that they have the highest hydro rates, the highest taxes.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Hamilton did not elect the Leader of the Opposition to protect a bunch of politicians' jobs in Toronto. They elected the Leader of the Opposition to lower their hydro rates, like we're doing. We're well on our way to lowering hydro rates by 12%. We're well on our way to reducing personal income tax by 20%. We're well on our way to making sure we have a good governance system and we get the city of Toronto back on track. There is total gridlock at the city of Toronto—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Restart the clock. Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The people of Ontario can see right through the Premier's bluster, Speaker, and they don't see a leader; they see a bully. They see a man who is taking petty, vindictive and mean-spirited retaliation against millions of voters, against a city that rejected him, and against his own political opponents.

1040

Why is this Premier abusing the powers of his office with the most outrageous, antidemocratic action that Ontario has seen in many, many, many years?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members, take your seats.

Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Myself and the Leader of the Opposition differ on a few items. The Leader of the Opposition believes in big government, more politicians, higher taxes, high carbon tax, high cap-and-trade. We believe in getting rid of the carbon tax, getting rid of the cap-and-trade, which we are doing and did. We believe in building transit for the great people of Toronto and the GTA. We believe in streamlining the government—I will repeat, streamlining the government, making government work for the people, not the people working for the government; that's their philosophy.

We're going to focus on running an efficient government. We're going to focus on respecting the taxpayers. We're going to focus on putting money back into the taxpayers' pockets.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. It's too bad he doesn't believe in democracy, though. It's just too bad he doesn't believe in democracy.

The people of Toronto should have had the power to decide on how they are represented, who they elect and what Toronto city council should look like. No one else should have that decision—no one else. It should be up to the people of Toronto. That's why council voted yesterday to oppose the Premier's plot to rip up wards in the middle of the campaign.

The question is, why exactly is it that this Premier is trying to rig the election and put more power in his own hands?

Interjections.

Hon. Doug Ford: Tell me when I'm ready.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Again, this is where we differ a little bit. We believe in streamlining the government. We believe in democracy. We believe in representing the people. Democracy is doing what we said we're going to do. We said we were going to reduce the size and cost of government, and that is exactly what we're doing. We're going to make sure that we get the city of Toronto—the dysfunctional city of Toronto—back on track.

My friends, I want to congratulate the councillors who stood up, 17 of them, for respecting the taxpayers. Councillors Gary Crawford, Vincent Crisanti, Glenn De Baeremaeker, Justin Di Ciano, Frank Di Giorgio, Michael Ford, Mark Grimes, Michelle Holland, Stephen Holyday, Norm Kelly, Giorgio Mammoliti, Denzil Minnan-Wong, Frances Nunziata, Cesar Palacio, Jaye Robinson, David Shiner and Michael Thompson respect the taxpayers.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats. Start the clock.

Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: A little lesson in democracy: That's less than 50%, Speaker.

What this Premier has not, I think, acknowledged is that what his decision is all about is election-rigging. Anybody who thinks that he gets to decide how to define a democracy really speaks to the issue of his belief in being a dictator as opposed to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to again caution the members on intemperate language, because it inflames passions and makes it impossible to have decorum in this House. I'm going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw that comment.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw, Speaker.

The Premier's secret plot is fundamentally at odds with our democracy. It is not up to one man to decide how an entire city should be governed. It is not up to one man to decide what Toronto's government should look like. And it is not up to one man to discard years and years of public consultation and impose his own hidden agenda on millions of people.

What is it about democracy that this Premier does not get?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I love the fact that politicians, the ones the Leader of the Opposition is trying to protect—they're trying to protect their little fiefdom. I can tell you one thing. Did anyone in this room ever get consulted when they wanted to increase the politicians? No. The answer is no. So they rammed it through—a perfect example of how dysfunctional the city is.

You watch it. Yesterday on the news you could see the dysfunction down there. We're going to make sure we run the city of Toronto more efficiently, with 25 councillors, as we have 25 MPs and 25 MPPs.

As I said the other day, the city of Los Angeles, with four million people, has 15 councillors. Imagine that. Imagine less politicians. Imagine respecting the taxpayers. Imagine reducing taxes. I know you don't believe in reducing taxes. Our party believes in the reduction of taxes.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Final supplementary? Restart the clock.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier's assault on local democracy is all about helping him take revenge on his political opponents and punishing the people of Toronto who have rejected him over and over again.

Yesterday, Councillor Mammoliti let the mask slip and revealed that this plot is all about purging city council of progressive councillors. It's all about rigging the election to increase the Premier's control and make sure that right-wing conservatives take over the city.

At least Councillor Mammoliti had the guts to come clean, Speaker. Why doesn't the Premier have the guts to do the same?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm looking at my list again, and I'm counting that half the members who are for reducing council are part of the Liberal Party. We even have one of your own, one of your own NDP staunch members, voting against you, Leader of the Opposition.

It's very clear—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Sorry to interrupt the Premier, but I would again remind all members of the House that you have to make your remarks through the Chair.

Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, it's very clear: This isn't about being red, orange or blue; it's about respecting the taxpayer. It's about making sure—they've been down there for a number of years. They see that nothing gets done. Transit wasn't built under David Miller, it wasn't built under Rob Ford and it wasn't built under John Tory. It's about time we stop the gridlock in the city and the GTA.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will please take your seats. Restart the clock.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. Instead of a Premier who does what's right for Ontario, we have a Premier who is focused on settling scores with his own political opponents. The people of Toronto have repeatedly voted against this Premier, so now he's trying to punish them with a vindictive and mean-spirited attack on our local democracy.

How can this Premier be willing to attack the very principles of our democracy and rig local elections just to get political revenge on the people—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm already ruling that out of order. I would ask the member, the Leader of the Opposition, again to withdraw.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Withdraw, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition is setting a new record for withdrawing her comments.

What the Leader of the Opposition should be focusing on is why she was elected. The reason the Leader of the Opposition should have been elected was to respect the taxpayers and protect the people in Hamilton.

1050

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, if I went up into Hamilton and door-knocked in the Leader of the Opposition's area—and make no mistake about it, the Leader of the Opposition won with a large vote—I guarantee you, the doors I knock on, "Do you want more politicians in Toronto, the people of Hamilton?" they would say, "Absolutely not." They would say, "I want lower taxes. I want to make sure our businesses thrive. I want to make sure we have lower hydro rates." That's what—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I invite the Premier to my riding. He'll get run out of town. He will get run out of town, because there's one thing that the people of Hamilton do respect, and that is democracy. They respect democracy, unlike this Premier.

Just a month into office, and this Premier has revealed so much about who he is. His word is worthless; his contempt for voters is on full display. He has no respect for municipal leaders. He is willing to trample on our democracy. He has abused his own office, the Office of the Premier, just to take revenge on his political opponents.

Why doesn't this Premier understand the difference between being a leader and being a bully?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, again, the Leader of the Opposition should start focusing on what matters to the people of Ontario, should start focusing on the great people of Hamilton, the hard-working people of Hamilton.

I went up there and we had rooms full of 500, 600 people packed up in Hamilton. I look forward to visiting my friends in Hamilton to tell them what the Leader of the Opposition believes in. The Leader of the Opposition believes in bigger government, higher taxes, higher hydro rates.

I think the Leader of the Opposition is worried about a couple of things: Mike Layton and Joe Cressy—that's what the Leader of the Opposition is worried about—who will be taking the Leader of the Opposition's job in the next little while.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. The House will come to order. There's a member waiting to ask a question.

The member for Etobicoke Centre.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Miss Kinga Surma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

It is very disheartening to hear the kind of angry, unparliamentary language coming from the opposition that we heard yesterday as they attacked our plan to create a smaller, more effective Toronto city council.

Our government is committed to working for the people and ensuring that their own local governments represent their views and work in an efficient and effective manner. Despite the official opposition's vicious name-calling, isn't it true that our legislation actually enhances local democracy?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Order. The House will please come to order. The House will come to order.

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, first of all, I want to congratulate the member on being elected as MPP for Etobicoke Centre. I know that my bill is near and dear to her heart.

Our proposed legislation will not only solve the problem of a municipal government that is completely tied up in gridlock; it also addresses the important issue of voter parity. Councillor Justin Di Ciano had some excellent remarks on the subject on Friday, and I want to highlight them by quoting him: "The ridings do not belong to the councillors; they belong to Torontonians. There is a massive improvement—over a million Torontonians who will now have a fairer vote because of the decision made this morning." That's the quote.

If the opposition would stop with the attacks and the drive-by smears and actually look at the legislation, they'd see it's improving local government—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Vic, you're laughing at that? I used to have a little bit of respect for you.

Sorry, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Essex will come to order.

Supplementary?

Miss Kinga Surma: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the minister for that answer. I find it hard to believe that the opposition, who pretends to be standing up for democracy, wouldn't support a plan to move closer to voter parity, which helps make sure that every voice is heard equally and represented as such at city council.

We all know that if it were up to the NDP, they would encourage even more members of council under the premise of good governance, when it's really just a matter of bloated governance. One of the original options suggested was 48 wards. That's 14 new councillors, 14 new speeches and over \$16 million in taxpayer money over and above the existing council budget.

To the minister: Can you tell us why that just won't work?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to again thank the member. I'd say that just like you don't put the fox in charge of the henhouse, you don't let a group of politicians decide how many of them should keep their jobs.

What we've proposed in the Better Local Government Act is nothing new. For two decades, cutting the size of Toronto council in half has been discussed. In fact, there's a 2014 poll that found 56% in favour of reducing council from 44 to 22 seats. But this never goes anywhere because councillors always vote to save themselves.

The NDP will have to explain why they're champions of big government, instead of supporting the leaner, more effective council that we're proposing.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: During the debate of a bill brought by the Liberals, a bill that would establish that the regional chair position for the region of York would no longer be appointed but elected, the now Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing said, "I think it speaks to the very core of our democracy ... so I hope that members will support this legislation. And perhaps we can expand it at some point down the road for all regions in the province of Ontario."

My question for the minister is simple: What changed?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The members will take their seats.

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing?

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. Through you to the member: I want to thank you for the question. Do you know what I think was the biggest change for New Democrats? The fact that we're on this side of the House and they're on that side of the House. That's the big change.

I want to talk about a debate that took place during the election that just passed, a debate where our Premier and members on this side of the House talked about committing to reducing the size of government, to respecting the taxpayers of this province. Our government for the people was very clear during the election that we were going to make sure that a more effective and a more efficient government—at all levels—was paramount in our message to Ontarians.

Again, it should come as no surprise to Ontarians that members on that side of the House are going to stand up for big government, and members on this side of the

House are going to stand up for effective and efficient smaller government.

1100

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

Start the clock. Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. Principle means that when you have power, it's irrelevant; right? Principle goes out the window.

My question again for the minister: This makes it all the more likely that the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who will be forever associated with this antidemocratic legislation—forever—was as in the dark as the rest of us when it was coming down the pike.

My question: When was the minister made aware of the Premier's unilateral decision to cut the number of councillors in Toronto? When?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, thank you for the question. The very first time I spoke to our Premier after he was elected leader, he came to my riding and he made it crystal clear that putting the taxpayers' dollars—respect, Speaker, respect for taxpayers' dollars was the number one thing that was going to guide him, guide our members and guide the campaign.

Again, it's no surprise to Ontarians that New Democrats continue to stand up for bigger government, more politicians. That's where they stand. We've made it very clear time and time again: effective and efficient government, government could be more streamlined, that can make those quick, effective decisions—we're going to choose that style of government every time.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Some Toronto city councillors are calling for a referendum on our plan for a smaller, more cost-effective council. I know you have said a 25-member council will save taxpayers \$25 million over the four-year term. We also know that reducing the size of council is going to ensure important decisions on building transit and housing are made faster. This means that the people of Toronto will get the better local government they deserve. But I'm concerned: No one is considering what a referendum will actually cost. Minister, can you provide the House with details?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Mississauga East–Cooksville for the question. It's a great question. You're absolutely right—Speaker, through you—that we haven't heard anything about the cost of a referendum, which has to be part of the discussion if you're going to respect taxpayers. We know that, in 2012, city staff indicated a special referendum would cost as much as an election, or about \$7 million. For comparison, in 2014, Toronto's election cost \$8.3 million.

Here's a question I'd like to ask taxpayers: Would they rather spend \$7 million to \$8 million on a referendum asking if you should keep more politicians, or would

you rather save \$25 million and save that money on politicians? You know something, Speaker? I think I know the answer to that question.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Thank you, Minister, for your response and for letting taxpayers know the truth about the cost of a referendum. Hearing those numbers, I'm sure taxpayers would rather have their councillors at city hall taking actions to improve life for—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The House will come to order. The Leader of the Opposition and the Premier will come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition and the Premier will come to order.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: That's a false accusation. Take it back. Take it back.

Hon. Doug Ford: He should recuse himself.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I was listening to the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Leader of the Opposition and the Premier will come to order.

I'm going to recess the House for five minutes.

The House recessed from 1105 to 1110.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members can take their seats.

Before we resume question period, I wish to explain to the House what just happened, as far as I know. The member for Mississauga East–Cooksville was in the midst of a supplementary question. I was listening to it intently. Apparently something may have been said which caused grave disorder, such that the Speaker felt it was necessary to recess the House.

I didn't hear any of the comments that may or may not have been made, but I would ask: If there are any members who would like to withdraw any unparliamentary comment, I would appreciate their willingness to do so.

All right. I would ask the House for order for the remainder of question period.

The member for Mississauga East–Cooksville: supplementary?

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Thank you, Minister, for your response and for letting taxpayers know the truth about the cost of a referendum. Hearing those numbers, I'm sure taxpayers would rather have their councillors at city hall taking actions to improve life for everyday residents of Toronto than wasting time and money on a costly referendum, keeping more politicians on the payroll.

Frankly, this debate is part of the reason we need these reforms. Looking beyond the cost, without a referendum, what gives you the confidence to say that our legislation is something the people support?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock.

Minister?

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker, and again, through you, I want to thank the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville for all of your advocacy and all your efforts. You're a real class act. We're lucky to have you in the caucus.

No one has a better feel for the pulse of taxpayers in this city or our province than Premier Doug Ford. We heard loud and clear from voters during the recent provincial election that they want governments at all levels—and I want to stress that; at all levels—to work for them, to work for the people.

There's no better referendum, Speaker, than the election we just went through, one that sent us here with a majority and a mandate to reduce the size and cost of government. We talked to tens of thousands of people—tens of thousands of people—who wanted us to take action—quick action—after the election. That's what the Better Local Government Act does for the people of Toronto and for the regions of York, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka. That's what it does.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Ms. Jessica Bell: My question is for the Premier. Why is the Premier only interested in proper public consultation when it serves his far-right extremist friends who want to drag Ontario's health curriculum back to 1998?

Hon. Doug Ford: To the Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. Todd Smith: In my capacity as government House leader, we will be standing on standing order 37(h). We will not be answering any questions from the official opposition until we get some kind of an apology from the member opposite who made those comments. We will no longer be answering questions from the official opposition today.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will take your seats. Stop the clock.

Supplementary question?

Ms. Jessica Bell: This Premier has railed on and on about the significance of public engagement, yet he refuses to let the people of Toronto make their own decision about their government. It's clear that his word means very little. He wants it when he wants to roll back the Ontario health education curriculum, but he skips it when the results could threaten his ego.

If public engagement is so important to this Premier, then why is he trampling over the people of Toronto and forcing this change on them with no input whatsoever?

Hon. Todd Smith: Speaker, the members opposite can continue to ask questions of our government, but until we get some kind of formal apology, as is our right under standing order 37(h), which says, "A minister may, in his or her discretion, decline to answer" questions, the government will not be answering any questions from the official opposition here this morning.

There's a simple solution to this problem. Everybody makes mistakes, Mr. Speaker. All we're expecting is an

apology for the member of this side of the House who asked a question earlier in question period, and we will not be answering any further questions from the members of the official opposition until that happens.

IMMIGRATION FRANCOPHONE

FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: My question is for the Premier. L'immigration francophone est cruciale pour la vitalité et la prospérité des Franco-Ontariens. Ceci dit, votre gouvernement ne travaille pas vraiment en partenariat avec Immigration Canada, a éliminé les postes des ministres de la citoyenneté et de la francophonie et a fait savoir à maintes reprises qu'investir davantage dans la francophonie n'était pas une priorité.

Donc, my question: Est-ce que le premier ministre peut nous expliquer, en termes concrets, les moyens que son gouvernement va prendre pour s'attaquer à cet enjeu important?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister responsible for immigration.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much for the question and thank you to the Premier for the opportunity to respond. I'll have my colleague the minister responsible for francophone affairs address you in the supplementary.

Ontario has set a target of 5% francophone immigration, and we've implemented a number of initiatives to increase the number of francophones in the province, including the Ontario express entry French-speaking skilled worker stream, which is an immigration pathway for potential French-speaking immigrants who have skills to succeed in our labour market.

My ministry also funds a municipal francophone immigration web portal, which is dedicated to profiling immigration opportunities in the province's francophone communities.

But most of all, Ontario will continue to undertake a variety of international outreach and promotion initiatives in order to reach francophone audiences worldwide. I can speak on behalf of this government that myself and the minister of francophone affairs have spoken about this several times since being elected as seatmates. We intend to undertake more initiatives throughout the rest of the world.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Écoutez, encore une fois, il y a beaucoup de raisons de croire que ce gouvernement semble concret et confirmé en son engagement envers la francophonie. Il y a une partie de la réponse qui a été notée concernant la part internationale—mais aussi d'autres programmes qui existent depuis les dernières années pour la francophonie.

Donc, ma question : Est-ce que, oui ou non, vous allez continuer l'engagement concernant l'OIF, l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie, qui pourrait aider au niveau de cette cible de 5 %, et est-ce que ce nouveau gouvernement va s'engager aussi à continuer un

programme pour donner de l'information et des services en français, le programme PAFO, le Programme d'appui à la francophonie ontarienne?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: The minister responsible for francophone affairs.

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Le gouvernement maintient son engagement envers l'immigration francophone.

Comme vous l'avez mentionné, le rapport du commissaire aux services en français de l'Ontario nous a appris que le poids démographique des francophones diminue et que, si nous ne prenons pas d'actions, ça va continuer dans la prochaine décennie.

Notre gouvernement reconnaît l'apport du patrimoine culturel de la population francophone, et nous désirons le sauvegarder pour les générations à venir. C'est pour ça que, en tant que ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones, je m'engage à travailler avec ma collègue la ministre responsable de l'Immigration pour mettre en place des stratégies pour encourager l'immigration francophone et pour réaliser l'épanouissement de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: My question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

1120

Minister, I watched with interest the Ontario government's launch of a human trafficking awareness week. I was pleased to see that you took the time to record a video and speak about your commitment to ending human trafficking. It is also my understanding that your ministry has launched a multi-platform social media campaign to raise awareness of this terrible crime. I applaud your stance and dedication, and stand with you against human trafficking.

Minister, could you tell this House about our government's commitment to raising awareness and combatting human trafficking?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: As the minister also responsible for women in this House, I thank the member from Mississauga for her question and for her dedication to ending human trafficking in the province of Ontario.

I would be remiss if I did not point out the excellent work of my colleague and friend the Minister of Labour, who has been one of the strongest advocates in this assembly and throughout all of Canada in trying to end human trafficking. As a result, Ontario has passed legislation, because of the Minister of Labour, to allow individuals to apply for restraining orders against human traffickers and make it easier for victims of human trafficking to get compensation from those who have trafficked them, and we have proclaimed February 22 of each year as Human Trafficking Awareness Day.

Of course, yesterday was a day to remember the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. I appreciate it, and I'll have more to say in the supplemental, but this is an important issue that every member of this assembly should stand against.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you very much for your answer. Back to the minister: I appreciate your focus and our party's long-standing commitment to this issue.

Yesterday, I saw your message on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. I am glad that we are reaching out to different audiences and on multiple platforms. I was troubled to learn that it is largely our neighbours, friends and family who are getting caught up in this terrible crime and that girls as young as 13 are being abused this way.

Minister, what is your plan, in addition to the social media campaign, to create awareness with different audiences, and what is your ministry doing to combat this crime?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Speaker, through you, again: Just to build on the work that my colleague Laurie Scott has done with the Saving the Girl Next Door Act in really taking this protection of women and girls to the next level, it's important to note that two thirds of police-reported cases of human trafficking in Canada take place in our province, and they are literally the girls next door. Women and girls are disproportionately represented in victims of human trafficking.

We're going to continue to work in my ministry with community organizations, police forces, international partners and government ministries to try to solve this crisis. Human trafficking is an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada, but provinces are taking action. I will continue to work with my ministerial colleagues in order to make sure that there is greater enforcement when these issues arise.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Jeff Burch: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: This year, for the first time ever, the people of Niagara were going to be able to elect their Niagara regional chair. But since the Premier started cooking up backroom deals with his friends to meddle in municipal elections, he has removed their democratic power.

As the minister should know, people in Niagara have serious concerns about their regional representatives. The Ombudsman and the Auditor General have both been involved with investigations of their activities, and another complaint has been filed recently.

Now, more than ever, Niagara residents are looking to bring more democracy and accountability to our regional council. Will the minister show some leadership, reverse his short-sighted decision and allow the people of Niagara to elect their regional chair?

Hon. Steve Clark: To the government House leader.

Hon. Todd Smith: We will not be, as I said earlier, answering any questions from the official opposition until we get an apology on behalf of the member for Mississauga East-Cooksville. There was mockery that occurred during question period, and our right under

standing order 37(h) is that as a minister, we may, in our discretion, decline to answer any questions in this House.

We should be very proud of the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville. He arrived here—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Restart the clock.

Hon. Todd Smith: Speaker, he arrived here from Pakistan in 2004. He had a very, very successful career with BlackBerry, and in less than 15 years of living here in Ontario, he's a member of provincial Parliament at Queen's Park in our Legislature. He deserves to be treated better than the mockery that went on this morning during question period, Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Jeff Burch: Mr. Speaker, through you: People in Niagara are outraged by this decision. They're tired of the lack of transparency and accountability at the Niagara region. The action taken by this government is a slap in the face to the people of Niagara.

Just in the last few weeks, the Niagara regional chair tried to influence an ombudsman's investigation by using outside counsel. Mr. Speaker, cancelling the election of the chair will only allow these problems to persist.

Does the minister intend to prop up unelected, unaccountable politicians, or will he reverse this decision and give the power back to the people to elect their regional chair?

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, again I'll cite standing order 37(h). We will be refusing to answer any questions from the official opposition until they actually apologize for what occurred here earlier in question period. It was completely unacceptable. It was very audible by members of the government and other members who are here at Queen's Park this morning to observe question period. Until the member responsible apologizes for mocking our member from Mississauga East–Cooksville, we won't be answering any questions from the official opposition.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Restart the clock.

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, take a look at this government caucus. We have the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville, who came from Pakistan. We have the first Tamil member elected in this Legislature. We have a very, very diverse group of politicians—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That's enough; thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats.

ONTARIO SUMMER GAMES

Ms. Donna Skelly: My question is directed to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. This weekend,

athletes, coaches and spectators will experience the Ontario Summer Games in the beautiful city of London, Ontario. In fact, my riding of Flamborough–Glanbrook will be sending athletes from ages 12 to 18. Many people in my riding are excited about this and they want to learn more about this unique program that is overseen by your ministry.

Can the minister tell the House more about the Games Ontario program?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you for that question. You are absolutely right; the London 2018 Ontario Summer Games is supported by our government through the Games Ontario program. This program supports events like the Ontario Summer Games, the Ontario Winter Games for youth, and the Ontario 55+ Summer and Winter Games for seniors, as well as the Ontario Para-Sport Games for people with disabilities.

The games run from August 2 through to August 5, with over 3,300 athletes, coaches and officials in 21 sports. The games are supported by over 800 volunteers from the local community and the surrounding area. The games' organizing committee has spent 18 to 24 months to plan and deliver these games. These games are crucial in developing the talents of young athletes.

Notable alumnae of the games include Diana Matheson of the national women's soccer team, and Aaron Brown, a member of the men's relay team, who captured a bronze medal at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Thank you to the minister for the insight into this initiative. I'm really happy that our government for the people is able to make investments in young athletes and our communities that will bring a positive change that will be felt for years to come.

Minister, can you elaborate on how the games are benefits to both our athletes and to our communities?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member for Flamborough–Glanbrook. I wish your team members well, but of course I'm cheering for all of Ontario.

1130

Through you, Mr. Speaker, thank you to the member for her insight into the Games Ontario program. I'm glad that we are able to shed some light on how important this program is. The games are a valuable motivator to encourage young people to be active and competitive in sports. The games deliver a valuable experience developing Ontario's athletes.

This year's Ontario Summer Games are expected to generate an economic impact of \$6 million in London. As part of the games' legacy, 10 new beach volleyball courts will be added to the North London Athletic Fields. With these additional courts, the Ontario Volleyball Association will now be able to run beach volleyball programs in the city.

This is one of the many ways that our government is supporting local communities and sport and increasing economic activity in our province. I encourage all mem-

bers in the House to support their local participants in the games from their riding in any way.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Premier. Does the Premier believe he can cancel question period just because he doesn't like the questions?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. Todd Smith: In my capacity as government House leader, I'm taking this question.

There was a very, very audible comment that came from the member who just asked that question during question period. It was mocking the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville. If the member opposite, the House leader for the official opposition, wants question period to continue, the honourable thing to do would be to stand in his place and apologize for making those comments and mocking the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Start the clock.

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, many members on this government side clearly heard the mocking remarks that were made. Over here, we are a government caucus very proud of our diversity.

A simple mistake was made. A mistake was made, Mr. Speaker. There's a simple solution to this. Stand in your place in the supplementary and apologize to the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Before I ask for the supplementary, I wish to inform the House—you can see that I'm wearing this earpiece. I have the volume cranked full blast, because otherwise I can't hear the person who has the floor on many exchanges. That's because of the loud voices; it seems that everyone in the House is participating. I can't hear everything that's said in the House. The government House leader says there was an audible comment. I did not hear it.

Supplementary?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Premier, I'm being accused of something, and if people know me and have heard me in this House for 28 years, and my constituents, that is not who I am and that's not what I say. I don't use that language.

My question is back to the Premier: Does the Premier believe in parliamentary democracy and the right of the opposition to ask questions of the government? Yes or no?

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned off the top, after that mocking remark was made in this Legislature, we'll be invoking standing order 37(h). We will not be answering any questions from the members of the official opposition until the member opposite apologizes for those comments that were made.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that one thing we do have on this side of the House is respect for this institution.

We have respect for this institution. We have respect for all members. We have respect for all members of this Legislature, all 124 members of this Legislature. We will not be mocking the members like the member of the official opposition did. We'll be standing up for the members of this Legislature. It's all about respect, and we saw a lack of respect this morning during question period. That's why—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Restart the clock. Next question.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. During the summer months, people from my riding and many other ridings across the province enjoy spending time camping with friends or discovering new parts of Ontario while taking the family on a road trip. These used to be relatively easy and, more importantly, affordable ways for average families to get a break without costing them a fortune. Unfortunately, instead of getting a break, these trips are now leaving families broke. The soaring cost of fuel has families looking to this government for relief.

This past week, the Minister of the Environment tabled legislation that will put an end to the cap-and-trade carbon tax. Can the Minister of the Environment please explain to this House how our government's plan will make life more affordable for families across Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, thank you to the member from Niagara West for that question. Of course, over 10 million people do visit Ontario's parks during the summer, so it is a popular pastime. But it is a pastime that requires people to drive their cars.

We've been clear that we are going to be staying true to the promise we made to the people of Ontario. The Cap and Trade Cancellation Act will deliver real savings for families: \$260 per year every year. It's estimated that the cost of gasoline will be reduced by 4.5 cents per litre and the cost of diesel by 5.5 cents within the year, if this legislation is passed.

On the other side, we've asked the question before—of course, they have other things to worry about today. But we've asked the question: How high a carbon tax would they support? The member from Ottawa Centre says he wants the highest carbon tax in the world—35 cents. The member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas calls our policy of lower gas taxes reckless.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you for your illuminating response, Minister. The truth is we've seen this story play out before. A Liberal Prime Minister paired with an NDP Premier: It's truly a dangerous combination. In British Columbia, the federal Liberal carbon plan paired with the NDP's carbon tax has seen gas prices skyrocket to more than \$1.60 per litre in April. This is the highest gas price in North America. They can say what they want, but a tax is a tax is a tax.

Ontario simply cannot afford to pay for these Liberal policies. Every time the NDP advocates for higher gas prices, they demonstrate just how out of touch they are with the realities that families in Ontario face.

Will the Minister of the Environment advise this House as to the dangers of the NDP's carbon tax plan?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, the people of Ontario can't afford historically high gas prices. That's why we're proceeding with our plan that will reduce the price of fuel. The end of the carbon tax means relief for families. It means relief for businesses and more disposable income for households. We understand the realities that families face when they wait in line, sometimes for hours, to save a couple of cents at the pump.

It's ironic that the member from Timmins, in a piece of his own legislation, claims he wants to protect consumers from gouging at the pumps, and yet his party sits idly by while this side and this government bring forward legislation that will actually support families and have real reductions at the pumps. The era of the carbon tax is over in Ontario. We will bring relief for families.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. John Vanthof: Last week, we said the Premier is behaving as though he thought he was the king of Ontario—

Interjections.

Mr. John Vanthof: To the Premier: So far he's rammed bills through the House without consultation or committee hearings. He's interfering in democratic elections across Ontario.

Will the Premier do the right thing and respect Ontario's democracy and democratic institutions?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member opposite for the question, which we won't be answering here this morning. We'll be invoking standing order 37(h) again, which, I will remind the members, gives the minister the opportunity to decline to answer a question.

The reason that we're doing that is because a member of our government caucus, who we are very proud to have as a member of our government caucus, from Mississauga East–Cooksville, was mocked during question period by a member of the official opposition. It was disrespectful, to say the least.

We could resume question period and the NDP could ask questions and get answers from the government members if they did the simple step of standing in their place and apologizing for the remark that was made during question period earlier. When you make a mistake, apologize. Apologize.

1140

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. John Vanthof: Again to the Premier: The Premier has cancelled contracts, cancelled due process, cancelled consultation, cancelled cap-and-trade, and now

he's cancelling question period. Is the Premier for real, or just trying to change the channel?

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, we could easily resume question period and answer the questions from the members of the official opposition if the House leader on the opposite side would stand in his place and apologize to the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville, a member of our Legislature, a member of our government caucus, a proud Pakistani Canadian who has been in this country for 15 years.

Look at the diversity of this government caucus. We have the first Tamil Canadians elected to the Legislature; the first Korean Canadian MPP, the Minister for Seniors, in this Legislature; the first Coptic Egyptian Canadian MPP, the member for Mississauga–Erin Mills we're proud to have; the first Armenian Canadian MPP, Aris Babikian, from the other side. We have two Persian Canadian MPPs, three Chinese Canadian MPPs, one Hindu Canadian MPP, four Sikh Canadian MPPs and three Jewish MPPs.

We are very proud of this caucus, and we will celebrate—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Members will take their seats. Restart the clock.

Next question.

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Mr. Stephen Crawford: My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. I would like to begin by congratulating the minister for being tasked with the crucial responsibility of being responsible for overseeing the province's correctional system, including its many dedicated correctional officers and staff.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 15 years in our correctional system, its many dedicated and hard-working correctional staff were repeatedly neglected. As a member of this government for the people, I am honoured to stand here today, knowing that our government is committed to fixing the crisis in our correctional system caused by the previous Liberal government.

Could the minister please explain what he is doing to address the current crisis in the Ontario correctional system?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question, to our member from Oakville, and congratulations on your election.

Mr. Speaker, the previous Liberal government left our correctional services in a crisis. I'm proud to state here today that our government for the people will remain committed to our promise of hiring more correctional, probation and parole officers to end the current crisis in corrections.

This past Friday, I attended the correctional officer and training assessment graduation in Hamilton, where we graduated more than 182 men and women to become correctional officers, and they are being deployed as of Monday this week.

Our front-line correctional workers know that they finally have a government that will listen to them and deliver on a promise of ending the crisis in corrections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Again to the minister: Thank you very much for your update and the work you're doing to address the crisis in Ontario's correctional system. I am proud to see our government working for the people, respecting our front-line workers and acknowledging the hard work they do every day.

Mr. Speaker, it is also my understanding that the minister participated in a ride-along with members of the Hamilton police force this past weekend. Will the minister please give the members of this Legislature an update on what he learned from this experience?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you again for the question.

This past Friday, I also participated in a ride-along in Hamilton with the Hamilton Police Service crisis response unit, which consists of the crisis outreach and support team, the mobile rapid response team and the social navigator program. These teams of men and women work together to ensure public safety through addressing the root causes of crime and by participating in crisis prevention training. The mental health training aspect of this unit is just one of the many policing innovations here in Ontario being led by our police services.

Unlike those from the official opposition, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to respect our police and correctional services and remain committed to providing our first responders with the resources they require to perform their jobs.

The status quo failed, Mr. Speaker, and we're the only party in this House that is prepared to do something about it. We have made a promise, and we intend to keep it.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

RESPONSABILITÉ GOUVERNEMENTALE

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ma question est pour le premier ministre. So far, we've heard that the Premier doesn't need to consult Ontarians because he knows better than them.

Les consultations sont au coeur de la démocratie.

Then we heard that the Premier is cancelling question period. Why does it feel like the Premier believes he is above Ontario's democracy?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government House leader.

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks, Speaker. I don't know about you, but we're here, in question period. The only questions that we're not answering, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect to the member from Nickel Belt, who has had her question basically made null and void by the fact that another member of her caucus mocked a member of our caucus earlier during question period—there would be a

simple resolution to this standoff if the member responsible would stand in his place and simply apologize to the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville.

He is a very well-respected member, obviously, in his community, a proud Pakistani Canadian who arrived in Ontario 14 years ago to raise his family and to make a living. He has been a contributing member both in the business world and here in our Legislature, and we are very proud of that member.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'd like to go back to the Premier, Speaker. This Premier makes his decisions in backrooms. He seems to think that he knows more about Toronto democracy than the people of Toronto themselves. Now he is cancelling question period, something that goes back to Confederation itself.

Does the Premier believe that he is above Ontario's democracy?

Hon. Todd Smith: It's amazing to me to hear members on the opposite side say we're cancelling question period when question period has now gone on for 59 minutes and 30 seconds. Mr. Speaker, what we're choosing not to do is respond to questions from the official opposition because they are mocking a member of our government caucus, a very proud Pakistani Canadian who represents his community extremely well.

Any member of our Ontario population, no matter where they came to Ontario from, has the opportunity to represent their community in this Legislature, just as Mr. Kaleed Rasheed is doing proudly in Mississauga East–Cooksville.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: For the people.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Just apologize.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

MEMBER'S COMMENTS

COMMENTAIRES D'UN DÉPUTÉ

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Timmins on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I want to thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say, in regard to the standing orders, it is clear according to standing order 23(h) and (i) that you can't make "allegations against another member," which they are doing now, and impute "false or unavowed motives to another member," and clearly that's what they are doing.

You know me. I've been in this Legislature as long as you. That's not who I am. I understand all about accents. Je suis francophone; j'ai fait rire de moi beaucoup de fois, faisant affaire avec mon langage. I would never do that. Members of this House know that. This, to me, is just a very offensive thing for the government to try to change channels in question period to answering questions about something I never did.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Orléans has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services concerning support for the Francophone Community Grants Program. This matter will be debated today at 6 p.m.

This House is in recess until 3 o'clock this afternoon.
The House recessed from 1149 to 1500.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: My riding, Humber River–Black Creek, is home to people of diverse cultures, languages and faiths. But we all share something in common: We are getting ripped off on our auto insurance rates. This is because the auto insurance industry is allowed to classify you as high-risk just for where you live.

Ontario's NDP raised this important issue back in 2012, showing that postal codes within places like Humber River–Black Creek, Brampton, Scarborough and others paid more than double the rates of many other postal codes, even within Toronto.

Mr. Speaker, I've done research on this postal code prejudice and found that my community had neither the highest local accident rates nor the highest rates of vehicular crime, yet our rates are sky-high.

I've held packed town hall meetings on the matter, written articles about it and spoken about it door to door. I heard stories from many people whose auto insurance premiums were higher than the value of their cars, and many who needed a vehicle but couldn't afford one because of the high rates—people with clean driving records.

The previous government promised relief on auto insurance rates, but in the end the only relief we got from them happened on the night of June 7.

Ontarians, as a whole, pay the highest auto insurance rates in the country, yet we have the lowest claims per capita. We need real action. I look forward to working with my colleagues to improve auto insurance here in our province.

SRI VARASITHTHI VINAAYAGAR HINDU TEMPLE CHARIOT FESTIVAL

Mr. Aris Babikian: Mr. Speaker, over the weekend, I had the pleasure of attending the Sri Varasiththi Vinaayagar Hindu Temple's annual chariot festival and bringing greetings from Premier Doug Ford.

This is an annual event that normally takes place on the fourth weekend of July. The Hindu deity known as Lord Ganesh—the elephant figure god—is brought out of the temple to destroy bad demons and evilness in the community.

Drawing more than 13,000 people annually, the event is truly a reminder of the diversity and the rich cultural mosaic of Scarborough–Agincourt. It is organizations and events like this one that make our city and province not only culturally and ethnically rich but also places where everyone can find home and community.

I am sure that under the leadership of Premier Doug Ford and our Progressive Conservative government, community organizations and houses of worship like the Sri Varasiththi Vinaayagar Hindu Temple will continue to flourish and grow, particularly as we open Ontario for business and ensure that everyone is able to find work and raise a family.

I look forward to attending many more of these events in my riding and meeting community members with culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds.

ANTI-RACISM ACTIVITIES

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Ontario is a beautiful and diverse province. Our cultural diversity is an asset. It allows us to experience different cultures, ideas, concepts and perspectives right here in Ontario. Our differences do not divide us; they strengthen us.

But I rise today to address a very concerning pattern that we've seen over the past few weeks. In London, a young man was threatened with a citizen's arrest for being an alleged "illegal." In Toronto, a Muslim family was physically attacked and victim to racist insults. In Hamilton, a couple faced racist insults and had the very lives of their innocent children threatened with death. These are just some of the rising acts of hate and Islamophobia that have become far too common, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to speak out against this hate, to say that acts of racism that target people's ethnicity, culture, religion or otherwise have no place in this province, and, further, to say that to truly combat racism, we must do more than only denounce hate; we must empower communities who are victims of hate. We must work for the creation of a society that understands that in order to make diverse communities feel welcome, they must be given access to both resources and justice. We must fight Islamophobia and racism by looking at the root causes that give rise to an environment that allows this hate to exist.

NICOLA ROSE

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Nothing is more devastating than being told you have a horrific disease. Today, I rise in this chamber to talk about a beautiful young woman who was diagnosed with cancer. She fought hard and overcame her illness. Not only did she face her cancer with a positive attitude; as soon as she became cancer-free, she wanted to give back. She immediately began a fund-raising campaign to raise money for the Trillium Health Partners Foundation to go towards the cancer care centre at the Credit Valley Hospital in Mississauga.

This past weekend, alongside the esteemed member from Willowdale, my staff, campaign volunteers and I joined over 120 other wonderful friends and families to

attend a fundraiser she arranged to honour being cancer-free for over five years. Over these five years, she has managed to raise over \$28,000, and every penny raised at the fundraiser was donated to the foundation.

Mr. Speaker, the first time I saw her, she was on the billboard located outside the Credit Valley Hospital, where her father pointed it out to me. How hard it must have been to watch your child go through such a difficult time.

On her behalf, I would like to thank the wonderful front-line doctors and nurses who provided her with the best possible treatment and cared for her throughout.

Please join me in welcoming Nicola Rose and her family, Pete, Carmen, and Stephanie Rose, to the Legislature today, and thank her for the great work she is doing in bringing about awareness and her phenomenal fundraising efforts for our local hospital in Mississauga.

GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

Ms. Marit Stiles: The people of Davenport and across Toronto have been shaking their heads over the last few weeks. People can't afford the sky-high rent in this city, schools are literally crumbling, and one in four children is living in poverty. Yet this government has chosen its urgent priorities, and none of those priorities speaks to the issues that my constituents have raised again and again. Instead, the Premier and his government seem obsessed with settling scores and undermining local democracy.

Yesterday, I was joined here at the Legislature by the Davenport-Perth area Bread and Bricks, a community group that takes action on issues that their members face, issues like poverty, and social and economic injustice. They came to Queen's Park to ask me to fight back against any attempts by this government to regressively roll back promised ODSP and social assistance rate increases. I want you to know that they can count on me to do that.

They also told me they already don't get calls back from their city councillor—yes, that's one of the Premier's so-called allies—and they asked me to stand up against the attack on Toronto's local democracy because less council seats will mean worse service, worse support. The truth is, the only people who will benefit are the developers who don't want to have to build affordable housing units or pay one red cent to help maintain or repair our schools.

I want to assure my constituents that I will work with our leader and caucus to use every tool we have, every ounce of energy, to fight this government and to bring democracy back to Ontario.

EVENTS IN ORLÉANS

ÉVÉNEMENTS DIVERS À ORLÉANS

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: This past weekend, I was very proud to attend two great events in our community of Orléans.

C'est toujours avec beaucoup de plaisir que je rencontre les gens de notre communauté lors d'activités locales.

The Orléans Youth Council, which is a joint council between my federal counterpart, MP Andrew Leslie, and myself, had their end-of-year community fundraising event.

J'ai participé avec fierté samedi à leur barbecue organisé par le Conseil jeunesse d'Orléans, créé conjointement avec mon vis-à-vis fédéral, l'honorable Andrew Leslie. Tous les profits générés ont été versés pour appuyer un refuge pour femmes à Ottawa, Cornerstone. J'aimerais les remercier profondément pour cette initiative et pour leur travail.

1510

They organized the barbecue for our community. We were joined by local representatives and organizations, fire and police services, and brought together community members for a very, very good cause.

I was also honoured to attend the first-ever art exhibition hosted by the Ottawa Kurdish Cultural Forum. They brought together eight talented artists from around the world, two of whom were actually from our riding of Orléans, in an inspiring showcase of rich culture and diversity. I want to thank them for promoting their culture through their paintings.

MARKHAM GREEK SUMMER FESTIVAL

Mr. Paul Calandra: Speaker, it's wonderful to rise today to recognize a wonderful community festival that took place in my riding this weekend. The Greek community of Markham got together for its 29th Annual Greek Summer Festival, bringing together thousands of people to celebrate everything that the Greek community in Markham has to offer.

I wanted to thank the president of the community, John Psihos, for hosting myself and the member for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, as well as the member for Scarborough-Agincourt and a number of other caucus members who were there. We were there, in part, to show our solidarity for what had been a very troubled or difficult summer—not only the fires in Greece, but as all members will know, one of the victims of the horrible tragedy on the Danforth was a member of this community and of this church in particular that hosts this event. His Eminence, Archbishop Sotirios, the Greek Metropolitan, brought a message of healing and remembrance. As I said, we took the time to remember, but we also took the time to celebrate everything that is great about the community.

I hope that all members might consider coming out to Markham next year as we celebrate this community once again and celebrate the 30th festival. I know you will all have a great time.

Again, Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak and thank you to all members. I encourage you all to visit the community next year.

MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING

Mr. Peter Tabuns: On Sunday evening, July 22, a man shot 15 people on the Danforth in my riding. Two of those people have died. Subsequently, it turned out the man suffered from severe mental illness.

The Ford government is cutting the funding for mental health supports in this province and potentially putting more people at risk. The Premier has expressed his sympathy for the people who were killed, injured or affected by the shootings, but is not only rolling back funding for mental health already set out during the budget process in the spring but saying that part of the funds his platform allocated for mental illness will be reallocated to policing. This and other tragic events show the funding is needed to protect those who may harm themselves and others. The Premier should change direction and provide the funds.

Premier, many people in my riding ask why you're spending time on changing Toronto city council when dealing with the recent shootings on the Danforth should be a higher priority for your government. Ontario needs your government to focus on public safety and mental health rather than focusing on city governance. My constituents ask you to stop cuts to mental health funding, get guns off the streets and take further steps to address the roots of violence.

BADEN CORN FESTIVAL

Mr. Mike Harris: I rise today to speak about Wilmot township's upcoming Baden Corn Festival, taking place August 11, and the valuable role it plays in highlighting agricultural roots in my riding and also the province.

The agri-food industry is a driving force of Ontario's economy. For example, based on the most recent numbers provided by Stats Canada, Ontario is home to nearly 50,000 farms and 70,000 farm operators. Without a doubt, a vibrant agri-food industry is vital to the success of Ontario's economy and the economy of Waterloo region.

In celebration of the rich history of the agri-food industry in Wilmot township, the Baden Corn Festival showcases local food producers and restaurants while providing an afternoon of fun for the whole family.

I would like to thank all the community organizers and local businesses who have come together to make sure this annual tradition continues to be a great success.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Baden Community Association for all their hard work in planning this event. You are providing your community a great service.

Secondly, I would like to thank all of the local businesses who have stepped forward to sponsor this event for their generosity and leadership.

Finally, thank you to all the local vendors who are participating in the Baden Corn Festival this year and showcasing the great food the Baden area and Wilmot township has to offer.

Our economy cannot grow and thrive without hard-working men and women in the agri-food industry.

Therefore, I will always wholeheartedly support community events such as the Baden Corn Festival that look to showcase the great contribution that agri-food companies have made and continue to make to Ontario's economy.

VIOLENCE IN SYRIA

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I'm honoured to welcome Mr. Adwet Sharma to Queen's Park. Mr. Sharma just got appointed as director of social for the UTM Conservative youth association. My congratulations. Mr. Adwet is in his second year of international affairs, was my volunteer team leader and was a critical part of my win. Thank you very much.

I rise today to speak about a terrible tragedy that has affected a number of my constituents and concerned community members across the province of Ontario and Canada. On Tuesday, July 25, depraved ISIS murderers massacred more than 200 innocent Syrian Druze civilians in the government-held city of Sweida in southwestern Syria—women, children and the elderly. I stood shoulder to shoulder with the mourning community members at the vigil on Sunday evening in front of Old City Hall.

We know all too well the toll that ISIS savagery and the Syrian civil war have had on the innocents caught in the crossfire. The province of Ontario currently provides refuge for many of them, as well as people from other crisis zones around the world. Since January 2016 alone, we have received over 36,000 refugees.

This is why I am encouraged by Minister MacLeod's principled stand and MPP Fee's motion passed in this House last week calling on the federal government to pay its—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

FAIRNESS IN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS PRICING ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MATIÈRE D'ÉTABLISSEMENT DU PRIX DES PRODUITS PÉTROLIERS

Mr. Bisson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 7, An Act to regulate the price of petroleum products / Projet de loi 7, Loi réglementant le prix des produits pétroliers.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member from Timmins for a brief explanation of his bill.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: This is a similar bill that is being reintroduced. It was passed at second reading the last time, with the support of the Conservative government

and the then finance minister. I hope they will do so again. Essentially, what it does is eliminate the gouging at the pump that consumers see every day when they go to gas up by regulating the price of gas through the Ontario Energy Board.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't indicate that my good friend, and a friend of many people in this House, is here today, Mr. Allan Rewak.

TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE
HEALTH CARE ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE FINANCEMENT
TRANSPARENT ET RESPONSABLE
DES SOINS DE SANTÉ

Mme Gélinas moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 8, An Act to promote transparency and accountability in the funding of health care services in Ontario / Projet de loi 8, Loi visant à promouvoir le financement transparent et responsable des services de soins de santé en Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Nickel Belt can give a brief explanation of her bill.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Under the act, major health organizations are required to comply with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act and the Public Sector Salary Disclosure Act. These organizations are also deemed to be government organizations for the purpose of the Ombudsman Act, and the Auditor General of Ontario is authorized to audit any aspect of their operation. The same requirement applies with respect to publicly funded suppliers. Those recommendations come from the diluted chemo drug report.

Thank you for your support.

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PTSD AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2018
LOI DE 2018 SUR LA JOURNÉE
DE SENSIBILISATION À L'ÉTAT
DE STRESS POST-TRAUMATIQUE

Mr. Bouma moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 9, An Act to proclaim an awareness day for posttraumatic stress disorder / Projet de loi 9, Loi proclamant une journée de sensibilisation à l'état de stress post-traumatique.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Brantford-Brant can now give an explanation of his bill.

Mr. Will Bouma: Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, is a debilitating anxiety disorder which can occur after a person has experienced a traumatic event.

Common among veterans, first responders, dispatchers and survivors of sexual violence, PTSD, similar to other mental illnesses, still faces stigmatization which prevents sufferers from seeking the help they need in order to combat this terrible affliction.

Mr. Speaker, this private member's bill will raise awareness and help deal with the stigma attached to PTSD and hopefully lead to more fulsome conversation about it in the workplace, at home and in society. This bill will proclaim June 27 in Ontario as PTSD Awareness Day annually.

BRUNT AND KENDALL ACT
(ENSURING SAFE FIREFIGHTER
AND TRAINEE RESCUE
TRAINING), 2018

LOI BRUNT ET KENDALL DE 2018
(FORMATION SÉCURITAIRE
DES POMPIERS ET DES ÉLÈVES
POMPIERS EN SAUVETAGE)

Ms. French moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 10, An Act to amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997 and the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005 in relation to rescue and emergency services training for firefighters and firefighter trainees / Projet de loi 10, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la prévention et la protection contre l'incendie et la Loi de 2005 sur les collèges privés d'enseignement professionnel en ce qui concerne la formation des pompiers et des élèves pompiers en services de sauvetage et d'urgence.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Oshawa can now give a brief explanation of her bill.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: This is a reintroduction of my bill from the previous session, also known as the Brunt and Kendall Act (Ensuring Safe Firefighter and Trainee Rescue Training), 2018, in memory of Adam Brunt and Gary Kendall and to keep our future firefighters safe.

The bill makes amendments to the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, and to the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005, to implement measures to provide for the safe training of firefighters and firefighter trainees in rescue and emergency services.

GARRETT'S LEGACY ACT
(REQUIREMENTS FOR MOVABLE
SOCCER GOALS), 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE LEGS DE GARRETT
(EXIGENCES RELATIVES AUX BUTS
DE SOCCER MOBILES)

Mr. Stan Cho moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 11, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals / Projet de loi 11, Loi prévoyant des mesures de sécurité pour les buts de soccer mobiles.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Willowdale can now give a brief explanation of his bill.

Mr. Stan Cho: I'm honoured to carry the torch for our government House leader, who introduced this last year to the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, Garrett's Legacy Act is a private member's bill named in honour of 15-year-old Garrett Mills of Napanee. He was killed in May 2017 when a movable soccer goal fell over, fracturing his skull and killing him instantly.

The act establishes requirements for organizations or entities respecting the secure installation of movable soccer goals that they make available for use by members of the public. The act provides for inspections and requires the minister to establish a mechanism to report complaints of alleged non-compliance with the act.

FAIRNESS FOR THE AUTO SECTOR ACT (EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS), 2018

LOI DE 2018 FAVORISANT L'ÉQUITÉ DANS LE SECTEUR DE L'AUTOMOBILE (NORMES D'EMPLOI)

Ms. French moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 12, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 in respect of leaves of absence / Projet de loi 12, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne les congés.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Oshawa with a brief explanation.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: This is a reintroduction of the bill that is also entitled Fairness for the Auto Sector Act (Employment Standards), 2018.

Currently, the Employment Standards Act, 2000, permits industry-specific regulations about leaves of absence. These regulations can detrimentally affect the entitlements and rights that an employee would otherwise have under the part of the act that deals with leaves of absence.

The bill would restrict this power. Industry-specific regulations could still be made, but they would not be permitted to detrimentally affect those entitlements and rights.

This is in response to the unfair exception of auto workers from entitlements provided by the Employment Standards Act.

TIME TO CARE ACT (LONG-TERM CARE HOMES AMENDMENT, MINIMUM STANDARD OF DAILY CARE), 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE TEMPS ALLOUÉ AUX SOINS (MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LES FOYERS DE SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE ET PRÉVOYANT UNE NORME MINIMALE EN MATIÈRE DE SOINS QUOTIDIENS)

Ms. Armstrong moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 13, An Act to amend the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007 to establish a minimum standard of daily care / Projet de loi 13, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les foyers de soins de longue durée afin d'établir une norme minimale en matière de soins quotidiens.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for London-Fanshawe can give a brief explanation.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This is also a reintroduction of the bill from the previous Parliament, a Time to Care Act (Long-Term Care Homes Amendment, Minimum Standard of Daily Care), 2018.

The bill amends the Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007, so that a long-term-care home will have to provide its residents with at least four hours a day of nursing and personal support services, averaged across the residents. The minimum hours may be increased by regulation.

Speaker, this is a very important bill, because we all know that seniors are vulnerable in our society, and we have to make sure that they reside in long-term-care homes with dignity and respect.

PETITIONS

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from Chris Ferrigan on Ridge Road in my riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas quality care for the 78,000 residents of (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families; and

"Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in LTC homes to keep pace with residents' increasing acuity and the growing number of residents with complex behaviours; and

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"Whereas several Ontario coroner's inquests into LTC homes deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and staffing levels and the most reputable studies on this topic recommend 4.1 hours of direct care per day;"

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

“Amend the LTC Homes Act (2007) for a legislated minimum care standard of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I fully agree. I’ll be signing my name and giving it to page Annabelle to bring up to the table.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Norman Miller: I have a health care petition, and it reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare has been considering the future of the Huntsville District Memorial and South Muskoka Memorial hospitals since 2012; and

“Whereas accessible health care services are of critical importance to all Ontarians, including those living in rural areas; and

“Whereas patients currently travel significant distances to access acute in-patient care, emergency, diagnostic and surgical services available at these hospitals; and

“Whereas the funding for small and medium-sized hospitals has not kept up with increasing costs including hydro rates and collective bargaining agreements made by the province; and

“Whereas the residents of Muskoka and surrounding areas feel that MAHC has not been listening to them; and

“Whereas the board of MAHC has yet to take the single-site proposal from 2015 off its books;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario request the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care commits to maintaining core hospital services at both Huntsville District Memorial Hospital and South Muskoka Memorial Hospital and ensure small and medium-sized hospitals receive enough funding to maintain core services.”

I support this petition. I’ve signed it and will give it to Emmanuel.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: My petition is to stop Doug Ford from interfering in municipal elections.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that

the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I agree with this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and passing it to page Bavan to take to the Clerk.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Suze Morrison: I would like to present a petition entitled “Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.” It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I fully endorse this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and providing it to page Justin to deliver to the Clerk.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Tom Rakovec: I will be reading out a petition entitled “Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.”

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I support and will be signing this and giving this to the page.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Chris Glover: Mr. Speaker, my petition is entitled “Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I support this petition. I will be affixing my signature and passing it to page Bavan.

AFFAIRES AUTOCHTONES

M^{me} France Gélinas: « Pour mettre fin aux coupures affectant la réconciliation avec les autochtones.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

« Considérant que l’Ontario est situé sur le territoire ancestral des peuples autochtones, dont beaucoup habitent ces terres depuis des temps immémoriaux;

« Considérant qu’en 2015, la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada a présenté son rapport final, intitulé “Honorer la vérité, réconcilier pour l’avenir” et comprenant 94 recommandations ou “appels à l’action” à l’intention du gouvernement du Canada;

« Considérant que la réconciliation doit être au coeur de toute prise de décision gouvernementale;

« Nous, les soussignés, demandons à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario de mettre en oeuvre les mesures suivantes :

« —poursuivre le travail de réconciliation en Ontario, en donnant suite aux recommandations de la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada;

« —rétablir le ministère des Relations avec les Autochtones et de la Réconciliation;

« —travailler avec les leaders des Premières Nations pour signer des accords coopératifs, de gouvernement à gouvernement;

« —donner son appui à l’éducation en matière de vérité et réconciliation et au développement communautaire (en appuyant, par exemple, l’organisation de sessions d’écriture estivales reliées aux éléments mis en avant par la Commission de vérité et réconciliation du Canada);

« —donner son appui aux communautés autochtones à travers la province (en appuyant, par exemple, les travaux de nettoyage du réseau hydrographique de Grassy Narrows) ».

Je vais signer cette pétition, puisque je l’appuie, et la donner à Justin pour l’amener à la table des greffiers.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: A petition entitled “Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.”

“Whereas Doug Ford’s decision to reduce Toronto’s wards from 47 to 25 was made without any public consultation;

“Whereas Doug Ford’s meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

“Whereas Doug Ford is cancelling democratic elections of some regional chairs;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford’s unilateral decision to dismantle Toronto city hall and cancel regional chair elections; to maintain the existing Toronto municipal boundaries; and ensure that the provincial government does not interfere with the upcoming Toronto municipal election for Ford’s political gain.”

I support this petition, add my name to it and give it to the page.

CURRICULUM

Ms. Catherine Fife: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the 2015 health and education curriculum empowers young people to make informed decisions about relationships and their bodies; and

“Whereas gender-based violence, gender inequality, unintended pregnancies, ‘sexting,’ HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) pose serious risks to the safety and well-being of young people; and

“Whereas one in three women and one in six men experience sexual violence in Canada and a lack of age-appropriate education about sexual health and healthy relationships leaves them vulnerable to sexual exploitation; and

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“Whereas a 2018 Ipsos poll found that one third of Canadian parents know a child in their community who has been cyber-bullied and 20% of parents reported their own child being a victim of cyberbullying; and

“Whereas the 1998 Progressive Conservative curriculum does not teach students about consent, social media and online safety, stereotypes, sexual orientation, LGBTQ+ families or gender identity;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Education to continue the use of the Ontario 2015 health and physical education curriculum” in Ontario schools.

I fully support this petition and will affix my signature and give it to page Emmanuel.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Suze Morrison: I would like to present a petition entitled “Stop the Cuts to Indigenous Reconciliation.” It reads:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario is situated on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, many of whom have been on this land since time immemorial;

“Whereas in 2015 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report: ‘Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future’ which made 94 recommendations or ‘Calls to Action’ for the government of Canada;

“Whereas reconciliation must be at the centre of all government decision-making;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“—continue reconciliation work in Ontario by implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission;

“—reinstate the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;

“—work with First Nations leaders to sign co-operative, government-to-government accords;

“—support TRC education and community development (e.g. TRC summer writing sessions);

“—support Indigenous communities across the province (e.g. cleaning up Grassy Narrows).”

I fully endorse this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and providing it to the page.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CAP AND TRADE CANCELLATION ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 ANNULANT LE PROGRAMME DE PLAFONNEMENT ET D'ÉCHANGE

Mr. Phillips moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 4, An Act respecting the preparation of a climate change plan, providing for the wind down of the cap and trade program and repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016 / Projet de loi 4, Loi concernant l'élaboration d'un plan sur le changement climatique, prévoyant la liquidation du programme de plafonnement et d'échange et abrogeant la Loi de 2016 sur l'atténuation du changement climatique et une économie sobre en carbone.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Mr. Phillips has moved second reading of Bill 4. Mr. Phillips.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Today, I'll be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant for the environment, conservation and parks, the member from Barrie–Innisfil, and the member from Cambridge as well.

I rise today to begin second reading of Bill 4, the proposed Cap and Trade Cancellation Act. Last week, I introduced the bill as a way to officially remove the cap-and-trade carbon tax from Ontario's books. Our government was elected on a clear mandate: to put the people first and make life more affordable for Ontario families.

As part of this, we made a promise to the people of Ontario that we would scrap the cap-and-trade carbon tax imposed by the previous Liberal government. The Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, if passed, will fulfill our promise to taxpayers and, in doing so, send a clear message: Ontario's carbon tax era is over.

While we understand the challenges that climate change presents, we do not believe that the solution is a regressive tax. It's a punishing tax that forces poor and middle-class Ontario families to pay more for basic things like heating their homes or fuelling their cars. It is also a job-killing tax that imposes massive new costs on business and cripples our economy during a time of uncertainty.

The Auditor General confirmed in her 2016 report that the cap-and-trade program would result in significant costs, with people and businesses in Ontario forecasted to pay about \$8 billion more to the government over four years, starting in 2017, for fuels such as gasoline and natural gas. At the same time, the Auditor General asserted that this expenditure would produce limited reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, falling 80% short of the targets set.

Mr. Speaker, \$8 billion is a very large sum to pay for measures that aren't very effective at reducing emissions in the province. The Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Academy of Engineering's 2017 report, *The Cost of a Cleaner Future: Examining the Economic Impacts of Reducing GHG Emission*, also confirmed that carbon pricing results in only a small reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. It's frustrating for Ontarians to learn that this substantial expenditure of tax dollars in the cap-and-trade program did not move us much towards the targets that were set.

The Auditor General reported that the joint market with Quebec and California could result in capital outflows to those jurisdictions, a subsidy provided for them with little benefit to Ontarians. Ontario contributed more than US\$2.7 million over the course of 2016-17 to help fund the operations of this market alone.

This is why we ran on a platform that would eliminate the cap-and-trade program and the regressive tax it imposes on people and businesses. We made it clear that we will eliminate the ineffective cap-and-trade program and fight the tax with every tool at our disposal, and we are following through on that commitment.

Our government revoked the cap-and-trade program regulation and prohibited all trading of emission allowances, effective July 3. The revocation of the cap-and-trade program regulation means there are no longer any costs associated with the program that could be passed on to Ontario households or businesses. We are initiating the formal process to withdraw from all agreements related to the linked market and the Western Climate Initiative. We have also already implemented a plan to end the programs that were being subsidized by the cap-and-trade carbon tax. Effective July 3, 2018, we started cancelling programs currently funded through the cap-and-trade carbon tax proceeds, including the immediate orderly wind-down of the Green Ontario Fund.

Finally, we are committed to using all available resources to challenge the federal government's plan to impose a carbon tax on Ontario families. If the federal government chooses to continue in this course to punish Ontario families with this oppressive new tax, we will oppose it with every tool and every court at our disposal. A tax is a tax, no matter what the spin. Instead of creating and protecting jobs, the federal government's plan would burden Ontario's economy with an oppressive carbon tax, chasing jobs out of the province. This is why, earlier this month, Premier Ford announced that Ontario will join Saskatchewan's court challenge of the federal government's carbon tax plan.

Our next step is this important legislation. The orderly and transparent wind-down of the cap-and-trade carbon tax would benefit all Ontarians. It would ensure that no additional cap-and-trade costs would be imposed on suppliers, to avoid passing these costs on to consumers. This is real action that will save the average family \$260 each and every year and create jobs for the people of Ontario.

If the proposed bill is passed, it is estimated that, in 2019, it will lower the cost of gasoline by 4.5 cents and diesel by 5.5 cents a litre. The price of natural gas is regulated by the Ontario Energy Board and we expect that the board will remove the carbon cost from its rate approvals at its next hearing in October. This, we anticipate, will have an annual household savings on natural gas bills of \$70 per year. We are also confident that fuel suppliers will work with us to lower retail prices so that Ontarians can see the price decrease at the pump.

If the proposed bill is passed, cancelling the cap-and-trade program is estimated to increase our gross domestic product by 0.13% and support 8,000 new jobs in 2021. The estimated direct savings to all sectors in 2019 will be \$1.9 billion.

In short, the end of the carbon tax era means relief for families, lower costs for businesses and more disposable incomes for households. In turn, more money for businesses and disposable income for households boosts consumption, exports, output, business investment and employment. An end to the regressive tax will result in a boost to Ontario's economy. It's for these reasons and more that the proposed Cap and Trade Cancellation Act is needed.

The proposed bill sets out the legal framework for the wind-down of the cap-and-trade program, including a responsible and fair compensation framework. Key elements of our legislation include:

- repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016;
- the retirement and cancellation of cap-and-trade instruments, both allowances and credits;
- a responsible and fair compensation framework;
- protecting taxpayers from additional costs;
- a requirement for government to set greenhouse gas emission reduction targets;
- a requirement for the minister to prepare a climate change plan; and

- addressing proceeds credited to the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account.

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If passed the bill would not only repeal the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016, but effectively revoke its underlying regulations, including:

- Ontario Offset Credits, O. Reg. 539/17;
- Administrative Penalties, O. Reg. 540/17;
- Service of Documents, O. Reg. 451/17;
- Prohibition Against the Purchase, Sale and Other Dealings with Emissions Allowances and Credits, O. Reg. 386/18; and
- Quantification, Reporting and Verification of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, O. Reg. 143/16.

Our decision-making on the proposed wind-down of the cap-and-trade program will be guided by several principles. We want to swiftly remove the carbon price from energy prices paid by Ontario consumers. We want to minimize impacts on taxpayers with possible compensation and legal liability. Indeed, our current estimate is that the total compensation cost will be up to \$5 million. We are putting the people of Ontario first and taking care to ensure that taxpayers are protected from unnecessary exposures.

Finally, we want to provide a responsible and fair framework for compensation. The proposed compensation framework aims to minimize the impact to capped participants who are not in a position to recover costs from consumers.

According to this plan, no compensation will be paid for allowances provided free of charge; allowances below assessed emissions; allowance costs that could have been passed on to consumers; or allowances purchased by non-emitting market participants.

This means that the following participants of the cap-and-trade program would not be eligible to receive compensation: non-emitting market participants; big gas suppliers; electricity importers; natural gas pipeline operators; and electricity transmission system operators. Furthermore, no compensation will be paid for allowances created for the year 2021.

Under the cap-and-trade program, capped participants were, by law, required to match allowances to the amount of greenhouse gases they emitted over a compliance period, for example 2017 to 2020. Our approach recognizes that regulated participants may have purchased allowances to comply with regulations, whereas market participants without a compliance obligation chose to take risks as market traders and speculators.

Regulation under the proposed act will contain details about how the compensation amounts were determined and circumstances that apply in order for compensation to be paid.

To provide businesses with certainty on what the reporting requirements are as related to the orderly wind-down of the cap-and-trade program, we will be making changes to the existing greenhouse gas reporting regulation, to be effective August 1, 2018. The changes include

moving the current reporting regulation, to be repealed, under the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016, to the Environmental Protection Act, and adding the requirement for a mid-year 2018 verified greenhouse gas emissions report.

Members of the regulated cap-and-trade community will be required to submit a report on their emissions from January 1 to July 3, 2018, by October 1, 2018, and have it verified by an accredited third party by December 1, 2018. This information will be used to process and determine the potential compensation as part of the orderly wind-down of the program. There are 251 capped participants that would be expected to submit the mid-year 2018 verified emissions report under the regulation.

We are also proposing that the act include provisions that would allow for the continuation of Ontario's greenhouse gas emissions reporting program and establish targets to reduce emissions in the province. This section of the regulation requires that the government make the reduction targets available to the public. The legislation will also see our government prepare a new climate change plan, a made-in-Ontario solution that addresses our challenges.

The legislation requires that the minister make the plan available to the public and gives the minister the ability to appoint a committee to perform such advisory functions for the purpose of preparing the plan. We would be required to prepare progress reports on the plan on a regular basis and make these reports available to the public.

Mr. Speaker, we are committed to putting in place a better, more effective plan to address environmental change while respecting the taxpayers and families of this province.

This government knows that climate change is a serious global problem. Canada's emissions make up just under 2% of global GHG emissions, and we know that Ontario represents 30% of that 2%. However, we know we can do better.

We know that the climate in Ontario is changing. Provincial annual temperature has been increasing since 1900, at a rate of approximately 1.3 degrees per 100 years. It's projected to increase by over three degrees by 2050, with even more significant warming expected in northern Ontario. This means that extreme weather events, such as storms and droughts, are likely to become more frequent and more severe.

We all know how much damage was caused in the July 2013 rainstorm, which dropped 124 millimetres of rain in just a few hours on some parts of the province. In Toronto alone it caused an estimated \$90 million in property damage—the most expensive natural disaster in Ontario history.

We do need to curb our emissions, but we also need an adaptation plan that will prepare us for climate-related events that could alter our food supply, health and property. We need to do this in a way that doesn't place an undue burden on Ontario families and businesses.

Make no mistake: The people of Ontario have done a lot. The people of Ontario have paid a great deal for the

progress that we've made. There is still a lot to do and much to be done, but we can find a solution that protects people and promotes prosperity.

We are moving past the previous government's obsession with raising taxes and instead focusing on an environmental plan that works. We'll deliver real action on providing clean air, clean water, conservation, reducing emissions and cleaning up litter, garbage and waste. With the proposed legislation, we have an opportunity to usher in a new era of economically prudent, effective environmental action that will also protect families.

As I said at the start, our government was elected with a clear mandate to put the people first and make life more affordable for Ontario families. This year, it begins with the cancelling of the cap-and-trade carbon tax. As I've said before, it's the right thing to do, it's a good thing to do, and it's one more example of promises made, promises kept. I would urge the members to support this legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): I recognize the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'm pleased to rise in the House this afternoon to speak to Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018, introduced by the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Why are we here to debate this bill and why are we here today? Because we have a clear mandate from the people of Ontario. We campaigned on a promise of eliminating cap-and-trade and the carbon tax. That is why we are here today. We are keeping our promise. Promise made, promise kept.

May I say that the fundamental difference between the Progressive Conservatives and the members of the opposing parties is the respect that we have for all Ontarians' hard-earned money. It is this respect that binds us on this side of the House, where we have no shame to stand up and protect those hard-earned taxpayer dollars, because we are here for the people, we are here to serve and we are here to protect.

Our PC caucus fundamentally believes that climate change is real and that human activity is a significant factor, and the minister has made that clear as well. But let's step back for a moment and look at some of the historic elements of the PC Party and how proud we can be of our record.

For starters, we're actually the party that did close down the coal plants. We closed those plants that were contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. That was on this side of the House. We're the ones who started it. It was our own former Minister of the Environment, Elizabeth Witmer, who was the first minister to announce the planned cancellation of the coal plants.

The PCs have a very proud history. Don't forget, Mr. Speaker, we're the ones who formed the Oak Ridges moraine and the Niagara Escarpment, and it was in 1999 that we announced Ontario's Living Legacy fund, where we added 378 new parks and protected areas, bringing the Ontario total to 650, increasing the square kilometres

of park by 95,000. This is a proud history, and I'm glad to stand up in the House to add to that historic moment.

We need to accept our responsibility, and we recognize that on this side of the House because we want to be part of the solution. We believe Ontarians need to be part of the solution, and they should not be punished for that solution. That is why they chose in the last election to have a voice in the solution, and that solution is not to tax and gouge. Unlike the previous government, we believe that whatever we do to fight climate change, we need to do it in a way that does not hurt our families and continues to make our businesses competitive in the dynamic global economy that we live in.

On the topic of the global economy, let's not fail to mention what our other partners are doing. For instance, Australia: Australia did impose a carbon tax, and two years later, after they introduced the program in 2012, they repealed it in 2014. Why did they repeal it, Mr. Speaker? Because the citizens, the taxpayers, the businesses and the industry groups across Australia rallied to abolish this harmful tax.

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Interjection: Like in Ontario.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Like in Ontario. Exactly.

The Prime Minister of Australia actually came down to Canada and he said, "Look, this is a terrible idea." He spoke with the Prime Minister of Canada, and what did they go ahead with and do? They repeated the same mistake. We do not want to go down this reckless path in Ontario. Here, we want an Ontario that is prosperous, that's open for business. Even the Australian Chamber of Commerce was clamouring about this impactful, harmful tax. They said it really did impact the competitiveness of many Australian businesses and, of course, it put the price up on power. According to the chamber of commerce for Australia, they said that by eliminating this terrible idea, this terrible policy, this terrible tax, it improves their competitive advantage in the world.

But look at us here. Don't we want a competitive advantage? We do. Stop prohibiting the future from having that competitive advantage. We need to think about the future of Ontarians, the kids who are going to school now. Where are they going to be in the future? Where is their competitive advantage? What if they want to do a start-up? What if they want to do a business? Well, all these things are harmful to them as they are losing their competitive edge. They do not want to be paying the tax now; they don't want to be paying the tax later. They, being the taxpayer, spoke loud and clear.

We need to abolish this tax, especially one that is sending millions of dollars to California. We need to spend it here at home. We don't want another slush fund. California, in another example, implemented their cap-and-trade program before us and without us, so why are we spending money to send it to California? It was there before, and suddenly now we're adding to their benefits without any benefits to our next generation and our future.

We need to make sure we're spending the money here at home to reduce our emissions without punishing those

who want to get ahead. Why not use the money that we're spending on California and spend it here on projects—projects like in my hometown of Barrie–Innisfil, in my riding. I know a number of local environmental projects that can certainly benefit from this fund. My constituents, for example, have worked on the Lake Simcoe Conservation Fund. We could be taking that money and, instead of giving to it California, we could be conserving right at home, right on our own Lake Simcoe, combatting phosphorus levels.

It was actually under the Harper government that we established this dedicated fund to reduce the phosphorus levels, which helped naturalize our shores and make sure our storm water is clean when it's going into our lakes. But do you know what happened? This fund, which was actually created by the Conservatives and helped clean up our lakes, helped reduce the phosphorus levels, was cancelled. And do you know who it was cancelled by? It was cancelled by Justin Trudeau's government, the same government that wants, rather, to tax us and take our money instead of putting it into local initiatives at home, things that we can quantify, we can count, and we can get our students, our teachers and our local first responders behind. But no, it was cancelled, and that's a shame.

Under the current cap-and-trade program, the previous Liberal government used the funds they raised to balance their budget. I'm going to say it, Mr. Speaker, because that's what they did. We have seen that it actually has not reduced greenhouse emissions. Not only did they use it to balance their budget, they used it for programs like Tesla subsidies, through the greenhouse gas reduction account.

It might just be me, but I'm a little skeptical. I don't think middle-income families are driving a \$100,000 car. That's just me. I'm just talking to folks in my riding of Barrie–Innisfil. Maybe your riding is a little different, but middle-class Barrie Ontarians and Innisfil Ontarians are not driving \$100,000 cars. Frankly, many people are not going to be fooled that this slush fund is reducing greenhouse emissions.

Don't just take it from my constituents in Barrie–Innisfil. Read the reports; read the science. A report by the Institute for Energy Research, for example, points to eight reasons why cap-and-trade is a bad policy. I'm not going to list all the reasons, but I encourage everyone to look them up. I do have a bit of a lack of time, so do your research.

But one of the main points presented focuses on the fact that the whole point of cap-and-trade is the increase to energy prices. One of the main points they presented does focus on the fact that it does increase the price of energy. For cap-and-trade to work, the price of oil, coal and natural gas needs to increase to force consumers to use more expensive forms of energy, and that just sounds terribly wrong.

In addition, we don't even know if the cap-and-trade tax actually works. I mentioned it earlier: Australia got rid of the carbon tax. This is another failed experiment that we don't want to take on, and now we don't even know if there's actual proof of cap-and-trade and whether it's actually going to work.

Europe's emissions trading scheme began in 2005, and the first phase from 2005 to 2007 did not reduce carbon dioxide emissions. So we have that evidence, Mr. Speaker. Instead, actually, overall emissions increased by 1.9% in that period, not decreased. So the facts, the studies and the science prove themselves.

Right now, however, things that we do know, as well, here locally is that we know families' budgets are stretched. They're stretched to the limits. Under the previous Liberal government, the cost of living in Ontario skyrocketed. The previous government was a government of high taxes, fees, hidden fees and more fees, caused by their mismanagement, scandals, practically no oversight in expenditures—but I would be here for hours talking about that. The people in Ontario made it clear: They cannot afford another tax.

Let me also remind this House that the former environment minister's chief of staff, under Kathleen Wynne, landed a job at none other than Tesla. That's really exciting for him. In the same month—

Hon. Sylvia Jones: In government relations.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: In government relations, yes; in government relations. So I don't know if that's unethical or a conflict of interest, but all of a sudden, in that same month as he landed that great job at Tesla, they announced a major subsidy for a program providing up to \$14,000 to consumers who buy electric cars like Tesla. Where's the accountability?

Interjection: No accountability.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: No accountability; that's right.

In addition, under this cap-and-trade program, there is no accountability for the cost and effectiveness of the greenhouse gas reduction account. There's none. This greenhouse gas reduction account funded projects, and there's no accountability linked to the total cap-and-trade proceeds to any specific level of the economy-wide greenhouse gas reductions, not even in the 9.8 million tonnes promised in the Climate Change Action Plan. So it's proof that this was just another tax grab, with zero accountability to the people of Ontario. There was zero accountability to them. Really, what we've seen is that it was just to help Liberal insiders.

No more, though, Mr. Speaker. Like we've been saying all along, hope and change are on the way, and no more. Our government is committed to restoring the trust, the trust between the government and its people, that social contract. Let it also be known that under the leadership of Premier Ford, we have actually delivered on our promises to the people of Ontario.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention—let's not forget the radical members of the opposition side. Some of their members have actually advocated for an even higher carbon tax. The member from Ottawa Centre, specifically, has clearly expressed his belief and has publicly stated that he would fight for a \$30-per-tonne carbon tax, with an annual increase by \$10 to 2030, making it \$150 per tonne in 12 years. That's unfathomable, Mr. Speaker. This would translate into a 34.8-cent-per-litre increase to gas. For the average driver, at 20,000 kilometres a year—

that's what you usually declare to your insurance company when they ask you how long you're going to drive; most people say 20,000 kilometres a year—that would mean a \$772.56 increase at the pumps per year. I don't know about you—but my constituents at Barrie–Innisfil can't afford that; not at all. Many of them commute every day to work, and they just can't afford that. Many of them have to take their kids to swimming lessons, soccer lessons or hockey lessons. They can't afford that. Camping trips this summer? Well, they're not going to be able to afford that this year because they're going to have to pay this increase. But luckily, they can actually budget for the summer, because we're stopping this from happening.

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That's the difference, and that's why we're proposing that hope and that prosperity, because we don't want to punish people for the things that they need day to day. Those learning experiences, those kids who want to go to Brownies, who want to go to Scouts—we don't believe in punishing them for those life experiences. We want to make sure that they learn that they can take the environment into their own hands. They can participate in things like the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation. They can participate in things like we had in Barrie and we also had in Innisfil, where we had a day where we cleaned up litter right off the streets. We had a lot of participants and many schools come and join us.

They're taking the future into their own hands—things they can count. It's quantifiable. They're literally taking litter from the ground, putting it in the trash bin, the recycling bin, and being able to actually make an impact and make a difference in their community. It's not coming at a cost to their mom and dad, who are really busy working, trying to provide food for the family, a roof over the house and extra-curricular activities, if the budget permits. That's the world that we want to create. That's the prosperity, hope and equality of opportunity that this side of the House believes in.

I know the opposing side would want something different. Even worse, the carbon tax that they proposed—like I was mentioning to the member from Ottawa Centre, his plan would actually also apply to natural gas. In my community, a lot of which is rural, that would punish a lot of my constituents, because they do rely on natural gas to heat their homes. It would mean they'd have to turn down the heat in their home during wintertime, and while we're not the buckle of the snowbelt in my riding, we are part of the belt, so it does get quite cold. We get a lot of snow. If you are relying on natural gas, your bill just got a little bit more and you have to make those cost-cutting reductions. That's why, on this side of the House, we're not going to punish those people who choose other forms of energy, like natural gas. In fact, we'd want to look into expanding those types of things and not punish people for using that source of energy.

When I was looking at the 2018 Ontario budget and thinking these things about my riding, the fact that we

would want to have them save on natural gas, have them save at the pumps and have them save on things like propane so they could do their summer barbecue—I noticed in the Ontario budget, it notes a \$72-a-tonne carbon tax would equate to \$50 more a month in natural gas prices. So what does that mean to a family? Well, this rate would be quite high. It would mean that a lot of families would have to make cost-cutting reductions. At this rate, a \$150-a-tonne carbon tax would equate to \$216 per month on natural gas bills alone. I'm glad some people can afford that, but there are people who don't have that luxury and they have to make those tough, cost-cutting decisions.

When you impose that on a family, that has other consequences. That is why, on this side of the House, we're a loud, strong voice for those people, because we will stand up against those gouging prices on 73% of Ontario households, and so we are going to stand up for that 73% of households that use natural gas to heat their homes. That means they're not going to have to pay more than \$2,592 that they would have to pay under the NDP. That is why we are in government—because we are going to stand up for those people and make sure they're not getting gouged for the natural gas.

As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, I can say that the minister is committed to developing a plan what will, in fact, reduce emissions in Ontario, not just another cash grab from the people of Ontario. That is because we are a party for the people. By eliminating the cap-and-trade carbon tax, our government will be saving the average Ontarian \$260 a year. That is going to be putting more money in their pocket, in addition to helping them reduce 10 cents per litre at the gas pumps.

We're also going to help eliminate and repeal the carbon tax, which is going to not only help reduce the price at the pump, but actually is going to be a job creator. It's shocking, I know, for some other members, but for us it's a relief, because do you know what it's going to do? It's going to create 14,000 jobs just by scrapping the cap-and-trade, jobs that are going to have additional businesses, more employment and more prosperity in the province—those extra dollars you have in your pocket to spend on the things that you need to help fight local environmental initiatives, and to go to your parks and get involved in reducing local waste and emissions.

That type of saving and those types of jobs: What kind of signal is that going to send to the rest of the province? What kind of signal is that going to send to the rest of the world? It's going to send the signal that Ontario is open for business because we are putting more money in people's pockets—two of our core commitments to the people of this great province.

The starting point of all this, Mr. Speaker, is to remember why we want businesses to thrive in this province: to provide quality jobs to our residents and to help boost our economy to pay for social services that provide a hand up, not a handout. If we build an environ-

ment where our businesses can thrive, then we don't need to just bring in a buy-in-Ontario solution. We're going to have those people being able to buy in Ontario because we'll have an economy to support it, without punishing our businesses for producing and performing in Ontario. Many of those businesses that have now left can actually come back. That does produce jobs and more businesses, and that will actually provide people more money in their pockets so they can spend it on the things that they need, so they can value their hard-earned dollars.

This proposed legislation will not only provide people a reasonable and transparent plan to wind down the program, but it will actually minimize the waste of taxpayer dollars.

We also understand that the federal Trudeau government will try to impose a federal mandatory tax on us. I want it to be known that we will use every tool at our disposal to fight the federal carbon tax, as the minister has so well said. We will be joining in with Saskatchewan on this court challenge.

I find it very hypocritical that the federal Liberal government campaigns on environmental protection, and yet, as I mentioned, they did cancel things like the Lake Simcoe Conservation Fund, where scientists have found evidence that it was actually working. So does the Justin Trudeau government really care about the environment and protecting things, or do they really just want to impose taxes on the province as a whole to pay for their out-of-control spending? That's what it seems like.

I want to reiterate what the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has said in the House: "We have been given a very strong mandate from the voters of Ontario to repeal the cap-and-trade carbon tax program of the previous Liberal government." He goes on to say: "To proceed with that program, and frankly for the federal program to proceed, is disrespectful to the taxpayers of Ontario." Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I agree with the minister.

On this side of the House, we respect the voters and we listen to what they have said, because we govern through the people.

We have made great progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario, but we can do more. We need to continue to find new ways to reduce emissions. We can do this through a variety of different ways such as advancing technology and becoming more innovative in our ways, as well as co-operating and working together. This is not a partisan issue. I believe that everyone in this House today wants to preserve and save our environment for future generations. This is why I'm asking each and every one of you to support this bill, so that we can work together to tackle climate change. Because let's face it: CO₂ emissions do not have political jurisdictions.

Instead, let us challenge our finest minds in our universities, in our colleges, in our private, public and not-for-profit sectors to bring this issue to the forefront. Through technological advancements, let's find solutions that will help us to combat climate change. But let's do it by using evidence. Let's do it by science and data,

because that's what taxpayers deserve and that's what they want.

They want to do away with the gouging at the pumps. They want cheaper gas. They don't want to be punished; they want lower energy bills. They want more money in their pockets. That is why Ontario chose the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party in the last election, because they want a government that is proud to defend and proud to serve their hard-working taxpayers and Ontarians.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Thank you to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for putting this bill forward. Thank you to the member from Barrie–Innisfil. I enjoyed hearing you speak.

I agree that this is an issue that crosses party lines. It deals with affordability. The cap-and-trade carbon tax actually punishes businesses: businesses that want to invest in green technologies that now have less money to do so. The carbon tax is not a green tax at all.

Back in December, if someone had told me that by July I would be standing in this House speaking in support of a bill that would bring the era of the carbon tax in Ontario to an end, I would have told them they were not in their right mind. But here we are, Mr. Speaker, proof that better days are always possible in Ontario.

Today, I am proud to stand in this House and speak in support of Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act. With this proposed legislation, we can proudly say Ontario's carbon tax era is over. Our government was elected with a clear mandate to make life more affordable for Ontario families, a mandate for the people. Part of that was our unequivocal commitment to scrap the cap-and-trade carbon tax imposed by the prior government, and that is what we are doing. It is a promise made and a promise kept.

If passed, this legislation would remove Ontario's cap-and-trade carbon tax law. This legislation will reduce the burden on Ontario taxpayers and Ontario consumers. It will result in savings for Ontario families in energy and fuel costs and in direct costs that are passed on in the price of goods and services, and it will prevent the increasing burden this cap-and-trade carbon tax would have imposed on families in future years.

This legislation will put more money back in the pockets of Ontario residents on essential goods and services. This legislation is a good thing for the people of Ontario; it will make life more affordable. The cap-and-trade carbon tax is nothing more than a tax grab that punishes families and chases good jobs out of Ontario.

Before I go on, let's be clear on one thing, Mr. Speaker: Cap-and-trade is a tax. It is not a price; it is not a market mechanism. The best explanation I heard explaining this goes something like this: A market price, as it is called, is based on supply and demand and the cost of production, and consumers have a choice. When

the government sets it, imposes it and enforces its collection, it's a tax; it's not a price. I don't think we should find much disagreement on this point.

This might be one of those rare cases where we are in agreement across party lines in this House. Cap-and-trade is a carbon tax. It is a tax. The former Premier called it a tax. Our Prime Minister called it a tax in the House of Commons. So let's not misinform Ontarians any further. Let's be clear: This is a tax, and this legislation is getting rid of it.

This tax is hurting Ontarians, and the worst part about cap-and-trade is, it doesn't matter how much you make. Regardless of how much or how little you make, Ontario taxpayers have to pay the same just to get to work, heat their homes or buy their groceries. That is why we call it a regressive tax, the worst kind of tax, because those with lower incomes have to pay the same amount under this cap-and-trade carbon tax as those who make more money.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Wow. Shame.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Indeed.

Let's be clear: In this House, the solution to every problem we are faced with should not always and only be a new tax or more taxes. That is not a responsible way to govern. That is not governing for the people.

The prior Ontario government was relying on this tax to raise \$1.9 billion in 2018-19. And their four-year plan would have cost Ontario taxpayers \$8 billion—\$8 billion in costs paid for by Ontarians when they're travelling to work and when they're heating their homes and when they're buying food for their families. And Ontario businesses were projected to spend close to \$466 million in allowances from businesses in Quebec and California. By 2030, the prior government's own forecasts projected to see this amount rise to \$2.2 billion—\$2.2 billion leaving the Ontario economy; Ontario, once the economic engine of Canada; the reason why my father, in 1971, chose to come to Ontario, because it's the economic engine. By 2030, this prior government had projected to see the amount rise to \$2.2 billion leaving the Ontario economy for California and Quebec, money that would have left our province. It is no wonder the governments of California and Quebec urged us to keep this cap-and-trade tax in place. Of course they would.

Our government was elected by the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, and we will govern for those people. The financial burden of this cap-and-trade carbon tax would have been shouldered by Ontario taxpayers and consumers through higher costs for goods and services like fuel and energy and clothing and groceries. For example, annual household heating bills, a service families can't live without, increased, on average, \$70 per year. With this legislation, we expect annual home heating bills to have this financial burden removed. This financial burden was to be shouldered by Ontario taxpayers with little benefit.

It was projected, even with this cap-and-trade carbon tax in place, that the prior government was going to achieve less than 20% of the reductions they promised

they would achieve by 2020. Think about that: Even the prior government said that they were going to achieve less than 20% of the reductions they promised they would achieve by 2020. Most of the reductions the prior government was projecting from this tax would have been achieved in California and Quebec. That's because the system did not control Ontario emissions, and the system would not have prevented reductions from being reported in more than one jurisdiction and, as such, double-counting.

The increased taxation and costs to Ontarians were based on the false promise that the environment would improve and emissions would be reduced. But the Auditor General even reported that the plan was only going to reduce emissions by about a third of what the prior government projected, which all equates to this cap-and-trade carbon tax being one large, expensive experiment of political optics, and an experiment in generating more revenue for the government.

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This carbon tax was only political optics to give the appearance of environmental stewardship, with the financial bill paid for by Ontario taxpayers and Ontario consumers. As the Leader of the Opposition said, the prior government "let us down when it came to cap-and-trade—she failed to make it transparent and failed to ensure it was everyday Ontario people that benefited from it." That's because carbon taxes are not transparent and they do not benefit Ontario residents, taxpayers, ratepayers or consumers.

Scrapping the cap-and-trade carbon tax and fighting the imposition of any carbon tax will also prevent a further weakening of Ontario's economic competitiveness. The cap-and-trade carbon tax will remove a cost burden from Ontario businesses, which will allow them to grow, to create jobs and to compete globally. It will benefit all Ontarians. It is the right thing to do.

Our government will not be raising taxes on Ontario families on behalf of Ottawa. We will use every tool at our disposal to fight the federal government's plan to impose a punishing carbon tax on Ontario families. Instead of creating jobs and protecting existing ones, the federal government's threat to intrude on provincial jurisdiction is sure to burden Ontario's economy and chase jobs into other jurisdictions, all while doing nothing to help the environment.

We will be supporting the government of Saskatchewan in their defence of provincial jurisdiction and in defence of the parliamentary supremacy which is the foundation of our free and democratic society in Ontario. I urge all members of this Legislature to join us in support of this bill.

As we work through the wind-down of the cap-and-trade carbon tax, the minister assures us that there will be a determination of potential compensation to ensure that Ontario taxpayers and consumers are protected, but such compensation will not be available for allowances where the costs associated with complying with this tax were passed on to consumers. That means that compensation

would not be provided for allowances that were exported out of Ontario, for allowances allocated free of charge, or for allowances where the cost was recovered from consumers. The minister also assures me that our government is committed to addressing environmental priorities, including clean air and clean water, conservation, reduction of pollution, and reducing litter and waste.

I would also like to add that when a government proposes a new tax or an increase in taxation, it is incumbent on that government that it be clear that it is imposing a new or an increase in taxation and that the government be clear on the costs associated with such a tax. Stop me if I'm wrong, but the previous government wasn't clear on the costs associated with such a tax. People weren't aware that everything was going to go up in price. You add a cap-and-trade carbon tax to things and everything goes up in price, from the gas that I put in my car to the clothes I buy to put on my back to the gas to heat my home. Everything goes up in price. As we heard today, salaries aren't going up, but the cost of living is going up. Scrapping cap-and-trade is going to help some of that. I have some stories to share with you soon, Mr. Speaker, about this as well.

When a government proposes a new tax or an increase in taxation, it is incumbent on that government that the government be clear on the use of the proceeds from such a tax, and that the government be forthright and put its best foot forward in explaining what such attacks will achieve. Governments should not be in the business of using taxation as a political tool or for political optics or as political cover to simply make the government look good on the backs of taxpayers—something the people of Ontario are all too familiar with from the last 15 years. That isn't governing for the people.

It is also imperative that a government in this House defend its provincial jurisdiction and defend the will of the people and the right for self-governance, through a Parliament that is supreme. That why we must defend our provincial jurisdiction from threats to impose taxation in arbitrary means in matters that lie within provincial jurisdiction, or at the very least, where there is a lack of clarity as to whose jurisdiction in our Confederation the power lies.

The Cap and Trade Cancellation Act is an act for the people: respecting taxpayers; respecting ratepayers; respecting consumers; respecting Ontarians; taking real steps to improve our environment; making life more affordable; raising our standard of living; ensuring Ontario's economic competitiveness is strengthened. We are committed to doing all of this. Unfortunately, the cap-and-trade carbon tax did none of these things.

When I was campaigning before the election, going door to door meeting my constituents, I came across one couple that really stuck out in my mind. They were very frustrated. They don't often vote. They had never voted for the PC Party. But something was changing their mind this time around and it goes back to affordability—back to the member from Barrie–Innisfil, that comment she made about affordability crossing party lines. This family

had been struggling. They both work full-time jobs, living in Cambridge, and she said to me, “Belinda, I haven’t had a raise in five years.” And yet, as of when I last spoke to her in May, she said that she was up to her eyeballs in trying to make ends meet, she and her husband. Nothing had changed: They weren’t eating fancier food; they weren’t going to higher-end supermarkets; they weren’t buying high-end clothing. Everything had remained the same, yet somehow their outgoing expenses had gotten higher and their income had stayed the same.

They realized it was because of this cap-and-trade. They were able to track it back, looking at their bills, that the cost of living had gone up. There was a frustration on this woman’s face, Mr. Speaker, that I will never forget, and for her, on June 7, that was the make or break. It was a complete lack of respect from the previous government, the idea that taxes can magically fix the environment, the fact that taxes were going to make life better for so many other people—a tax like the cap-and-trade, which did nothing that it said it was going to do, that was attached to no results.

It’s very frustrating for people, Mr. Speaker, when that is their reality. And so this woman, who I have not been in touch with since—but who did put a sign on her lawn. I know that she’s looking for us to do the right thing and to hold true to our promises. And so every day, when we say, “Promise made, promise kept,” I think of her, because that’s the expectation from not just her, but from all of my constituents. Because as the government for the people, we need to remember them every single day.

1640

I also want to speak about some of the businesses in my area. Cambridge is home to a lot of great manufacturers, small businesses and medium-sized businesses. I spoke with one local small business owner and he hadn’t voted in 40 years. Again, this was make or break for him. It was the fact that things were becoming that much harder for him, both as a business owner and as a father, a husband and a homeowner.

These are the stories that we all heard every single day. These are the stories that pushed us to work harder and work longer. These are the things that push me today to work longer and work harder.

Bill 4 means a lot to me and my family, for reasons that I have mentioned before, and it means a lot to Ontarians; I know. Again, I want to commend the minister for putting this bill forward because it will make the difference. We will see a difference in our electrical bills. We will see a difference at the gas pumps. We’re going to see a difference across the board. We know that if we put money back in the pockets of Ontarians, they’re going to spend that money. And that’s going to help our economy grow.

If our small businesses, if our manufacturers are not having to pay this cap-and-trade, they have more money too to spend on green technologies, because that’s what they want to do. We shouldn’t assume that these businesses don’t want to do that, that we have to impose

this cap-and-trade. They’re investing already. They’re investing in green technology. This cap-and-trade was taking away money from businesses to do just that. We need to help them.

You help the people, you help the businesses. We eventually will support this economy. That’s what a Conservative government wants to do. We want to support our economy, support our people. We want growth. We want business. We want success. That’s what we want. That’s what we fight for every day.

A tax is a tax is a tax, and that’s what this cap-and-trade is. It is a tax. It is not a price. I said it in the beginning, and I’ll say it again: It is a tax. Call it by any other word, it is a tax.

Mr. Speaker, just quickly before I end, I have a news release provided to me—“Ontario’s Cap and Trade Will Not Significantly Lower Emissions Within the Province by 2020”—from the Auditor General.

“It is likely that less than 20% of reductions required to meet the province’s 2020 target will be achieved in Ontario, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk says in her 2016 annual report.”

I don’t even know if I need to say much more than that. This tax, this regressive tax, that has been pushed on the people of Ontario—I’m hoping that it will be no more. I’m looking forward to standing with Saskatchewan to ensure that this is not imposed on us from the federal government. I am so pleased that our Premier will stand strong with the Premier of Saskatchewan. I want the Premier to know, and I’m sure my colleagues will agree, that we stand by him 110%. We will fight Ottawa.

We are committed to doing all of this, to respecting taxpayers, ratepayers, consumers, Ontarians. The carbon tax did none of these things, and this is why I support this act, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Just before I go to questions and comments, I want to recognize a constituent of mine. John Parent has come up from Windsor. He’s here because many of you would recognize Tamsyn King, a page from our last Parliament. Tamsyn has volunteered to be back here to help us out this week. John, welcome back to Queen’s Park, and Tamsyn, thank you for volunteering to come back.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Chris Glover: In responding to the speeches that were just made, I just want to comment that the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights, which was passed by this Legislature in 1993, gives Ontario citizens the right to participate in environmental decision-making. The Canadian Environment Law Association has sent a letter to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks asking whether this bill will be going to consultation.

In the response, when the members opposite are making their final comments, I would ask them to answer this question: Will the Ford government obey the law of this land and consult with the citizens of the province, as called for in the Environmental Bill of Rights?

Hon. Steve Clark: What do you think we’re doing?

Mr. Chris Glover: I’m asking for a comment in the follow-up statements.

The other statement that I'd like to just comment on: People have been talking on the opposite side, saying that this is not good for the economy. But *Fortune* magazine on July 16, just two weeks ago, had an article that said that California beat its 2020 emissions target four years early. In 2016, they had lower carbon emissions than they did in 1990. It's the equivalent of them having taken 12 million cars off the road in a state that has 14 million cars. California has one of the most successful economies in the world, and *Fortune* magazine points out that a big part of the reason that they were able to achieve their carbon targets is because they have a cap-and-trade system with Ontario and Quebec.

However, with this bill, if it passes, Ontario will be coming out of that. We will be removing ourselves from that cap-and-trade system, so we will not be following the lead that has been established by California.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Questions and comments?

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Families are struggling to make ends meet, and the cap-and-trade carbon tax makes it even more difficult. They have to choose between heating and eating. It's time to put the people of Ontario first. As mentioned by the honourable Minister of the Environment, Ontario's carbon tax era is over.

With the elimination of the cap-and-trade carbon tax, the average family will save about \$260 per year, and it is a necessary next step to reducing gas prices by 10 cents a litre. Promises made, promises kept. Also, there is little incentive for businesses to open or expand here in Ontario. We can only be open for business if costs are reduced.

We must find a solution to focus on the environment, but it must be done responsibly. As the member for Barrie–Innisfil stated, we cannot gouge our taxpayers any longer. Just like Australia, we must abolish the cap-and-trade carbon tax. There has been very little to no reduction in greenhouse emissions under the previous Liberal cap-and-trade program. I would like to thank the honourable Minister of the Environment for moving to wind down the cap-and-trade program and repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act.

We will stand strong with the government of Saskatchewan and their Premier and our Premier together to make sure we put Ontarians first and fight the carbon tax of the Liberals federally.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Questions and comments?

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: This bill is an ideological carbon-tax-deniers make-believe act. I don't know how much the members opposite are aware of the fact that they are introducing it as unprecedented levels of forest fires rage across California and, in fact, Ontario. My colleague the member from Nickel Belt has been besieged by constituents calling her to say, "What am I going to do with my animals? They are threatened, and I'm being told that I have to be ready to evacuate any day now."

These forest fires, these floods and these earthquakes are getting more and more pernicious and dangerous.

Even the Insurance Bureau of Canada is deeply concerned about the effect they have on Canadian businesses as well as individuals and their ability to function.

1650

I wonder if my colleagues opposite have considered the cost to taxpayers of fighting these fires, earthquakes and floods—

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Are you suggesting a tax is going to stop fires?

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: —and I wonder what they're going to do to replace the cap-and-trade system, which, by the way, you can keep saying over and over again is a tax, but it really isn't, and it's another thing that shows your incredible ignorance—their incredible ignorance.

There are no targets set, there's no plan to get anywhere, and unless they have a magic wand that they're sitting on, I'm really not sure how they can claim to be environmentally responsible.

Moreover, they have no respect for business. This government that claims to want to open Ontario for business is busy bashing business over the head by creating a climate of insecurity.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Questions and comments?

Mr. Michael Parsa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start by thanking the minister for his very, very eloquent statement and his parliamentary assistant—a terrific job letting us know about the policy itself.

If you don't mind, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I'd like to acknowledge my very honourable colleague across about the question that he asked about consulting the people. We did that, sir. We did that for not only 28 days during the writ period but we did that for months and months before, and that's why we got elected. We went to the people and said, "Do you want to continue on this high tax, or do you want to have more money in your pocket?" We gave people choices.

Every political party had an opportunity to put their ideas forward. The members of the opposition did theirs, the independent members in the corner did theirs, and so did we, and we got a resounding majority from the people of Ontario because they liked our ideas. They like to have a government that respects their dollars. They like to have a government in power that cares about the environment but is not going to hurt the middle class and is not going to hurt small business owners, such as myself, who were struggling under the previous government. We simply could not afford to go the route that the official opposition was putting forward, which is why they weren't elected.

So I'm proud of our government. I'm proud of the minister for the proposals that he has put forward, and quite frankly, I can't wait to see more.

When we talk about "open for business" all across this province—all these proposals are going to help. I know that our small business owners in Ontario—I've spoken to them. They're excited about our initiatives.

Thank you very much, Minister, for putting them forward, and I can't wait to see the rest of our results.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): We'll now return to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for his two-minute wrap-up.

Hon. Rod Phillips: In wrapping up: Thank you for the comments from my colleagues—very insightful thoughts on the impacts. I think that's where I would leave this discussion today: the impacts on individual Ontarians, the impacts on families.

Yes, there are impacts on the environment, and we are going to be and are very serious about those and need to understand that people want clean air. They want clean water. They want action with regard to reduction in emissions, and they certainly want action in terms of looking at the effects of climate change because it's real.

But families also need to know that there's a government—and they do know that there's a government—that is going to put their interests first, that is going to understand that the 10- and 15- and 20- and 30- and 35-cent-per-litre additions to their gas are just not reasonable, are just not responsible.

They need a government that is going to look at the economy and look at the environment and say that these things can operate in tandem. They expect us, as a government that made the commitment we made, to not just get rid of the carbon tax or the cap-and-trade program of the previous government but also to fight with every tool that we have the imposition of the same sort of tax by a federal Liberal government that, frankly, doesn't seem to understand the needs of Ontario families, doesn't seem to understand the pressures that they face and doesn't understand that in standing against the people they won't be successful.

So, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments that were made. We look forward to the rest of the debate on this bill and, again, urge all the members of this House to consider passing this bill in the interests of Ontario families.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to address the House on this bill.

Speaker, I like to hike in the winter. I have friends who live north of Kingston, near Frontenac Park, and I go visit them at the end of December. When the days are minus 20 or minus 25, you go out and you can walk across the lakes. The hills are pretty rough, but the lakes are pretty flat. So you're out there, the ice is frozen solid, and you can walk safely under the beautiful clear blue skies. It's an extraordinary experience. When you're doing that, when it's minus 20 or minus 25, you're safe on that lake because that ice is frozen solid.

But if you go back at the end of February, early March, when there have been a few days when it has gotten close to zero, then the ice starts to thin out, and underneath the very thin snow on that layer of ice there are places where you can fall through. And that's deadly. That is deadly, Speaker.

We in this world today are in a place where literally the ice is melting under our feet and figuratively the ice is melting under our feet. We are breaking through in a variety of areas where we're seeing extreme weather events that put people at risk, put people's lives at risk.

This bill ignores that reality. It ignores the fact that we need to be dramatically, steadily cutting back our emissions.

I don't disagree that the cap-and-trade program brought in by the Liberals was flawed. If any of the members on the other side would like to read Hansard, they can see the criticisms I made to the Liberals: the inadequacy of their plans, the failings in terms of transparency, impact, fairness. All of that is true.

This government could have addressed those issues, but it didn't do that, not with this bill. What it has done is say, "We're not going to have cap-and-trade, and we're going to bring in a climate plan at some point." I'll get into that in greater detail, but the reality is that people's lives are at risk. People are losing their lives. To come into this Legislature with a bill that scraps that program and does not, in fact, put forward something concrete is unethical. When you put people's lives at risk, you are acting in a way that is unethical.

This bill will be expensive. I listened to the minister and I listened to the parliamentary assistant and the member from Cambridge. They seem to think—and I would be very interested in their comments—that a court challenge of the federal carbon tax will stop it from being imposed. I will just note to all of those who spoke that the Canada Revenue Agency collects the HST; the province doesn't collect it. So the federal government's ability to go in and just collect directly is there. You can challenge that bill, you can challenge the federal government—and I'll talk about that further—but unless you have a strategy that you have not yet revealed to stop the CRA from collecting taxes from businesses, your ability to stop the imposition of the carbon tax is a phantom, a ghost, a wish, not reality.

It's not just the direct costs, though, of the federal carbon tax coming in, which will be higher than the cap-and-trade fees in Ontario; this government is planning to spend \$30 million on a no-hope court case, \$30 million of hard-earned money that is going to be washed away. Some lawyer, maybe a very nice lawyer, maybe a lawyer who would be a friend of mine—I don't know—is going to get an opportunity to go on a vacation to a very nice place with \$30 million of our money that this government is going to spend on a no-hope court case.

Beyond that, this government is setting us all up for a higher cost of living in the years to come—higher food costs, higher energy costs, higher taxes—because, frankly, the infrastructure that's in place today can't handle the weather that we have today and that is coming in the years to come.

The bill is unethical, it will lead to a higher cost of living and, frankly, it smells. It smells of a backroom deal with the fossil fuel industry—an industry that has been

rigorous globally in protecting its market share when it comes to energy.

1700

I have no doubt that somewhere in a backroom—maybe a no-smoking backroom; times have changed—there was a deal between this Premier and the fossil fuel industry to kill action on climate change. It's entirely consistent.

I will be expanding on those points, Speaker. I'm sure you're just waiting for it eagerly now; I can see there's an energy in the way you're sitting in that chair.

If you're going to consider the ethics of this bill, look back at the context, because it isn't a bill that exists somewhere high up in the sky unconnected to the world. There is a context, and the context is that the world's climate is changing—it's changing more rapidly than scientists thought even five years ago—and there will be substantial consequences to that.

In 2006, the British government commissioned a study by Lord Stern. The Stern report came out and it outlined the impacts of climate change. It was very important because up to that point, all of the discussion had been what it's going to cost to take on climate change. There had been no discussion and no substantive research into the cost of not taking on climate change. That's of consequence, because there is always a cost and an effect. There are things on both sides of the scale. When you only focus on the cost of action and don't take into account the cost of inaction, you're not being honest with the public; you're covering up.

Lord Stern had a number of interesting things to say. It's a long report—well written; a bright guy. He notes:

“Our actions now and over the coming decades could create risks of major disruption to economic and social activity, later in this century and in the next”—now, later in the century, in 2006, is 2020, 2030; times that we're all going to be around in, that our children are going to be around in, that these pages are going to be around in—“on a scale similar to those associated with the great wars and the economic depression of the first half of the 20th century.”

So who in this House is eager to have us get back to the Great Depression? Who in this House thinks that the destruction and loss of life that went on in World War II is something we should be opening the door to? One would hope no one. But the reality of this bill, this do-nothing bill, is that that is where we're headed.

Lord Stern noted as well, the “emerging evidence of risks that higher temperatures will trigger massive system ‘surprises,’ such as the melting and collapse of ice sheets and sudden shifts in regional weather patterns like the monsoons.” Well, we've seen a global shift in weather patterns with heat waves around the world. Japan is even calling its current heat wave a national emergency because of the number of deaths. “Thus there is a danger that feedbacks could generate abrupt and large-scale changes in the climate and still further losses.”

Speaker, that's the global context: a risk to our way of life, a risk to our lives that has to be taken into account

when you are talking about climate policy. And that's not taken into account.

I looked at this bill. I'll go into more detail about it, but this bill acts as if climate change is a distant problem with minimal effect that we don't have to worry about. No, it's urgent, it's now, and it's taking lives.

On July 28, the Associated Press wrote about funerals taking place in Greece for the victims of Greece's lethal wildfire. The funerals began on Saturday: “The fire was the deadliest wildfire in Europe since 1900, according to the International Disaster Database run” in Brussels.

Greece's public order minister told the state broadcaster that it was “impossible to evacuate the area's 15,000 people”—we're talking about a place called Mati, outside of Athens—“in the 90 minutes that Monday's blaze roared through the area”—15,000 people. Moving them in 90 minutes ain't gonna happen, and it didn't happen.

A lot of people saved themselves by running into the sea; some drowned. One of the most heart-rending cases was that of twin girls, who their father had initially believed had survived the fire and were subsequently identified. “Nine-year-old twins Sophia and Vasiliki Philipopoulos were found in the arms of their grandparents, who also perished in the fire.”

The heat wave in the northern hemisphere is causing fires and temperatures at unprecedented levels. It is having a real impact on human life and is causing human death. The fire outside of Athens was hot enough to melt metal. It was hot enough to melt metal.

Speaker, there is a direct connection between those fires and the heat wave in the northern hemisphere. It's no mystery, say scientists, that we're having record heat and record fires. Heat waves are setting all-time temperature records across the globe. Europe suffered its deadliest wildfire in more than a century, and one of nearly 90 large fires in the western US burned dozens of homes and forced the evacuation of at least 37,000 people near Redding, California.

My colleague from Beaches–East York talked about a situation in Nickel Belt where my other colleague France Gélinas is dealing with constituent calls asking, “Where am I going to evacuate to? Where am I going to take my livestock to?” It's a real question. It's not something distant, far away and minor; it is life-threatening. It is taking lives today. It is destroying people's homes. It is of consequence. To bring forward a bill that dismantles cap-and-trade, that allows the government to stop the investments needed to reduce our emissions, and to bring forward a proposal for a pablum-like climate plan, is irresponsible. It is unethical.

In the United States so far this year, fires have burned 4.15 million acres, which is nearly 14% higher than average over the past 10 years. If you go back 10 years, they will tell you that the fires then were bigger and more extensive than they had been the previous 10 years, and so on and so on. The world is getting hotter. It's getting drier. The forests that we love so much are drying out. They're becoming tinder for massive fires.

It's so hot, again, other media reports, that even parts of the Arctic are on fire. Temperatures this month reached 30 degrees Celsius well inside the Arctic Circle in Sweden, where the worst fires the country has seen in decades are now burning. More than 50 fires have ignited across the country, forcing evacuations.

We're not exempt here in Ontario. I was talking about my colleague from Nickel Belt and what she's dealing with. Yesterday in the House, we marked the tragic loss of a firefighter, and a number of large fires are still burning in the province. In fact, the Canadian Press reported that crews from the United States and Mexico have joined firefighters from throughout Ontario and the rest of Canada to tackle the flames. A local official said that this has been a landmark year for forest fires in Ontario mostly due to lots of lightning and precious little rain. The world gets drier; you get more fires.

There have been 688 wildfires this year so far in Ontario, compared to an annual average of 517 over the past 10 years. It's getting hot. Things are catching fire. People are being driven out of their homes. Some are being caught in those fires. When you simply say, "I'm not going to continue this cap-and-trade. I'm going to bring in maybe a mushy climate plan later," you're saying you're okay with that. You're okay with that. Ontario can burn and you're okay with that.

I'll use a smaller analogy. If you hire an architect and give that architect directions to design a building, but you want to save some money so you say, "Just cut out that fire protection stuff, because it's so pricey. You know, it really can be. It's a bother"—and if you can save a few million bucks on a multi-million dollar building by getting rid of the fire suppression and the fire protection, well, it's all to the good, right? Until it catches fire. Then you put people at risk of a terrible death.

1710

It's no different to abandon climate action. We know the consequences. We know the consequences in human lives and the economic fate of our society if we're not taking action on climate change.

The minister has said that the Ford government accepts climate science and it will act. I don't believe either of those two statements, and I don't think anyone should believe those statements.

First of all, if you believe the science—and I assume that if you believe the science, you've read scientific reports—then you understand the urgency of the matter before us. If you actually believe the science, you wouldn't bring forward this bill. You might bring forward a different bill. You might deal with the problems the Liberals left off the table. You'd actually have concrete plans and you wouldn't just be talking about how we'll deal with climate change through innovation and technology. That's not an answer; that's a time-filler.

Secondly, if you were willing to actually take action on climate change, you wouldn't stop the projects that are in place today to reduce emissions. "Oh, yes, we're going to do it later. We'll do it sometime down the road. I'll pay you back later. You give me 20 bucks now; I'll

pay you in a week or two." No, Speaker, the mechanisms are in place to act now. They're imperfect. I've been deeply critical of them. But, frankly, before you get rid of them, show that you have something in place that will make things better, not worse. So I don't think anybody should believe that this government either truly believes the climate science or is truly going to make a difference.

The Ford government has decided to halt climate action—even inadequate climate action—without paying any attention to the consequences of that halt. It is taking us backward. There's no concrete commitment to targets; no concrete commitment to methods; no concrete commitment to actually bring things forward in the near future.

The act requires the minister to develop greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, but there are no targets in the bill. He says he's going to bring them forward. There's no basis for setting the targets. Is the basis for setting the targets that we need to meet the Paris climate agreement, that we keep the increase in temperature on earth to two degrees centigrade or less? There's no indication of that in the bill. Is the indication that the targets should be consistent with what the minister feels like when he finishes breakfast in the morning? There's no indication of that. What we have is mush.

There are no deadlines to set the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The bill says he has to set targets. Is it this year? Is it next year? Is it the year after that? Is it in the next election year? Any of those are entirely viable guesses because you haven't set a date for bringing it forward. It has unconstrained discretion to decide whatever the targets are going to be and can revise them in any direction it wants. If it decides, "Hey, I'm getting pushback from the fossil fuel industry. Exxon, Chevron and Suncor are all saying they don't like this. It's eating into their market share. You've got to pull back on those targets. You've got to reduce the action that's going to be done," the minister can do that. It may not be this minister. I've seen Ministers of the Environment come and go in my time here. They sort of whirl around, and you get different ones in different years. Maybe this minister is conscientious; I don't know yet. But the next one may not be, and the next one can cut back the targets to whatever level they want.

The targets will no longer be enshrined in law or regulation as they were under the act that is being replaced. Again, that act was weak. There was tons of criticism. Again, read my Hansard. I was not gentle. But it's even less than the Liberals. Now, that's saying something. That's an extraordinary thought, because I thought they were laggards.

The minister can set new targets. They don't have to be as strong as existing targets. There's no requirement to seek expert advice on setting the targets. The Minister of the Environment could talk to the Minister of Tourism, who is someone who's a decent person, but I don't think they have the knowledge about target-setting when it comes to greenhouse gas emission reduction. It's not there. It's just not there. So that's the targets.

All of this is reproduced when it comes to the climate change plan itself that's required by the act. There are no deadlines to make a plan. So again I ask, this year, next year, the year after, 2021, 2022? Who knows? Who knows? There is no duty to review the plan periodically, so the plan could be written and it could be put into a drawer. If anyone asks, "Do you have a climate plan?", the minister could say, "Yes, I've got one. It's in that desk drawer down there. You can pull it out if you want. Yes, it's still shiny; we printed it on good paper." But, frankly, Speaker, there is no duty to review that plan periodically to see if it's effective or to see if it's ineffective—nothing. He can revise the plan in any way he wants, and again, if the fossil fuel industry doesn't like the direction that he's taking, he can just gut it.

There's no requirement to seek expert advice on the plan. Interestingly, the UK, which for the last few years has had Conservative governments, actually has an expert advisory committee. They do analysis. They look at what's going on in the economy. They look at what's going on in the environment. They advise the government on their climate plans. There is no requirement for anything like that. It is possible for a Conservative government to talk to experts. I know some people will say I'm just blowing hot air, but it is possible for them to do it—and there are real-world examples.

There is no requirement for public consultation on the plan. Now, I have to say that that was a criticism I had of the Liberals as well: They didn't have the consultation that I felt needed to take place on their climate plan. But the Tories have just taken a page out of the Liberal book and gone forward with that.

There's no deadline to issue progress reports on the plan. So what do we get? A progress report every four years, just before an election or just after an election? Who knows?

It may be possible to write a weaker, more weaselly act, but you would have to work on it. I mean, you would have to spend some time. I know my colleagues are thinking, how could I write a worse bill? They're stretching their imaginations; I mean, it's tough. I see my colleague the member from Guelph; he's wondering as well. I mean, really, how do you do it worse? It's possible. Anything is possible in the universe. But they have done well in terms of being weaselly.

There's no requirement for an evaluation of the real impact of any measure proposed in the plan or an assessment of effectiveness. That was a big problem I had with the Liberals as well. They would announce this, that or the other direction, but there was no mechanism for assessment. Did it actually save the emissions that it said it was going to save? Who knows?

I had an opportunity to talk to the auditor about this. She was pretty good; she said, "I can tell you dollars in and dollars out, but I'm not qualified to tell you what the impact was in terms of reduction of emissions." So you would probably have to empower the Environmental Commissioner and make sure the Environmental Commissioner had the budget for the staff to do that

assessment. But you have to do that assessment so you're not just writing stuff down on paper, moving dollars in, moving product out, and not determining whether or not you have an effect.

So for all that I've noted above, given the size of risk to human life and to our economy, the dereliction of duty with this bill is evident. The bill is unethical. This bill will be expensive. I've talked about the ethics. Now I want to talk about the cost, because the parliamentary assistant and the member from Cambridge spoke about cost.

With the cap-and-trade bill out of the way, the federal government's carbon tax will come into effect on January 1 of next year. I've been told that this government will fight it with all the legal tools at their disposal. Again, Speaker, I have no doubt that a well-off Bay Street law firm will do well. It's clear. If nothing else is clear, that is clear. But, unless they have a surprise—and I look forward to hearing it in the comments in response to my speech. The federal government collects HST through the Canada Revenue Agency, so it's all in their hands, and if they want to say to a gas station, to Enbridge, to a natural gas supplier, "You're collecting HST and you're remitting it to us. I want you to add this amount as well," then I don't see how the provincial government is going to stop that, I really don't. You may enlighten me. I look forward to it. I like to be enlightened. Enlightenment—there are some religions based on this. It's a good idea. So let's have some.

1720

Speaker, we know that any government that doesn't have in place its own carbon plan—carbon pricing—is going to be subject to the federal backstop, and that is going to be higher than what we're paying now. So what you've done here is that you've ensured that people will be paying more on January 1. I think your voters need to understand that. I think they need to understand that, set aside the blaze of publicity—such as it is, on any given bill. Set aside that blaze of publicity and, I'm sure, self-congratulatory tweets and—what's that Conservative news network, Ontario News Now or something?—the people who run around behind the Premier. I'm sure they'll feature this really heavily. But the reality is that people will be paying more on January 1, not less.

Premier Ford has said that he will be joining Saskatchewan's legal challenge over the federal government's right to impose a federal backstop—a brave man; all of us should recognize that. But a more cautious man, the PC Premier of Manitoba, Brian Pallister, who has been very critical of the federal backstop—but he's also said, "If we say no, we get Trudeau; if we go to court, we lose." In other words, he's recognized that blowing tens of millions of bucks on a no-hope, loser court action doesn't serve his constituents, doesn't serve the people. Manitoba had an opportunity to join and they actually did an assessment.

Interestingly, "Manitoba's Progressive Conservative government announced it was seeking a legal opinion in June, to see if Ottawa had the constitutional authority to

impose its carbon plan.” Now, I know it’s wild for a Conservative government to actually ask a legal expert to do an analysis, but they did it. It’s out of type, but there you are. “The Premier said the analysis cost the province roughly \$40,000.” But this government is willing to spend \$30 million. So \$40,000—not the biggest number in the world.

“We wanted clarity. I certainly did not want to waste a bunch of Manitoba taxpayers’ hard-earned money going to Supreme Court and losing,” Pallister said.”

Gee, I would say that that Premier is a lot more careful with public money than this Premier because he actually does an assessment, first off, to see if he’s throwing away cash.

The report came back. It said, “No option but to charge carbon tax: Premier”—sorry; a headline. You know headlines; grammar isn’t the big thing, Speaker. It’s just the flow.

“In his 64-page analysis, released Wednesday by Manitoba Justice Minister Heather Stefanson,” the legal analyst concluded that “the federal government has the authority to impose its carbon pricing policy on the provinces, and there’s a ‘strong likelihood’ the Supreme Court of Canada would uphold the proposed carbon tax.”

So, 30 million bucks down the tubes: again, good for some lawyers—nothing against lawyers—but not really good for the people of Ontario.

A number of people in the media and elsewhere have mused that this is all about a pre-election, anti-Liberal plan. Being against the Liberals in a pre-election period? That warms my heart. Spending \$30 million of Ontario’s money to do that? That’s another matter.

I am no fan of the Trudeau government. I know people in this House won’t be shocked, but I expect to spend a lot of time in the next 12 or 14 months trying to defeat the Trudeau government and getting an NDP government elected in this country. But I think spending tens of millions of dollars of Ontario’s money for a partisan, political motive and goal is not worthy, is not something people in Ontario would support. You could go door to door and say, “Should we waste \$30 million of Ontario’s money fighting Trudeau over the carbon tax?” I think most people would say, “No, don’t throw away 30 million bucks.”

Not only is this bill going to open us up to higher gasoline and natural gas costs, but we’re going to throw away another \$30 million on top of that. That being said, that’s one cost, the \$30 million. It’s interesting. It’s the figure that has been cited fairly regularly in the media, and I haven’t seen it challenged by anyone in this government. Maybe it’s \$60 million. Maybe they’re happy to let the \$30-million number out there because it’s a lot more. We’ll see.

In terms of the bill itself—set aside for the moment the waste of \$30 million on a loser court case—from a legal perspective, Ontario should be prepared for legal challenges to this bill. As far as I know, no one has filed a legal challenge yet. Just because they haven’t done it yet doesn’t mean it won’t happen. It’s highly probable

that there will be challenges in the future. They will cost money. Some have raised the possibility of Chapter 11 NAFTA challenges, which, if successful, would hit the federal government rather than the provincial. But wasting federal money is just as bad as wasting provincial—bad on both levels.

We have a direct increase in our costs because we’re going from the lower cap-and-trade fees to the higher carbon taxes; we’re going to blow money on an anti-Liberal court case that’s going to lose; and we’re probably going to get sued by participants in the market for the way this whole thing has rolled out. In direct costs: They’re real; people will feel it; we will see it.

But we’re also losing things that we need that were going to be paid for by the cap-and-trade funds, because there is going to be something like \$2.6 billion available. According to the minister’s figures presented in the press conference last week, \$2.6 billion are staying in the province’s hands, money that could be and should be spent on climate action, which will be rolled into what? Tax cuts; an extra backroom for the Premier—he’s only got one backroom; he needs a few more backrooms. He has got so many people to bring in.

I don’t know where that money will go, but I know where it’s not going: \$100 million in funding to fix schools and make them more energy-efficient was cut. It didn’t need to be cut. People are well aware of the condition of the schools in Ontario. The Liberals left a horrendous bill: \$15 billion to \$16 billion in unmet capital costs—a huge amount. I think that needs to be addressed. But \$100 million could have helped in some places. Losing \$100 million is consequential. In fact, \$358,000 was invested in Kensington Community School for two energy-efficient hot water boilers. My guess is that the old boilers were clapped out and had to be junked, because that’s the condition of a lot of our schools.

So \$100 million that would have helped reduce energy bills in our schools—cut by this government, to no necessity whatsoever. The money is sitting in the bank account. The government could have met its promises of stopping carbon pricing ongoing and still spent the money on fixing our schools, but they didn’t do that.

They cut funding that was going to go to fix up social housing. In 2017, it was announced that \$200 million would go to retrofit social housing apartment buildings to reduce their energy costs and their carbon emissions. I’m sure there were slushy things that the Liberals had put into their funding plans. You could have stopped that. You now have the purse strings. Just because the Liberals operate a slush fund doesn’t mean you have to follow in their footsteps, even though I think you are. You didn’t have to do it. You could have spent the money on the things that needed to be done.

Here is another report. It’s from the Ottawa Sun, not well known as a left-wing rag, not reputed to be in the pocket of the left. Their headline was, “Millions Gone: Scrapping of Cap-and-Trade Ends Program That Helped Hospitals Save on Electricity.” Whoa, the Ottawa Sun—must have been real bad.

They note, “A \$64-million program that was helping cash-strapped hospitals save millions on electricity bills is among the provincial programs that have been cut as a result of the scrapping of cap-and-trade in Ontario.” Actually, no—cut as a result of the government not spending the money that had already been collected. That’s more to the point, but that’s my editorial.

“The Hospital Energy Efficiency Program paid out \$64 million to Ontario hospitals in 2017-18 for projects such as motion-activated light sensors” and other things that reduce energy costs.

1730

My colleague “NDP health critic France Gélinas says the program was a boon to smaller hospitals in particular”—smaller hospitals, most of which would be in rural and small-town Ontario; not big city hospitals that may have a bit more money, but the smaller places with a tougher time—“smaller hospitals, many of which are facing deficits and couldn’t afford to put money into work that would help reduce their rising energy bills.”

So just a message to rural hospitals: Tough luck. We’re keeping the money; you’re not getting it. Your bills are going to go up. We’re not going to help you.

“‘The program was extremely popular,’ said Gélinas. ‘They got way more requests than they were able to fund...’

“In recent years,” France Gélinas said, “she has heard from as many as half of the province’s 152 hospitals with serious concerns about increasing electricity costs.” So what’s the government’s response? Cut the program that was going to cut their energy costs.

“Fourteen hospitals in eastern Ontario’s Champlain LHIN received a total of \$3.6 million through the program, says a spokesperson for the LHIN.... The Ottawa Hospital received \$80,000 to replace light fixtures.”

Speaker, I’m sure there was spending that I wouldn’t have approved of, but I think spending money on hospitals, particularly small, rural hospitals and small-town hospitals that are having a tough time of it, is entirely defensible. But it’s something that this government has decided to cut. Small-town hospitals, you’re not on our Christmas list. You’re not on our birthday list. You’re not on any of our lists. We’re just going to tell you, “You ain’t getting any cash. Good luck with the future.”

That’s a taste of the kind of necessary investment that the Ford government has decided to cut and that this bill facilitates the cutting of.

But wait, Speaker, there’s more: Climate change is already costing you money. TVO publishes some good articles, and last November they published an article, “How Climate Change Is Already Costing You Money,” setting out five areas where climate change was increasing the cost of living for people.

They noted food prices:

“Climate change is affecting our grocery bills, and it’s only going to get worse.

“California is the largest agricultural producer in the United States, and Canada its largest export market. The six-year drought that ended” in the spring of 2017 and

“has been connected to human-induced climate change, pushed up the price of imported fruits and vegetables in Canadian supermarkets.” My constituents in the last few years have been talking about those higher food prices and asking for food price controls.

Climate change is going to make life more expensive, and this government doesn’t actually care about that, and they’re not going to act on it.

“If you’re a seafood lover, you’ll be concerned by the research suggesting that warming waters and ocean acidification caused by greenhouse gases will devastate Pacific salmon stocks”—so higher fruit and vegetable prices and higher prices for fish.

Coffee: As the world’s climate changes, the regions that can support coffee are going to be reduced. The price of coffee is going up. That is a concern, especially in this place. People sometimes ask, “How do you work those long hours and how do you listen to those speeches?” It’s coffee. You all know that—everyone in this room. Your commitment to coffee is profound. So a threat to the supply of coffee—now I think I’ve got your attention. Excellent.

Then, the other side of coffee all day long is the wine in the evenings. For those watching on TV, that isn’t the way we live every day, but it does happen occasionally.

The cost of wine: In 2017, “global wine production is expected to be down about 8%, mostly because of drought in Western Europe” and “wildfires that burned up thousands of acres in California wine country” in 2017.

So food is more expensive, coffee will be more expensive, wine will be more expensive. If you don’t act on climate change, there are all kinds of cataclysmic things on their way, but, frankly, in your day-to-day life things will be more expensive.

Home repairs and insurance: In 2017, “southern Ontario had its wettest spring since record-keeping began in 1948...” We saw flooding across the province, “from Windsor to Cornwall to North Bay and points in between.” Because of that, more people are buying flood insurance. It’s becoming a growth sector in the insurance industry. But even if you can buy flood insurance—and it’s another expense that people add on to their lives—in areas where people have seen repeated flooding, “your home may be effectively uninsurable.” So you can’t even get the insurance to deal with the higher costs. That’s consequential. My colleagues from Windsor spoke to me about the flooding they saw over the last two years, repeat flooding that was really demoralizing to many of their constituents. If you’re getting repeat flooding from these now more profound rainfall events and you can’t insure, can you afford to keep your house? Can you afford to repair it each time it’s flooded out? Maybe not. Maybe not.

Then there’s health care. As the world gets hotter, “extreme heat is potentially dangerous to a significant segment of the population, including asthma sufferers, people with heart conditions, pregnant women and older adults.”

Along with heat and drought come forest fires. We've mentioned that before. In 2017, we saw record acreage burn in the western US and Canada. At one point, smoke from forest fires in British Columbia drifted all the way to the east coast of North America. We're talking big fires, and this is a government that doesn't believe in fire prevention, doesn't believe in putting things in place to prevent those fires. No, no; they're okay with that. It's clear because we've seen the bill. We know where they're headed.

"How much damage can smoke from distant wildfires cause? A study from Johns Hopkins found that smoke from Quebec forest fires in 2002 led to a 50% increase in hospitalizations for pulmonary and cardiovascular problems among elderly people on the east coast of the United States—hundreds of miles away."

It's interesting. I was actually driving along the north shore of the St. Lawrence in 2002, and I remember it because I was struck by the fact that you could see the smoke in the air, and I knew the fires were hundreds and hundreds of kilometres further north. You could taste it. You could taste the smoke in your mouth; it was that strong. We're going to see a lot more of that. We're going to taste a lot more of that bitter, smoky smell.

So we have been seeing all that, and then just in the last few days Bloomberg News printed a really interesting article saying, "Commodity producers are having a summer to remember, for all the wrong reasons." Maybe you don't care so much about the health impacts or the loss of life, but economically, these heat waves are bad news.

"A heat-wave across swathes of North America, Europe and Asia, coupled with a worsening drought in some areas, is causing spikes in the prices of anything from wheat to electricity. Cotton plants are stunted in parched Texas fields, French rivers are too warm to effectively cool nuclear reactors"—so they're having to be ramped down; they're having to ramp them down because the rivers are too hot—"and the Russian wheat crop is faltering." That's of consequence, because when you are having to cut back electricity production on a national scale, it drives up the price of power. It has an impact on the economy.

A number of years ago, the city of Toronto did a study of the impact of a warmer world on Toronto's infrastructure. When they looked at the rainfall numbers, they realized that the sewer system that had been put in place over the last century would not be adequate, that the city of Toronto was looking at a multi-billion dollar required investment to expand the size of the sewer system, because they could not, with the current system, protect people from flooding.

There are all these costs that are going to be part of our lives, or are part of our lives now, that this bill is ignoring. The government is shirking its responsibilities to protect the environment for Ontarians today and for future generations. It makes no concrete commitments to lowering greenhouse gas emissions. It's taking us backwards.

1740

This is taking us back to the early days of Dalton McGuinty, which is a grim thought for anyone in this House. That's where we're headed. Who knew that we'd be back to the future—Dalton Ford? It's all coming together. He doesn't have to have this bill. He could bring a bill that actually was effective. You don't like cap-and-trade? Figure out another mechanism. But to say that you're really just going to put everything aside and give us pabulum is not a responsible or respectable or ethical approach.

There was no consultation before the government decided unilaterally to rip up contracts and cut programs aimed at reducing Ontario's GHG emissions. Okay, so maybe you didn't like cap-and-trade, but you could still have spent the money on reducing emissions. Did you talk to anybody? No. No, it didn't happen. You could have fulfilled your promise to stop cap-and-trade and kept spending the money that had been collected to help those hospitals, help those schools, but you didn't. That's not what's on the table.

This is the kind of thing you expect from climate deniers, but deniers who are a bit more sophisticated, who have to say, "Yes, it's real," and then, with a very soft voice, say, "But we're not going to do anything." This is not helping our society.

Speaker, there are some other elements in this bill: retroactive termination of crown liability to pay compensation for breach of contract. The act retroactively terminates crown liability to pay compensation for breach of contract. This is really unusual, really unusual. I actually had a business reporter from the United States, from Washington, DC, interviewing me yesterday about what was going on in Ontario, because in DC they were finding the stuff they were seeing kind of weird, not what they considered to be mainstream business thinking. They were thinking about contracts being honoured, that sort of a businessy thing; respecting rule of law when it comes to contracts, sort of a businessy thing. And retroactive termination of crown liability—hey, really interesting for a government that calls itself pro-business. That reporter was just simply puzzled and trying to understand the nature of this government, because that isn't what they understand in the United States when they think business; they just don't. She certainly didn't.

Interestingly, using this power to terminate crown liability to pay compensation for breach of contract: I think they may be able to get away with it legally. I've seen some contrary opinion, and I think substantial contrary opinion. But let's set aside the legal opinion for a while. Using the power undermines confidence in doing business with the government because you just never know when they're going to cancel a contract and leave you high and dry, and cancel your normally used or normally recognized legal rights to protect yourself. That's pretty extraordinary.

Now, we saw that with the White Pines development. This is the second bill in which the government is saying, "Contract law doesn't apply to us." I'm looking forward

to the next three or four bills to see if any laws apply to this government, because you can sort of see the trend line. If they're beating up on the business community, boy, what are they going to do with ordinary people? That's pretty wild to me. That is totally wild to me.

Speaker, it is also unclear—and I'll just mention this in passing. It's unclear as to whether Ontario is opening itself up to challenges by Quebec and California on the way we approached ending our relationship on cap-and-trade. There may not be a case. Quebec and California may say it's not worth the money. But I'm just saying that when you analyze a business decision, you look at risk; you look at potential liability. When I look at this bill, that's a risk and potential liability that I haven't seen addressed.

I had an opportunity to listen to the minister and the parliamentary assistant and the member from Cambridge with their remarks earlier in the leadoff. First of all, the minister was saying cap-and-trade was not good for jobs. My colleague from Spadina–Fort York noted that California's economy—and they've been running cap-and-trade for a while now; I think over a decade—is one of the most robust in North America, if not globally. It doesn't seem to have undermined their economy. It doesn't seem to have done that. To say that this is good for jobs and business, well, the most substantial example you have of it, in California, doesn't seem to support that narrative.

The minister said that ending cap-and-trade would increase gross domestic product by 0.13%, if I understood him correctly—and I'll check Hansard to see if I got it right. So just about a tenth of a per cent is the impact it would have. I have to tell you, I've seen GDP fluctuate by a lot more than a tenth of a per cent month to month. We're not talking about throwing open the gates of paradise here. We're talking about what could be a rounding error. Beyond that, we haven't seen the analysis from the government to support that number. Maybe that tenth of a per cent, after 100 pages of analysis, turns out to be accurate, but it's still pretty close to a rounding error. I think that's the way people should understand it.

Interestingly, the minister noted that Canada's emissions are 2% of the global total. First of all, we're in the top 10 globally. We're not China, we're not the EU and we're not the United States, but we are in the top 10. If a wealthy country like Canada, still a democracy, can't actually take on climate action while it's in the top 10 emitters in the world, well, then, who on earth is going to be able to take it on? If people are throwing litter on the streets, is your response, "I can throw litter on the streets as well, that's fine"? My mother used to correct me on that thinking: "If your friends were going to jump off a bridge, would you jump off too?" "Well, no, Ma, I wouldn't do that." "Well, then think about it."

Think about it. You're saying that just because we're 2% of the global total, we don't have any responsibility. No, Speaker, we have a lot of responsibility, to ourselves and to the rest of the world.

It was interesting that the minister was talking about a regressive tax. That's a concern for me. I don't like the

idea of regressive taxes. But this is a government that in its platform put forward a tax cut that rewarded high-income earners and beat up low-income earners. So I think you guys need some consistency on this. If you're concerned about flat taxes and if you're concerned about low-income individuals, maybe you should rewrite that tax-cut policy of yours. Maybe you should continue on going to a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, which will give people a lot more than the piddly tax cut that you've said you would give them. So when the Ford government speaks about regressive taxes, I look at their record and I say: This is not an argument based on principle. This is just being thrown into the pot and hoping that it will sound good at the time.

The parliamentary assistant said, "We had a clear mandate to cut cap-and-trade." But you didn't have a clear mandate to abandon action to protect people from fire, from higher costs of living or to push to the side the federal carbon tax. You didn't have that. You didn't have a mandate to drive up the cost of living. I don't think you were honest with your platform as to the consequences of your actions. That's pretty clear, because when you say you have a mandate to cut cap-and-trade, you didn't have a mandate to damage the province, and that's what you've done with this bill.

It was interesting to me that the parliamentary assistant said that climate change is real, that human activity is a significant contributor, and the Progressive Conservatives have a solution. Well, not that I've seen so far. But the PA cited Australia and Australia's cut of its carbon tax. A carbon tax and cap-and-trade are two different things. We can go into the discussion later, but they're two different things. We'll just say, for purposes of the discussion today, that Australia did end its carbon tax. So, given what the minister, the PA and the member from Cambridge had to say, what's Australia's record on dealing with climate change since they did that? Well, they are not going to meet any of their targets. The United Nations has pointed out that they are not meeting the targets they committed to when they signed on in Paris. Their emissions have grown substantially from 2015 to 2017. That's a report from the Australian Broadcasting Corp.

1750

Emissions reached an all-time peak in 2017. Yes, great plan, Australia. You cut the carbon tax and you didn't put anything in place that would actually make a difference. Australia is seeing some very severe temperatures. They're actually changing their weather maps because the current maps don't reflect these outside-the-box, outside-human-experience, new, higher temperatures that they're dealing with.

So that's a problem with citing Australia, because they have been a complete failure on climate action. If you're going to follow the Australians, let people know now that their cottages have a much greater risk of burning up in a fire, that their farms and their livestock are at greater risk, that their basements are going to be flooded, that their lives are going to be more expensive. That's the direction you're headed in. That's what you like; I can see it.

Now, the parliamentary assistant did say there was no accountability with the Liberal plan. Do you know what, Speaker? I've been talking for almost an hour, so I have to agree with the Tories on something. I thought that there was a real lack of accountability with the Liberals, not that the Conservative plan corrects any of that—not a bit, not for a moment, not for a dollar. But they were right about their criticism of the Liberals. That one I have to agree with.

The parliamentary assistant talked about standing up against gouging prices. Now, it's interesting to me that my colleague the member for Timmins has been talking about regulating gasoline prices for a long time, because gouging by oil companies is a bad thing. Eliminating the cap-and-trade rate on gasoline with no regulation means that, from one week to the next, prices can slip up and that little gap can be filled. Who would prove otherwise? Who would know otherwise? That's the reality. This is a gift to the oil companies. Let's be clear: The oil companies want jurisdictions to not act on climate, and this government has complied. Somewhere in that smokeless backroom, that deal was cut.

The parliamentary assistant was claiming job creation from cutting cap-and-trade or cutting carbon pricing. First of all, it would be interesting seeing the analysis. I think it should be tabled. If you're going to make claims like that, show us the numbers. Then the second question is, if you've decided that being part of the 21st-century economy is something you don't like, that you think a high-carbon economy is the way to go, then how exactly are you helping Ontario's economy? How exactly are you doing that? You're not. You're not doing it.

I see my time is short. I just wanted to wrap up by noting that in the past century alone, temperatures have climbed by 0.7 degrees Celsius. That's roughly 10 times faster than at the end of the last ice age. That means we're going to see unusual phenomena—not so unusual but troubling. Tyler Hamilton wrote in the *Toronto Star* in 2016 about Deer Lake in northern Ontario. It's a First Nation community that depends on ice roads for goods to get into that community. It has depended on those roads for decades, because it used to be colder. He writes:

“Historically, those roads could be relied on for 70 to 80 days during winter months. But shorter and warmer winters have significantly narrowed that window, sometimes to fewer than 30 days.

“No community is more aware of the risks than Deer Lake ... former deputy chief Henry Meekis, drowned in late 2012 after the ice-road grooming machine he was driving plunged through the ice.”

The changes are affecting people's ability to live and putting people's lives at risk. The world is changing. It's changing very rapidly. It's changing because it's getting hotter. When you don't act to stabilize the climate, when you cut a program without having another to put in its place, when you stop measures that would reduce emissions for no good reason—because you have the money—then you can claim no moral high ground. In fact, you have to recognize that your actions are unethical.

Speaker, I urge this House to reject this bill, to tell the minister to go back, rewrite it, come to us with a climate plan, show us how you're going to deal with climate change, and then let's have a real debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): I have good news and I have bad news, I guess. You can figure out which way this is going, because we don't have enough time to do the full hits on the questions and comments. We'll do those the next time this bill is brought up.

You'll have your occasion then to do your two-minute wrap-up as well.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made. However, we do have late shows today—three of them, as a matter of fact.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

CURRICULUM

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member for Davenport has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Minister of Education. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

I recognize the member for Davenport.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I want to thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, as I felt the minister did not provide an adequate response to my question on this very important issue. My question again is to the Minister of Education and it is regarding this government's irresponsible move to roll back our children's sexual education curriculum.

There is a wonderful festival in my riding called BIG on Bloor. At that festival, parents, caregivers, grandparents, students, aunties, uncles and teachers all asked me the same thing: Why is this government going backward, not forward, on sex education? In a matter of hours, 1,200 people had signed a petition to that effect.

Here's what some of those parents told us. They said, “Please give our kids the most up-to-date information possible.” They are furious that their children won't be receiving an adequate education to keep them safe. They said that going back to the 1998 curriculum ignores the many changes we have experienced as a society, not just a little something called Google or social media or technology, but what we now acknowledge are human rights, like same-sex marriage. They said to me, “If we value equality and freedom, then going backwards makes no sense at all.” I cannot tell you how many people have said to me, “If I'd had the 2015 curriculum when I was growing up, it would have changed my life.”

People are confused about what it is that this government thinks is so deeply unacceptable about the current modern curriculum. The members opposite say it's about

parents, but I think, maybe not so much. We know that it's really about satisfying a very small but influential group of socially conservative people who don't want their kids to learn about LGBTQ+ people and same-sex families. The Premier himself made promises to those people.

Do you know who this really should be about? It should be about the kids. It should be about children knowing they aren't sick because they are attracted to someone of the same sex. It should be about ensuring kids aren't left vulnerable to online bullying. It should be about ensuring our kids have the language and the tools to talk about consent and what a healthy or unhealthy relationship is, or when a touch is not a good touch.

Parents are worried that the folks who have the Premier's ear don't want kids to learn that it's okay to be gay or lesbian or trans or queer. What does that tell queer youth? It forces them back into the closet, depressed and with thoughts of suicide. I want you to know that my own children have shared that concern with me. It's a very real one that our students are also thinking about when they think about their friends.

The Minister of Education has to know that this will be on her, because the minister is supposed to speak up for our students, for children. She is supposed to rise above these crass politics and ensure that kids know what they need to know to stay healthy and alive. I know that's a really big responsibility and one that the minister is having some trouble with. Already, 20 school boards across this province—and that number is growing every day—have spoken out against this terrible decision. They're worried about violating human rights legislation if they avoid talking about gender or same-sex families. With only weeks before our kids are back in school, this government is sending mixed messages, and it is chaos—like the Deputy Premier recommending that teachers close the doors and talk about sex with the students in private? Yes, that really couldn't possibly go wrong. Or the minister talking about using the 2014 curriculum. Really? News flash: It's the same as the 1998 curriculum. Nothing changed.

1800

Let's remember that the Liberals had many years—yes, many years—to update that curriculum and they didn't have the guts to do it for many of those years; and when they did, they failed to properly educate and communicate with families.

But we don't need another costly and false consultation, because we know that you know what you want to have in that curriculum at the end of the day, and it's not about parents. It doesn't take much to bring about greater understanding. I have spoken with parents in my community who had concerns when I was a school board trustee and as recently as the last few weeks. I told them, "Check in with your child's teacher." When they did they were relieved. They understood what was going to be shared and they could be ready to anticipate questions that came up. That is our responsibility as parents.

Dragging the curriculum back to 1998 and starting the consultation in September completely fails the kids who

will be in classrooms this fall. Whether this government likes it or not, we live in 2018, not 1818. Why does this government refuse to equip our kids with the tools they need to stay safe and healthy now?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The minister's parliamentary assistant will now have five minutes.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I would like to begin today by thanking the member from Davenport for her question. It's great that the member has been listening to her constituents and bringing their issues forward here in the House. After all, that's what we were all elected to do and, frankly, that's what our government is doing.

During the election, the Premier spoke with families from Windsor to Ottawa, from Toronto to Thunder Bay, and he heard a strong message from the people of Ontario: There was a clear lack of consultation on the 2015 sex ed curriculum.

Since then, parents have voiced their concerns and been ignored by the previous administration. When the 2015 sex ed curriculum was revealed, the Toronto Star held an online poll. About 65% of its readers objected to the implementation of the new curriculum compared to only 31% who supported it.

Let's do some math, Speaker, although I know that can be difficult for the NDP. It's important to recognize that this online poll had 21,876 participants. The online survey for parents launched by the previous administration had only 1,638 hand-picked respondents. That's about 13 times more people reached by a Toronto Star poll than the supposed consultation with parents. When it comes to children's education, that's just not good enough.

For three long years parents organized to make the previous administration aware that the lack of consultation was disrespectful. They did their best to make their voices heard but they were ignored. Whenever parents have concerns about their children's education they have a right to voice those concerns. As we've said time and time again, and as we will continue to say, our government will honour parents' right to be heard. It's a non-partisan idea to believe that listening to parents matters.

In 2015, the former MPP and federal NDP member Mr. Jagmeet Singh rose in this House to speak on this very lack of inclusive consultations. I want to read what he said because this highlights the fact that inclusive consultations are definitely a clear and non-partisan choice: "Mr. Speaker, I stand today once again to voice the concerns of my constituents around the health curriculum in our schools. When it comes to proper consultation, it's clear the Liberal government has not learned from previous mistakes. The lack of inclusive consultation before announcing the curriculum was disrespectful to parents in my constituency and a mistake on the Liberal government's part."

Mr. Singh was right. The lack of inclusive consultation was disrespectful to parents. Constituents do deserve to have their voices heard. This is not about left versus right, not about NDP versus PC. This is simply about

doing the right thing. And that's why we're delivering on our promise to have parents' voices heard. That's why these consultations will take place all across Ontario in 124 ridings. We will ensure that everyone who wants to be heard will be heard. We want to hear from parents, from young people and anyone who can provide insightful feedback. If someone has an idea on how we can improve sexual education in schools, we want to hear them.

What's important is the fact that no one will be excluded from these consultations. Our government understands that children's first teachers are their parents. When parents send their kids to school every morning, they trust the education system to provide a proper education. In return, the least the decision-makers can do is to trust parents. That's why we're going to continue to listen to parents, who are children's first and most caring educators.

Speaker, this will be a fair and balanced process. Ontario is home to a wide variety of perspectives. A wide range of beliefs and various points of views will be accepted and considered. When we have civil conversations about different things from different groups, we can come to an agreement that not only works for everyone but helps children. Without a process like this, more vocal groups may drown out valuable insights that deserve to be heard. And we want to know who has what to say, not who can say it the loudest. That's why we're making this a big priority.

We need to get this done right. Ontario's kids are more than worth the effort. We will go above and beyond to help deliver these results. In this way, we are beginning a new chapter in the dialogue between decision-makers and parents. It will be defined, first and foremost, by respect. Premier Ford and our government for the people are following through on our promise this time and every time—and this time, we're getting it right.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member for Toronto Centre has given notice of her dissatisfaction with an answer to a question given to the Premier. The member will have five minutes to debate, and then the Premier's parliamentary assistant will have five minutes to respond.

I recognize the member from Toronto Centre.

Ms. Suze Morrison: On Monday morning, I asked what I believed to have been a relatively simple question of the Premier. My question was this: Where exactly in his plan did he specifically campaign on the promise of cutting Toronto's city council seats in half in the middle of an election? Now, to be fair to the Premier, I already knew the answer to the question. My dissatisfaction lies largely in his unwillingness to state that answer officially on the record.

Through you, Mr. Speaker: I thought I would help the Premier out today. You see, I did some of his homework for him.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, good for you.

Ms. Suze Morrison: Yes, I printed out a copy of his plan for the people. I suppose, when he said yesterday that he would save taxpayer dollars by printing less paper, he thought he would start with his own platform. You see, it's only eight pages long. I went through this document line by line, as the Premier is so apt to say, and—surprise, surprise—there is not a single mention of slashing Toronto city council seats, not a single mention of meddling in elections of any kind, and certainly not a single mention of reducing the number of elected officials anywhere in this province.

So, no, the Premier did not campaign on this; no, he does not have the mandate of the people to do this. In fact, the reason he could not answer my question on Monday is because it's not anywhere to be found in his eight-page plan.

As a new member to this chamber, I am truly astonished I am here today to defend the basic principles of democracy. Yet here we are. What I've come to learn in the last few days is that democracy is neither strong nor impermeable. It is, in fact, as delicate as fine china and must be handled with care. If it is not handled appropriately by the elected representatives charged with protecting it, much like a small teacup with a chipped rim, the structural integrity of our democracy becomes weakened and its ability to serve the people ceases to exist.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who knows me knows that I'm a fairly accident-prone person. As a child, when I would come crashing through the house, bruising my legs on the corners of tables and tripping over my own shoelaces, my mother would look at me in this exhausted kind of way that only a mother can and tell me that I was behaving like a bull moose in a china shop. If my mother were standing before the Premier today, I'm sure she would make the same admonishment to him.

I'd like to ask the Premier, through the member opposite, where he thinks he received a mandate to trample on our democracy in the city of Toronto, because it certainly was not a promise that he was elected on. Every single constituent I've spoken to is entirely flabbergasted that the Premier has had the gall to change the rules of an election in the middle of the game.

1810

I've printed out just a small handful of some of the emails I've received already, and, to be fair, I only printed eight pages of them. This is what the people of Toronto are saying.

"This action was not taken with a mandate of the people in mind. Nowhere was a change so immediate and drastic mentioned in the OPC's platform."

Another reads, "This was not an election issue."

Another reads, "This is not part of the PC platform, so you cannot claim unilateral mandate."

Yet another reads, "This was not a campaign issue, and I fear average Toronto citizens are not being heard."

Yet another reads, "I guess that since he proposed no platform during the election, he can now do whatever he wants without damaging any campaign promises."

Yet another reads, “To unilaterally declare this, especially at the start of an election campaign, is undemocratic.”

Yet another reads, “Ontario is starting to show shades of the Republic of Gilead.”

Yet another reads, “The citizens of Toronto have said no to Doug Ford twice now. We do not want his meddling in our city.”

Again to the Premier, through the member opposite: Where exactly do you think you received the mandate to unilaterally disrupt democratic elections in Ontario? Because it wasn't from the people and it wasn't from your own platform.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): It's never too late to be warned or named and tossed.

We now recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Premier, the member from King–Vaughan.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Let the record note, Mr. Speaker, that that comment wasn't made to me. That was a general comment, so I'd just like the transcript to reflect that.

It's good to be with you, Speaker. I want to thank the member from Toronto Centre. I did listen attentively to her points, and I want to start with the fact that this legislation has brought together members across political aisles. I'm going to name a few examples, one that you will know very well, Councillor de Baeremaeker; Bonnie Crombie, a former Liberal member of Parliament and Mississauga's mayor; and Wayne Emerson, chairman of York region. What do these three—and I could keep going for the record. But what do these three individuals have in common? They support reform in the municipality of Toronto and across the GTA.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was posed a question and I do intend, in good faith, to answer it, but I actually have a question for the New Democrats. They feel so passionate about the platform, and I'm curious: Where is it exactly in the New Democratic platform that they were going to put the interests of politicians over working people? Actually, to the member for Toronto Centre: Where is it exactly? Is it around the \$7-billion hole in your platform? Is it around that section?

Mr. Speaker, for too long in Toronto—and anyone who's from the GTA knows this. To be fair, this is a phenomenon written in the New York Times and around the world: For too long, gridlock and dysfunction at Toronto city hall have deprived Torontonians of efficient and accountable government.

This Premier not only campaigned on a promise to restore accountability and trust; he also fought to reduce the size and cost of government. This bill tabled by our Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a capable, strong defender of efficiency in government, brought forth this bill to streamline Toronto city council to finally get our city moving. Currently, Toronto has, as you know, 25 federal MPs, 25 provincial MPPs and, soon, when and if this bill passes, we will have 25 city councillors. Our proposed bill will save the taxpayer \$25 million over the course of four years, and I recognize, just like

the elimination of cap-and-trade, over \$200 in the pockets of ordinary people—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Order, please.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: The NDP dismisses it; of course they do—but over \$200 to average people by eliminating cap-and-trade. By streamlining government we are going to put \$25 million back into the pockets of working people or to front-line investments. That is leadership, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting. I can obviously appreciate that the members opposite are starting to come to appreciate that the emails they're getting are actually increasingly opposing their position because average working people in this province, across Ontario—we have colleagues from eastern Ontario all the way down to southwestern Ontario who have said that this legislation is the greatest example of common sense they've seen in a generation.

What Toronto does not need is more politicians. I would say this clearly to the House leader: I want you to go, sir, to your constituents selling more politicians. I'm sure that will get you elected in four years, sir. But the fact is, this Premier, myself, every single one on this side, every woman and man, we believe that we should be able to do more with less and improve efficiency by passing this bill.

The city of Toronto needs to revisit its priorities and reinvest in its most pressing issues. I would submit, as someone who grew up in the GTA—my riding is King–Vaughan, adjacent to Toronto; I was educated for six years in the city of Toronto—that we need a transit system that is dependable—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): May I remind the members of the official opposition that it's never too late to be named; it's never too late to be kicked out of here. We like to carry on a civil discussion, thank you very much.

Continue, please.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: The city of Toronto, as I mentioned, needs to reinvest in the most pressing issues affecting working people. I would submit that the issues, in my judgment, that are most relevant to the people of Toronto are the economy, transit, infrastructure, social housing—things that we should be able to come together on to put savings towards. Instead, we have a political party in this House—in fact, two, I would submit; I was able to do a radio interview with one of my colleagues in the Liberal Party. But the fact is that they are defending dysfunction, and I can't understand how that is in the public interest, because it certainly isn't.

There's one thing in common between David Miller, Rob Ford and John Tory—I know the Premier spoke about this earlier in question period: All three of these people, whom I respect as public servants, irrespective of their ideological convictions, couldn't get transit done. What we are trying to do is to improve the governance, improve the municipality, to get them to build projects

and actually implement projects that are in the public interest.

It is time, in our estimation, that we end this gridlock at city hall and take action. That's why I call on all members—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Thank you.

IMMIGRATION FRANCOPHONE

FRANCOPHONE IMMIGRATION

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member for Orléans has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. The member will have five minutes to debate, and then the minister or her parliamentary assistant will have an opportunity to reply for up to five minutes.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Écoutez, on est ici ce soir parce que, lorsque j'ai demandé la question ce matin, je dois dire que la ministre a bien lu ses notes. Elle a parlé des nouveaux programmes et initiatives que le gouvernement Ford a entrepris. Mais je voudrais juste au moins rappeler que toutes ces initiatives ont été entreprises par l'ancien gouvernement, un gouvernement libéral, et ce, grâce à une belle collaboration et un partenariat avec le fédéral, mais aussi grâce à un engagement profond du gouvernement. Cet engagement, ils le prenaient à coeur; il était constant, était précis et était concret.

Donc, oui, il y a des programmes, et j'ai compris la réponse de la ministre par rapport aux programmes et aux initiatives. Mais ce qu'on n'a pas entendu ce matin c'est l'engagement de poursuivre ces belles initiatives, parce que, dans ces initiatives—on le sait qu'il y a des coûts associés à ceci. Et, depuis les derniers temps, ce qu'on voit de ce gouvernement, bien, écoutez, c'est des coupures, par rapport à un gouvernement qui s'était engagé à poursuivre certains engagements.

Donc, vraiment, ce que je demande—une des composantes de pourquoi on est ici ce soir—c'est particulièrement, est-ce que le gouvernement s'engage personnellement et particulièrement à continuer ces belles initiatives qui favorisent l'immigration francophone?

La deuxième question—et c'est là que j'ai un petit peu de difficulté, et j'espère que le gouvernement va pouvoir m'aider et que l'adjointe parlementaire de la ministre va pouvoir m'aider—était principalement sur la composante francophone.

On sait que l'Ontario est devenu membre de l'OIF, l'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. Il y a plusieurs avantages à être membre de l'OIF, dont promouvoir la langue française, ainsi que la culture et une forte identité dans la province et au niveau international. Ça a des avancées concrètes.

1820

On sait aussi qu'être membre de l'OIF va nous permettre une vitalité—dans les communautés et dans

nos institutions francophones—et d'être reconnus. L'OIF a plus de 80 États membres de la Francophonie qui avaient voté à l'unanimité pour que l'Ontario s'y joigne.

On sait aussi que notre adhésion à l'OIF va ouvrir des portes, monsieur le Président, et a le potentiel de favoriser l'atteinte de la cible de 5 %, ce que la ministre a bien voulu noter et resouligner ce matin, de l'Ontario en immigration francophone. Donc, de ce fait, est-ce que le gouvernement est prêt à nous dire qu'ils vont s'engager à poursuivre la membriété à l'OIF pour pouvoir aider possiblement à atteindre la cible de 5 %? Je pense que c'est ce qu'un gouvernement responsable doit faire. N'est-ce pas aussi ce qu'un gouvernement qui se respecte et qui respecte sa communauté francophone doit défendre pour les Ontariens et les Ontariennes?

J'aimerais aussi apporter—et j'espère que l'adjointe parlementaire va pouvoir nous dire cet engagement par rapport à une autre composante francophone qui a un lien avec l'immigration francophone, et ça s'appelle le PAFO, le Programme d'appui à la francophonie ontarienne. Donc, juste un rappel pour l'adjointe parlementaire, c'est un programme de subvention pour les communautés francophones de la province afin de promouvoir la culture francophone et d'encourager un plus grand engagement communautaire. C'est un fonds de trois millions, et le dernier million de dollars pour la troisième année devrait être lancé, ou aurait dû être lancé, dans les prochains mois. Un aspect important pour le PAFO : ce programme fait en sorte de favoriser, justement, l'intégration sociale des immigrants francophones. On parlait aussi de favoriser la célébration de la culture franco-ontarienne.

Donc, ce que je demande, et pourquoi je demande une réponse plus particulière, c'est l'engagement du gouvernement Ford envers ces programmes qui sont très importants pour la communauté franco-ontarienne et l'immigration ici en Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The minister's parliamentary assistant has up to five minutes to reply.

I recognize the member from Cambridge.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the member opposite for the question. We have not had a chance to address one another. I would like to congratulate you on your success on June 7.

Allow me to go beyond the answers already provided this morning by both Minister MacLeod and Minister Mulroney. Ontario welcomes the highest number of French-speaking immigrants to Canada after Quebec. Ontario has committed to achieve a target of 5% francophone immigration and has implemented initiatives to help increase the number of francophones in the province.

The Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program has a stream that is designed to attract French-speaking immigrants who have the skills to succeed in Ontario's labour market. In 2017, 4.2% of nominees through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program were francophone.

We will continue our work to reach a 5% target within this program.

Internationally, Ontario has promoted the province as a destination of choice within francophone countries. The ministry also funds a municipal francophone immigration website that markets francophone communities to potential French-speaking immigrants.

Ontario will be working with the federal government to better meet the settlement needs of French-speaking immigrants through the delivery of services by and for francophones. We will implement the French-speaking immigrants annex of the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement and partner with the federal government on promotion, recruitment, selection and integration of French-speaking immigrants in Ontario.

Nationally, we will continue to demonstrate leadership on francophone immigration, as we move forward with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Action Plan for Increasing Francophone Immigration Outside of Quebec. We

look forward to working with francophone stakeholders to explore additional opportunities to increase francophone immigration.

As the minister said today in the Legislature, she and the minister of francophone affairs have spoken about outreach and promotion initiatives in order to reach francophone audiences worldwide. The minister said that the government intends to undertake more initiatives throughout the rest of the world to promote Ontario as a destination for high-skilled francophone immigrants.

I will also highlight that my colleague the Attorney General of Ontario and minister responsible for francophone affairs can speak in more detail about our government's commitment to the francophonie.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried. This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1825.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott
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Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
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Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
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Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Downey, Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	
Dunlop, Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

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Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
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Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutilla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
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Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa- Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

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John Fraser, Wayne Gates
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece
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