

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

---

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

No. 34

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

N° 34

1<sup>st</sup> Session  
42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament  
Monday  
15 October 2018

1<sup>re</sup> session  
42<sup>e</sup> législature  
Lundi  
15 octobre 2018

---

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott  
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Todd Decker

### **Hansard on the Internet**

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

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

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

<https://www.ola.org/>

### **Index inquiries**

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

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

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

---

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



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

ISSN 1180-2987

## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 15 October 2018 / Lundi 15 octobre 2018

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott) .....	1517
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	1517
Mr. Norman Miller.....	1517
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	1517
Mr. Billy Pang.....	1517
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	1517
Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto.....	1517
Ms. Bhutla Karpoche .....	1517
Mr. Will Bouma .....	1517
Hon. Monte McNaughton.....	1517
Ms. Goldie Ghamari.....	1517
The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott) .....	1517
<b>Steven Fobister Sr.</b>	
Mr. Sol Mamakwa.....	1517
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1518

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Employment standards

Ms. Sara Singh .....	1518
Hon. Doug Ford .....	1518

#### Hospital funding

Ms. Sandy Shaw.....	1519
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo .....	1519
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	1519

#### Hospital funding

Mme France Gélinas .....	1519
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	1519

#### Taxation

Mr. Mike Harris .....	1520
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1520

#### Anti-racism activities

Mr. Taras Natyshak.....	1520
Hon. Doug Ford .....	1520
Hon. Lisa MacLeod.....	1521

#### Public safety

Ms. Jill Dunlop.....	1521
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo .....	1521

#### Firefighters

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	1522
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo.....	1522

#### Climate change

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	1522
Hon. Rod Phillips.....	1522

#### Cannabis regulation

Mr. Stan Cho .....	1523
Hon. Caroline Mulroney .....	1523

#### Automobile insurance

Mr. Gurratan Singh .....	1523
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1523

#### Public safety

Ms. Goldie Ghamari.....	1524
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo .....	1524

#### Addiction services

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche .....	1524
Hon. Sylvia Jones.....	1524

#### Small business

Mr. David Piccini .....	1525
Hon. Jim Wilson.....	1525

#### Horse racing industry

Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	1525
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1526

#### Public safety

Mr. Paul Calandra .....	1526
Hon. Michael A. Tibollo .....	1526
Hon. Steve Clark .....	1526

#### Horse racing industry

Mr. Wayne Gates .....	1526
Hon. Victor Fedeli.....	1527

#### Visitors

Mr. Michael Coteau.....	1527
-------------------------	------

#### Annual report, Chief Electoral Officer

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott).....	1527
------------------------------------	------

#### Visitors

Mr. Stephen Lecce.....	1527
------------------------	------

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Norman Miller.....	1527
Mr. Aris Babikian.....	1527

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

#### Grandview Children's Centre

Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	1527
-----------------------------	------

#### Waste diversion

Mr. Norman Miller.....	1528
------------------------	------

#### Flooding in Algoma–Manitoulin

Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1528
-------------------------	------

<b>Neil Tweedale</b>	
Mr. Jeremy Roberts.....	1528
<b>Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month</b>	
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1529
<b>Opioid abuse / Abus d’opioides</b>	
Mme Nathalie Des Rosiers .....	1529
<b>Armenian community</b>	
Mr. Aris Babikian.....	1529
<b>Mental health services</b>	
Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	1529
<b>Saint Charbel Maronite Catholic church</b>	
Mr. Sheref Sabawy.....	1530
<b>Volunteer firefighters</b>	
Ms. Jane McKenna.....	1530

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS /  
DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI**

<b>Ending Discrimination in Automobile Insurance Act, 2018, Bill 42, Mr. Gill / Loi de 2018 mettant fin à la discrimination en matière d’assurance-automobile, projet de loi 42, M. Gill</b>	
First reading agreed to.....	1530
Mr. Parm Gill .....	1530

**PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS**

<b>School facilities</b>	
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1531
<b>Poet laureate</b>	
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	1531
<b>Injured workers</b>	
Mr. Kevin Yarde .....	1531
<b>Curriculum</b>	
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1532
<b>Employment standards</b>	
Mr. Faisal Hassan.....	1532
<b>Employment standards</b>	
Ms. Sara Singh.....	1532
<b>Injured workers</b>	
Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens .....	1533
<b>Northern health services</b>	
Mme France Gélinas .....	1533
<b>Curriculum</b>	
Miss Monique Taylor.....	1533

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

<b>Green Energy Repeal Act, 2018, Bill 34, Mr. Rickford / Loi de 2018 abrogeant la Loi sur l’énergie verte, projet de loi 34, M. Rickford</b>	
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1534
Mr. Paul Calandra .....	1536
Mr. Michael Mantha.....	1542
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	1542
Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell .....	1542
Mr. Will Bouma .....	1542
Hon. Greg Rickford.....	1543
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1543
Mr. Paul Calandra .....	1550
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	1551
Mrs. Belinda Karahalios.....	1551
Mme France Gélinas .....	1551
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	1552
Ms. Jill Dunlop.....	1552
Mr. Chris Glover .....	1555
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	1555
M. Guy Bourgouin .....	1555
Mr. Stan Cho .....	1556
Ms. Jill Dunlop.....	1556
Ms. Bhutla Karpoche .....	1556
Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto .....	1559
Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell .....	1559
Mr. Stephen Crawford.....	1559
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	1560
Ms. Bhutla Karpoche .....	1560
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1560
Mr. Jamie West .....	1563
Mr. Jeremy Roberts.....	1563
Mr. Chris Glover .....	1563
Mr. Paul Calandra .....	1564
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	1564
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	1564
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	1567
Miss Monique Taylor .....	1568
Mrs. Amy Fee.....	1568
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	1568
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	1568
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	1569

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 15 October 2018

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 15 octobre 2018

*The House met at 1030.*

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

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today students from the public leadership of change course at McMaster University in Hamilton. With them is a very special guest: our former Speaker, Dave Levac, MPP for Brant from the 37th to the 41st provincial Parliament. Welcome, Mr. Speaker. Our former colleague is currently a distinguished visiting professor at McMaster University and has brought his class for an impressive experience here at Queen's Park. Welcome to Queen's Park.

In the Speaker's gallery today as well we have Patty and Rick Sinnamon of Mount Forest and Rev. Marksen Wafula Masinde and his wife, Frida Masinde. Rev. Masinde and his wife are visiting from Kitale, Kenya. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Would the members also please join me in welcoming a visitor to the table today: Visiting from the Legislative Assembly of Alberta is Philip Massolin, manager of committee services. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature. We're pleased to have you here.

Further introduction of guests?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I would like to introduce:

*Remarks in Portuguese.*

As well, the president of the parish of Matriz, Hernani Costa.

Bem-vindo à Legislatura do Ontário.

**Mr. Norman Miller:** I'd like to welcome Andy Mahut from Stelco, Serge Laflamme from Rayonier Advanced Materials and Doug Yates from General Motors, who are with the Association of Major Power Consumers. They're here visiting Queen's Park today.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I am pleased to welcome my new legislative assistant, Danika Goshulak, here at Queen's Park to check out question period. Welcome.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** I would like to introduce my legislative assistant, Jesse Toma.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It is my pleasure to welcome a page from Windsor West, Albert Douglas. Today he is joined by his mom, Mel Douglas, and sister Lenore Douglas. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** I would like to welcome one of my staff members from my constituency office, Kanza Mirza.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I'm pleased to introduce and welcome Dorjee Wangchuk, a campaign volunteer and constituent from Parkdale-High Park.

I also see in the Speaker's gallery former OLIP intern, and my friend, Kristen Stewart. Hey, Kristen.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** It's my pleasure to welcome to the members' gallery today Marty Verhey who is HR director for Walters Group. And if you want to see their handiwork, just look at the ROM. I'm welcoming him here, speaking for the Ontario colleges.

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I'd like to welcome the people from Capital Power today who are at Queen's Park: Mark Zimmerman, Kate Chisholm, Jerry Bellikka, Anthony Zlatic, Kelly Lail and Daniel Jurijew. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** It's my pleasure to introduce Hudson Manning, my new legislative intern. I'm very pleased and excited, and look forward to working with him in the next few months.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** And, of course, we would like to welcome everyone else who's here with us today who hasn't been introduced.

STEVEN FOBISTER SR.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Kiiwetinoong.

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** I believe we have unanimous consent for both myself and Minister Rickford to say a few words about Chief Steven Fobister Sr.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Is there unanimous consent? Agreed.

Once again, I recognize the member for Kiiwetinoong.

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** I rise in this House to honour the life of Steven Fobister Sr. of Grassy Narrows, who has passed on. Steve was a former Grassy Narrows chief and also a former grand chief of Anishinaabe Nation, Treaty 3. He was a tireless advocate and a fighter for Grassy Narrows and the Anishinaabe people, and a teacher of younger generations.

Some in this place will recall that in 2014, he came here, ready to sacrifice his life through a hunger strike, in order to finally get some justice for the suffering his people have faced since the mercury was released into the river 60 years ago, and which destroyed their way of life—fishing and hunting—and destroyed their health. A commitment was made to him then.

Ultimately, complications due to Minamata disease took Steve's life. He would want us to keep fighting until

the fish from the English-Wabigoon River are safe to eat and the water is safe to drink.

On behalf of my people in the Kiiwetinoong riding and the NDP caucus, I want to extend my condolences to Steven's family and to the people of Grassy Narrows. Meegwetch.

**1040**

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the minister of northern affairs.

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to add to my friend and colleague across the way, perhaps on a more personal note, I sat across the table from Steve Fobister 15 or 20 years ago as a young lawyer taking his instructions. If he was unwell, you'd never know it. He was a testament not only to his community, Treaty 3 and the Anishnawbe people of northern Ontario; he set a standard for leadership, one I think that we should all be clear on. It was the basis recently for a visit by myself and my colleague and friend Rod Phillips, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, to Grassy Narrows. Much of the work that we reaffirmed and that we announced is a testament to governments previous and present that remain committed to closing a dark chapter of Grassy Narrows history.

I think it's pretty safe to say, in perhaps one of those pure non-partisan moments, that we all have an investment in Grassy Narrows and their well-being, and that we've all had in some way—some more direct than others—an opportunity to meet and experience this incredible man's life, his leadership and his legacy. I thank him for his contributions. We're thinking of his people and the community today. Thank you.

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

It is now time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Sara Singh:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

Kalpesh Parmar is a 46-year-old father of two. He has worked as a security guard for the last six years. Kalpesh says, "Before the new decent work laws ... when I had back pain I couldn't afford to get treatment. We didn't have bargaining protection. Now we do, and [the] quality of life is better."

Speaker, now that the Premier has said he will scrap the rules that provide these protections for workers across our province, what does the Premier have to say to workers like Kalpesh?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Brampton Centre, what I have to say to your friend there who came up to you is that they can expect to hold on to their job instead of losing their job. TD Economics came out and said there are going to be 80,000

to 90,000 people who are going to lose their jobs. I'm guessing 60,000 people have already lost their jobs.

What you can tell your friend in Brampton Centre is that their gas prices just dropped down five cents per litre because of the cap-and-trade.

You can tell your friend he's actually going to save \$850 because he won't be on the tax roll anymore. They'll have zero tax.

You can tell your friend that when he goes to pay his hydro bill, it's going to be down \$280. We've saved \$750 million a year. You know something, Mr. Speaker? My daughter sent over—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Sara Singh:** I can appreciate the comments that the Premier is making, but let's hear a little bit more from Kalpesh. "Before the minimum wage increase it was very hard to survive. When buying anything ... I had to think, 'Is it necessary for me?' I can't think of the last time I bought myself even a new T-shirt."

Since the Premier has never once spoken with anyone about his plans to tear up the new rules—especially people who would actually benefit from a higher minimum wage or paid sick days or emergency leave—what does the Premier say to Kalpesh and the 1.7 million workers just like him?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker, what the member from Brampton Centre didn't have an opportunity to do, but we did and their leader did, is to go around the province and talk to small-business owners that laid people off, talk to restaurants, talk to the little Home Hardware that laid people off. In thousands and thousands of businesses across this province, people lost their jobs.

I know the opposition doesn't understand economics, but you can't automatically in one year increase salaries by 22% and then increase them 32%. Just imagine if everyone's costs increased by 32%. It's not realistic.

We're going to create good-paying jobs. We're going to make sure that the part-time person gets treated very well. But you have to keep in mind the person that's been working there 15 years. You can't treat a part-timer the same way you treat someone that's been—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Final supplementary?

**Ms. Sara Singh:** Mr. Premier, Kalpesh is one of a million Ontario workers who move this province forward every single day. He doesn't get invited to your consultations, but he works hard and plays by the rules. Is it too much to ask that he be allowed to take a sick day without worrying about lost pay and how he's going to cover his bills at the end of the month; or an emergency day during a family crisis; or that he earn a \$15 minimum wage? Premier, is that too much to ask for workers across this province?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker, we're going to protect Kalpesh. We're going to protect people like that by, again, lowering their taxes, saving on that green energy scam, the millions and millions of dollars that the province wasted—\$750 million on the hydro alone.

We're going to create good-paying jobs so Kalpesh doesn't have to stay on minimum wage. He can work his way up the ladder. He can be a manager. I've seen it over and over again in business: Someone might start at a lower level, work their way up to middle manager, manager, and then they could be running the show. That's what democracy is about, that's what free enterprise is about: giving everyone an opportunity to grow. We live in the greatest country and the greatest province in the world.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** My question is for the Premier. In the city of Hamilton, a code zero is issued when there's only one ambulance available, or in fact none at all. Can the Premier please tell us how many code zeros were issued last week in the city of Hamilton?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you for the question. We take public safety as a paramount concern in the province. One of the things that we do is ensure that we provide the resources to our front-line officers and the people that provide front-line services to ensure that they have the ability to do their jobs. That's something that we've done and will continue to do. We will continue to provide those services and that support to make sure that all of our front-line responders have the ability to complete and do their work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Well, I appreciate the attempt at an answer, but this is about health care, not about safety and security. The city of Hamilton, in fact, experienced five code zero events last week. Thursday's code zero lasted more than two hours. Hamilton's chief paramedic says that it's an issue of hospital flow: Patients are stuck waiting on stretchers for more than two hours while hospitals scramble to find space.

Premier, we know this isn't new. Where is the plan to deal with this ongoing crisis?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Mr. Speaker, I'm going to refer the matter to the Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Clearly, we cannot have code zeros happening in our hospitals throughout the province. We understand that. We also understand that the city of Hamilton is actually responsible for their ambulance services. We will work with those partners. We will ensure that they get the resources they need.

But let's be clear: This is not a new problem. This has not just happened this weekend. This is a 15-year problem that's going to take some time. We're going to get it right, and we're going to make sure that we provide the services the city of Hamilton needs.

1050

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Order.

Start the clock. Final supplementary?

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** This is clearly not an issue for tourism, but I would suggest that maybe this government

might want to take a tour of some of the hospitals in Ontario, because this isn't just a Hamilton problem. The Ottawa Hospital, for example, was at 104% capacity on Thursday. Thunder Bay's hospital just reported that they were operating over capacity 94% of the time. These hospitals are saying that repackaging the same old Liberal announcements won't get people out of hospital hallways.

When are we going to see a plan?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** I would not presuppose to try to figure out how the opposite party organizes themselves, but I can assure you that a Doug Ford government works as a team. We are a strong caucus, a strong cabinet. We work together to solve these issues. As I said, we will work with our municipal partners, including the city of Hamilton, to ensure they have the resources they need.

But to be clear: This is not a new problem. Fifteen years of inaction, 15 years of lack of any kind of focus, and this is what you're dealt. If you would like to ask why the Liberals ignored it for 15 years, go right ahead. But in our first 100 days, we are dealing with the issues that the people of Ontario expect us to deal with, including hallway medicine.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le premier ministre.

Hamilton's mayor noted that his community still doesn't know whether they're going to get any of the \$90-million surge capacity hospital funding announcement. It's a concern that I've heard over and over, from Thunder Bay to Ottawa to Hamilton and every community in between.

Can the Premier provide any details as to where the \$90 million in surge capacity for our hospitals that he announced—where is this money going to be spent?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** When we announced the surge funding, we did it with the co-operation and feedback from the local LHINs, because we need to make sure that that surge funding is going to the communities that are most in need.

I'm actually very proud of the fact that I spent last week in my constituency talking to the people of my riding, and they said, "Good on you for finally actually doing something before the flu season becomes a problem and people continue to be treated in hallways."

We are proactively trying to deal with that. We've chosen certain areas throughout the province where we already see, through the work of the LHINs, that there are going to be problems. Historically there have been problems, and that's why we've chosen the communities that we have. It's only a first step, but it's an important first step. It sends the message that we are on the job and we want to protect this stuff before the flu season is upon us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Back to the Premier: The Premier's \$90-million commitment won't stretch very far. Last year, Kathleen Wynne's flu season funding didn't make a dent in hallway medicine. The Premier's plan is

\$10 million less than last year, while more of our hospitals—over half of them, actually—are now operating on over-capacity status every single night. And that's before you consider the impact of health care cuts.

Does the Premier really think that \$90 million to cover the surge linked to the flu season will end hallway medicine or will improve the situation in our overcrowded hospitals?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I wish to remind all members that we refer to other members not by their given names but by their riding names or their ministry title.

Response? Minister.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Respectfully, Speaker, I must correct the member opposite. This is new money. This is very specifically for the upcoming flu season. We are proactively getting the resources in place so that hospitals like Bridgepoint, North Bay Regional Health Centre, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, Pine Villa, the Cooksville Care Centre and Humber River Hospital can prepare appropriately for the flu season, and so that we can stop treating our parents and our grandparents in hallways and in closets. It's inappropriate. It shouldn't be happening. Last week's announcement was the first step toward that change.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Mike Harris:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Our government is committed to putting more money back into people's pockets. For the last 15 years, the previous Liberal government took every opportunity to tax the hard-working people of Ontario. The pattern was clear: The Liberals would tax and the Liberals would spend, and the people of Ontario would lose.

I'm both happy and relieved our government is putting an end to the Liberals' reckless tax-and-spend policies. For example, last week, our government announced our intention to halt the beer tax increase. Could the minister please explain his intention to stop the cost of beer from going up and how this will save the people of Ontario more money?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga for the question. Every year for the past three years, the Liberals have increased the beer tax on November 1. They took every opportunity to squeeze more money out of the hard-working people across our province, all in an effort to keep up with their reckless spending.

Last week, our government announced our intention to put an end to yet another Liberal cash grab. Our plan proposes to stop the three-cents-per-litre tax hike on beer on November 1. Instead, we're letting the people of Ontario hold on to more of their hard-earned money.

The days of the tax-and-spend Liberals are over. We're respecting the taxpayer, we're lowering taxes and we're putting more money in people's pockets every single chance we get.

*Interjections.*

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

Restart the clock. Supplementary?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Thank you to the minister for his response. I'm thrilled to be part of a government that is putting the people first.

An annual beer tax hike is nothing more than an opportunity for the Liberals to finance their reckless spending and failed policies. It's about time the people of Ontario get the relief they deserve. For too long, taxpayers' pockets were treated like a piggy bank. The Liberals were taking whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted. I'm proud our government is doing things differently. I'm proud our government is respecting the taxpayer.

The beer tax hike was just another example of the Liberals making life more unaffordable for Ontario families. Could the minister further explain why the plan to stop the beer tax increase is necessary?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Our proposed plan to stop the beer tax hike is part of our commitment to putting more money in people's pockets. We're bringing relief to the people of Ontario every single chance we get. We've introduced legislation to scrap cap-and-trade which, if passed, would bring further relief at the pump and in families' wallets. We've rolled back increases for driver's licence renewal fees. We've cancelled expensive wind and solar projects in order to bring down hydro rates.

Every single decision we make and every single dollar we spend is for the people. The beer tax is no different. We will continue to provide relief in every way we can and let the hard-working people of Ontario keep more money in their pockets.

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Order. Order on the government benches. Order.

Next question. Start the clock.

#### ANTI-RACISM ACTIVITIES

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Premier. Speaker, as the Premier knows, Faith Goldy is a neo-Nazi sympathizer who the Premier posed for photos with at an event several weeks ago. Now that photo is being used on campaign advertising to promote Faith Goldy's campaign as Toronto mayor.

**1100**

Speaker, the people of Ontario want to know: Did the Premier give permission for his image to be used in Faith Goldy's campaign advertising?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Through you, Mr. Speaker: I can tell you, I'm not going down that alley again. I'll tell you where I'm going. I look forward to working with the next mayor of Toronto. I look forward to working with a reduced size of council—a dysfunctional council before. Now they're going to be able to work with the province to get transit built, to get housing built, to actually save the taxpayers some money. Believe me, I know that game at city hall like the back of my hand, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully, they're going to get things done once and for all.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** The advertisement in question is in Chinese, and that's especially concerning, given that, among other hateful things, Faith Goldy has recently stated, "Toronto shouldn't be a suburb of Beijing." She's implying that she has the endorsement of this Premier. The Premier now, again, has a chance to clear the air. It shouldn't be this hard, Speaker. It can't be this hard.

Will the Premier unequivocally denounce Faith Goldy and apologize for appearing in a photo that is now being used as a de facto endorsement of her campaign by the Premier of this province?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** I'd like to point out to the member opposite that this Premier has disavowed that individual no less than 20 times in this assembly. I reject the premise where that government is trying to say that this party is anti-immigration. Look around these benches on that side and on this side. This party is full of diversity. This party welcomes diversity. This party is standing up for immigration and refugees in the province of Ontario. That member should watch what he says, watch what he implies, and he should apologize to the Premier of Ontario for suggesting that right-wing extremism exists in this government, when it certainly doesn't.

I can tell you, I'm proud of the new members we have in this Legislature who are from Egypt, who are from India. They can come from New Delhi, New Glasgow or North Bay. I'm going to tell you, we're here for the people—all of the people—in this province.

*Interjection.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The members will come to order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Member for Flamborough–Glanbrook, please come to order. The Premier will come to order. Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, come to order. Member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, come to order.

Start the clock. The member for Simcoe North.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** My question today is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, our brave, dedicated and hard-working front-line officers and emergency responders have faced incredible pressure due to constant failures associated with their communications network known as the Public Safety Radio Network. Our dedicated front-line officers and emergency responders deserve to know that our government is listening to them and remains committed to providing them with the tools they need to perform their duties safely and effectively. Ontarians also deserve to know their government is

able to provide them with the level of public safety they expect us to provide them with.

To the minister: Can you please update the members of this Legislature on the current state of Ontario's Public Safety Radio Network?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you to the member for Simcoe North for the question. The Ontario Public Safety Radio Network has been left in a terrible state of disrepair. The last time the network was replaced was back in 1998. The project is long overdue.

We're taking real action to ensure that our government can provide the people of this great province with the level of public safety they expect us to provide them with. Due to the current state of the PSRN, any delay in modernizing the system increases the risk to public safety as a result of radio failure, so it's critical that we move forward with this project as soon as possible.

The safety of Ontarians will always be our first priority. A mitigation strategy has now been put in place to ensure that the current radio network can still be used until the new system is phased in in 2021. Public safety is a top priority of this government, and we will do everything in our power to ensure that the radio network is up and running and working for all Ontarians.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** I want to thank the minister for his response and for working to keep our front-line officers and communities safe. It is unacceptable to hear that the previous Liberal government ignored such important communications infrastructure for so long.

It is very reassuring to hear that our government for the people has moved so quickly to ensure that our front-line officers and emergency personnel are able to better communicate and respond to emergency situations. I'm also pleased to learn that a mitigation strategy has been put in place while the network is being modernized to ensure the safety of families and communities across Ontario.

To the minister: Could you please tell the members of this Legislature how long it will take to modernize the Public Safety Radio Network?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you for that follow-up question. Our government for the people acted as quickly as possible to ensure that the province's Public Safety Radio Network could be replaced and modernized to keep Ontario's communities safe.

This project is a massive undertaking. The technology that provides essential public safety radio coverage across the province will be rebuilt by this government. The new network will be a 15-year service agreement to ensure that our network remains up to date and in good repair. In addition, funding has been set aside to improve the existing legacy system during the transition to the new system.

Mr. Speaker, our front-line and emergency responders do some of the most dangerous work in the province. They need to have the tools and resources in place to do their jobs. Our government for the people is making sure that they have the necessary tools to be able to do their jobs safely.

## FIREFIGHTERS

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels. The minister and the Premier's comments about the cancellation of certification requirements for firefighters make absolutely no sense. In response to several tragic incidents and recommendations from coroners' inquests, and the requests of firefighters, mandatory training requirements were put in place.

Mandatory training is not just red tape, as the Conservatives like to refer to it. It keeps firefighters and the community safe as they serve. In fact, Rob Hyndman, the president of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, said that these regulations were necessary to save lives.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen what happens when rules to keep people safe are called red tape by the Conservatives. Does the minister believe that his government's insistence on cutting so-called red tape is worth the lives of Ontario's firefighters?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Listening to the question begs me to ask the question back: What exactly is it that they are trying to do? What we are trying to do as a government is to be responsible and ensure that our firefighters are safe. What that means is that we will look at certification, but what we are also doing is listening to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. At their annual conference, we heard from them and from other stakeholders, including fire chiefs, that the certification regulation would create significant challenges for fire services and municipalities, particularly small, rural and northern municipalities with volunteer firefighters.

1110

Firefighters and municipalities have expressed concern with the resources and supports that were required to be compliant with the certification requirements and with the potential longer-term—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** Actually, I'm happy about the answer that the minister gave, because we, the former government that was here, confirmed with AMO and every single individual who was consulted for the past 18 months on this at an expert fire table—AMO was there, the volunteer firefighters were there and the fire chiefs were there. Every single individual was sitting at this table, and we came to the table saying that we were going to help our most vulnerable, rural and faraway communities.

Again to the minister: What's the cost of not helping firefighters? I want to remind everyone in Ontario, when you go to the barber or to your hairdresser, they actually have a minimum requirement of standards. Again to the minister: What are you going to do to help firefighters in this province and to keep them safe?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Our government is a responsible government and will work with the firefighters and the municipalities to ensure that they're safe.

I find it rich that I'm listening to the former Liberal caucus talk about the fact that they were going to spend all

this money. Let me remind you about the \$354-billion debt. Let me also remind you of the \$15-billion deficit that we operate with.

The reality of the situation is we are listening to the stakeholders and we are listening to the fire chiefs. I've had numerous discussions where they've told me and have congratulated our government for taking the lid off a boiling pot. We are working with the firefighters, and we will give them real results.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Last week, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its latest report. Ninety scientists reviewed over 6,000 climate studies to compile the world's most comprehensive understanding of the risks we face from climate change. Its conclusion: We need to keep the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees if we're to avoid the most catastrophic impacts.

Ontario once had a plan to mitigate climate change. Then, the Premier ripped up the plan and replaced it with nothing. Did the minister read the conclusions reached by the IPCC, and, if so, how is it acceptable that Ontario no longer has a climate plan?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, I thank him for the question. As the member knows, this is a 700-page study. It is a study that's being reviewed now by the ministry team and, like all other information, will be integrated into our planning, our planning for a plan that works—not the cap-and-trade carbon-tax plan that was rejected by the people of Ontario, but a plan that works.

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you what is really shocking: The previous government, supported 97% by the NDP, did not prepare a comprehensive climate review in terms of the impacts on the province of Ontario. I was shocked to find that, with all of the attention paid to it—supported 97% of the time by the NDP—there's no comprehensive review of how we're going to deal with these impacts. Climate change is real. Our plan will deal with the impacts, unlike the previous government's.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Back to the minister: The NDP supports climate action that is fair, effective and transparent. The minister doesn't seem to support climate action at all. Ontario's Environmental Commissioner said, "Ontario has gutted most of its climate change programs."

When so much is at stake, why is the minister gutting Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan without putting forward an alternative plan?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: Climate change is real and we are addressing it, but we are addressing it with an effective made-in-Ontario plan.

There are two things that are clear: First, we need to build resilience. We need to understand the impacts of climate change, because it's happening. Second, we need to

deal with reductions in greenhouse gases, but reductions that provide a balance, a balance between a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

Our made-in-Ontario plan will bring forward those changes, and we look forward to the member's comments when the plan is released.

#### CANNABIS REGULATION

**Mr. Stan Cho:** My question is for the wonderful and talented Attorney General. We know that the Trudeau government has mandated that recreational cannabis be legal across Canada on October 17. I know that our government has been hard at work developing a plan that ensures our province is ready for legalization this Wednesday, a plan that will protect our children, keep our roads and communities safe, and combat the illegal market.

But I also know that many parents and young people in my riding of Willowdale still have questions about what the federal Liberal government's legalization of this drug means and what it will mean for families and their communities. I know our government has made many announcements on this topic, which have been helpful, but I'm wondering if the Attorney General can highlight any further places that people may be able to learn more about the government's plan.

**Hon. Caroline Mulroney:** I would like to thank the member from Willowdale for his question. With the federal government's legalization of cannabis only two short days away on October 17, I would like to start by reassuring this chamber and all Ontarians that this province will be ready.

I understand that parents and young people have questions about the federal government's legalization policy. As a mother of four children myself, I have thought about how this policy will affect my family, and so I know that, like so many others, I'd like to have as much information as possible about how to navigate these waters.

That is why I'm happy to share with the House that we have launched a public awareness campaign aimed at informing Ontarians, especially parents and young people, about the new legal framework for the purchase and consumption of recreational cannabis, about the dangers associated with drug-impaired driving, and highlighting the health risks to consumers. Over the coming months, we will be rolling out more and more ads that will be accessible and apparent for people where they live and commute.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Stan Cho:** Thank you to the minister. I know that the parents in my riding will be relieved to know the government is providing resources they can turn to when they have questions. These are certainly uncharted waters. It's reassuring to know that we have a government that takes this matter and the protection of our young people very seriously.

Mr. Speaker, the minister mentioned that the purpose of the public awareness campaign was to highlight the rules around recreational cannabis use in Ontario. Can the

minister outline how the new plan will better inform families and commuters on how to be safer in our communities and on our roads?

**Hon. Caroline Mulroney:** I'd be happy to provide the member from Willowdale with more information. These ads will focus on social responsibility, including the serious health and addiction risks of short- and long-term cannabis use. They will not promote cannabis use. Our message will remain simple and clear: We will plainly tell Ontarians how our children, our communities and our roads will be protected and how we will work to combat the illegal market.

The deterring effects of our zero-tolerance policies will also be amplified through these ads, which will work to educate people about the dangers of driving impaired and the stiff penalties. No matter where or how you hear about our government's plans, our commitment to protecting youth, keeping our communities and our roads safe, and fighting the illegal market will always be paramount. I cannot stress this enough, Mr. Speaker: Ontario is ready for the federal government's legalization of recreational cannabis.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Gurratan Singh:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. Ontarians living in areas like Brampton, Scarborough, Humber River–Black Creek and York South–Weston pay disproportionately higher auto insurance premiums than drivers in any other neighbourhood in the GTA. This is simply not okay. Ontario families already pay enough. We must stop auto insurance companies from gouging families merely based on the neighbourhood they live in. Climbing daily expenses, from auto insurance to hydro to housing, are pushing families past the breaking point. We have to do better.

This is why I will be introducing my private member's bill to end postal code discrimination in auto insurance premiums. Will the government support my private member's bill, or will they side with auto insurance companies over Ontario drivers?

1120

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you to the member from Brampton East for the question. It's clear that the Liberal-NDP system of failed stretch goals on auto insurance is broken. We congratulate our PC member from Milton for his work on this file. He will be introducing legislation that, if passed, will eliminate the unfair practice of postal code discrimination with respect to auto insurance rates. His proposed initiative is a great way to combat discrimination in our auto insurance system. Once the member's legislation is tabled, we look forward to working with him and industry stakeholders to ensure our auto insurance system meets the needs of Ontario's 10 million drivers.

Speaker, he has done this right. He consulted with stakeholders right across the province and put forward a great private member's bill.

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

**Mr. Gurratan Singh:** Ontario has one of the lowest levels of auto accidents in Canada yet the most expensive auto insurance premiums. While the government should be working hard to fix the situation, the Premier has, instead, continued with the Liberals' policy, which has failed drivers for too long and paved the way for a 9% increase in average premiums paid by drivers. We need to be moving forward, not backwards. Will the government support my private member's bill and stop allowing premiums to be based on where you live?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** The previous Liberal government, backed by the NDP, failed to deliver anything but stretch goals when it came to auto insurance rates. Our member from Milton's bill, if passed, will end the unfair practice of discriminating against drivers simply based on where they live.

Our government for the people is committed to putting more money in people's pockets, and this bill is another step towards doing that. We congratulate the member from Milton.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. With the recent tornadoes that affected many families throughout the Ottawa region, we've heard of the many difficulties faced by our dedicated emergency responders during their response efforts. The communications infrastructure that our hard-working, front-line officers and emergency personnel rely upon to respond to emergency situations is in a terrible state of disrepair.

Speaker, through you, could the minister please explain to all members of this Legislature what he's doing to ensure that Ontario's emergency communications infrastructure is improved?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member from Carleton for the question. As you've heard today, our government has taken real action to address Ontario's crumbling Public Safety Radio Network, a system relied upon by many of the province's front-line officers and emergency responders. Replacing this outdated and ineffective radio network is critical to all emergency services throughout the province.

When Ottawa was shaken by the tragic tornadoes, our hard-working and dedicated front-line officers and emergency responders were obstructed from performing their duties safely and effectively due to the frequent outages that affected the PSRN on a daily basis. In an emergency situation, regardless of where it is in the province, communication between our front-line emergency responders is a key component to ensuring public safety and also keeping our emergency responders safe.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his response. It's reassuring to know that our government for the people, under Premier Ford's leadership,

is taking the necessary steps to ensure that public safety is enhanced and restored throughout the province. Our hard-working and dedicated front-line officers and emergency personnel deserve to have the tools they need to keep all of Ontario's communities safe.

Minister, as you know, front-line officers and emergency personnel throughout the province rely upon Ontario's Public Safety Radio Network. There has been constant concern over smaller, rural and northern communities, like Richmond, Metcalfe and Osgoode, when it comes to having the necessary tools and resources to perform their duties safely and effectively.

To the minister: Could you please explain how modernizing the Public Safety Radio Network will help those living in smaller, rural and northern communities, in my riding of Carleton and across this great province?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you for that very good question. Let me start off by saying that the Ontario Public Safety Radio Network is relied upon by more than 38,000 emergency responders throughout the province. It is the largest, most complex net in all of North America, but it's one of the last ones that has been left to comply with the P25 standard in North America.

This modernization project will ensure that our more than 38,000 front-line officers and first responders, including OPP officers, paramedics, hospital staff, fire services, provincial highway maintenance staff and even the province's conservation officers, can count on the communications infrastructure, network and equipment they need when they respond to emergencies.

This project will assist our hard-working front-line officers and emergency responders throughout the province to become better equipped to keep our communities, families and businesses safe.

#### ADDICTION SERVICES

**Ms. Bhutila Karpoche:** My question is to the Premier. A fully equipped medical trailer for overdose prevention in my riding of Parkdale–High Park sits unused. As the weather worsens, volunteers who maintained the overdose prevention site decided last week that they had to close in order to keep the community safe. Some 189 people and counting have died in the 10 weeks since the government started its unnecessary review, given that the evidence is already very clear.

Speaker, with no sign of a decision, will the Premier finally tell the people of Parkdale–High Park if the previously approved permanent site can operate safely and openly—yes or no?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** Minister of Tourism.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** The member opposite understands that we requested an extension from the federal government to study the problem and make sure we got it right. As the Speaker knows, we received that extension from the federal government. We're going to study it. We're going to get it right.

I think it's very important for people to understand that any discussion about mental health and addictions must include a conversation about the opioid crisis.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Back to the Premier: People are dying while this government dithers. Three people a day die from preventable overdoses. Regardless of whether the Premier is “dead set” against these sites, it is a proven harm reduction tool that saves lives.

I ask again: Will the Premier allow health professionals already doing the work of saving lives to do it safely from community health clinics—yes or no?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Frankly, I think the member opposite is just reinforcing the point that we need to get this right. This is not a knee-jerk reaction. This is not, “Let's throw money at it.” I know it's always the NDP's solution, but, frankly, there are better ways.

We need to make sure that the treatment is in place. We will study this and we will get it right and we will not be rushed because you want to make a snap decision.

#### SMALL BUSINESS

**Mr. David Piccini:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Today marks the beginning of Small Business Week. After 15 years of red tape, overregulation and excessive taxation, I know I speak on behalf of all the small businesses in my community when I say how special this Small Business Week is.

We know that businesses are the backbone of Ontario's economy. Small business owners are hard-working people; they get up early, they work late, they take great risks and they create jobs in communities across our great province.

Our government is committed to helping small businesses succeed, creating the right conditions and helping them thrive. When small businesses prosper, Ontario prospers.

1130

Could the minister please inform the Legislature how our government for the people is helping small business owners after 15 years of hardship under the previous Liberal government?

**Hon. Jim Wilson:** I thank my honourable colleague for this very important question. Yes, this is Small Business Week in Ontario. We celebrate the jobs, the food that's put on the table by our small businesses, the families that have great lives and those who come off welfare, work for business and make their way up, as the Premier said. While this week is Small Business Week officially, every week is a small business week for this government. In fact, every day is small business day with this government.

We have over 400,000 small businesses in the province of Ontario and they account for about 90% of the actual businesses in our province. Ontario's small businesses employ nearly two million people, and our government is making sure every day that they're able to thrive, prosper and employ more Ontarians.

We're doing that by scrapping cap-and-trade, if passed. The Green Energy Act is being scrapped, if passed. We

removed the carbon tax from the price of natural gas, lowered the gas tax by 4.3 cents with more to come, committed to lowering corporate—

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

**Mr. David Piccini:** Thank you to the minister for his response. Our number one priority in this government is ensuring that Ontario is open for business. We are making it easier in this province to grow a business by cutting red tape and regulatory burdens. In fact, the PA was just in my riding and held an excellent round table with small businesses on this very thing.

We've heard from businesses across this province that they need relief. Business resources should be spent on improving and innovating, not clearing regulatory hurdles. Far too many provincial regulations are inflexible, inefficient and, quite frankly, duplicative or simply out of date, misaligned with so many jurisdictions across this country. We're paying higher bills for this.

Could the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade please inform this Legislature of how our government for the people is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Minister?

**Hon. Jim Wilson:** Thank you again to my colleague for the question. Our government is taking serious action to reduce the burden of red tape and to send a message that Ontario is indeed open for business. My parliamentary assistants, Donna Skelly and Mike Parsa—Donna has been doing free trade: What's the effect of free trade and the NAFTA negotiations on our small businesses and all our businesses? And PA Mike Parsa has been doing an excellent job, as was mentioned in the question, of listening to businesses so we can cut red tape.

We're not just having these meetings for the sake of meetings; that's what other governments do. We're having these meetings so that we will cut red tape—not down the centre, like 50%, like so many cut it in half; we're going to cut it right off in this province. We're going to create more jobs. The Premier has appointed a special deputy minister to do exactly that, to look at the regulatory burden in the province. Historically, we've saved small businesses and all businesses—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. Next question.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** My question is to the environment minister, the former head of the OLG. Good morning, Minister.

The minister tweeted last week that he's cut a deal in his riding to keep 500 slot machines at Ajax Downs, even though a new mega casino is opening up just 10 minutes away in Pickering. So what's the deal? Has the government reintroduced the Slots at Racetracks Program right across the province or just in ridings held by cabinet ministers?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much for the question. Our government has kept its commitment to bolster the horse racing industry and repair the damage done by the previous Liberal government, with the support of the NDP.

Agreements in principle have now been reached to keep slots operating in Kawartha Downs and Ajax Downs and to provide additional funding to continue horse racing in Fort Erie and Dresden. Discussions continue with other racetracks in Ontario. This commitment will directly support the horse racing industry and rural Ontario. This is certainly another promise made, promise kept.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Speaker, there's great confusion at Kawartha Downs. Employees were locked out this morning. The Premier said on Friday the slots would stay at Kawartha Downs even though a new casino is opening up in Peterborough tonight, but there seems to be a communications breakdown. Racetrack management has told the union that if all of the slots aren't open by tomorrow, layoff notices will be issued. The OLG and Great Canadian Gaming apparently aren't doing what the Premier said they were going to do.

Who is calling the shots in this province: the government or private casino operators?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Our government made a generous offer to all of the racetracks, including offering the return of slots to Fort Erie and Dresden. The racetracks in those areas made a business decision to take further enhanced funding as opposed to opening their slots.

We're committed to supporting horse racing in Ontario, and we're listening to the needs of the industry stakeholders, something that the member across the aisle should well do. You know, Speaker, it's difficult when you deal with the NDP. They deal in chaos; we deal in confidence. They deal in resistance; we deal in results.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** My question today is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, I know the members for Simcoe North and Carleton have already asked this question, but given how important the public safety network is to our front-line officers and our emergency service workers, I think it bears asking again. The system is in a terrible state of disrepair. We know how important this is for our front-line workers, how important it is to keeping our communities across this province safe.

I wonder if the minister could once again share with us what his ministry is doing to address this critical problem, this critical lack of infrastructure that is so important for the people of Ontario.

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you to the member for that question.

Last week, as many of you know, I was proud to stand alongside the Premier of the province and the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade to announce our government's plans to replace Ontario's crumbling Public Safety Radio Network. As I stated, there

hasn't been an update to this network for over 20 years. Our network is crumbling, to the extent that our emergency responders are scouring Kijiji just to find parts to keep their radios in working order. This is simply unacceptable.

Our government is taking action to ensure that more than 38,000 of our front-line workers can count on the communications infrastructure, networks and equipment they need when responding to emergencies. During the election campaign, we committed to providing our front-line officers with the tools and resources they require to perform their duties safely and effectively. Promises made, promises kept.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Thank you, Minister, for the answer.

It's shocking, really, that Liberals, both federally and provincially, seem to take the safety and security of our province and country so lightly, whether it was a decade of darkness for our Canadian Armed Forces that the federal Liberals gave us or 15 years to repair a public safety network and make investments in public safety. That is completely unacceptable and part of the reason why the people of Ontario elected Progressive Conservatives on this side of the House and on that side of the House to make these important changes.

It is absolutely disheartening to hear that our front-line officers and workers have to go out and buy spare parts to keep their radios working. That's not what the people of Ontario expect. I'm very proud to be part of a government for the people that is making investments like this.

1140

I wonder if the minister could share, for the House and for the people of Ontario, just why this is such an important investment to make in order to keep our communities safe.

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** To the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**Hon. Steve Clark:** I want to thank the member for the question. I also want to thank our Premier and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services for their commitment to taking the necessary steps to modernize the province's Public Safety Radio Network. I want to thank them for that. These updates are urgently needed, as was seen during the recent tornadoes that affected numerous families in the Ottawa region. The PSRN is a vital tool used by our emergency responders. It assists with protecting the life safety of the general public and also the workers themselves. That's why our government is now taking the necessary steps to modernize and to upgrade the province's Public Safety Radio Network so that we can prevent any further challenges faced by emergency responders and our municipal partners. Again, I want to thank the Premier and the minister for—

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

Next question.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Mr. Speaker,

for five years I have stood in this House and said clearly that any long-term future for the Fort Erie Race Track must include the return of slots. The community and the town have said the same thing, yet on Friday night, after 5 o'clock, this Conservative government quietly put out a press release that said, in a closed-door deal, that the government would not be returning slots to Fort Erie. Instead, they're going to give cash or a buyout.

Mr. Speaker, my question is simple: When did the minister or the Premier consult either an elected representative or the people of the town of Fort Erie on this deal?

**Hon. Rod Phillips:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much for the question. We are pleased that the member opposite finally recognizes the importance of the horse racing industry after the Liberal government took it apart, only thanks to the support of the NDP. However, the member may want to take time to acknowledge the industry's real needs.

We made a generous offer to return slots to Fort Erie, but the racetrack themselves made a business decision to accept enhanced funding instead. We are committed to supporting the horse racing industry in Ontario. The member opposite would be wise to listen to his own riding.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Mr. Speaker, let me say very clearly: I do not have to take any lessons from that member on what to do in the racetrack in Fort Erie. I've been fighting for that track for five years, to make sure we get the slots back. That's what I've done and you know that. As a member, you know that.

Mr. Speaker, back to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: For five years, I have been clear. The future of the Fort Erie Race Track must include slots and the jobs. That would mean much-needed revenue but also hundreds of new jobs for the town of Fort Erie, jobs that the residents can raise their families on. Instead, this closed-door deal has resulted in the trade of dollars instead of slots. The mayor, the councillors and my office didn't agree to this, and, most importantly, the residents of Fort Erie were not even told about this.

So the people of Fort Erie can know: Will the minister re-examine his deal and ensure that the slots can return to Fort Erie Race Track, just like the Premier promised?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Opposition benches, come to order.

Minister, response.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much. Once again our government has kept its commitment to bolster the horse racing industry and repair the damage done by the previous Liberal government, only due to the support of the NDP.

We made a generous offer to return slots to Fort Erie but the racetrack made a business decision to accept the enhanced funding instead. This commitment will directly support the horse racing industry and rural communities. Our government made a generous offer to all of these race-tracks including offering the return of slots to Fort Erie and Dresden.

Speaker, I'm going to say it again: The NDP deals in chaos. We deliver confidence. The NDP deals in resistance. We will deliver results.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Question period has expired.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Point of order: the member for Don Valley East.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** I just want to take a moment to recognize the students from Don Mills Collegiate who are in the assembly today.

#### ANNUAL REPORT, CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I beg to inform the House that the following document has been tabled: the 2016-17 annual report of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Ontario.

#### VISITORS

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Point of order: the member for King-Vaughan.

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** I also want to recognize students from St. Raphael the Archangel from Vaughan, who were with us earlier today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you. There being no deferred votes, this House is recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1146 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Norman Miller:** I'm pleased to introduce, in the members' east gallery, Sarah Litchfield, a Seneca post-graduate government relations program student volunteering in my office, and also Braelyn Guppy, an Ontario legislative intern program participant, who just started a couple of days ago. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** It is my pleasure to introduce two of my Queen's Park staff—first of all, Patil Imasdownian. She is a fourth-year Ryerson University political science student and part-time staff in my office here. I wish her welcome—and Fadi Dawood, who is my Queen's Park legislative assistant. Thank you and welcome.

#### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

##### GRANDVIEW CHILDREN'S CENTRE

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** In my riding, we have a very special place that does wonderful work with some of our most fantastic children. Grandview Children's Centre works

with children with special needs and gives them the best chance to reach their full potential. They started humbly 65 years ago with a small number of families requesting services, and have grown to serve 10,000 families with kids who depend on Grandview's services and supports.

Every day across Grandview's six locations throughout Durham region, over 330 families arrive for appointments: 65,000 appointments for urgently needed pediatric rehabilitation, physio, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, specialist medical care and clinics, audiology, therapeutic recreation, and family support services. Kids with physical, communication and developmental needs depend on Grandview being there as the only pediatric rehabilitation centre in Durham. Grandview is also the regional provider for autism services.

Grandview helps so many families, but has an ever-increasing wait-list of over 3,000 kids and has outgrown the facility that is in my riding of Oshawa. I was excited to recently join Grandview and supporters to launch their Believe Campaign. The province has committed \$31 million, and the Grandview Children's Foundation is currently raising \$20 million through the campaign to be able to build and move to their new home in Ajax.

The Grandview Children's Foundation has launched the Believe Campaign. I met eight-year-old Teagan and many of the special children who are Grandview's ambassadors—and they and all children deserve the world. I encourage everyone to believe and be a part of making dreams come true and empowering our children to realize their full potential.

Get involved. Visit [grandviewkidsbelieve.ca](http://grandviewkidsbelieve.ca). We believe, and we believe in a new Grandview.

#### WASTE DIVERSION

**Mr. Norman Miller:** In honour of Waste Reduction Week, I would like to share a new program that has been implemented in Parry Sound–Muskoka to help reduce waste going to landfill. I'm proud that the district of Muskoka has partnered with Ontario Mattress Recycling in Barrie to help provide residents with an environmentally conscious way to dispose of used mattresses.

Mattresses take up an enormous amount of space in landfills but, properly sorted and disassembled, 95% of discarded mattresses can be transformed into new products.

The project began as a three-month pilot project to provide services from the Barrie-based company to Muskoka residents. Since the project was launched, approximately 600 mattresses have been repurposed instead of ending up in Muskoka's only remaining landfill.

I commend Muskoka councillors for making this program permanent starting in 2019. This should divert 10,000 to 12,000 mattresses annually and extend the life of the Rosewarne landfill by more than three years. The district projects the program will break even financially, with residents paying a tipping fee of \$26 per mattress to help to cover the cost of increased staff time and the \$16 per mattress the district pays to Ontario Mattress Recycling.

This program is an example of Muskoka's dedication to environmental conservation and sustainability. The program will continue to increase the municipality's waste-diversion rate and provide more value for taxpayers on the existing landfill.

#### FLOODING IN ALGOMA–MANITOULIN

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Speaker, do you know what the communities of Chapleau, Thessalon, Wharncliffe, Manitowadge, Wawa, Goulais River, Searchmont and the residents of Downey Creek and Harmony Beach have in common? They have just felt the wrath of Mother Nature. Mother Nature decided to pour and rain and release waters over an excessive period of time, which resulted in road closures and flooding.

I was out in Goulais River over my constituency week looking at individuals—and a shout-out to the crews of the search-and-rescue team, who went out and rescued these people out of their homes, which had roughly about three to four feet of water through them. It is gut-wrenching seeing the struggles of those individuals and it is disheartening seeing them losing their homes.

However, what I am really frustrated about is when some of these incidents are preventable. On Highway 614 into Manitowadge, there was a culvert that had been identified as faulty over the course of the summer. There was a dip in the culvert. The decision-makers of the day decided to put a log through it to clear the passage and put some cold patch over top it. But guess what? The heavy rains washed in, brought in debris, blocked it and we have a washed-out road. This is something that is completely preventable.

It's not just an isolated event; it has happened year after year in northern Ontario. We're not asking for anything more in northern Ontario, but we sure as hell won't accept anything less. We want our roads to be a priority as well.

#### NEIL TWEEDALE

**Mr. Jeremy Roberts:** Last Friday evening, I attended an event in my riding at which 500 revellers were gathered sharing a beer and a few laughs. But this was not a normal party. It wasn't a wedding or a fundraiser; it was a funeral. All of these people were gathered to celebrate the life of Neil Tweedale, who passed away suddenly last week at the age of 57.

The day Neil died happened to be the 20th anniversary of the business that he and his brothers had built, Tweedale Sewer & Water. Neil was immensely proud of the company. They employed 20 to 25 workers across Ottawa every year. He was particularly proud that in 2007 his team was brought on for the emergency replacement of a water main that had burst on Parliament Hill. Within the industry, the Tweedale name has become synonymous with reliability, quality and hard work.

Neil loved his family above all else. His children, Lana, Caleum and Brittany, have each grown into impressive young men and women. I was awed by the speeches that Lana and Caleum delivered on Friday. Instead of despair, they showed through their courage and thoughtful words

that Neil's legacy would continue to be celebrated for years to come.

On a personal note, Mr. Speaker, Neil's passing is a tremendous loss for my family. Neil was one of my father's best friends from the day they first met in kindergarten at City View public school. I will always remember Neil coming in and out of my campaign office with an armful of lawn signs and stakes. His efforts helped put me here today.

Neil, I know that your memory will continue to bring a smile to many for many years to come. Thank you for all you did.

#### AUTISM AWARENESS AND ACCEPTANCE MONTH

**Miss Monique Taylor:** October is Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month, a time to reflect and commit to the work that ensures that families and individuals living with autism have the support and services they need not only to reach their full potential but, for some, to merely survive.

Stephen Francella is 35 years old. He has very limited verbal skills and lives at home with his parents, Frank and Maureen. For five years, Stephen did live in a group home, but they weren't able to manage his needs, so he returned home 10 years ago.

Stephen is usually very calm, happy, loving and easy to get along with, but he has occasional bouts of violence and self-injury, and they have increased dramatically over the past year.

1310

Mom now has PTSD and is not able to manage Stephen, and is fearful of his uncontrollable outbursts.

He has been in the West 5th emergency mental health unit since mid-September, in a locked ward, and receives 24-hour care. But that overnight care for Stephen is about to be cut. That means there will be no one there with him during the evening hours. His parents are extremely concerned and worried about Stephen's future. The family is no longer able to care for him and ensure that his needs are met. He is on wait-lists for behaviour intervention and housing.

These are the things that we should be providing to people in our communities. People in our communities need help to ensure that they can live fulfilling lives and that they can care for their loved ones. Hopefully this government will step up to the plate.

#### OPIOID ABUSE ABUS D'OPIOÏDES

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** I rise in this House to discuss the opioid crisis. Since 2003, the number of opioid-related deaths has increased 246% in Ontario. In 2017, more than 1,200 Ontarians died from opioid-related causes. In Ottawa, the rate of opioid-related deaths is 4.1 per 100,000 people.

Every death is a tragedy. I had the occasion of attending a very moving memorial service for all the people who died from opioid-related deaths in my riding, and I have to

say that I was quite moved by the way in which everybody was getting together and trying to support each other.

The evidence is in on safe injection sites and it is unacceptable to delay any further. I had the occasion to visit the sites in the riding of Ottawa–Vanier. They work well. People are getting the services that they need. It's a pathway to getting services.

Il est temps d'agir, monsieur le Président. Il faut agir avant qu'il y a d'autres décès qui affectent Ottawa–Vanier ait et toute la province de l'Ontario. Ce gouvernement est en poste depuis quatre mois. C'est le temps d'agir et d'arrêter de tergiverser. J'ai eu l'occasion de voir de mes propres yeux combien ça marche et comment ça peut soutenir des vies. Il est important de ne pas abandonner notre devoir à l'égard de toutes ces personnes dont la vie est en danger.

#### ARMENIAN COMMUNITY

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** Last week, leaders from around the world gathered in Yerevan, Armenia, for the 2018 la Francophonie summit. This was the first international gathering of Francophonie leaders, allowing them to experience Armenian hospitality.

On that same note, on September 21, around the world and in Canada, Armenians celebrated the 27th anniversary of the inception of the third republic.

Canada has had a long and historic relationship with Armenia and Armenians. Canada was one of the first countries around the world to recognize this important day and provided immediate assistance to the newly established republic to overcome the challenges left behind by 70 years of Soviet rule.

The first Armenian students, merchants and agriculturists started arriving in Ontario 150 years ago. In 1920, Ontario and Canada were pioneers in initiating the first worldwide humanitarian mission to save some of the orphan survivors of the Armenian genocide. They provided shelter and safe haven to over 100 boys and gave them a new lease on life. At the time, this mission was called Canada's noble experiment.

Many Ontario Armenians became trailblazers in elevating and enhancing Canada's image around the world. Movie director Atom Egoyan, photographer Yousuf Karsh and former Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner Ann Cavoukian are among many who have made great contributions to Ontario.

I am confident that under the leadership of our Premier, Doug Ford, the relationship between Canada and America will become even more intertwined.

I believe that an economic free trade agreement between Ontario and Armenia will further strengthen the bonds between our two countries.

#### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** On July 22 of this year, there was a terrible and tragic shooting on the Danforth in my riding.

Two people were killed and 13 were injured. In the aftermath, people across Ontario, people across Toronto reached out to my community and gave them support and condolences, and that is deeply appreciated.

At the time, I had the opportunity in this House to rise and speak to my community, speak to Ontario, about that tragedy and offer condolences and support. Some of my constituents recently contacted me to say that the family of the shooter was also deeply, deeply affected. They had nothing to do with what happened, yet their lives were totally disrupted. Unfortunately, at the time that I spoke in the House previously, I didn't speak about their plight, their difficulties, and I wish to acknowledge today that they went through tremendous pain and deserve the support and care of the community.

Speaker, many families struggle with a member who has severe problems with mental illness. Families tell me about the huge difficulties they go through trying to access care and support, which is part of the reason we've been very worried, very upset about cuts to promised investment in mental health care. We know that families face these impossible situations. For the sake of those families and to prevent future tragedies, we need to invest in mental health care, we need to look after the people of this province.

#### SAINT CHARBEL MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

**Mr. Sheref Sabawy:** Today I would like to draw our attention to the parish of Saint Charbel Maronite Catholic church in the great city of Mississauga.

Led by Father Charbel, the Maronite Catholics came together and built a new home for their community.

This past Sunday, with the patriarch of their church, His Eminence Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rahi, in attendance, the new church hosted its first mass and the community blessed their altar. I had the pleasure of attending. Although it's not my first time celebrating with the community, I'm always impressed by the love and care they have for each other. Be it at the Saint Charbel Lebanese Heritage Festival in July or the festival of St. Mary in September, or the elevation of the cross just a few weeks ago, Saint Charbel parish welcomes the broader Mississauga community and all Ontarians to celebrate their faith and their culture.

The new Saint Charbel Church is the physical example of love, and like their love, it will stand the test of time.

#### VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

**Ms. Jane McKenna:** On Friday, I had the honour of attending the 38th annual volunteer firefighters recognition and appreciation awards. It was truly an extraordinary occasion, and I was honoured to play a small part by bringing greetings from the government of Ontario and sitting with our extraordinary fire chief, Dave Lazenby.

We all recognize that volunteers have a long and venerable history as the foundation of strong communities. We know that to be true. From health care navigators and

hospital volunteers to food banks, from community outreach volunteers and Big Brothers to Girl Guides and on and on, every single volunteer contributes to making the world a better place one person at a time.

I am so happy that volunteerism today is very much in style. But in the world of firefighting, volunteering has long been a way of life. Today and every day, for well over a hundred years, the volunteer firefighters in Burlington and across rural and small-town Ontario have given their all to help others in desperate need. Volunteers are the only protection and source of security against the devastation of fire in so many parts of our province.

On Friday, October 12, we celebrated the bravest, the strongest, the gentlest and the most relied upon of volunteers. The men and women we honoured, the volunteers who have been firefighting for 10, 25 and even 40 years, have been a literal lifeline for victims, for survivors, when their world was on the brink of destruction or worse.

#### 1320

For five years of service, we recognize Matthew Fedele, Zahari Ganichev, Jim Patterson and Brian Yott. For 10 years, we congratulate Peter Cairns, and for 15 years, Peter Oleskiw. For 20 years, we recognize John Robertson. For 25 years, we honour Lynn Powell and Kevin Ruty. And for 40 years of commitment, we congratulate Jeff Swance.

Thankfully, most people will never need volunteer fire services, but we are all grateful beyond words to know that should there be a need, they will be there for us.

I know that all members in this House share with me in congratulating these courageous men and women on their commitment and years of selfless dedication to volunteer firefighting in Burlington. They have contributed greatly to making the world a better place.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### ENDING DISCRIMINATION IN AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE ACT, 2018

##### LOI DE 2018 METTANT FIN À LA DISCRIMINATION EN MATIÈRE D'ASSURANCE-AUTOMOBILE

Mr. Gill moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 42, An Act to amend the Automobile Insurance Rate Stabilization Act, 2003 and the Insurance Act with respect to ending discrimination in automobile insurance /  
Projet de loi 42, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2003 sur la stabilisation des taux d'assurance-automobile et la Loi sur les assurances en ce qui concerne l'élimination de la discrimination en matière d'assurance-automobile.

**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):** Does the member for Milton care to explain his bill?

**Mr. Parm Gill:** Absolutely. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of my bill is to enhance the marketplace and to encourage

more consumer choice in the area of automobile insurance. The bill amends the Automobile Insurance Rate Stabilization Act, 2003, to require the Superintendent of Financial Services to rescind bulletin A-01/05, which sets out factors to be included in a risk classification system of an insurer under that act.

The bill also amends the Insurance Act to require the Lieutenant Governor in Council to amend regulation 664 (Automobile Insurance) of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990, made under this act so that a risk classification system prohibits insurers from using factors primarily related to the postal code or telephone area code for the residence of a person who would be an insured person under a contract. It also requires the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario to make a rule to the same effect.

## PETITIONS

### SCHOOL FACILITIES

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I would like to thank one of the residents in my riding, Jayoti Edington, for gathering all of these signatures and for putting the petition together, named “Classroom Climate Control Petition.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas section 265(1)(j) of the Education Act requires principals ‘to give assiduous attention to the health and comfort of the pupils, to the cleanliness, temperature and ventilation of the school, to the care of all teaching materials and other school property, and to the condition and appearance of the school buildings and grounds’; and

“Whereas funding for the deferred maintenance in schools has been inadequate to keep up with the costs of our aging infrastructure; and

“Whereas students and education workers go to school every year in sweltering and freezing conditions not conducive to learning or working;

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

“That funding be immediately provided to allow principals of schools across Ontario the ability to achieve their legally required duty under section 26(1)(j); and

“That an amendment be made to the Occupational Health and Safety Act to allow education sector workers the right of work refusal with a heat index above 32 degrees Celsius; and

“That the Education Act reflect the rights of students to have a climate-controlled learning environment that should reflect the tolerances allowed for workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.”

I agree with this petition. I’m going to affix my name to it and give it to page Albert to bring to the Clerk.

### POET LAUREATE

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I would like to thank my friends Kim Kristy and Pat Jeflyn for signing this petition and sending it along.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas poets laureate have been officially recognized at all levels of Canadian government and in at least 15 countries around the world; and

“Whereas the establishment of our own poet laureate for the province of Ontario would promote literacy and celebrate Ontario culture and heritage, along with raising public awareness of poetry and of the spoken word; and

“Whereas Gord Downie was a poet, a singer and advocate for indigenous issues, and designating the poet laureate in his memory will serve to honour him and continue his legacy; and

“Whereas Bill 6, An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie, will establish the Office of Poet Laureate for the province of Ontario as a non-partisan attempt to promote literacy, to focus attention on our iconic poets and to give new focus to the arts community in Ontario;

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

“To support the establishment of the Office of Poet Laureate as an officer of the Ontario Legislature and that private member’s Bill 6, An Act to establish the Poet Laureate of Ontario in memory of Gord Downie, receive swift passage through the legislative process.”

I fully agree. I will sign it and give it to Harry to bring down to the desk.

### INJURED WORKERS

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** This petition is entitled “Workers’ Comp is a Right.”

“Whereas about 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

“Whereas over a century ago, workers in Ontario who were injured on the job gave up the right to sue their employers, in exchange for a system that would provide them with just compensation;

“Whereas decades of cost-cutting have pushed injured workers into poverty and onto publicly funded social assistance programs, and have gradually curtailed the rights of injured workers;

“Whereas injured workers have the right to quality and timely medical care, compensation for lost wages, and protection from discrimination;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to accomplish the following for injured workers in Ontario:

“Eliminate the practice of ‘deeming’ or ‘determining,’ which bases compensation on phantom jobs that injured workers do not actually have;

“Ensure that the WSIB prioritizes and respects the medical opinions of the health care providers who treat the injured worker directly;

“Prevent compensation from being reduced or denied based on ‘pre-existing conditions’ that never affected the worker’s ability to function prior to the work injury.”

I completely agree with this petition and I'll give it to page Taya.

### CURRICULUM

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Speaker, I have received a large number of petitions from Tanya Granic Allen and Parents as First Educators, addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Liberal government of Kathleen Wynne, in 2015, imposed on Ontario parents, without proper consultation, an ideological sex ed curriculum that, in many places, was age-inappropriate and had the effect of sexualizing children; and

"Whereas the Wynne sex ed curriculum has, since 2015, forced Ontario teachers to promote ideology over facts, including the controversial and unscientific 'gender identity theory';

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

"(1) That the Minister of Education immediately repeal the 2015 changes to the sex ed component of the health and physical education curriculum; that she restore, for the 2018-19 school year, the previous sex ed component; that she immediately instruct Ontario school boards and teachers that none of the controversial aspects of the Wynne sex ed—especially the unscientific 'gender identity theory'—be taught in Ontario schools, neither to the classroom nor in private instruction to individual students; that she conduct a broad and exhaustive consultation with all Ontario parents; and, subject to those consultations, that she replace previous versions of the sex ed component with something that is both age-appropriate and that avoids the sexualization of Ontario children;

1330

"(2) And that, starting in September 2018, the Minister of Education instruct every Ontario school board to ensure that every Ontario parent receives sufficient notice of any sex ed instruction provided in the jurisdiction of that school board, and in such a manner that all parents can easily exercise their right to 'opt out' of any particular sex ed class by removing their child from that class."

I will affix my signature to these petitions.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Faisal Hassan:** I have a petition from residents of York South–Weston entitled, "Don't Take Away Our \$15 Minimum Wage and Fairer Labour Laws."

"Whereas the vast majority of Ontarians support a \$15 minimum wage and better laws to protect workers; and

"Whereas last year, in response to overwhelming popular demand by the people of Ontario, the provincial government brought in legislation and regulations that:

"Deliver 10 personal emergency leave days for all workers, the first two of which are paid;

"Make it illegal to pay part-time, temporary, casual or contract workers less than their full-time or directly hired

co-workers, including equal public holiday pay and vacation pay;

"Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it to a \$15 minimum wage on January 1, 2019, with annual adjustments by Ontario's consumer price index;

"Make it easier to join unions, especially for workers in the temporary help, home care, community services and building services sectors;

"Make client companies responsible for workplace health and safety for temporary agency employees;

"Provide strong enforcement through the hiring of an additional 175 employment standards officers;

"Will ensure workers have modest improvements in the scheduling of their hours, including:

"—three hours' pay when workers are expected to be on call all day, but are not called into work;

"—three hours' pay for any employee whose shift is cancelled with less than two days' notice; and

"—the right to refuse shifts without penalty if the shift is scheduled with fewer than four days' notice;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to honour these commitments, including the \$15 minimum wage and fairer scheduling rules set to take effect on January 1, 2019. We further call on the assembly to take all necessary steps to enforce these laws and extend them to ensure no worker is left without protection."

I support this petition, add my signature and give it to page Sophie.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Sara Singh:** I have a petition here. I would like to thank my friends at Fight for \$15 and Fairness and at the Workers' Action Centre, and Susmita Rai from Brampton, for bringing this petition to us today.

"Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Don't Take Away Our \$15 Minimum Wage and Fairer Labour Laws.

"Whereas the vast majority of Ontarians support a \$15 minimum wage and better laws to protect workers; and

"Whereas last year, in response to overwhelming popular demand by the people of Ontario, the provincial government brought in legislation and regulations that:

"Deliver 10 personal emergency leave days for all workers, the first two of which are paid;

"Make it illegal to pay part-time, temporary, casual or contract workers less than their full-time or directly hired co-workers, including equal public holiday pay and vacation pay;

"Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it to ... \$15" per hour "on January 1, 2019, with annual adjustments by Ontario's consumer price index;

"Make it easier to join unions, especially for workers in the temporary help, home care, community services and building services sectors;

"Make client companies responsible for workplace health and safety for temporary agency employees...;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to honour these commitments, including the \$15 minimum wage and fairer scheduling rules set to take effect on January 1, 2019. We further call on the assembly to take all necessary steps to enforce these laws and extend them to ensure no worker is left without protection.”

I fully endorse this petition, and I will affix my name and send it off with page Andrei.

#### INJURED WORKERS

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** “Whereas about 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

“Whereas over a century ago, workers in Ontario who were injured on the job gave up the right to sue their employers, in exchange for a system that would provide them with just compensation;

“Whereas decades of cost-cutting have pushed injured workers into poverty and onto publicly funded social assistance programs, and have gradually curtailed the rights of injured workers;

“Whereas injured workers have the right to quality and timely medical care, compensation for lost wages, and protection from discrimination;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to accomplish the following for injured workers in Ontario:

“Eliminate the practice of ‘deeming’ or ‘determining,’ which bases compensation on phantom jobs that injured workers do not actually have;

“Ensure that the WSIB prioritizes and respects the medical opinions of the health care providers who treat the injured worker directly;

“Prevent compensation from being reduced or denied based on ‘pre-existing conditions’ that never affected the worker’s ability to function prior to the work injury.”

I will affix my name to this and I will hand it to page Harry.

#### NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Anne Marie Higgs from Hanmer in my riding for collecting hundreds and hundreds of names on the following petition. It reads as follows:

“Save the Breast Screening and Assessment Service.

“Whereas Premier Doug Ford promised that there would not be cuts to nurses’ positions; and

“Whereas in Sudbury we have already lost 70 nurses, and Health Sciences North is closing part of the Breast Screening and Assessment Service; and

“Whereas cuts to the Sudbury Breast Screening and Assessment Service will result in longer wait times, which is very stressful for women diagnosed with breast cancer; and

“Whereas cuts to the Sudbury Breast Screening and Assessment Service will only take us backwards”;

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Provide adequate funding to Health Sciences North to ensure northerners have equitable access to life-saving programs such as the Breast Screening and Assessment Service.”

I fully support this petition and will affix my name to it and ask my new page, Sophia, to bring it to the Clerk.

#### CURRICULUM

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I would like to thank Clara McIntosh, who is a student at Cawthra Park Secondary School, who gathered 298 signatures on this petition.

“Protecting Children: Forward, Not Backward, on Sex Ed.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

“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 children and youth vulnerable to exploitation;

“Whereas one in five parents reported their own child being a victim of cyberbullying; and

“Whereas” the Premier “and the Conservative government is dragging Ontario backward, requiring students to learn an outdated sex ed curriculum that excludes information about consent, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexting, cyberbullying and safe and healthy relationships;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Education to continue the use of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum in schools and move Ontario forward, not backward.”

**1340**

I fully support this petition. I will affix my name to it and give it to page Armita to bring to the Clerk.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### GREEN ENERGY REPEAL ACT, 2018

##### LOI DE 2018 ABROGEANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉNERGIE VERTE

Mr. Rickford moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Environmental Protection Act, the Planning Act and various other statutes / Projet de loi 34, Loi abrogeant la Loi de 2009 sur l'énergie verte et modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité, la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement, la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et diverses autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** To the minister.

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to be here today to speak about another promise our government for the people is delivering on. Here to help me celebrate is my parliamentary assistant, the member for Markham–Stouffville, who will be sharing time with me today. I appreciate his participation and his support in our important work about Bill 34.

When our government came to power, we were given a very clear mandate by the people of Ontario. We promised them a government that puts the needs of everyday, hard-working people, families and small businesses first. Imagine that concept. We promised to respect their hard-earned money and to make hydro and various other costs to them more affordable, putting and keeping more money in their pockets, where it belongs, at least long enough to decide how and when they want to spend that money on their priorities, not the government's.

Madam Speaker, we promised to bring transparency back to Queen's Park, to be accountable to people who pay their bills day in and day out, month in and month out, to drive efficiencies in the electricity system, and to push energy costs down. Most importantly, we promised to restore the public's faith in our electricity system. We've been working very hard at this over the past 100 days and we boast a number of successes to speak of. Since day one, my colleagues and I have been working day and night to keep the promises we made. We've heard it before—"Promise made, promise kept"—over and over again. We're delivering on what we said we would do. We listened to people from across the province. We heard stories from families and small businesses who were forced to make tough decisions because of a bad energy policy. Large manufacturing employers deserted this province in favour of competing jurisdictions south of the border. We saw small businesses, mom-and-pop shops closing down and other legislation forcing them to lay people off.

I just had a birthday a couple of weeks ago—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Yes, they're coming too fast and frequently now.

I grew up in a province that had a distinct advantage. It had an energy advantage. In the south here, we had manufacturing. My dad was in charge of quality control at a foundry, pouring grey and ductile iron. My grandpa and my uncle were working at Massey Ferguson. Forestry mills and mines were operating at full steam. But then, something happened. Just a little over a generation ago—say, 15 years—we started to lose that advantage. The priorities of the previous government and their backroom, elite friends started to take the agenda over. Slowly but surely, Madam Speaker, we lost our edge. We lost our ability to be competitive with Ohio, with Michigan, with Manitoba and with Quebec. No disrespect—I spent a number of years in Quebec, a beautiful province; well-educated there. But on the mining and forestry mill front and on hydro, Ontario was placing second to them, a province often touted for its regulatory burdens. Ontario

was now way more expensive and way more difficult to do business in.

We want to change that, Madam Speaker. It doesn't make any sense to me that Kenora Forest Products sat idle while a mill owned by the same family, right across the border in Manitoba—again, coming from northwestern Ontario, we kind of consider ourselves Manitarians of a sort because we're so far away from Toronto here. But that forestry mill sat idle. It sat idle, Madam Speaker, while the other mill of its likeness, not too far away but inside the Manitoba border, was running at full production. What was the difference? Energy. That was the difference. Some of my colleagues across the way know full well that that was going on as well.

It was hampering the decisions of major mining developments.

So while we know there's more work to be done, Madam Speaker, immediate action had to be taken. That's why we're here today. In Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act, 2018, we're taking another significant step toward fulfilling our pledge to make life more affordable for the people of Ontario and for the businesses of Ontario.

As I've said before, Madam Speaker, it occurred to me, in reviewing the legislation and all the policy options around it, that the only thing green about the Green Energy Act was the green that lined the pockets of Liberal insiders who helped to support this legislation. Insiders got rich. Hydro got expensive. Projects were put in places where people didn't want them and Ontario's grid system didn't need them. So while people from all over Ontario were struggling to pay their hydro bills, those families and businesses getting increasingly fed up with rising electricity prices entrusted our government to clean up this hydro mess.

They had every right to be fed up, and that's why our government is moving quickly to keep our promises and bring them the kind of relief that they need and that they deserve. For many people in Ontario, Madam Speaker, the Green Energy Act has become a symbol of an inefficient and burdensome energy economy. It represents the doling out of massive energy contracts that our energy system doesn't need and, as I said before, many communities didn't want. These contracts, rather oddly, guaranteed above-market prices for renewable energy companies for power our system never needed. More importantly, it wasn't addressing solutions for communities all across this province that would have benefited from another form of energy had they had the option. We're learning that now, when we find out about communities who are looking for natural gas expansion. We're learning that now with mining companies that are looking for alternatives for energy to meet needs at their sites.

I can say to them, Madam Speaker—I can say to families and businesses alike—that our government is committed to making sure our system runs efficiently and effectively. That's why we had to eliminate more than 758 renewable energy projects. Repealing the Green Energy Act will protect people from paying hydro bills in the future to cover the costs of senseless renewable projects.

Repealing the Green Energy Act is about taking another important step towards our goal of creating a more efficient and competitive energy marketplace in Ontario.

Through you, Madam Speaker, to my colleagues on both sides of the floor and our friends in our own party over there, the Ontario energy advantage—doesn't that sound good? Don't we conjure up images of a booming Ontario economy circa Bill Davis days, when bills were paid, taxpayers' dollars were respected, and our industries and small businesses were running at full throttle?

Well, the good news is, we're working to reduce the bills for residential, business and industrial customers in Ontario to provide relief for families and an incentive for employers—"job creators" I prefer to call them—to come back to our province.

**1350**

That's why we're putting signs at the border: "Ontario is open for business." My responsibility and my very capable parliamentary assistant's responsibility is to modernize our energy system here in Ontario, make us affordable and make us competitive—imagine that. Along with repealing the Green Energy Act, there are a few other pieces to this legislation in terms of amending several other existing acts to help us get there. They include the Planning Act and the Environmental Protection Act.

For too long, municipalities were forced to watch while needless green energy projects were constructed in their communities without their approval. The critical amendments we're introducing would give municipalities back their voice—power to the municipalities, Madam Speaker—so they can make decisions about the location of renewable energy projects in their communities, so that they can have a dialogue with our talented Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing as to the kinds of infrastructure projects for energy they need and require, and so that our very capable Minister of Infrastructure and I can work together to ensure those communities get what they need for more affordable energy bills that are competitive, not just for their families in their day-to-day lives but for the industries that are there and, most importantly, the ones that could be there. By restoring municipal authority for the location of renewable energy facilities we're ensuring that any future projects have the support and buy-in—wait for it—of local communities.

Now, for those of us out in the far-reaching areas of northern Ontario, northwestern Ontario, eastern Ontario and deep into southwestern Ontario, the smaller municipalities, this means a lot to us because we want solutions that work for us. No disrespect to this great city and its hockey team, which I love very much, but we want solutions for Kenora; we want solutions for southwestern Ontario and the far-reaching corners—Bay of Quinte out there in eastern Ontario. Name the place, name the space, they need a government who's listening to them, who can provide solutions and opportunities for them to thrive.

Municipalities have and continue to tell us time and time again that they felt ignored when the wasteful green energy projects were forced into their backyards. No more, Madam Speaker: Our government recognizes and respects

the rights of all municipalities. The municipal decision-making authority is a key pillar of this legislation that puts the people of Ontario and their communities first. We're giving municipalities across Ontario their voices back.

Local governments have their fingers closest to the pulse of the people they represent. It makes perfect sense that they would be in the best position, through engagement with their community members and their businesses, to decide what real energy solutions work for them.

That's why we're working hard to make sure their interests are never trampled by ideological crusades like the ones waged by the previous government. By doing this, we're ensuring that in the future projects will not be built without the expressed support of local communities. This can be done without hardship.

We have some experience with that up in Kenora. The great Kenora riding, when I was presiding over it federally—we had a mine up in Red Lake and the electrification was just insufficient for the overall efficient and effective functioning of Red Lake, now in the provincial riding of Kiiwetinoong. We worked with Union Gas at the time to supplement the energy, but really to give them solutions—extended the pipeline from Ear Falls up to Red Lake; everyone got on board. Goldcorp signed on by supporting folks in a conversion program to go to natural gas, and Goldcorp had an alternative form of energy. Everyone benefited. FedNor, that institution that it was by the time our government was finished with its modernization and revamp, was responding to communities' energy needs, to their solutions, to their requests as viable options that met the threshold, the test and the expectations of large employers, small businesses and families living in that beautiful part of the country.

This amendment, Madam Speaker, is about respecting local government so that they can accommodate renewable energy proposals as willing partners. We're ensuring that new projects meet the local planning objectives of municipalities. I hope we see a trend here, colleagues: They can now make decisions that reflect the needs of the people who live in their communities.

Amending the Planning Act is about making the right decisions for the people because it would restore authority to municipalities across Ontario. It means more power in the hands of the people and the communities, where it belongs. This is going to bring about positive change, change that is much needed. Frankly, from everything I've heard—and I'm not speaking for my colleagues surrounding me here today, but is it pretty fair to say through you, Madam Speaker, that this is a much-needed breath of fresh air across Ontario?

This is the right decision for the people of Ontario because the Green Energy Act has led to incredibly poor outcomes that have been a real burden for Ontario families and for Ontario businesses. Families have struggled to pay their bills. Many small businesses have been forced to close their doors for extended periods of time in many instances, and some permanently because of the previous government's energy policy.

We're not going to stand for that, Madam Speaker. We want those job creators to be able to employ more people. We want families to not have to cut back on how many sports their kids are enrolled in or make choices between heating and eating, particularly for some of our more vulnerable. It's not just an expression that has had some political importance. I know of real situations out in northwestern Ontario where vulnerable people have had to make those choices. We're proposing other positive changes to the renewable energy regulatory system to safeguard against these dramatic consequences.

We're also making amendments to the Environmental Protection Act. Our government's proposed legislation will give us the authority to freeze environmental approvals for proposed energy projects where the need for electricity has not been demonstrated. This would allow us to put the brakes on unnecessary additional projects that would add costs to electricity bills that the people of Ontario simply cannot afford. This would allow our government to continue to make responsible choices that respect energy customers and keep their bills from skyrocketing again in the future.

We've used this word for a while, "ratepayers," and we sometimes forget what that really means. That is that bill at the end of the month that that family gets and that small business gets. It determines, to a certain extent and in some instances to a great extent, the quality of their life and the ability of their business to compete locally, provincially, in Canada and across the borders.

Madam Speaker, this would allow our government to continue to make the responsible choices that respect energy rates, most importantly, from skyrocketing in the future.

Our government for the people is restoring power back to municipalities by giving them back their decision-making authority. We're eliminating the burden that needless renewable energy projects have created in our electricity system. We are making sure that new energy projects are only being built where the supply is needed. It's all part of our plan to lower hydro bills and bring relief to families and businesses of all sizes. The people of Ontario voted for relief on June 7. Today, on October—is it the 14th?

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** The 15th.

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Okay.

Help is here. This is just one example of a promise made and a promise kept. And I can assure this place, Madam Speaker, that we will continue to work each and every day to break down those barriers, to level the playing field, so that Ontario can have that energy advantage again. When great cities like Kenora and Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury, Timmins, moving to southern Ontario—

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Chatham.

1400

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Chatham—I'm getting whispers in my ear—

**Hon. Todd Smith:** Belleville.

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** —Belleville—that will be a distinct advantage. We'll be able to boast that not only are

our energy bills affordable for us as families and as individuals, whether we rent or own our homes, but small businesses will be competitive and able to grow, and our large employers, our job creators, will be competitive once again.

I want to thank this place for the opportunity to speak on this important piece of legislation. I'd now like to yield and share my time with my colleague.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** The member for Markham–Stouffville.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Just let me thank and congratulate the minister. What is obvious from the minister's discourse is that this is actually a time for us to be excited. It's a time for all Ontarians to be excited that change is coming to Ontario. It's coming to Ontario and it's long overdue.

I will just say this, Madam Speaker. I, of course, had the good fortune to work with the minister in Ottawa. He was the Minister of Natural Resources, in charge of energy, and prior to that the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs. He comes to this portfolio with a knowledge and an understanding that I guess few of us have. I think that's what also gives us a unique opportunity to really make changes.

I will also say this. One thing I've seen from all of the members who come from the north—not just the members on this side of the House but members opposite as well: All share a passion for making things better in the north. They all see the potential that there is in the north, and many have remained frustrated that that potential hasn't always been met. More often than not, bad decisions of governments have frustrated that progress.

The Green Energy Repeal Act is just one way that we're taking Ontario back. We're moving it forward and we are unleashing the potential not only of southern Ontario, but of northern Ontario and all parts of this great province. The Green Energy Repeal Act is another step in our agenda to make life more affordable for all Ontarians—because we all heard it during the election. I know all of my colleagues worked just as hard as I did knocking on doors, talking to people, talking to small, medium and large job creators. They all heard the frustration that many of them felt with respect to how costly it had become to live and to work in Ontario. Many were lamenting the inability to make investments in the province that would fulfill their needs and their families' needs in the future. The Green Energy Repeal Act is but another step on the road to improving conditions for all Ontarians—families and individuals; small, medium and large job creators.

It's an exciting time, but, as I said, much of what we're doing is a fulsome agenda to unleash that potential that has really been frustrated over the last number of years.

One of the things that the minister touched on, and I wanted to speak a little bit further on this, is that the Green Energy Act, parts of it—the bill that we brought forward, Bill 34, does touch on a number of different things. There are some positive aspects we're going to be retaining from the Green Energy Act. We're going to continue to talk about energy conservation. We're going to continue to talk

about collection of data. But what we are going to aggressively attack and eliminate are these contracts, first and foremost, that have cost Ontarians hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars, and not just in the cost of power.

One of the first acts we brought here was the elimination of some 750 contracts and the elimination or the cancellation of the White Pines project. I know the member for Prince Edward, the government House leader, had been a vociferous champion on this, to try and get the government before we were here to stop this, to listen to the community. That had not been done by the previous government.

When you look at the green energy contracts, it's not, as the minister talked about, just that the cost of energy was so much more expensive than other forms of energy. It's the opportunity cost as well.

I come from a riding just north of Toronto, Markham–Stouffville, where manufacturing was and is important. Farming is important to the rural part of my community. Both sectors, over the last number of years, have suffered dramatically because of the decisions that government made that made it less profitable for them to operate, that really reduced their ability to compete not only with other jurisdictions in Canada but, of course, with our neighbours to the south.

I just want to take a moment, if I can, to talk about some of the results of these decisions, how they impacted communities across Ontario. There is a number of reports, Madam Speaker; I don't intend to highlight all of them, but there was a number of reports that were specific with respect to how the Green Energy Act impacted manufacturing and job creation in the province of Ontario, in particular between 2005 and 2016.

Now, obviously, Madam Speaker, it would be wrong if I didn't highlight the fact that of course there was a recession in that time period, but much of what we're talking about also compares Ontario and how it came out of the recession in comparison to other jurisdictions. What many of these reports find is that Ontario was slower. It took them longer. The results were less than would have been expected in the past. And many of them highlight the fact that it was the policies of the previous Liberal government, in particular the Green Energy Act, that caused Ontario to lose hundreds of thousands of jobs, hundreds of billions of dollars in economic investment. That frustrated our ability to grow. What was once the engine of the Canadian economy was a have-not province. There are a number of reports that highlight that.

One report from the Fraser Institute talks about how Ontario's electricity costs are among the fastest-growing. "Between 2010 and 2016, electricity costs for small industrial consumers in Ottawa increased by 50% and in Toronto, 48%, while the average rate of increase in the rest of Canada was only 15%." Madam Speaker, I can't begin to tell you the impact that type of an increase would have had on small, medium and large job creators. In my hometown of Stouffville, we saw the loss of one of our larger manufacturers. It closed down and consolidated its operations in the United States. It wasn't just about the cost of

high energy; it was about all of the other policies that were in place that made it almost impossible for them to compete with other jurisdictions and with plants that they had in the United States.

When we talk about the cost of energy and why it has such an impact, it's not only on the ratepayers—it's not only when we go home and open up our hydro bill and see the costs have increased. It's also the opportunity cost. It's the jobs that aren't created. It's the investments that aren't made because of the policies that were put in place, which cost Ontarians so much money.

To think that we had a province, as the minister said, that had the economic advantage, that had an advantage over the rest of the country by virtue of the fact that we had a clean, reliable source of energy. I would submit to you, Madam Speaker, that that energy advantage that we had, obviously, as the minister said, we lost. But we can get that back.

When trying to explain to people over the last little bit why the Green Energy Act was created as it was—I know many, if not all, members of the House, or at least the vast majority of the members of the House, were at the International Plowing Match, and for many members it was probably their first opportunity to see a windmill, to see the size of a windmill. I know that many of the members had the same questions as I did when they saw the windmill not turning for the couple of days that we were there. Many of the farmers who we met with and talked with were insistent—one in particular insisted and said, "Just go stand below one of these windmills. Go take a look at one of these windmills," and we did that. We went out, we stood under it, we took a look at it, just the sheer scale and enormity of just one of these windmills, Madam Speaker. Then you look across the landscape and see many, many, many of these windmills across class A agricultural land.

**1410**

You hear the stories of the farmers who were frustrated and angry that they didn't have an opportunity to have a say in what was happening in their community. You heard from two different sets of people, the fighting and the arguments that were happening in communities, the frustration of our elected municipal partners who wanted to represent their community but had the ability to do that taken away from them by the previous Liberal government.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Just like the city of Toronto.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** The member opposite shouts out, "Just like the city of Toronto." Not to sidetrack too far, but as a member of Parliament from Markham–Stouffville who has felt the devastation of indecision from the city of Toronto for a number of years and has felt the deep impact of their inability to make transit decisions has had on my community—their inability to make decisions on roads and transportation, which causes people and members of provincial Parliament like me to take three hours to get into work—I think the member can appreciate that a streamlined decision-making process that represents the people is the best way to go.

But in talking about the city of Toronto, he highlights what it is this government wants to do. We want to unleash the potential of the entire province. You can't have a strong province if you don't have a strong city of Toronto. The city of Toronto is the economic engine of our province. When it doesn't succeed, nor do the rest of our municipalities succeed. When the city of Toronto doesn't succeed, we don't have the money for health care, we don't have the money for all of the things that the people of Ontario deem important. So when the member talks about the city of Toronto, I can't tell him how excited I am about the future Toronto has after the election of October 22, Madam Speaker.

When you go back and look at just how important it is that we make these changes right now, again going back to our municipal partners, the frustration and anger that many of them talked about—many of our Progressive Conservative members were at the AMO conference. We all talked with our colleagues. The number one thing many of them talked about was their rights being stripped away from them in terms of the Green Energy Act. They wanted change. They had seen what we had talked about in the election and they were excited for change. They wanted to be able to represent communities again, and this act allows them to do that.

One of the reasons why White Pines is so important, why it was such an important part of what we wanted to accomplish and why it was one of the first bills that we brought forward in this House is because it reflects and represents just how bad the previous government had gotten, just how far they had gotten away from what they originally were elected to do.

Members of the community in that area were taking their government to court. They were taking their government to court to stop a project that nobody wanted—nobody wanted—and, moreover, a project that we didn't need. We didn't need the power, and yet it was being forced upon them. Some 750 other contracts were about to come online for power that we didn't need. That's one of the reasons why it had become so important for us to show the people of Ontario right away that we were going to start making changes, changes that would not only reduce the cost of energy, but would also put more money back in the pockets of the people of Ontario.

Now, a lot of members opposite will talk about how the Green Energy Act also has an important role in keeping our environment clean, but it's certainly not the only way. I know the member for Haldimand–Norfolk has a very important private member's bill that talks about keeping our environment clean. There are other ways of addressing the environment. The member from Haldimand–Norfolk's bill is just one of those ways.

When we talk about affordability and bringing costs down, the member from Milton brought forward an important bill today, something that he has been working on, the imbalance with insurance rates across jurisdictions. That's another way that we're putting affordability back in the pockets of Ontarians.

But when you get back to the environment, Madam Speaker, there are so many different ways that we can protect the environment and enhance the environment. When you look at the Green Energy Act, it is very clear that this was an ideologically driven attempt that could have had no other impact but to line the pockets of people who had made massive donations to the Liberal Party—because there is no other way to describe taking away the rights of our municipal councillors. There is absolutely no other way to describe how a government could come up with green energy contracts and feed-in tariffs that were sometimes 10 times higher than the going rate. You can't make those comparisons.

We have to find out what it was—and we know, frankly; we know. We know that many of these contracts were for projects that we simply did not need, at a time when we did not need them. It was the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade who, in a previous government, was the Minister of Energy—he understood, as did the previous Harris government, that one of the ways that we could keep our environment clean and we could meet our energy needs was to make investments in our nuclear sector. And we did that. Bruce was brought back online. One of the reasons we did that was because we knew that our nuclear sector was one that was clean. It was an incredible resource for the people of Ontario. The member for Toronto–Danforth talks about pricing. It is a lower-cost price than the green energy or the windmills that were brought online, and solar. It creates hundreds of thousands of jobs—not only direct jobs. As the Premier talked about when we made the decision to retain Pickering nuclear up until 2024, Madam Speaker, that was the preservation of some 7,000 jobs.

I had the opportunity to visit, just last Friday, the Pickering nuclear generating station, Madam Speaker. It is operating at the lowest per kilowatt-hour that it has in its entire time. It is the safest that it has ever been. This is an absolute success story for the province of Ontario. Our entire nuclear industry is a success story for the province of Ontario. Whether it is Pickering, whether it is Bruce, whether it is Darlington, it is a success story, and it is about time that we stop being embarrassed about the things we have created—in particular on the nuclear side. We have done great things. It is clean, it is Canadian technology and it has been meeting the needs of Ontario consumers for decades. It was what gave us that energy advantage that we no longer enjoy today.

When you talk about the environment, there are other ways that we can and could meet the needs of the environment.

I'm glad the member for Don Valley West, I believe, is in the House today, because the member for Don Valley West and her government were responsible for the Green Energy Act. The member for Don Valley West is responsible—

**Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne:** When you were in Ottawa—

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Yes, the member is right; I was in Ottawa. The member for Don Valley West is correct. I was in Ottawa. I was part of a government that reduced taxes

to the lowest level in 50 years in Ottawa, Madam Speaker. I was part of a government that made massive investments in infrastructure and then returned the budget to balance and left a surplus. I was part of a government in Ottawa that made investments in energy, that made retrofitting a priority for the federal government. We got it done. The member will know.

This is what frustrates me in particular. The member in particular will know the Rouge park—this is a \$110-million investment for the people of my riding, frustrated by what? Frustrated by the former Ontario Liberal government and the former Premier, the member for Don Valley West. I'll tell you what's so frustrating, Madam Speaker: They come forward with their plans, their Green Energy Act, and they're going to save the environment, but only if it was good for them, only if it lined the pockets of individuals. So we paid billions of dollars more for projects that we didn't need, but on the ground, where it mattered the most, they turned their back on the people.

1420

You look in my riding, Madam Speaker. In my riding of Markham–Stouffville, do you know what the Green Energy Act and what energy conservation and the environment meant to them? It meant evicting farmers from their land. That's what it meant for them. Farmers who had spent generations on their land, hiring people, crops—200 years of farming. It meant removing them from their land, planting trees across that land and not saying a word.

It meant the delaying of the Rouge park—not because the act that the federal government brought in was bad, but because they wanted to roll the dice just in case there was a different government. So \$110 million worth of investments were delayed because of ideology. The member for Don Valley West will know this very well, because the member for Don Valley West will certainly recall that, in April 2014, we had come to an agreement—an agreement that had to be delayed because of an election.

Now, at that time, calling an election meant halting a project. You go into stasis until the election is done. For the \$110-million investment for the Rouge park, which would create Canada's largest national urban park, the Liberals wanted to hold off, wanted to wait until after the election. But for White Pines and for energy that we didn't need? “No problem. The election is called? Let's move forward. Hopefully, nobody will notice.” The two are completely inconsistent.

So when it comes to talking about the Green Energy Act as something that saves or promotes the environment, the words don't match the actions, Madam Speaker, and they never have with the former government.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Hot air.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Exactly. The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is quite correct: hot air. The member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, again, is from a riding that touches on Bruce Power—thousands of jobs, a source of cheap energy, a source of incredible technology—something we should all be proud of. I know that the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound is very proud of that, Madam Speaker.

I want to just go back to, if I can, the costs of the Green Energy Act. Again, it's well known by now that almost everything the previous government did in energy was a mistake. Nobody has to take my word for it: The current Auditor General was very clear about this.

The Samsung deal was a bad deal for the people of Ontario.

Smart metering: a multi-billion dollar boondoggle, bad for the people of Ontario.

Fair Hydro Plan: Not only was the Fair Hydro Plan a bad deal that was brought in to try and keep prices down, which they had inflated; what was worse about it was the way it was done. The auditor has been very, very elegant in explaining to the people of Ontario just how badly that was done.

Of course, one of the very first things that we did, with the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board, was to look at not only the energy sector, but to look at all the expenditures of the government of Ontario, because it had to be done. We were getting one set of records from the Auditor General and something completely different from the government of the day. We knew that something had to be done. So I applaud certainly the Minister of Finance and the President of the Treasury Board for the good work that they did in helping to understand where the money went.

I know the select committee, if I'm not mistaken, is meeting right now, and they're continuing to do some very good work, because we have to get to the bottom of it. I wish it was just the energy file that they messed up, Madam Speaker. I really do. But across government, boondoggle after boondoggle, it had become—and it still is; we still have a lot of work to do—very expensive for people in this province. You went to the grocery store, the cost of your groceries had gone up. Your water bills, they've gone up. Your hydro bills, they've gone up. You put gas in your car, that had gone up. We all remember the January blues—the January blues—because what happens in January? Government of Ontario taxes kicked in, and there were lots of them—there were lots of them. Every year, government of Ontario taxes would kick in. And they would be small ones—a lot of small ones so, hopefully, you didn't notice. Then 15 years later, you'd look back and say, “Well, I'm earning as much as I did 15 years ago.” That's not the way this province should operate.

I want to go back to manufacturing, if I can, and spend a little bit more time on that, because it is so important to communities like mine—it's so important to communities like mine. I see the member for Markham–Unionville is in the House. He'll appreciate that many of the manufacturers in our ridings have struggled. We've heard at round table after round table how difficult it is for them because of the cost of hydro, because of the other programs that had been brought in. WSIB rates have skyrocketed. Bill 148 and its provisions have made it very difficult for them to schedule and to compete. They talk about how it has become—they can't even think, many of them in our riding, in our community, of making investments. They're

just talking about getting by. We talked to one manufacturer in our area whose cost of hydro had gone up by close to \$500,000 a year. It's outrageous. Then you talk about WSIB premiums that had skyrocketed and other tax increases at the same time. I know the member from Markham–Unionville was as surprised as I, wondering how they can continue to operate.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** They have to lay off people.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** They have to lay off people, put investments aside. That's not the province that we should have. And when you look at report after report after report, Ontario's manufacturing sector has been hurt the most by the decisions of the previous government. While other jurisdictions have started to climb out of the recession faster, it took Ontario longer. And it continues to take us longer because people aren't making those investments. It's not as easy as going into other jurisdictions. One individual we talked to at a round table talked about potentially moving to another jurisdiction. He said, "Look, I can move away from Markham, but where else can I go in Ontario? If I move to a certain other part of Ontario, they don't have natural gas, so that would make the cost of operating even worse for me."

We shouldn't have small, medium and large job creators who feel stuck or feel disincentivized to be here. That's why when you look at what the Minister of Infrastructure is doing, along with the Minister of Energy, to expand access to natural gas, again it's another piece of the puzzle that fits in together. Repealing the cap-and-trade carbon tax—another piece of the puzzle that fits in together. Expanding natural gas—another piece of the puzzle that fits in together. Making representation in the city of Toronto better—another piece of the puzzle. Reducing WSIB payments by 25%—another piece of the puzzle, Madam Speaker. All of these things get people starting to think, "Hey, I don't have to worry about turning on the radio and hearing that another fee or cost is increasing. We have a government that's actually bringing them down."

Getting rid of Drive Clean—a time-waster. Not only did it cost the government money, it cost every single one of us money. It was a waste of people's time—

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** The cost of my driver's licence.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** —but it's a classic example of a program that worked. It did its job and needed to be phased out.

The Minister of Energy talks about the cost of a driver's licence. We froze that.

Madam Speaker, for the first time in over 15 years, they have a government that is focused on bringing costs down, putting more money back in the pockets of Ontario families and individuals, unleashing the opportunity of our small, medium and large job creators so that they can make important investments, so that they can hire people, so that we can remain competitive. We have a government that is working hard on trade, a government that's talking about cutting red tape.

**1430**

The member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill has been criss-crossing the province talking to small, medium and large operators about red tape. He has really done a great job. You talk to the member and you hear the stories that he's hearing when he sits down with these people. A number of our members of Parliament have participated. They immediately start talking about the cost of energy because it comes right out of their pocket. They talk about the cost of energy. They talk about the red tape that was a fixture of the previous government. But for the first time, they feel excited. For the first time in a decade and a half, they see that there is opportunity back again in the province of Ontario.

That's what our task, on this side and for Progressive Conservatives on that side, is to be. It's to unleash the opportunity so that when people think of their government, they don't think of it as a government that provides obstacles but a government that provides opportunity for them to succeed, for their families to succeed, where their investments grow. That's what we are focused on.

Again, and not to belabour the point, Madam Speaker, here's another quote from another Fraser report: "Manufacturing in all provinces fell during the ... recession"—which I highlighted earlier—"but bounced back elsewhere in Canada. Only Ontario has failed to recover to pre-recession levels. The drop in employment..."

That's not what Ontario is. It's not who we should be. The impact of our inability to unleash opportunity is across all sectors. It touches on every single riding in this place. I know that our members have talked—and I've heard from other members as well—about how expensive it is for them and their families. We have different ideas on how we can make life more affordable, but overwhelmingly we all want the same things. We want Ontarians to feel safe and secure. We want them to have food on their table. We want them to be able to buy their first home and to be able to pay for that first home. We want them to have money to invest in their children's future. We don't want them to have to stress, as the Minister of Energy said. We want them to be able to put their kids into extracurricular activities if they can. Government shouldn't be an obstacle for that. For far too long, the Ontario government, under the previous Liberals, has been an obstacle.

When you talk about education—as a federal member of Parliament, I had the privilege of serving with the member for Milton on the standing committee on immigration. The amount of times that we heard—I know that the member for Milton will recall this—from colleges in the province of Ontario who had been waiting for decisions that would help them educate people for industries that were lacking employees—one of the big industries, I know that the member will probably recall, was the video gaming industry, and the extraordinary work that was being done at Sheridan College and a number of other colleges across the province. But the previous government wouldn't open up more spaces for them. So the federal government had to go internationally to fill the spaces. It wasn't for lack of individuals here who wanted to get that education; it was

because there was too much red tape. We heard that about the trades. We heard that about apprentices.

It was very, very frustrating. It was frustrating when we had—I believe that Sheridan College is in Oakville. I recall listening—I believe it was the president of Sheridan College who was very frustrated. They had the opportunity to bring more students in to meet their needs, but the previous government wasn't allowing them. There was too much red tape. Ten years on, they still haven't been able to make those investments that they needed.

Thankfully, under the Economic Action Plan of the former federal Conservative government, we did make those investments. We went directly and we made those investments in colleges and universities. But we had a long way to go, and we still have a long way to go.

Madam Speaker, as much as when we all went out there and were knocking on doors and we were sharing the frustrations of Ontarians, most of us—all of us, whether you're on this side or on that side of the House, if you're new to this place, you probably were running because there was something that bothered you about the previous Liberal government. There was a frustration that you had in your community. It might have been the Green Energy Act. It might have been the lack of serious effort on the environment. It might have been the high taxes. It might have been the jobs that you were losing. It might have been education. It might have been the fact the government just wasn't listening to you. But most of us wanted to make a difference, and that's why we've come to this place.

As I said in my maiden speech, we all have differences of opinion on how we get there, but we all want the same thing: We want a stronger province and we want a better province, one that meets the needs of all the people of Ontario. That's what makes this first few months here such an exciting time.

The member for Mississauga–Lakeshore: I remember seeing him prior to the election, every night. I would be jealous of his Instagram feed, in a lot of instances. He was running against the former Minister of Finance. A lot of people said it was a tall order to take on a Minister of Finance. So I asked the member: "In the very cold months, door-knocking every single day, what sustained you? What kept you going all the time, three and four hours a night after working all day, and then going and knocking on doors?"—always with a smile on his face. He said that the thing that sustained him was hearing the stories of people who were just frustrated and angry. They were frustrated and angry, and the government wasn't listening to them. They were frustrated that they could barely make ends meet at the end of the month. Forget about making those investments for their future and for their kids' futures. And he knew that he had an opportunity to make a difference if he got elected here, Madam Speaker.

A lot of us who had not been in here—new candidates—looked at the member for Mississauga–Lakeshore and said, "If he can be out there taking on a Minister of Finance, then we can get out there and do the same." And we did, and we heard the exact same stories. At the same

time, our colleagues who were in this place fought right to the end of the last government to try and make changes.

The minister of international trade, on the very last day, brought a bill in to try and restore responsibility for energy contracts back to municipalities. They fought tooth and nail all of those decisions which were holding back the province of Ontario, because, as they were in their ridings, they heard the same stories that we were hearing.

We all knew that we had a tall order when we got here. The loss of hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs—none of us can be proud of that. None of us should be proud of the fact that we are in a province that has lost that many jobs. None of us should be proud of the fact that we lost the economic advantage that cheap hydro gave us. None of us should be proud of the fact that, for more than a decade, we refused to talk about how important our nuclear sector was to a growing economy.

We shouldn't be proud of that, but what we should be proud of is the fact that we're making the changes now, Madam Speaker. I can appreciate the fact that the members opposite might disagree with me on this. But, again, as I said in my maiden speech, that's what this place is about. We can argue and we can fight and we can talk about the differences, but ultimately we want the same thing. We don't want what the last 15 years were all about in this province. We don't want that.

**1440**

We want better transit. We want better transportation. We want our residents to have more money in their pockets. We don't want people frustrated constantly. We want to end hallway health care. We know that we can do it. And for the members of the north, the northern communities of whom we've heard so much—there is so much opportunity that is there for our northern communities, but investments need to be made, and we understand that. This is just one part of unleashing the opportunity in the north as well.

When you put it all together: Cutting hydro, repealing the Green Energy Act, is a great step. Hydro One: renewing the board, listening to the people—another great step. Ending the cap-and-trade carbon tax: a monumental step in restoring people's rights. Expansion of natural gas into communities like mine, where farming is so important, where the cost of operating has become so detrimental to job creation: another step. For the first time in over 15 years, Ontarians see the light at the end of the tunnel.

We have that opportunity. When we look back at our time in office, Madam Speaker, I know that by making these changes, by cutting red tape, by focusing on investing and by focusing on small, medium and large job creators, we will have accomplished what generations of Ontario legislators before us have accomplished. That was to make this the engine of the Canadian economy. And we will do that once again, because if we don't, then we will have failed not only in our jobs, but we will have failed, more importantly, future generations who are relying on us to make these changes, to unleash the economy, to bring down taxes, to balance the budget. I can't tell you how excited I am to be part of a caucus that is so focused on

doing that. We'll get the job done because that's what we were elected to do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I sat very quietly, as I normally do in this House, and I listened to the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, along with the member from Markham–Stouffville, who—actually, I'm looking forward to hearing a little bit more detail. But if you're looking at changing—and we're going to agree on this: The Liberals have made a mess of this province. I actually can stand here in my place and honestly say I am an MPP because of their policies. I used to be a forestry employee in northern Ontario, and I was affected by those policies. I lost my job. I lost a lot more than my job, but I had a family that kept me up and told me that I had to go on and keep doing things.

However, when we're looking at the priorities that this Liberal government had brought in at one time, you've accepted those priorities in the Fair Hydro Plan. Now that's your priority. They've laid down the path to something that is absolutely ridiculous, which will pass the costs on to our children, but you've accepted it as your own policy. It just baffles my mind.

When you stand and you say that you're going to be reducing hydro bills by 12%, tell me where that is. Tell me what you're doing in regard to where those numbers are going to add up, because all I'm hearing is window dressing. And that's what my constituents are telling me. I do as you do. You're not the only ones who are going around this province, talking to small business and homeowners. We are hearing those same things.

If you want to do something, let me give you little bit of a suggestion. Why don't you look at eliminating time-of-use? Why don't you look at equalizing delivery charges? I'm going to be giving you a little bit more ideas tomorrow morning, when I'm giving my part to this debate, but there are a lot of things that can be done. There are a lot of businesses that are waiting for your help. We're waiting for some solutions.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** I'm pleased to stand here and address this particular bill.

Ontario's government for the people is, in fact, delivering on its promise to repeal the 2009 Green Energy Act. Maybe that Green Energy Act should have been called the red energy act, simply because it has put Ontario in the red. But then again, it was supported by the NDP. When you take red and you take orange, you get a colour called vermillion. I'll let them check out what colour that is.

However, under the Liberal government, we all know that the energy rates have in fact tripled, hurting families and driving manufacturing jobs out of Ontario.

I take a look at my particular riding of Chatham–Kent–Leamington, and since 2003 my riding has lost in excess of 15,000 manufacturing jobs. You want me to name a few? I'm happy to name a few, Madam Speaker. You take a look at Navistar—gone; the plant completely levelled.

You take a look at Motor Wheel, you take a look at—what are some of the other ones? Canadian FRAM used to have a plant there as well. They're all gone.

I overheard someone mention about the windmills. You know what? Those windmills in our area—we have great agricultural land. We grow all kinds of crops, including industrial wind turbines. We have in excess of 500, driving our hydro rates through the roof. I look at that and I go, "You know what? Maybe there should have been a referendum."

This Liberal government said they consulted. Nonsense. They didn't consult. They should have put forth a referendum, had every municipality vote as to whether or not they wanted those industrial wind turbines. But, no, they didn't do that. And now we're stuck and our hydro rates have gone right through the roof. But we're going to change that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** That's a hard act to follow.

I want to address something that was said on the other side: Why did we get into politics? One of the inspirations for me was my granddaughter Rosie and the kind of world that we want to leave for her.

This weekend when I was out talking to people, many of them approached me about the UN climate report and how disturbing it was that the effects of climate change were going to be with us a lot sooner than we realized. They were concerned and they said, "What's the plan?" I said, "Well, we don't know what the plan is, because there's no plan yet. We have concerns about that."

We know that they have said that there's going to be no deadlines to set GHG emissions for the reduction of targets. The government has unconstrained discretion, so there's no respect for the Paris accord and the targets are no longer enshrined in an act. If you're going to take something away that we could argue is going to protect the environment, then you need to be ready to put something back in to protect the environment: clear guidelines on how you're going to address this. Because we can't eat money and we can't be open for business if we don't have a world that we can live in and that will sustain our grandchildren and our children.

So that's why I got into politics, is to ensure that we have a world that will be sustainable. It's one of the goals. I'm sure on both sides of the House we want a world that is going to be able to be lived in, with a climate that we can live in.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I remember a few years ago, when I was on council, talking to a German developer who wanted to put a number of wind turbines into Brantford–Brant. He seemed to think that we needed to be ready for 25- and 30-cent-a-kilowatt-hour electricity and that we would be pleased with his low-rate contract. I remember asking him a few questions about if he could run his business model on market rate hydro and he said no. I

remember asking him how much of his profits would be going back into a fund to clean up what was left behind after he was done with his wind turbines. He refused to answer the question. These are some of the great things that the province is facing as a result of the Green Energy Act, and I'm happy that it's being repealed.

The Green Energy Act took away the rights of municipalities. I know our mayor and former member here, Ron Eddy, is fond of saying that all municipalities are creatures of the province and yet, at the same time, they are delegated authority to do certain things. The Green Energy Act really took away that ability for the municipalities, who are closest to the people, in order to deal with things that were so important to the people.

**1450**

We know from the Auditor General's report that Ontarians overpaid by billions and billions of dollars for their hydro as a result of the Green Energy Act.

I talked to a greenhouse grower last week at one of our round tables who said that his hydro bills had gone up \$4,000 a month in the last couple of years. Last Saturday night, I was in Embro watching my son play hockey with Trevor, the owner of the Food Town of St. George, and he told me that his monthly hydro bills have gone up \$3,000 a month, even after doing a retrofit to fix all his freezers to make them more energy-efficient and to put in all-LED lighting.

This is what our people are facing. This is why we need to repeal this act.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Back to the minister for a two-minute response.

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. I want to thank my colleagues in this place for their thoughtful debate on every side of it.

I heard that we have consensus around the problem, and that is that this was an act that created serious challenges and serious problems for our energy sector, and Ontario's ability to compete, and families' ability to pay their bills and make responsible choices in other areas of their lives, given the tremendous costs.

We heard loud and clear, from colleagues speaking about this, that small businesses around the province have been affected by this, from Windsor to Wawa, from the Bay of Quinte to Kenora, and all points in between. Ontario had just become a place where more people wanted to leave than be when it came to creating jobs and economic opportunity, when it came to being competitive and, more sadly, when it came to making choices around heating versus eating or what sports or activities they could afford to put their families in.

So we're there, Madam Speaker. The question is, what is part of the solution? With the greatest of respect to some of my colleagues who chimed in, albeit briefly, earlier on in the NDP, let's be clear. They've asked for the largest carbon tax in the world. They have proposed state-controlled enterprises for insurance and for gas prices. They want to keep the Thunder Bay generating station open, which had only been open a couple of days a year for a number of years. Its capital costs were extraordinary,

and the pellets didn't even come from northern Ontario or northwestern Ontario.

Madam Speaker, we're going to stand up every time for all people in Ontario, for energy solutions that are affordable and make sense for businesses.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further debate? The member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Why, thank you, Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill.

Let's start off at the top and recognize that, in Ontario, the last 15 years of Liberal leadership, which continued many of the policies that Mike Harris put in place, has been bad news for this province. It has driven up hydro rates. It has made life difficult. I've talked to people in my riding. Over the last few years, people were getting bills of \$500 or \$1,000 a month, and when I talk to my colleagues from Nickel Belt or Sudbury, they can tell you about people who spend \$1,000 a month in January and February for home heating.

There's a substantial problem here in Ontario; there's no doubt about it. Frankly, for the last 15 years, as the Liberals have pursued their policy of Mike Harris-inspired privatization, we on this side have been opposing them. We opposed Harris when he started privatizing, we opposed the Liberals when they continued it, and we oppose the policies of this government, which are simply a continuation of the damage and destruction brought about by Dalton McGuinty and Kathleen Wynne.

We know that businesses have a tough time dealing with the cost of power. Many of you, I'm sure, met today with the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario, which had teams fanning out through this building talking about the difficulties they're facing and the necessity for an energy policy that would actually allow development and growth in this province.

Speaker, the lessons we learned 100 years ago in Ontario—more than 100 years ago now—are ones that have been forgotten by the Liberals and Tories. At the beginning of the 20th century, a Conservative government that was inspired by Adam Beck, who became Sir Adam Beck, understood the necessity of two things: publicly owned power—something that would make a huge difference to our industrial development—and an end to coal burning, which made us dependent on Pennsylvania. We imported all our coal. So building a hydro grid on hydroelectric power from Niagara Falls and from all over this province, and making sure it was in public hands so that no one could profiteer, was critical to us becoming an industrial society.

At that time, interestingly, the Conservatives understood that because they represented manufacturing interests. They were smart. They understood buying wholesale was a lot better than buying retail. The Liberals didn't understand that. They fought against that at the time. But unfortunately, those lessons have been lost, and the attempted burial by the ruling Ford government and the attempted burial by the former Liberal government have put Ontario in a very, very difficult spot.

That said, I want to make three points to start about this Conservative bill:

(1) Hydro prices are still rising and they are out of control. Bill 34 will do nothing about that—nothing.

(2) This bill is a con job. The province's ability to site any electricity generator wherever they want is untouched. This bill is about an attack on renewable energy and not about giving control over electricity to local government. I will expand on that and the first point.

(3) This bill signals that this government is turning its back on climate action. It's turning its back on the huge economic development potential and the potential to keep prices low in the future by turning its back on renewable energy development.

That's the reality. That's what we're dealing with. So let's look at these things in some detail.

Hydro prices in Ontario are still rising out of control. Bill 34 does nothing to fix this. It will not rein in privatization and it won't rein in skyrocketing hydro costs. If people are not getting increases on their bill twice a year right now, you have to understand that that's because there's a mountain of money that's being moved by bulldozers and put on top of those rising prices. It used to be Kathleen Wynne who was driving that bulldozer; now it's Premier Ford. But that's the reality. Huge debts are being accumulated which we will have to pay back later, which will drive up hydro rates an incredible amount. That is not being addressed in this bill.

The rise in hydro rates is directly related to the decision under the Harris government to privatize, just like the huge rise in the costs of using Highway 407 is directly related to the Harris government's decision to privatize that facility. The price of electricity in Ontario started zooming up far before the Green Energy Act was enacted or before the first wind turbine was put up underneath it. It started rising in 2006. I actually went through the figures. I had the opportunity to look through the history of hydro price increases. That's the reality, and it didn't have to be that way. It did not have to be that way. We didn't have to privatize. We could have stopped the privatization momentum coming out of the Harris government. The Liberals didn't do that. What they did is doubled down and made it much more difficult.

What we have is not only a situation under privatization, where money flows out of this province to pay private generators—the best estimate I could get, in around 2010, was that we were paying \$1 billion a year in profit to private hydro companies. You know why my estimate is limited? Because I don't speak Japanese, and the Japanese companies that own gas generators in this province—I can't read their profit-and-loss statements. I can't get at them. If I knew another language or two, I could tell you how much money was actually flowing out of the province. But this government has no interest in dealing with that money flowing out of Ontario—not for a moment, not for a nanosecond.

The second thing is that with privatization, you get pressure from well-connected special interests who want their own plants built.

Speaker, I think you were here for the gas plant scandal. You've got the colour of hair that indicates you went through a harrowing experience.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** That was the NDP under the Rae years.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** No, no. He was more recent.

The simple reality—and we saw it from reading all the Liberal emails—was that they didn't want to offend TransCanada. Oh, they would do anything to be buddies with TransCanada. In the end, the Liberal government decided to keep their friendship with TransCanada rather than cutting them loose. And so they cancelled two plants and then relocated them at a cost to Ontarians of over a billion dollars.

**1500**

I was listening to the minister and to the parliamentary assistant talk about unnecessary generation. We built two gas plants out of that scandal that we don't need. They are redundant. They add to our bills every month, but we don't need them. Why? Because when you've got private interests, those private interests are seeking to expand their profits constantly. It's just the way things work. And when they come up against a "We don't need it" sort of statement, they push back past that if they have the political power—and they do.

It also means, when you have privatization, that if a government realizes, sometimes too late, that it needs to stop a project from going forward, under the current system in Ontario, you're liable for 20 years of profits—20 years. That's why, in part, the Liberals decided, "Hey, we'll just pay out all this money for relocation rather than pay all this other money for profits that the companies didn't realize," as opposed to a situation where OPG put out a call for bids around 2009 or 2010 for a new nuclear plant.

Now, the price of the power from that plant was never revealed, never publicly disclosed, but it was so high that even the Liberals said no, they can't go forward with it. We didn't get stuck with paying 20 years of profits to OPG or anyone else. We lost a million dollars on the cost of the bidding process—still too much, in my opinion—but we didn't get stuck with 20 years of profits that we had to pay for.

So when you privatize, you set things up so that you're flowing money out of our economy, you set things up so that you have powerful lobbyists and players who are trying to get as much generation capacity built as possible, and if you make any decision to change, you're stuck with the cost of making them as happy as you possibly can. That is tough.

Hydro bills in this province from 2006 to 2016 rose by 100%. The cost of green energy in those bills is 15%. So let's say there was no green energy at all. Bills would have gone up 85%. I've heard the Conservatives for years now saying, "The bulk of the cost increases are from green energy," but that's not the reality. That is not the reality. Look at the numbers. I know it's a strange thought. It may break standard practice for you, but look at the numbers, because they tell a very different story.

Speaker, when you look at those costs, part of the reason the bills went up so fast is that we built more gas plants than we needed and they sit idle most of the time. Part of the problem is that we had a \$2-billion overrun at the Bruce nuclear refurbishment, a big chunk of which was eaten by the ratepayers of this province. And we're in a situation where we had a government that would not review, in any substantial way, business plans. They didn't actually do an analysis to see what things would cost. So with the smart meters, two billion bucks we spent that we need not have spent. But, frankly—all of you—they did not do a business case analysis.

In Germany, they looked at smart meters and they decided that for individual homes the payback was just too small. People didn't use enough power to justify that kind of investment. That analysis was not done here. The previous Liberal government, and I'm sure that this crew will do the same, simply ignored the Ontario Energy Board, pushed them aside, said, "No, we don't want any regulation. We don't want any second thought or second opinion. We're going to do what we want to do."

In the course of the debates in the last decade or so—a bit longer—we had the Conservatives making a very convenient argument for them against green energy. Their insiders weren't connected, so they didn't have to protect them. On the other hand, you had the Liberals, who, when they were questioned about the cost of power in this House, would say, "Well, you know, it's expensive to switch away from coal," effectively saying, "Green energy is your problem," and feeding the narrative that the Tories had.

Neither party wanted to talk about privatization. We talked about it. We talked about it because we knew the impact. We understood the dynamics. We understood the economics. Neither the Tories nor the Liberals would go there. And if you don't recognize the problem, you can never correct it. They don't recognize it. They're not correcting it with this bill. They have no intention of correcting it.

I'll note as well that in the course of the last 15 years, the Liberals had very little interest in actually putting in place a strong, capable conservation program that would drive down demand and eliminate the need for new plants. Why? Because they had friends who wanted to build plants—simple as that. And they made sure that their friends were happy.

Now the Tories have received the torch. It's been passed on from the Liberals. You can imagine the scene when former Minister of Energy Thibeault was sitting in a cozy room, with a fireplace, with the new Minister of Energy at his knee. Thibeault would say, "Here, my son, is the playbook: Keep privatizing, occasionally bring in bills that are totally empty but sound really good and, frankly, just spin as much confusion as you possibly can." I am sure it was a tender moment—completely tender—a passing on of the torch, the passing on of the playbook.

That, Speaker, leaves us in a situation of looking at the content of Bill 34. You have a bit of the context; let's look at the content.

This is a pointless, symbolic exercise. It is a con job. It's here to make it look as though the Tories are doing something.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** I'm going to ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Withdraw. This is an initiative meant to build confidence in the Liberal position—sorry, the Liberal and Tory position—without actually delivering on anything of substance.

We do need solutions. In fact, during the election we came forward with a hydro plan that proposed to make time-of-use payments voluntary. The analysis of the Ontario Energy Board was that for people that would mean in general a 10% reduction. That's of consequence, Speaker.

We talked about limiting the profits that can be taken out of the system by private operators. We don't hear any talk about that. One of the big issues that we fought the Liberals on was the \$2.6 billion they gave to Hydro One when they privatized it—\$2.6 billion. You notice those kinds of numbers. It's not pocket money. It's not a cheap breakfast at Tim Hortons; \$2.6 billion is of consequence.

We argued, as did a number of consumers at the Ontario Energy Board, that that \$2.6 billion—a gift to Hydro One—should have been dispersed back to hydro consumers to help reduce their bills over the next few years. The Ontario Energy Board said, "Well, they should disperse \$300 million and the rest stays with Hydro One." Hydro One was not happy with that. They took them to court and now there's a new hearing on this, because Hydro One wants to keep the whole \$2.6 billion to give to their investors. Has anyone heard a peep from the Ford Conservatives about protecting ratepayers with that \$2.6 billion?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** "Not I," said the NDP, "not I."

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I've been validated, Speaker. No one has heard that. No one has heard that. It just doesn't happen. It just isn't happening. That is the kind of thing you actually need to do if you want to control hydro prices. You have to say customers, Ontarians, ratepayers first; investors second. You have to have that kind of structure.

That's not what we're dealing with right here. This bill will do nothing to protect the environment and it won't stop the province from rolling over municipalities if that's what it wants to do—simple as that.

Most of the actual Green Energy Act is re-enacted under the Electricity Act in Bill 34. Now they'll revoke all the Green Energy Act regulations—energy efficiency standards for appliances; requirements for efficiency and conservation plans; disclosure to government of energy consumption, etc. I'm not sure which of those regulations will be re-enacted. The parliamentary assistant said we'll still be discussing conservation, which is very different from funding and implementing.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** We'll be discussing it.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I look forward to the discussion, but I look forward even more to actual investment and implementation of regulations that make a difference. That's what we need to do.

**1510**

Speaker, the Green Energy Act projects that this government wants to stop were already cancelled by the Liberals. The provincial government cancelled IESO contracts for renewable energy projects not yet under construction. There was no new call for any renewable generation. There may be some projects procured by local utilities outside the Independent Electricity System Operator, the body that runs the system as a whole, but the reality is that under the Liberals and the Tories, green energy was brought to a halt. They don't actually need to stop this bill, because it has already been done. It's over. But in terms of a sales job, in terms of a messaging or communication process, this bill is central to their strategy—which, again, is very much like the Liberal strategy: You rely on messaging and communications, not so much on substance that really helps people.

The ability of the provincial government to steamroll over municipalities predates the bill, it predates the Green Energy Act, and it will definitely survive this repeal. It's very clear from Bill 5 and Bill 31, the attack-on-Toronto acts, that this government understands that municipalities are creatures of the province and has no compunctions whatsoever about overriding them. As much as I hear from the Conservatives today that we have to respect municipal decision-making, it's totally irrelevant to them when it comes to the biggest city in this province, the biggest city in the country. They don't actually think that they're grown-ups and can make decisions like this. What do you think they're going to do with smaller towns? So to say that you're actually going to change this and make a difference makes no sense and is not supportable.

Prior to this bill bringing forward a repealing of section 62.0.2—I know everyone wanted to know the number so they could check the bill on their desk—that change will allow municipalities to enforce planning rules for renewable energy projects in pretty much the same way they can enforce planning rules for gas plants. What we saw with the gas plants scandal was that it doesn't matter what the municipalities say; if the province wants to put a gas plant in a jurisdiction, it just does it.

A few years ago, in 2009-10, there was a huge fight in York region. I actually went up to talk to people in York region about a plant that was being built that was unnecessary, that would cause air pollution in the region, and one that they should resist. They did, in fact, do their best. But in 2011—I'll just read an excerpt from a newspaper report datelined Bradford, Ontario, August 4, 2011:

"It's been just over a year since the provincial Liberal government effectively exempted the York Energy Centre from the Planning Act.

"But the passage of time has done nothing to heal the wounds of those who continue to oppose the project.

"Holland Marsh farmer and King ward 6 councillor Avia Eek is among those who remain deeply disappointed about the province's decision. Flabbergasted is the word she uses to describe how she felt upon learning the Liberals were moving to enact the regulation that paved the way for Pristine Power, which has since become Veresen

Inc., to build the 400-megawatt natural-gas-fired power plant....

"The only excuse that they had was that they needed the infrastructure to meet the (future electricity) needs, but nobody is stopping to think about the need to protect agricultural land."

The reality, Speaker, is that power demand has been flat or dropping. That was the case with the plants that came forward in the gas plants scandal. I had an opportunity to question the head of the Independent Electricity System Operator while we were going through that process. He thought that demand was going up, but when I asked him for the numbers, the reality was that they were going down. People are moving away from centralized power and increasingly either conserving energy to cut their costs or providing themselves with their own power. This plant is another testament to the Liberals' privatization impact: Private interests get to force their own projects onto the province, and this government will do nothing to stop that.

Frankly, this bill would not prevent another York Energy Centre from going forward, not for a moment. I attended a press conference that was held by the Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister of Energy. They talked about all of these things that were being done to stop renewable energy. A reporter said, "Okay, what if someone wants to locate a natural-gas-fired power plant in an area, or a nuclear plant? What power do municipalities have to say no? To what extent will they be consulted?" They could not get an answer from those two ministers—couldn't get an answer from the two ministers—because the reality is that this so-called tightening applies only to renewable energy. So if you're a big power developer and you want to put a gas plant in Beaches-East York, just as they did in my riding, the Portlands Energy Centre in Toronto-Danforth, the municipality is out of luck—out of luck. It is going to go ahead. They're not even discussing that, not for a second. That's why I say, Speaker, that this is all about messaging and communication and not about substance—and again, a very powerful indicator of the extent to which this government is carrying on the practices and the approach of the previous government.

Speaker, the bill fails to restore the independent professional oversight of energy planning and approvals that was stripped away by Bill 135 in 2015. If you were going to talk about an energy system or an electricity system that really reflected the best thinking, really reflected the needs of the province, why are they not addressing that issue? The reality is, they're leaving the situation set up by the Liberals that they can make energy decisions behind closed doors and everyone else can lump it or like it. That's it. Take your pick. It doesn't strengthen any environmental protections. It is bad news for this province. It will not take us anywhere.

The third thing I want to speak about with regard to this bill is that it signals that this government is turning its back on climate action and it's turning its back on the huge economic development potential that renewable power offers. It confirms their commitment to nuclear and gas plants. In fact, the minister and the parliamentary assistant

talked about both of those, ignoring where the lower costs are coming from.

Speaker, before I go further into that, I just want to note the almost irrational—no, it's rational in their terms of thinking, irrational in terms of the needs of the province—changes that they made, saying that not only would the zoning changes allow municipalities to decide where renewable energy could go—which, frankly, as I've said, can be overruled by the cabinet—but they also said that if a municipality doesn't allow a zoning change for a renewable energy facility, it can't appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, whereas a gas plant or a nuclear plant operator could. Not only do they want to say, "We don't like renewable power," they want to make it as difficult as possible, except for their intervention, for it to go forward.

It says that the minister will retain power to declare a provincial interest in any matter. He can substitute his decision for theirs. But in terms of the message that's being sent out: "Gas? Yep, no problem. Nukes? Yep, no problem. Renewable power? No. We're not going anywhere near that." That is pretty extraordinary.

On top of all of that, this bill is saying that the renewable power development has to prove that there's a need for its power. Now, I'll say that no other power source in this province—a hydroelectric dam or a nuclear generator or a gas plant—has to prove that the demand exists for its power. I'm interested in this, because right now we have a system operator that determines what power is needed. Frankly, given the problems with privatization, it often recommends too much power. But if you're in a situation where you completely atomize that and let anyone put any plant up anywhere that they want, then maybe this actually will be consequential, but not for gas plants, not for nuclear plants. They don't have to do any assessment of need. This is a set-up, really, to make private companies much happier, as long as they're not developing renewable power.

**1520**

It's astounding to me—and it came up in question period today. I was able to ask the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks about climate change. The reality is, we're just a week out from the UN report that shows we're facing very grave threats to the stability of our climate—the climate we depend on. We've heard arguments about the need to grow crops and provide ourselves with food; absolutely the case. If you can't depend on rain in the spring, can't depend on getting some rain in the summer—and heat—and can't depend on the supply of sun and water at the right times, it is very difficult to grow crops. We are going to be increasingly seeing drought, we're going to be increasingly seeing floods and we're going to increasingly see very unpredictable and erratic weather patterns. That's going to affect food production here and throughout the world.

That's a huge issue. This government is ignoring that issue. They cancelled the previous climate plan without having one ready to put in its place. That alone is irresponsible. But the thing that's going to be critical here is that every substantial study about how you deal with climate change talks about the need to ramp up investment in

renewable power, because that's where we have to go. We have to go with emission-free power if we're actually going to get greenhouse gases out of the picture.

This government is saying, "We don't want anything to do with it. We want no green energy whatsoever." That is the guts of their position. This bill may be cosmetic and it may have no real effect in terms of what happens at ground level, except for this: It's a strong signal and a strong message that this government doesn't like renewable power and is not particularly thrilled with conservation, either. They're going to be going backwards.

That is consequential for us, because the costs of inaction are quite extraordinary. I just want to cite a few. In the United States, since 1989, the Federal Emergency Management Administration has provided \$2.8 billion to buy out households that are getting flooded because increasingly torrential rains, rising seas and storm surges mean that some parts of the United States are no longer habitable.

I know that you, Speaker, from Windsor, can speak about homeowners in your riding who have had their basements flooded two or three times in the last few years—people who, after the first time, rebuilt, cleaned up, bailed out the sewage, and then again got flooded, had to bail out the sewage and had to rebuild. It's becoming a regular issue.

I was talking to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane earlier today. He was in Cochrane last week in constituency week talking to the chamber of commerce. They had had three inches of rain in just a few days. They were seeing flooding they'd never seen before. People were seeing basements flooded that had never flooded before.

The big issue of rising seas and making areas uninhabitable—for a lot of people, it's hard to grasp. But sewage in the basement, I think, is really easy for people to understand. They don't want it. Even in my riding of Toronto–Danforth, there are parts of the northern part of the riding, in East York, where people have been told by insurance companies that they won't insure them against flooding any more. They're in a very low-lying area; they're out of luck.

That will be the legacy of this government to the people of Ontario: sewage in the basement. That's where we're headed. They do not have a strategy or an approach that's going to change that. Their approach is one that says, "We're going to abandon the future and abandon where industry is going, and we're going to stick with the things that have been causing substantial problems for us for a long time."

One other set of costs: The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction also just recently put out a report. In the period from 1998 to 2017, disaster-hit countries reported direct economic losses of about \$3 trillion. Climate-related disasters accounted for 77% of those damages. This is a huge number. This is a huge burden for the world economy when we're dealing with those kinds of numbers and that kind of damage. In terms of occurrence, climate-related disasters dominated the picture, accounting for 91% of over 7,000 major recorded events between 1998 and 2017.

So we're seeing, not in the distant future—we're seeing the future right now in terms of flooding and extraordinary costs to deal with the damage of flooding and extreme weather. Yet this government ignores that. It ignores the recommendations globally for what has to be done to change the economy, to change the electricity system, the energy system, so that we aren't putting ourselves on a course with disaster. That is bad news for us.

The other thing: Not only are they ignoring the reality on the ground and in the basements today, but the reality is, they're ignoring where industry is going to go.

I'll tell you a story, Speaker. A few years ago, some friends of mine in Yarker, Ontario, were operating a tea room. Yarker is a little town in eastern Ontario, north of Kingston. It's a beautiful place. It has a rapids that runs through it—

**Hon. Steve Clark:** Beautiful.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Yes. Even the minister recognizes it.

This town, in the late 1800s into the early 1900s, was incredibly prosperous because it had two things: It had those rapids, which provided energy for a sawmill, and it had great forests. So they became a centre for furniture production and they made wagon wheels—lots of wagon wheels.

In about 1915, 1918, Mr. McLaughlin came to see them and said, "What do you think about making wheels for these cars that I'm building in Oshawa?" The good people of Yarker and the local industries said, "No, we think those cars are a passing fad. We're not going there," and, "Who is this Sam McLaughlin and what are these cars?" So they passed on what would have made them a far more prosperous place because they didn't believe that the economy and the means of transportation were changing. The reality was that they were.

I look at the example of Yarker, but I'm going to talk about 2018 and the huge shift that's going on in energy production around the globe. Bloomberg New Energy Finance does an annual review of energy markets. They're fairly authoritative, not particularly left-wing. I mean, it is Bloomberg. We're talking big business here. In their report, one of the headlines was "Wind and Solar Have Already Won." Their assessment was that "solar and wind have already won the race for cheap, bulk electricity." They noted that the cost of new wind and solar crosses the cost of new-build coal and gas.

Whether you're talking about China or the United States, if you've got good situations for solar and well-situated wind, then they are already at about the same cost as new gas. That is a real game changer—not just gas; gas and coal. They note that that is going to change all kinds of investment decisions.

The second thing they noted was that the price continues to come down so that existing plants are going to find that they're more expensive than new solar and new wind, even without subsidies. That has huge impacts.

For those who may not be familiar with it, in around 2002, British Energy in the UK went bankrupt. It went bankrupt because, effectively, it operated the old nuclear power plants that Margaret Thatcher had spun off. She'd

privatized the energy system so you had nuclear power plants trying to compete in a system that was dominated by gas, which was much cheaper. In the end, no one wanted to buy their power. The government of the time was stuck, because even though the power was expensive, it was 25% of the UK's supply, so they couldn't simply abandon them. They had to bail them out.

That's going to be the reality for us: that as wind and solar prices continue to drop, the plants that this government wants to invest in will become uneconomical. We'll find ourselves in a situation competing with Quebec or New York or Ohio or Michigan, where they are able to put in place much cheaper electricity sources than we can here. That is the simple reality.

I have to tell you, Speaker, over a century ago when Adam Beck was making his argument about hydro from Niagara Falls, all the coal industries were saying, "No. This is never going to go anywhere. Don't throw your money and time away on this hydro stuff, because, really, coal is where it is. This is what we have to have." If we had followed their prescription, Ontario would never have become the industrial centre that it is today—it would not have happened. But that's the attitude this government has. They want to stick with the old ways, and they want to make sure that a clean, renewable future is not part of this province. That is really bad news.

**1530**

In terms of cost, in 2018, the benchmark global price for windmills on land was 5.5 cents a kilowatt hour. Now, for those of you who pay your hydro bills, we're paying about 11 to 12 cents a kilowatt hour on our bills. So 5.5 cents is much cheaper than what we're paying now and much cheaper than many other sources of electricity.

Two years ago, Quebec was buying wind power at six cents a kilowatt hour, which is a pretty good price. We're charging people in Ontario much more for that. I'll get into some of the other dynamics that we're going to be dealing with that will make our bills much higher than they are today. Solar power dropping to seven cents a kilowatt hour—it's been down substantially from what it was before. Most recently, in Alberta, they negotiated wind power at 3.7 cents a kilowatt hour.

I'm giving you a lot of numbers, but I just want to illustrate that just as with the development of computers, you see this drop in cost on a steady basis as the technology improves. That's what this government is saying it doesn't want anything to do with. It could have a very different approach to this, but that is not their interest. Privatized gas, privatized nuclear, maybe more privatization, maybe the sale of OPG—we will see. But an interest in going where the prices are dropping—not an interest at all. And that is a huge problem.

This government will argue that if you take action on climate, if you get into renewable power, then you have an economy that's just not going to perform, that's not competitive. I just want to note that recently the Energy Post website, which does an awful lot of mainstream energy reporting, noted that California reached its 2020 carbon reduction target four years earlier than their target

date of 2020. They've been pretty aggressive. They were the 10th-largest economy in the world; they're the fifth-largest today. All the while, they've been putting in more renewable power and cutting carbon emissions. At the time that they were going forward with their proposal, when they brought forward Assembly Bill 32—something that Governor Schwarzenegger, who was a Republican, agreed to along with the Democrats because he could see where the future was going—there were all kinds of predictions that the cost of gasoline would quadruple, that thousands of people would be laid off—no, not thousands, that 1.1 million jobs would be lost—by 2020 because they were engaged in this renewable power and reduction of carbon emissions. In fact, California has had an unprecedented jobs boom. Their unemployment rate is at 4.2%. All the while, they're putting in more renewable power, and they're cutting their carbon emissions. This government has no interest in going there—no interest.

I think it was the late 1960s that Western Electric in the United States had developed transistors but they also made vacuum tubes for radios. They decided they had to defend the vacuum tube manufacturing and that transistors were just bad news, so they sold the transistor patents to Japanese electronics companies because they knew that they were just going to be wasting their time, and it was free money for them. Who is standing today? Has anyone bought anything from Western Electric in the last few decades? Has anyone ever heard of it? I came across it as an historical oddity. But the Japanese understood where the electronics industry was going to go. This government would not understand that. This government would have sold that patent and would have doubled down on vacuum tubes. That's where they are. That's what they want to do.

I want to note as well a recent book by an author called Bethany McLean. I think very few of you will know her, but she wrote the book about Enron, *The Smartest Guys in the Room*. For those of you, including pages, who don't know Enron, Enron was a Texas-based oil and gas trading company, pipeline company and power developer in the 1990s up to about 2001. Enron was—what can I say?—a company that operated with Liberal accounting. They had off-balance-sheet companies. They engaged in a variety of activities that ensured that by 2001 they blew up, and this was after they had wrecked the California energy system.

McLean was one of the few business writers to understand that Enron was not operating in a way that could be called businesslike. She was one of the few people who was willing to challenge Enron and say, "You guys can't show where you're making money. Your operation is a sham." She's a pretty sharp business writer, and in her most recent book she looks at the fracking boom in the United States and the reality of those investments. That's a debate for another day.

But in the closing section of her book, she actually goes out and talks to people in the energy industry. She notes that in talking to several large private equity investors, they were no longer investing in oil and gas, and they weren't because they didn't see the profits there in the next few decades. This was an industry that was on its way out.

Now, it's fighting to hold on, and I'm sure that with the help of the Conservative government they'll have at least one beachhead in North America, but people who understand what's going on in energy don't see a future there.

Fitch Ratings—I don't know Fitch Ratings. I've heard of Standard and Poor's; there are a number of rating agencies. But Fitch, a fairly substantial firm, called the adoption of battery-powered vehicles a "serious threat to the oil industry," noting that the cost of the batteries for those cars had dropped 73% since 2008. So very soon, electric cars will be cost-competitive with gas and diesel power vehicles.

We in Ontario should be paying attention to that. We should be supporting our auto industry to get onto that next wave, but it's going to be very difficult to make that argument when we're abandoning renewable power and abandoning action on climate change. That is a huge problem with this government. We're headed in the wrong direction.

I'm just noting, as well, that Saudi Arabia, which is synonymous with oil in people's minds, is planning to spend \$50 billion for a massive push into solar power, because in places in the Arabian peninsula they're now getting solar power at three cents a kilowatt hour, much less than almost anywhere else in the world. They have a lot of sun. They have a lot of open field. It's easy to put solar panels in the desert.

But if we don't understand where the competition is going to be in the next few years, if we bury our head in the sand as the coal barons wanted us to do at the beginning of the 20th century, we aren't going to have industry in the future. We aren't going to be competitive in the future. We're going to be in a very, very desperate situation.

What do we need to do? Well, first of all, this bill needs major reworking to be useful in any way, shape or form. But I would say that if we were on that side, we would be bringing forward a bill to restore public ownership of the electricity system. It's something we discussed in the election: We'd be buying back Hydro One, and as contracts came up with private generators, we'd either buy them or we'd shut them down; we wouldn't need them in the future. But we could build an energy system that's publicly owned, renewably based and would be far cheaper in the future.

We need to end the Liberal hydro plan, which is just building up billions of dollars in debt for us that we're going to have to repay through much higher hydro rates in the future. I haven't heard from this government about that. They're having a big inquiry into Liberal spending and Liberal practice, but frankly, Speaker, they know about this. If they were going to be spending their time usefully, they'd be figuring out how to phase this plan out as quickly as possible. If they say they can reduce electricity rates by a further 12%, well, do it: Phase out the Liberal hydro plan and save people tens of billions of dollars. I don't see a lot of enthusiasm for that position on that side of the room.

**1540**

We need a government that's actually going to look at conservation renewables in a way that dramatically cuts

the cost of electricity. No one in northern Ontario should be paying a thousand bucks a month for heating—nobody.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Well, they may be paying more than a thousand, but I'll say that they shouldn't be there and they shouldn't be higher.

We should invest in places around Ontario where there is that really extreme climatic situation to drive people's energy consumption as close to zero as we can. That would make a huge difference to the economy of the north, to the people of the north, and it would create a ton of jobs. We need those jobs. But they're not even talking about it with this bill. It's not even on the landscape with this government. That's a huge failing on their part.

Speaker, I have touched on four main points. I want to talk a little bit about what's in the bill, because I know often for people what's in the bill isn't as interesting. How many clauses and subsections can you talk about before you use toothpicks to keep your eyes open, Speaker? You're very valiant. You get through all of the speeches and you're awake. That's an amazing thing. I think everyone in the room is impressed.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's an exceptional speech.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Yes, I've kept her awake for almost 50 minutes.

What's in the bill? There are some interesting things. The following provisions of the Green Energy Act are not being re-enacted: a requirement that public agencies must consider energy conservation when buying goods or services, and a provision committing the government of Ontario to being guided by the principles of energy efficiency. I have to say, Speaker, that section is classic Liberal-speak. It doesn't say that you actually have to do something; it says that you have to think about it. As the parliamentary assistant said, maybe you have to talk about it, but you don't actually have to do something. The government could have taken that section, rewritten it and enacted it so that we were setting conservation goals that were substantial and that made a big difference to people's everyday cost of living, as well as making a big difference in terms of the climate crisis that we're facing.

They have a section of the bill that's not being re-enacted that would allow the minister to enter into agreements with respect to promoting energy conservation—again, a classic Liberal phrase, because ministers can enter into agreements with bodies around energy conservation any day of the week that they want to now. So not re-enacting that is not going to make a lot of difference. It didn't make a lot of difference when it was in there.

There's a provision letting the government issue energy efficiency directives to itself, as if it couldn't do that beforehand.

I understand why they're not re-enacting this. They could have put something in place that was consequential. They could have put something in place saying, "These are the energy efficiency standards and targets we want to reach, and this is how we'll do it."

Most of the elements in the Green Energy Act are going to be put into the Electricity Act now. As I said at the

beginning, this is a very empty, very symbolic bill. It's basically a swipe at renewable energy. But we're wasting a lot of legislative time on small things, when we could actually be doing something substantial.

I will note—and those around Ontario who have been waiting for it for a long time should know—that the government is re-enacting the regulation that prevents municipalities from banning clotheslines. Speaker, I know this is before your time, but I actually fought on this issue around 2007-08: Why aren't people allowed to have clotheslines? I didn't think it was that dramatic at the time; I thought it was pretty common sense. This government, bravely, is retaining this, and clotheslines will be allowed to run free in Ontario in the years to come. Thank God for that.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Got some nuclear notes?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** No, no. I've got lots of nuclear notes.

I'm just realizing, frankly, that there isn't a lot there. It's fairly empty. That's, I think, one of the things that's most frustrating about the bill. We've gone through 15 years of Liberal government; we badly need a reset on our energy policies. What we're getting is really just a communication that, "We don't like green energy anymore; we're not going to do it; relax," which they didn't need a bill to do. What they do need a bill to do, and I have said this earlier, is to restore public ownership, put in those efficiency standards, put in those efficiency programs and move Ontario forward. That, desperately, is what we need, Speaker.

A number of people, I'm sure, at committee hearings will come forward and say that the bill is the best thing since sliced bread; I look forward to asking them questions. A number will say that it's a terrible bill; I'm looking forward to asking them questions as well, because I don't think there's enough there to keep them going. But I think, for us, we should recognize that it's a thin bill, it doesn't make a lot of difference and it's a missed opportunity.

With that, I thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I thank the member for his comments. At the outset, I know the member might think that I'm going to be overly critical of his comments, but I think what his comments really show is that in many respects we're actually on the same page: We want cheaper energy for people. The member talked about bringing the cost of energy down. I was actually very encouraged by the member's comments on that. He talked about energy conservation; he suggested it wasn't in the bill. It is, on page 2. We also go a bit further. We allow for data so that consumers can have access to the information that they require. That's also in the bill.

What concerns me a little bit is that when we talk about bringing the cost of energy down, the member must recognize that here in the province of Ontario the costs of green energy are very expensive.

The cost of nuclear—this is by the Ontario Energy Board. I'm not making this up; it's the OEB that has put this forward. The cost of nuclear energy is 6.8 cents a kilowatt hour; hydro, 5.7; gas, 14 cents; wind, 13.3 cents; and solar,

48.1 cents a kilowatt hour. That is absolutely incredible, the differences between the two. Moreover, wind at 13.3 cents is 8% of our supply but 15% of the global adjustment, so 15% of the extra costs that Ontario ratepayers have to absorb. Solar is 13% of the global adjustment, so 13% of the extra cost, and only 2% of the power.

When we're talking about green energy contracts, we're talking about contracts in the future for power that we simply do not need right now. So while I can appreciate the honourable member suggesting that perhaps in the future the costs of these things will be much cheaper—and I hope that he's right. But right now we have made significant investments in nuclear power. Nuclear power is very clean and cost-effective. Generations in Ontario have made these investments, and we should utilize these investments when we have the chance and avail ourselves of 6.8 cents per kilowatt hour, which is a clean source of energy—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Thank you. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It's always a pleasure to rise in the House, and particularly to talk about Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act.

I want to talk to the member from Markham–Stouffville. I listened to him talk earlier today. That tells you how exciting my life is: I was actually watching the Parliament station while he was speaking. He talked about how we should all be upset about the 300,000 jobs that were lost in the province of Ontario, and as an MP, he was upset. But what he didn't tell you during that two-minute—or, I guess he was on for an hour. He didn't tell us about who caused the 300,000 jobs to go out of the province of Ontario. It was the MP and the Conservative government. And I'll tell you very easily how they did it. They had a petrodollar. Yes, they did. They had a petrodollar that was supported out west, at the expense of the province of Ontario.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Yes, they did; they did. And what did we do? We lost jobs in auto. Some of the members over here, I think it was—I'm not sure of your riding, but you talked about a plant that we lost. We lost it because the petrodollar went to \$1.10. There isn't a manufacturer in Ontario that could survive with the dollar at \$1.10, being run by a petrodollar. So we protected the oil industry out west at the expense of Ontario and at the expense of—

*Interjection.*

1550

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Let me finish. Let me finish. I listened to you for two hours. You should at least give me the courtesy to listen to what I have to say. I think that's fair, reasonable.

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** You're wrong.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm not wrong. I came out of the auto industry. I saw the plants that left Windsor. I saw the downsizing of Oshawa. I saw St. Catharines. Do you know, member, that in St. Catharines we had 10,000 jobs? Do you know what we have today? We have 1,600 manufacturing jobs in the auto plant today, and a lot of it stems

from the fact that the auto sector was attacked. Unions were attacked by having a petrodollar. That's reality.

How much time have I got? Eleven seconds. Time goes quick. I'm sorry, Madam Speaker.

You support the Liberal hydro plan and you talk about it going down 12%. Well, guess what? It's going to go up. It has to go up. You've got—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Belinda Karahalios:** I'm listening to the debate today, and I want to thank my colleagues for their comments and my colleagues across the way as well for their comments.

I look at this bill and I think about that Green Energy Act and what's wrong with it. We know that it aimed to increase the use of renewable energy, like wind power and solar, biofuels and small-scale hydro power, and then there were the feed-in tariffs. What it ended up doing, this Green Energy Act, was creating skyrocketing energy rates. It created unnecessary cost challenges to our manufacturers, to our small business owners and to people like you and me. Much like cap-and-trade and the carbon tax, it increased the cost of everything. And the Green Energy Act also represented the largest transfer of money from the poor and the middle class to rich Liberal insiders.

When door-knocking and speaking to my constituents today, the hardest part about all of this is just the cost of life becoming more expensive, from something as simple as fuel, as the member from Niagara mentioned—did I get your riding wrong?—and clothing and food and electricity. Everything has become more expensive. Ontario is now essentially a have-not province. This province used to be fantastic for business, fantastic to live and work in, and I don't see that any more. That has occurred over the last 15 years, and it's because of these failed policies that were implemented, that were forced upon us by the former Liberal government.

So I stand here today very proud to be a Conservative member and to support the repeal of the Green Energy Act to help Ontario business and the Ontario economy.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It's always a pleasure to listen to my colleague who knows so much about energy. Unfortunately, I'm becoming quite knowledgeable about energy, but a specific part of it, which is the number of my constituents who come to me with hydro bills that are in the four figures; that is, over \$1,000 a month. Why? Because the people I represent in Nickel Belt do not have access to natural gas. Lots of us live in rural areas where you cannot have oil or propane delivery, so you heat your house with electricity and you pay the price. Electricity bills have gone through the roof, so everybody is looking for relief.

Finally, GreenON energy came on. It was directly linked to cap-and-trade, but it allowed hundreds of people in my riding to make their homes more energy-efficient. We will know in the next year, but the ones who are on

equal billing were already able to decrease the amount of electricity they used and directly decrease their bills.

I have letters here that I won't have time to read into the record, but I have Mrs. Sheila Renton from my riding, I have Ron and Julie Denomme, and I have Richard and Catherine Gagne. These are all people who signed on to GreenON energy. But you know what? Because of the arbitrary deadline they've put on, contractors have chosen to work in urban areas so that they can do as many jobs as they can, as fast as they can, to meet the deadline of October 31. What does that mean? That means the people I represent who live in northern Ontario, who live in rural Ontario, they don't come to us, because it takes three hours to drive to our house, do the job, and three hours to drive back. They can do three jobs for the one they do in northern Ontario. The deadline is arbitrary. It is not fair to people in northern and rural Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Back to the member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My thanks to the members who spoke: the parliamentary assistant, the member from Niagara Falls, the member from Carleton and the member from Nickel Belt.

First of all, with regard to the comments from the parliament assistant: Parliamentary assistant, you may see the posting price for nuclear today at a number that's relatively low. But if you followed what's going on with the refurbishments at all, we're looking at costs rising to 16.5 cents a kilowatt hour. That's what we're looking at. I'm sure it will be the same with Bruce. I don't think they have a magic formula. That's where the refurbishments will take us.

That's what was before the Ontario Energy Board. Those are the numbers that are coming forward. Do you think you're going to have a \$12-billion project that won't increase the cost of nuclear power in a decade? It will. Those are the cost figures that were put forward by OPG and that were accepted by the OEB. You're looking at power that's going to cost itself way out of the market, and that's about 50% of the power used in Ontario. We're being set up for a dramatic rise in the cost of power. If you don't know that that's coming, you're not paying attention to either OPG or the energy board that you're supposed to be supervising.

I want to thank the member from Niagara Falls for his comments about the petrodollar and its impact on Ontario manufacturing. There's no doubt about it. Stephen Harper made a choice. It was going to be tar sands or manufacturing. He chose tar sands, and people who were making a living out of manufacturing got hit really hard. That is a huge problem.

Those policies, that way of thinking imported from the Harper government to this chamber, are not going to serve us well in the years to come. They will be bad news. So if you've got an energy minister who is not paying attention to what nuclear power is going to cost, not paying attention to what renewable power is going to cost, we're setting ourselves on a collision course with reality, and that's that

other jurisdictions will be able to make things much more cheaper than we can. That is bad news.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** Under the previous Liberal government, life was unaffordable and many of the programs in place were unrealistic and did not deliver meaningful results. The Green Energy Act falls within this category. We have been hearing for years how much harder the Green Energy Act made it for families to thrive and businesses to prosper.

In response, Ontario's government for the people promised to repeal the 2009 Green Energy Act and reduce Ontario's skyrocketing hydro rates. We made a promise to lower the cost of living for hard-working Ontarians.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Promise made—

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:**—promise kept. Our government has once again upheld this promise. I'm happy to say it once again: Promises made, promises kept.

This proposed legislation is simply the beginning. When it comes to putting money in the pockets of Ontarians, we are just getting started. We campaigned on this commitment and, once again, we are delivering results to the people of Ontario. Our government has upheld its promise by introducing Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Environmental Protection Act, the Planning Act and various other statutes.

The Green Energy Act has been hurting Ontario families and damaging Ontario businesses for far too long. By eliminating this act, our government is enabling municipalities to have the ability to stop unwanted and unneeded energy projects, and to have a better say in what is being developed in their communities. Our government is also focusing on strategic policy that will actually protect the environment, measures like promoting energy efficiency standards and energy conservation.

The previous government tried to disguise their insider deals with favoured industry groups and the Green Energy Act as an initiative to reduce air pollution levels and protect the environment. However, the Green Energy Act delivered no such promise. It actually posed a risk to increase air pollution levels, as wind power required natural gas as a backup. Furthermore, the wind farms that were forced into rural communities were causing serious noise pollution, damaging well-preserved land and affecting the wildlife that lived on the surrounding terrain.

Even the previous government's energy minister knew how wasteful the Green Energy Act was. In 2017, he was quoted as saying that the implementation of the Green Energy Act has led to "suboptimal outcomes" for consumers. The outcomes that the Green Energy Act did produce were troublesome, increasing the price of electricity for families and businesses in Ontario.

**1600**

Our government is delivering results to the people of Ontario, and we're making life more affordable for our residents. We are opening up Ontario for business, by supporting and promoting industry growth and increasing employment opportunities. Our government is showing,

time after time, that we are listening to and working for the people.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that the Green Energy Act has been hurting Ontario families for far too many years. As our current Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines explained, the Green Energy Act represents the largest transfer of money from the poor and middle-class to the rich in Ontario's history. The previous government pushed its agenda forward without listening to policy advisers, residents of Ontario or even the Auditor General.

In 2011, the Auditor General found that the Liberal government's focus was on providing stability for energy investors, not what was best for Ontario taxpayers. The Auditor General also found that while the Green Energy and Green Economy Act was expected to support more than 50,000 jobs, most of those jobs were likely to be short-term jobs, and that for each job created through renewable energy generation, two to four jobs were often lost in other sectors as a result of higher electricity prices.

Under the former Liberal government, energy rates tripled. This is unacceptable and was devastating to the people of Ontario. Too many families were put in a desperate and vulnerable situation. As a result of the Liberal hydro crisis, closely associated with the Green Energy Act, Ontario families were forced to choose between heating their homes and putting food on their plates.

According to the Ontario Energy Board and the Independent Electricity System Operator, in 2017, wind and solar added \$3.75 billion in costs to electricity bills. Additionally, in 2017, as much as 26% of electricity generated for wind and solar was wasted, and this was electricity that Ontarians paid for. This is simply wrong. It's time that Ontarians get this money back, so they can use it in meaningful ways, like supporting their families. Families should not have to worry about whether they pay to heat their homes or have food on their tables.

As the Minister of Infrastructure stated, the GEA allowed the previous government to trample over the rights of families, businesses and municipalities across rural Ontario. I come from rural Ontario, and I have seen first-hand the negative impact that the Green Energy Act has had on my riding of Simcoe North. I have had young families who have just purchased a house and students who have just started living on their own reach out to me about how high the hydro rates were, affecting their ability to save for their futures. They were living paycheque to paycheque, despite all their hard work.

Rural residents and families not only had to deal with skyrocketing hydro prices, but some had to worry about the possible health complications linked to the continued pile-driving associated with the creation of the wind turbine developments. In 2013, the previous government approved a wind power project despite its location near an important aquifer in north Kent. The residents claimed that the continuous vibrations made by the pile-driving were contaminating their wells, and that it was disrupting the shale bedrock and damaging nearby well structures.

A Canadian field study conducted in 2017 also found a correlation between the vibrations and ground material

within 100 metres of the structure. A hydrogeologist also gathered and analyzed the samples from the residents' homes in north Kent, and his testing showed the affected wells affected "the amount of particles found in the well, colour and cloudiness of the water, and rate of flow."

Residents voiced their concerns to the past government and asked them to further investigate whether their water was safe to drink, but their requests were disregarded.

In Port Hope, a 500-kilowatt solar project was pushed onto residents even though the intended site was on fertile agricultural land. The agricultural land should never have been considered for an energy project when it could have been used for farmers to grow produce for our province.

In 2009, in my riding of Simcoe North, we saw the township of Oro-Medonte and the township of Tay disagree with proposed green energy projects. Residents who purchased land to use and enjoy 15 years ago were being told that 14-foot solar energy panels were being built right next door. The residents were concerned that their property values would decrease and the structures would cut down their enjoyment of their natural surroundings. These concerns were brought forward to the mayor of Oro-Medonte, Harry Hughes, but whether the township approved of them or not was irrelevant because the legislation superseded the will of municipalities and their planning processes.

In 2014 in Tay township, farmers took to their tractors to protest a solar farm that was being forced onto agricultural land. The organizer of the event stated that the area was considered prime agricultural land and that it "should have crops going on it, not solar panels."

The mayor of Tay township was quoted at the time saying, "Under the Green Energy Act we are really out of the loop. We are not part of the approval process. We have passed a motion that says we are no longer a willing host for either solar or wind farm development. But that doesn't do anything to stop the ones that are currently in the approval stage or have been approved by the province of Ontario."

A professor of economics at the University of Guelph who specializes in environmental economics and policy analysis stated that it was easier for the energy minister's office to site new wind turbine facilities and just ram them through despite the objections of local property owners.

Our Ontario farmers work hard to feed our cities, and they are integral to the success of our agriculture and agri-food sector, contributing \$3.95 billion to the provincial GDP. The agricultural sector also supports more than 822,000 jobs, or nearly one in eight jobs across the province. For fertile land to be taken away from the agricultural producers and to then force solar farms on these grounds is absolutely appalling.

I have heard from dairy farmers in my riding of Simcoe North about how they are paying nearly triple in hydro rates but milk production remains the same. They have also told me that they would try to farm on off-peak hours so that they could save money. Some were even purchasing diesel generators just so that they did not have to plug into the hydro grid and be forced to pay extreme charges.

Wasteful energy projects increased under the previous Liberal government, forcing Ontarians to pay drastic fees, and significantly impacted the quality of life of families and farmers across Ontario. Our government is proud of the work that our farmers do, and we will not leave them behind like the past government did. We are standing up for them and working to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens. We have put legislation forward that will expand access to natural gas in rural communities and provide real relief to farmers. Ontarians deserve a government that listens to them and their families about what matters most in their daily lives. We are committed to cleaning up the Liberal hydro mess and making sure our electricity system works for the people.

I am proud to say to the people of Ontario that after years of skyrocketing electricity rates, hydro bills are finally starting to come down. Under our government, life is becoming more affordable for all families across Ontario. One of the first actions we took as a new government was to cancel 758 expensive and wasteful energy projects as part of our plan to cut hydro rates by 12%, saving \$790 million for electricity customers. We are giving Ontarians the affordability that they deserve. Our government is ensuring that taxpayers no longer have to contribute to programs like the Green Energy Act, programs that are wasting their hard-earned money. Under our government, we are going to ensure that the best interests of the people of Ontario are always at the forefront.

**1610**

Our government is fighting for the rights of our residents so they are able to decide how they want to spend their money and ensure their money is staying in their pockets where it belongs. The previous Liberal government not only trampled over the rights of families, they also made it much harder for businesses in Ontario to grow and prosper.

Madam Speaker, the Green Energy Act has not only been hurting families in Ontario, it has been damaging to Ontario businesses. The Green Energy Act drove many manufacturing jobs out of this province. Thousands of jobs were lost across Ontario because manufacturing plants were too expensive to operate. The Green Energy Act put our province near the top of North American electricity costs and created damaging consequences for our province's ability to compete and grow our economy. This is shameful.

Our government is committed to supporting and promoting opportunities in skilled trades, including manufacturing, because these are good-paying and fulfilling career opportunities. These are the kinds of jobs that hard-working Ontarians can support a family with while also giving back to society. These are jobs that our province desperately needs.

This is a topic that I have focused a lot of my attention on since taking office. I have met with many stakeholders in a variety of skilled labour-related industries. My discussions have included industry professionals, apprentices and business owners. Every person I have met with has

stressed the importance of growing and sustaining skilled labour in our province.

As such, I am very pleased that the Green Energy Act will no longer hurt Ontario businesses by pushing away job opportunities in skilled labour. Our government is committed to growing business and providing better job opportunities for Ontarians. This starts with ensuring that Ontarians have every available opportunity for a good-paying and rewarding career. Manufacturing jobs and other skilled labour jobs certainly fit within this criteria, so it is essential that we promote and support jobs as much as possible.

By repealing the Green Energy Act, our government is also ensuring that municipalities have the ability to stop unwanted and unneeded energy projects in our communities. The proposed legislation to repeal the Green Energy Act would give the government the authority to make regulations to stop approvals for wasteful renewable energy projects, where the need for electricity has not been demonstrated. This will stop additional projects that will add costs to electricity bills that the people of Ontario simply cannot afford.

Our government believes municipalities should have the final decision about what is going to be built in their communities. As part of the new proposed legislation, our government is taking action to give the power back to municipalities, allowing them to stop projects like the White Pines Wind Project.

The White Pines Wind Project was quietly granted a notice to proceed in the middle of an election campaign, when government was supposed to be functioning in a caretaker capacity. Local municipalities were not even made aware that this notice to proceed was granted. This is yet another example of the previous government's total lack of respect for the people of Ontario. I can only imagine how frustrated residents must have felt, worrying that they would be on the hook for this overpriced wind power.

The previous Liberal government shoved these wind and solar farms into the backyards of communities that did not want them. Wind and solar account for just 11% of total power generation in Ontario, yet they reflect 30% of the global adjustment costs. The high cost that was associated with these wind and solar farms was deeply troublesome, especially considering the relatively small amount of electricity that was actually being generated by these sources. And yet these inefficient projects were aggressively pushed on Ontario families. These expensive energy projects were hurting families and disrespecting municipalities across Ontario by taking away their ability to have a say in what was being forced into their backyards.

Our government believes the people of Ontario should have the final say about what gets built in their neighbourhoods, and we believe that municipalities have the power to stop expensive and unneeded energy projects in their communities. As such, our government is restoring the ability for local municipalities to control where major facilities can be built. It will allow municipalities to have the ability to decide how they want to advance economic development and infrastructure on their own terms.

Madam Speaker, let's be clear: Our government is committed to enacting measures that actually protect the environment—measures like promoting energy efficiency standards and energy conservation. Our government recognizes that it needs to put measures in place that are actually realistic and affordable for the people of Ontario. Ontarians have been ignored for far too long, and calls for the past government to repeal feed-in tariffs had been ignored. The past government did not even make feed-in tariff applications competitive, and once a contract was signed, the energy producer was guaranteed a fixed price for the duration of that contract. They even ignored advice from industry experts and engineers responsible for the plan that could have saved billions of dollars. These disastrous feed-in tariffs, as the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines so aptly named them, were arbitrary and did nothing to make Ontario a leader in renewable energy.

Our government is committed to making Ontario open for business again and one of the ways we are doing that is by fully striking the Green Energy Act from the province's books. Through this proposed legislation, our government will maintain provisions related to energy efficiency and conservation standards to give people the information they need to make decisions to help lower their energy costs. These provisions include energy and water efficiency standards, customer access to energy data, energy and water reporting and benchmarking, and broader public sector energy reporting. These provisions will be made to other acts as well. Our government is committed to supporting the environment, but in a way that will not seriously jeopardize the average Ontario taxpayer.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I've got two minutes so I'm going to make two points. The first one is, in the debate today, people have been talking about why electricity costs have gone up and "Is it the Green Energy Act?" But the reason electricity costs have gone up is because of privatization. In 1995, the former Conservative government broke up Ontario Hydro and started selling off the pieces. Our utility rates, our electricity rates, which had been kept under public management at about four or five cents a kilowatt hour for 90 years, started to increase, and we're now paying four to five times that rate. So when you're looking at the reason for the cost of electricity going up, you've got to look at privatization. It was started by the former Conservative government and was continued by the former Liberal government, and we're now faced with the electricity rates that we have.

The second point I wanted to make is that this government, the Conservative government, is continuing to prepare Ontario for the 20th century. This is not the 20th century. When you talk about the loss of manufacturing jobs, you're right, the high cost of electricity was one of the contributing factors. The high dollar and the farming out of jobs to China and Mexico were the other reasons. But what we have now is an opportunity because, with green

technology, we are now transitioning our economy from a carbon-heavy economy to a green economy. We have green technology.

All of the pieces of the Green Energy Act were feeding into that green economy. The rebates on homeowner retrofits were providing jobs for contractors, who could then hire people and then buy products manufactured in Ontario. We were creating this green economy. The solar panels, the windmill farms—these are all feeding into the green economy and the transition that we need to make for the future, for the 21st century.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** We've heard a lot today about the Green Energy Act and its harm, and people are absolutely right on this.

The one thing I do want to make a point of is that I recall during the last election the NDP actually wanted to buy back Ontario Hydro shares. At what price? And who would be paying for that? I think that when you take a look at the cost of a share for Ontario Hydro right now, at around \$20 a share—and, of course, they wanted to buy back about 60% of all the shares that had been sold—initially that would be like \$9 billion. It's probably much higher than that now.

1620

Earlier today, I talked about the Green Energy Act and that it probably should have been called the red energy act, based on the fact that it has really put Ontario in the red. We know that, of course, our hydro prices are just escalating, skyrocketing, for sure.

The other thing I also wanted to mention, though, is the fact that down in my riding of Chatham-Kent–Leamington we've lost in excess of 15,000 manufacturing jobs because of the fact that this former Liberal government basically said, "We're putting turbines here." And we heard from the member from—help me out with your riding.

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** Simcoe North.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:**—Simcoe North that, again, there were actually water issues down adjacent to my riding because of the fact of the pile-driving and industrial wind turbines.

The Liberals, in fact, never really presented the facts clearly on the downside of industrial wind turbines. Of course, we all know escalating costs were number one; secondly, the fact that these turbines were ruining landscapes throughout rural Ontario.

The other thing too, and I remember we talked about it briefly, were the health issues: not only the water issues, the contamination, but also hearing loss and the fact that people suffer from insomnia. Those are some of the other health issues that were never presented.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**M. Guy Bourgouin:** Nombreux commettants de ma circonscription sont frustrés par la cancellation du programme vert qui aidait des propriétaires à réinvestir dans leur maison. On parle de revêtements, du changement

des vitrines ou des châssis, les portes, et aussi l'isolation de leur maison pour réduire leurs coûts d'énergie.

Il y en a qui chauffent à l'huile aussi, mais c'est plutôt aussi, veux, veux pas, combiné avec l'électricité. J'ai des commettants qui paient près de 5 000 \$, 5 500 \$, des fois 6 000 piastres par année de chauffage pour une maison normale, ce qui est inacceptable dans le temps où on est aujourd'hui.

Ces programmes aidaient à réduire les coûts pour les commettants du Nord, parce qu'il faut réaliser que l'hiver dans le nord de l'Ontario est assez froid, on peut se le dire. Il fait 40 sous zéro qui dure des fois un mois. On a besoin d'isoler nos maisons comme il faut pour être capable de se garder au chaud. Ce veut dire que ça nous coûte beaucoup, l'électricité. Ça coûte cher.

Il y avait aussi beaucoup de commettants qui sont venus concernant les autos électriques. Il y a du monde qui en achetait, et puis aujourd'hui on se rend compte que ces programmes-là n'existent plus. On voit que ce gouvernement semble nager qu'à contre-courant. On sait que l'avenir est dans l'énergie verte, mais on s'acharne d'aller à reculons et non de l'avant. Il va sans dire qu'on pourrait supporter l'industrie, amener plus de voitures électriques, et aussi créer beaucoup d'emplois en Ontario.

Merci, madame la Présidente.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Merci. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Stan Cho:** I'd like to thank the member from Simcoe North for her insightful comments as well as the debate here today in this House. Maybe I'm still honeymooning, but it's always a pleasure to stand and speak to such insight.

I just want to say that the member from Toronto-Danforth had quite a few insightful comments in his debate, and one of the points that he mentioned I wholeheartedly agree with. That's when he said, and I'm paraphrasing, that as technology improves, costs go down. I can't help but think of the late 1990s, when you saw flat-screen TVs first coming out. These things used to cost \$20,000 each, but if you compare them to today's televisions, the quality was far inferior. That's the point. TVs today you can pick up for 800 or 900 bucks at a much better quality, and that's where we're headed. Renewable energy is coming, and climate change is real, and it's man-made.

I reject the notion that we are turning our backs on climate change. No. We are turning our backs on bad contracts. We are turning our backs on burdening taxpayers with an increased cost of living, on giving away \$6 billion in surplus energy to the United States and on off-peak rates increasing 150% since 2009.

No, Madam Speaker, we have not turned our backs. We've turned and faced Ontarians and we're listening to what they're saying. What they're saying is that a tax is not a plan and an increased cost of living is not a solution. Rest assured, though, I can tell you one thing that's for sure: Help is here. We are going to repeal the Green Energy Act and we are going to make sure we get this province back on track.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Back to the member from Simcoe North.

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** Thank you to the members from Spadina-Fort York, Chatham-Kent-Leamington, Mushkegowuk-James Bay and my colleague from Willowdale.

The Green Energy Act has been damaging to families, farmers, municipalities and businesses for far too long. We've all heard that here today. Under the former Liberal government, energy rates have tripled. Families should not have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their families. Farmers should not have to work on off-peak hours to feed our cities. Municipalities should not feel powerless in making decisions about what is happening in their own communities. The Green Energy Act hurt Ontario's economy and thousands of jobs were lost across Ontario because manufacturing plants were too expensive to operate under their wasteful initiative.

The opposition will have you believe that the Green Energy Act is about saving our environment, but it's not. The Green Energy Act actually posed a risk to increase air pollution levels, as wind power required natural gas as a backup. The development of the wind and solar farms jeopardized the health of our citizens and the integrity of our agricultural soil.

Our government is committed to supporting the environment, but in a way that will not seriously jeopardize the average Ontario taxpayer. Our government is committed to working for the people and delivering real results. We campaigned on this commitment and, once again, we are delivering results. By repealing the Green Energy Act, we are keeping our promises of making life more affordable for Ontarians. I'm always happy to say: Promises made, promises kept.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further debate?

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** It is an honour and privilege to give my inaugural speech today.

I want to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered today as settlers on Indigenous lands. These lands were part of the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishnawbe, the Huron-Wendat, the Métis and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. This House, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, is specifically on land under the Toronto Purchase and Treaty 13 from 1805.

As a settler who profits off colonial privilege each and every day, it is imperative that I acknowledge the original caretakers of this land that we are on. More personally, my family's and my people's history bring me even more conviction of the importance of land acknowledgements.

My parents and grandparents escaped the illegal Chinese occupation of our homeland, Tibet. I have spent my entire life trying to make those around me aware and educate them on the true history of my people. So, in turn, I see it as a responsibility of mine that I learn about the true history of the Indigenous peoples of this land that I now call home, and that I do my part in working to its reconciliation and addressing the past and continued colonization of the Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island.

It is a great honour and responsibility to represent Parkdale-High Park at the Legislative Assembly of

Ontario. I want to thank the residents of Parkdale–High Park for placing their trust in me. I want them to know that they can count on me to be a strong voice for our riding, for our city and for our province. It is incredibly humbling to have made history and become the first person of Tibetan heritage to be elected into public office in North America.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Thank you. As a volunteer also pointed out to me on election night, I also became the first person of colour to represent Parkdale–High Park provincially.

1630

I'm here in this seat with the support of many along the way, and I would like to thank some key individuals. First, I would like to acknowledge His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. Although he refers to himself as a simple Buddhist monk, for Tibetans all over the world the Dalai Lama holds a very special place. As our leader, he has dedicated his life to working tirelessly for the Tibetan people. It is through his efforts that the Tibetan cause has gained the international attention that it has now and that it has helped Tibetans, people like my family and others in our community, settle in Canada and elsewhere.

Growing up, I appreciated having a leader who called himself a feminist, promoted science and the protection of the environment, and actively worked to lessen his own role in government and, instead, strengthen Tibetan democracy. The Dalai Lama's first commitment has always been to encourage others to cultivate happiness by practising compassion while promoting universal human values.

As elected representatives and members of this House, I think we all need to practise more compassion. Imagine what we could accomplish if we moved beyond the partisan paradigm of Conservative values or NDP values and, instead, focused on human values. By seeing and respecting each other as human beings, we could work together to build a stronger, fairer and more just Ontario, and we could get there much faster.

I would also like to acknowledge the previous member for Parkdale–High Park, Cheri DiNovo, and thank her for her service. I may be biased, but I think she was one of the best MPPs in Ontario's history. I had the privilege of working with her for eight of the 11 years she held office. Through working with her, I learned how to become an effective representative for our community and to continually strive to make principled decisions and always put the needs of our community first.

As well, Speaker, I would like to thank the Tibetan community of Toronto, especially those in our unofficial Little Tibet in Parkdale. They were an integral part of the campaign, and it is because of their hard work that the Tibetan Canadian community was able to make history on June 7, 2018.

I also want to thank everyone else on our campaign team, especially our fantastic volunteers and supporters. As I said often during the campaign and I will say now, it may have been my name on the ballot and my face on the

signs, but the campaign did not belong to me; it belonged to the people of Parkdale–High Park. The campaign was our campaign, a campaign that everyone could see themselves being a part of. It was a campaign that reflected the values of our community and reflected the diversity of the people we strive to serve. Our campaign dispelled a pervasive myth that young people are politically apathetic. Youth are engaged in politics, and we have proven that we can run inclusive campaigns from the inside out and win.

Speaker, I am so proud of the campaign that we ran. It was a positive campaign from start to end. Our volunteers worked so hard. They were so passionate and dedicated that they inspired everyone they met to expect more from government, to demand more from government, that the status quo at Queen's Park was not working and, more importantly, it was no longer acceptable and that we can have change for the better.

In Parkdale–High Park, we chose to build a stronger, fairer and more just Ontario. As the result of the Parkdale–High Park election indicated, our campaign secured nearly 60% of the vote. It was the widest victory margin in Parkdale–High Park's history and among the top three province-wide in terms of number of votes. It was an overwhelming endorsement by the people of Parkdale–High Park of our campaign message. That message, I think, was sent pretty loud and clear: the message that we believe in taking care of our neighbours, that we believe governments should put people at the heart of every decision they make, that we want to see governments put people before profit.

Speaker, I love Parkdale–High Park. When my family and I moved to Canada 15 years ago, like many immigrant and refugee families before us, we landed in Parkdale–High Park. The community welcomed us with open arms. We had wonderful neighbours and incredible community organizations that helped us settle and build our lives here in Canada. It is a community where I am choosing to raise my daughter. It is a community that I want to fight for and a community that I want to help build.

But right now, as a community, we are facing some serious challenges. We have a housing affordability crisis. In Parkdale–High Park, tenants are being priced out of their apartments, places they've called home for 10, 15, even 20 years. We have tenants who are forced to go on rent strikes because currently the system is designed to benefit corporate landlords over tenants. Currently, the system is designed to evict people, and governments are refusing to protect tenants.

We have people—our neighbours—who are working multiple jobs at minimum wage, working precariously through temp agencies, and are unable to escape poverty. They have jobs with no health and dental benefits. They are in workplaces that are not unionized.

Speaker, no one should be working full-time and still live in poverty. We need a living wage for all Ontarians. Everyone should have jobs with health and dental benefits. Everyone should have the right to join a union if they choose to.

Universal pharmacare and dental care for everyone was one of the top priorities of the people of Parkdale–High Park, along with housing and child care.

We have seniors in Parkdale–High Park who have been waiting years for long-term care, sadly, with some passing away while still on the wait-list.

We have parents who are struggling with unaffordable child care and a lack of child care spots, parents who are paying more than their mortgage for child care. The phenomenon of child care deserts is very much a reality in Parkdale–High Park.

We have tremendous hospitals, like St. Joseph's, where dedicated front-line health workers are unable to provide the quality care they want to provide because of chronic underfunding and privatization of our health care system, and a complete ignoring of the social determinants of health. St. Joseph's hospital has one of the largest catchment areas and is one of the busiest emergency rooms in the country, yet we have buildings that are over a century old, crumbling and unused, waiting for government funding to trickle down.

Speaker, while the challenges that we face are real, and while we live through these challenges daily, ours is a community of strength and resilience, a community where we believe in the power of everyday people and of grass-roots organizing.

I want to share some examples of this resiliency and power of community organizing. In the last two years, we've had two rent strikes in Parkdale–High Park. The first rent strike involved 300 tenants across 12 buildings and it lasted months. The corporate landlord in question even attempted to break up the strike, but the solidarity among the tenants was unbreakable—a corporate landlord who had never hesitated to increase rents above guidelines, even though they could never get around to fixing basic things in people's units.

The tenants took on one of the biggest corporate landlords in the country, MetCap, certainly the biggest in our riding, and they fought back and they won. While the outcome of the rent strike was successful, it shouldn't have to be this way. It is our responsibility, as members of this House and as part of the government, to protect tenants and to tackle the housing crisis that we are facing.

**1640**

Another example of community strength and organizing is Fix Our Schools. After decades of underfunding of our education system, with governments leaving our schools in a state of disrepair and letting them crumble, parents had had enough. A small group of them from Runnymede public school got together in 2014 and started the Fix Our Schools campaign. It is now a province-wide campaign. The campaign has grown to include over 10,000 people from as many as 72 school boards across the province. It is a prime example of the people of Parkdale–High Park coming together to address an issue that successive governments have ignored for far too long. I have to say it was really great to see the Fix Our Schools campaign be able to finally get on the government agenda.

There are many, many other examples of Parkdale–High Park people coming together and organizing, but I

would be here all night if I shared all of the stories with you. Very quickly, I do want to mention High Park Zoo. High Park Zoo, just a few years ago, was almost shut down. But the people of Parkdale–High Park once again got together and the zoo is now thriving. In fact, Friends of High Park Zoo are working on a master plan for rejuvenation of the zoo. This is a free attraction that is not only for the people of Parkdale–High Park but for those across the city.

Another example is the business improvement areas. BIAs are great bodies that connect small businesses to community organizations and residents and make our neighbourhoods more liveable and vibrant. Parkdale–High Park is home to the world's very first BIA in the Bloor West Village. What started as small businesses coming together in Parkdale–High Park has again spread across the city, the province and in fact the world.

We are also home to incredible cultural and community events like Momo Crawl in Parkdale, and the Bloor West Ukrainian festival and the Roncesvalles Polish Festival that attract people from across the city.

Speaker, as you can see, Parkdale–High Park is a very special place and you can see why I love Parkdale–High Park so much.

Now, taking this seat in the House, it is my hope, as a legislator representing the riding of Parkdale–High Park and, as a matter of fact, all of us representing our constituents, that we keep a few important things in mind.

First, when we put forward policies, we need to ensure that they are people-centred, that our policies echo people's voices. Our job, our responsibility is to meet the needs of people. We can only do this by listening to what people say. Our constituents' needs are very simple: They want to be able to live and work with dignity. What does that look like? It means having decent wages and benefits, having housing that's affordable. It means having access to social and health services without barriers, having food security, and to be able to live and work in a place that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. Very simple: Every piece of legislation that is tabled in this House, every issue that we work on must have people at the heart of every decision—not corporations, not big business, not ideologies, but truly engage people in the process.

Second, we need to rethink what counts as evidence and who counts as an expert. If our job is to meet the needs of the people, it is imperative that we rethink who we view as experts and what we count as evidence. Tenants who have had to deal with the realities of forced evictions and displacement are expert voices, in my opinion, on affordable housing and rent control issues. We must not discount their experiences and their voices. Minimum wage workers and precarious workers, through their lived experiences, are experts on labour and employment issues just as much as economists are. It is critical that we listen to the lived experiences of people to inform our policy decisions.

As for evidence, it's not all about numbers; it's not all statistics. Stories are equally important and are the evidence that we need to use to guide our decisions. People's stories, their experiences—they provide incredible insight

and help us gain a much deeper understanding of the problems than numbers will ever be able to convey.

Lastly, I think we really need to be careful in the language that we use. We all know that words matter. Every word, in fact, that we utter in this House is recorded as part of the official record. As such, it is incumbent on us to recognize that the words we use, the language we use, to describe any individual or group has the power to shape their narratives and their experiences. For example, when we have cabinet ministers calling asylum seekers “illegal migrants,” we are ascribing upon them an element of illegality—unfounded, I should add. As human beings on earth, especially as settlers on Indigenous lands, we cannot claim that anyone is illegal. Seeking safety is not a crime. No one is illegal. No human can be illegal.

When we use certain language to construe groups in negative light, it takes us down a path where the marginalization of these individuals and groups becomes normalized. Instead of bringing people together and building our province up, our language can divide people and take us backwards. As legislators, we have a responsibility to hold ourselves and our words to a higher standard, and we need to ensure that no one is hurt through the way we construe them.

To conclude, I want to acknowledge that this seat that I am in today is not just my seat. This seat belongs to the people of Parkdale–High Park and it belongs to all who fight for justice. I will work hard every day to ensure that I never forget who sent me here and what my purpose is in taking this seat.

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** I rise here today to support Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act, introduced by the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines.

As the minister said, this government was elected in June with a clear mandate: to reduce the cost of hydro and to make life easier and more affordable for Ontario families and businesses. We were elected with a clear mandate to repeal the Green Energy Act.

The Liberal record on energy is one of the biggest policy disasters in the history of Ontario. As the Auditor General reported in 2015, Ontarians are being overcharged by \$170 billion—about \$100 every month on the average family’s hydro bill—because the Liberals bought green electricity that we did not need at heavily subsidized rates from companies that donated \$1.3 million to the Ontario Liberal Party. Billions were wasted on cancelled gas plants, smart meters, executive salaries and countless other examples of gross mismanagement.

The province has simply given away \$6 billion in surplus energy to places like New York and Michigan since 2009. Meanwhile, our manufacturers paid hydro rates that were double or even triple those of competitive jurisdictions. This madness destroyed jobs. It’s one reason that Ontario lost 350,000 manufacturing jobs over the last 15 years, including many well-paying jobs in the auto industry, where I came from.

After the former Premier herself admitted that because of her mistake on the energy file, some Ontarians were forced to choose between paying their electricity bill, buying food or paying rent, moving forward, we are committed to a better, more effective plan to address climate change while also respecting the taxpayers and the families of this province.

Madam Speaker, I urge all members to join with me to support—

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** Thank you.

The member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan.

**1650**

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** Thank you, Speaker. I’m here to congratulate Bhutala—

**Interjection:** Are you in your seat?

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** I’m not. Sorry, I thought I was. Thank you.

I’m here to congratulate the member from Parkdale—  
*Interjection.*

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** High Park–Riverdale.

**Mr. Jamie West:** Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** Parkdale–High Park, sorry.

I’m proud to have her as a colleague. She’s extremely hard-working, and she challenges and enhances our caucus. I’m glad to have her by our side.

I’d also like to comment that the challenges that you face are the same. That strikes me, that in northern Ontario and southern Ontario, we have the same issues of housing, health care and crumbling schools, and that we’re here to work on those issues.

I hear her commitment, and I know that she has also had the same experience as so many in this House, being an immigrant and first-generation. I think that brings a perspective, because it’s a struggle when you are an immigrant. You actually observe the other part of the world. You don’t have that privilege. You are disadvantaged, and so it gives you a perspective and a sympathy and empathy that I think we heard in her speech.

Thank you for those words, and sorry that this was so disjointed.

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** I’d like to thank the member from Parkdale–High Park—a very impassioned inaugural speech. I know it’s an important day to do your inaugural speech. As I recall, I did mine a few months ago. It seems like years ago, but it was only a few months ago. I congratulate you on your motivation and why you decided to run.

I think your acknowledgement of the First Nations people is taken into account and well respected. I was recently, this last weekend, up in the territory of Nunavut with several members of this Legislature. We witnessed first-hand how the Indigenous community, the Inuit there, can work together both with the federal government and business interests so they can further their economy in a very sustainable way. I encourage you to talk and look into the Inuit community there and the government of Nunavut

and what they've been able to do to develop the economy, because I think there are some good things we can learn from that.

I know I was certainly motivated to run for public service for the same reasons that you were. I felt this province was unfortunately in a very bad position. I know there's a lot more we can do to put it on a better path after 15 years of Liberal mismanagement, debt of \$330 billion—\$23,000 per man, woman and child; a billion dollars in interest a month. Imagine how many hospitals or long-term-care facilities we could build with that unfortunate high level of debt. Highest hydro rates in North America—I'm so pleased our government is taking action with the Green Energy Act to help bring about lower energy costs.

It also concerns me, the slow economic growth we've had relative to the rest of the Canadian provinces over the last decade. Unfortunately, Ontario used to be the engine of the Canadian economy and we are now ranked 10th out of 10 provinces in economic growth over the last decade. Sometimes our Liberal members talk about how unemployment has been the lowest in quite a few years, but what's more important is not just comparing to Ontario but to other provinces. Our unemployment has grown considerably relative to other provinces over the last decade.

So there's more we can do. I look forward to being a part of a government that—

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** Thank you. Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I want to say congratulations to my colleague from Parkdale–High Park. The thing that really caught my attention right off the hop—and I think all of us can relate to this; maybe you didn't pick up on it. I've run now three times, and I've increased my vote total every time, which is nice, and my percentage. But did anybody pick up on how much she won by, how much of the vote she got? Help me out here. Can anybody answer it? Sixty per cent—first time out. I think that deserves a big round of applause.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Yes. Great job. That's incredible.

I'm proud to say that she's part of a caucus that has 50% women. That's another milestone for us.

Then she talked about volunteers. A lot of times we talk here about young people, that they don't get engaged with politics, that young people don't care about politics. But she talked about the fact that her volunteer base was young people: young women, young men, single moms and single dads. So I want to congratulate her on making sure that's done.

I congratulate her. I'm sure I speak on behalf of our entire caucus: We're extremely proud of you. I want to say that I'm sure that your daughter is extremely proud of you, although she's probably not seeing Mom as much as she'd like.

She also talked about things that we all are finding in our ridings. I think that's important to talk about as we talk about our communities. I probably shouldn't say this now, but I'm going to anyway: I always get a kick out of how the Conservatives always say that they're the party for the

people. I'm trying to figure out, what am I? Am I the people for the horses? I haven't figured this out. But anyway, we're all here for the people.

She talked about housing, affordability of housing, minimum wage and health care benefits that we should all need, whether you're in a union shop or a non-union shop. Think about going to work 40 hours a week—it happens all the time in the province of Ontario—and at the end of the week, do you know the first place they go to, because they're living in poverty? They go to the food bank.

I want to say congratulations. Your speech was excellent. Thank you for being part of the NDP.

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** I now return to the member from Parkdale–High Park.

**Ms. Bhutila Karpoche:** I'd like to thank my colleagues from Thunder Bay–Atikokan and Niagara Falls, and also the member from Oakville, for their comments to my inaugural speech. I think that one of the things that was mentioned by all members was how similar the experiences are across ridings, and I think it simply underscores what I was trying to say in my inaugural speech: that the needs of the people are very simple, and it's basically that they want to live and work with dignity.

I also think that as members of this House we need to ensure that we are always centering people in our policy decisions, that we always listen to people before we make our policy decisions. I would like right now to share a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King which I think is very apt in this case:

“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve.... You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”

I think that one of the things that we need to remember here is that all the work that we do has to come from a place of love. It has to come from a place of grace, and it has to come recognizing that as humans we all share the same human values: to care for each other, to belong to a place and to make sure that we stand up for each other when one of us is hurting.

**The Acting Speaker (Miss Monique Taylor):** Further debate?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I appreciate the opportunity to address this bill.

I really appreciated the inaugural presentation from the member from Parkdale–High Park, giving us a bit of a picture of what Tibetan people have gone through. I haven't been in Tibet; I've been in Nepal and I met an awful lot of Tibetan people and heard some of their stories coming across the Himalayas.

My maiden speech—it seems like years ago; actually, it was years ago.

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** It was years ago. Let's hear it again.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** No, no. You can look it up in Hansard. That's the beauty: Everything you say here ends up in Hansard for some reason.

But I do welcome the opportunity to address this legislation. For me it has been nine years, and I'm kind of thrilled that here we are today, actually scrapping the Green Energy Act through Bill 34. That's legislation that was first brought in by the Liberals in 2009, so I guess I've been waiting nine years for this day.

When we scrap legislation like this, or repeal this legislation, we're scrapping what's left of those senseless renewable energy projects, the contracts that can still be opened up and terminated, the contracts that were at the time providing electricity at something like 10 times the going rate—certainly 10 times or more of the going rate from, at the time, the largest coal-fired generating station in the world, which happened to be in my riding. That one has been half destroyed. Both towers have come down and the main building—this is a billion-dollar asset—will be rubble, I imagine, by this winter.

**1700**

What is it replaced with? I took a photograph of the OPG plant just a few days ago from the end of the Stelco pier, and in the photograph, of course, are the ever-present wind turbines down in our area in Haldimand county, high-priced wind, coupled with high-priced solar that was forced on our local municipality, our rural areas. One thing I find quite heartening: we will be giving decision-making back to our municipalities.

I've been telling people in the riding this summer, trying to explain why I haven't been around that much, that I've been at Queen's Park. Much of it has been to clean up the mess with hydro, certainly beginning with—I caught the minister's eye—the Urgent Priorities Act, which, if you dig a little deeper, is reforming Hydro One, and of course today's debate on the Green Energy Repeal Act.

I have to admit that I've been railing against the cost of electricity for a number of years now, probably three elections. People in my riding have been very concerned about the high cost of electricity. Full disclosure: I heat with electricity. I built my house out in the country. Although we have natural gas on some of our farms, there was no way I could justify the cost of bringing natural gas up to the house, so I really had no choice at the time but to install electricity. Back then, I think we were told at the time to live better electrically—I still see some of those little plastic signs on the doors when I door-knock.

With many people down my way, we have a bushlot. We have access to wood. That means I heat with wood. I go through 20 cords of wood a year. It's good exercise. Oftentimes I buy from my neighbour. I bought some beautiful black locust last winter and of course—

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Bush cords?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** No, not bush cords, face cords. Twenty face cords of black locust—and regrettably I'm burning an awful lot of white ash these days because of the emerald ash borer.

I don't know whether we could predict what the Liberal government was going to do over the last 15 years when I built the house, but I did incorporate a wood stove system within the electricity system. I now have something like three wood stoves on the property. Why is that? Well, with

the electricity costs we've ended up with probably the highest rates anywhere in North America, the highest rates in Canada. Obviously that could not continue.

We talk about advances in technology. When I built the house, I built it as a solar saltbox. I built into the side of the hill with an awful lot of concrete. I insulated the concrete inside and out, and 85% of my glass faces south-southeast. It faces the Long Point lighthouse out in the middle of Lake Erie. My theory—and I can't get this through to the solar people—is that the best sun in the winter is the morning sun, especially when you're near the lake, because it does cloud up by noon.

Passive solar works with wood, but I designed my roof—I can't remember now, but six- or nine-pitch, or something like that. I designed my roof at the right angle for solar panels, because I assumed that solar technology would advance to the point that would help me to heat my house. I'm still waiting. I bought into that program big time. I won't take government money, but I put a fair bit of money into this project and I am still waiting for the technology to be there.

Of course, on our farms we have what are called windmills. They're maybe 60 or 70 feet high. They're dismantled now. They're not industrial wind turbines. That made sense at the time, to pump water for cattle and things like that.

Having spent a number of years in opposition, we proposed so many measures over the years to help cut the cost. We talked about cutting an additional 12% on top of that 25% that was announced over the last year or so. One proposal: The annual Hydro One dividend should be rebated to ratepayers instead of using something like \$350 million a year for government projects. Of course, we all agree that conservation programs are worthwhile, but they should be funded from general revenues.

Under that 2009 Green Energy Act, the FIT contracts—the feed-in tariff contracts—have led, obviously, to exorbitant subsidies for generating power. In most cases, it's generally not needed, given the decline in Ontario's economy, and could have been generated in much less expensive ways.

I've always advocated that we use every legal and feasible opportunity to renegotiate or exit those renewable contracts, certainly at every contract breach, whether it be a missed operational deadline or a permit violation, where feasible. We've seen this happen over the summer. We walk away from any committed capacity contracts that have cancellation benefits, like the pre-notice-to-proceed contracts that were struck under the Green Energy Act, thus avoiding already scheduled rate increases that could go on for 10 or 20 years. A short-term hit pays off for both the ratepayer and the taxpayer in the long run.

Over the summer, we have cancelled a number of these contracts. That particular train has left the station. I've met with a number of people who are in a bit of a pickle. I think of farmers. There are some farmers, for example, that have built solar buildings for hay and, in some cases, for cattle. There is a reassessment process, as I understand. There has to be some flexibility in this, because some of these

companies that are associated and some of the small companies have gone bankrupt because the business isn't there anymore.

**Smart meters:** I probably shouldn't talk at length about smart meters, the charge that was intended to pay for Ontario's data centre. The Auditor General, in one of the reports, found that 812,000 of the 4.8 million homes with smart meters have not transmitted any data. What's with that? I just find that hard to get my head around. Smart meter charges, at one point, were \$1 billion over budget. I think it was much higher than that in the endgame.

**The CEO of Hydro One:** Ratepayers were paying for a CEO who made well over \$4 million a year. That's six times what the old CEO at Hydro One used to make. Very clearly, we took action on that. That was a very popular—it was almost a simplistic approach to electricity. But it played well at the doors—I don't think anyone would argue against that—certainly down in my neck of the woods. We have to continue to take a look at some of the exorbitant executive salaries, the overall compensation packages, not only at Hydro One but also at OPG itself.

**The C.D. Howe Institute:** They charged that the Green Energy Act policies "had a dramatic impact on electricity costs in the province, but they have generated very limited environmental benefits and have had a negligible to negative effect on economic growth and employment." Again, it's time to repeal the Green Energy Act.

**Green energy is a good thing.** I taught environmental science for a number of years. It bothers me a little bit what has been done over the last 15 years under the cloak of environmentalism, where "green" becomes a bit of a swear word in some quarters. Sure, we support green energy, but paying unaffordable rates for power that we don't need and forcing these projects on unwilling host municipalities was not the way to go. As we said many times in opposition, and I've heard it said today, we will restore local planning authority, in particular over the wind and solar projects. Let's have a full environmental impact. What's wrong with doing cost-benefit analysis, risk-benefit analysis, for many of these projects that end up in people's neighbourhoods?

1710

I think there's more work to be done through the Ontario Energy Board with respect to red tape, driving costs out of the system and creating a much more flexible regulatory body.

Obviously, and this has been stated, we should proceed with the nuclear refurbishment in Ontario and keep Pickering running for the next few years.

I summarize my 15 years in opposition, my 15 years of observing the government in power at the time, as 15 years of mismanagement and recklessness, in my view. Much of this really wasn't thought out. Much of it really appeared to be politically driven, perhaps vested-interest driven, perhaps fundraiser driven, and it has left so many families, seniors, people who I meet at the doors, certainly over the last three elections, complaining to me about the fact that, quite simply, they can't pay their bills. They can't pay their household bills. If they're running a small business—

an ice cream parlour, for example—how they can keep those refrigeration units running, I don't know. And industry, including heavy industry, including our steel industry—electricity is a major factor in rolling out steel.

One example I used recently in one of my newspaper columns: This summer I wrote a cheque for a property that I own—it's my house, actually—that used \$23.05 of electricity. That's how much I paid on my previous hydro bill, but it required \$40 to deliver it. I used to hear these stories; I'd see the bills come into the constituency office. So with my house down in Port Dover, I used \$23 of electricity and I paid \$40 to deliver it. Now, that seems awfully cheap, but because we'd been up at Queen's Park all summer, I hadn't been living in my house. I'm also renovating a house in town, which was the last thing I needed to do when the House was sitting but—

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Oh, you're young.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Yes, I can handle that.

I guess I'm living proof of much of the insanity of our electricity system.

Between 2008 and 2016, residential electricity costs increased 71%, more than double the national average increase of 34%. As I travelled around the riding just prior to the election—we were all on the road, of course—I heard time and time again, and it was in the media, that people were burned that the CEO at Hydro One made so much money, something like, if you add it up, \$6.2 million last year, not to mention the lofty something like \$14.2 million that other top executives paid themselves at our expense. About \$3.5 million of that CEO salary was in the form of stock-based incentives. I know there's some debate around this; I don't think government could have changed that preordained deal.

On the positive side, I'm quite heartened that the present government has been able, after all that foofaraw—I don't know whether that's a word, Hansard; I'll check with you on that one—to find and negotiate a solution at Hydro One that would help minimize the cost for people that we're trying to help and look after.

This summer, as I mentioned, our Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines and Indigenous affairs shepherded the passage of the Urgent Priorities Act. As he explained during debate, nowhere has the public's trust been so tested as with our province's electricity system. We've heard it at the doorstep—I would say all parties represented here. Time and time again, we hear it at the town halls. We read it in our community newspapers. The public's faith in the management of this province's electricity system fell to an all-time low, a system that has been there for well over 100 years.

In recent years, the public really was given very little hope that things would change—until now, until today, in my view. I know the present opposition had big plans for Hydro One as well. I was invited to speak at a number of what I thought were very, very good debates to compare our approach to that of the NDP.

I'll quote Premier Ford: "It is morally indefensible, at a time when seniors are fearful of heating their own homes, when businesses are closing down and good jobs are

moving out of our province, and when taxpayers are facing financial hardships—all due to skyrocketing hydro bills—that this board and this CEO” were “laughing themselves to the bank.”

I think we’ve wrestled that one to the ground, by engaging constructively with Hydro One’s board. I truly hope that continues. We delivered on a commitment, a promise, to people. It’s so important to keep this company stable and achieve a lower-cost result without outrageous severances and what have you.

I think all of us here agree that Hydro One is an important company; it’s a vital part of our province’s electricity system. It controls 95% of the transmission wires across Ontario. It’s also the local distributor for over five million customers, many of them in my riding of Haldimand–Norfolk. It has far more rural and remote customers than any of the other distributors in the province. Those are the people I hear from: farmers; rural residents; people who retired; perhaps people who retired early or moved into our area and bought a cottage. No natural gas; like me, they are heating with electricity and sometimes wood, now that colder weather is coming on. Many of these people are economically vulnerable and struggling to make ends meet.

Prior to the passage of the Green Energy Act—that was in 2009—my colleagues and I, again and again, attempted to warn the government of the day. We essentially said that there’s no sense in bringing in a system that people can’t afford. I know we heard talk of 50,000 jobs and things like that. I’m sure you can get a job picking up dead birds underneath our wind turbines—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Thank you. Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jamie West:** I want to thank the member from Perth–Wellington for his comments. I’ll come back to them in a minute. I just want to take the opportunity now to congratulate the member from Parkdale–High Park for her inaugural speech. It was very impressive, and congratulations on your success. I look forward to doing mine shortly.

Earlier today, the member for Simcoe North spoke, and I just want to thank her for coming to Sudbury to visit Collège Boréal. Thank you very much for that. One of the comments she had made was about farming in off-peak hours. I can relate to that because I come from a mining and smelting background. If you think it’s difficult to farm in the evening, try shutting off a smelter or a mine, where you have to bring all your air underground, or in a smelting facility, where you have to keep the metal hot. It’s expensive. Those of you who have been visited by AMPCO, or who will be later on today, know how expensive hydro rates are and how important they are.

That’s what brings me back to the member from Perth–Wellington. He was talking about buying into electricity years ago. That happened all across Sudbury and Nickel Belt as well, where we had bought electricity and people had baseboard heaters. It was the new, cheap, effective energy. Two weeks ago, we were talking about how gas now is going to be the new, cheap, effective energy.

Maybe we’ll go back to a boom cycle there as well, and we need to do that with some caution.

Similarly, I once owned a house that was all baseboard heaters and we used a natural gas heater as often as possible. At our camp—our cottage, for those of you in the south—I spent the weekend stacking firewood, because that’s how we would heat: with firewood. So it is good exercise, but it’s not really a substitute when it comes to cost.

**1720**

At the end of the day, what we’re talking about, though, is cap-and-trade or green energy or whatever it is, and the issue we have when people talk to me in Sudbury is that we replaced cap-and-trade—which wasn’t effective, but still—with scrap and nothing. We just have no green plan, and that’s the difficulty. Even when I look at the bill, there’s not much in there for teeth.

We need to look at what we’re going to do for the future. Just saying “Trust us” seems weird, coming from a party that purports to be for business, because there is no business plan.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeremy Roberts:** I’d like to begin by thanking the member for Haldimand–Norfolk for his remarks today.

The Green Energy Act is something that really drove me to run in this election, because when you look at this piece of legislation, this is a classic, classic case of ideology trumping pragmatism. What was presented with this Green Energy Act was a false choice for Ontarians, a choice between more reasonable costs and environmental benefit. But that’s a false choice because we could already get both. The way we could get both is by looking at opportunities for clean energy at a reasonable cost, and one of those just happens to be right across the river from my beautiful riding of Ottawa West–Nepean. I speak, of course, of hydroelectric power from Quebec.

Hydroelectric power from Quebec, when you look at where they are selling it—51% of hydro power from Quebec goes to the New England states; 23% of hydroelectric power from Quebec goes to New York; only 18% of what they are currently selling is coming to Ontario.

Hydroelectric power is zero-emission, a much more reasonable cost and could have provided Ontario with a path forward that wouldn’t have resulted in so many of our people having to choose between food or heating their home, having to choose between continuing to grow their small business or shutting it down and ending those jobs in our community.

That’s why I’m so proud to be part of this government that is going to make sure that, going forward, we are pursuing the pragmatic solutions that will help our people.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I also would like to congratulate our member for Parkdale–High Park for her inaugural speech. It was wonderful, and it’s wonderful to have her in the caucus to be a part of this great caucus.

In response to the comments made by the member from Haldimand–Norfolk, first of all, I’d like to say I went

camping down at Long Point for the first time two summers ago. I had never been there before. It's absolutely spectacular. I love that area of Turkey Point and Port Dover. It's an amazing space.

You mentioned that you thought that "green" had become a swear word. You were upset that that had happened over the last few years. I think we need to look at why that has happened. Even in this House, when we listen to the members of the government talk, they blame high electricity rates exclusively on green energy. You need to uncouple those two things, because the reason our electricity rates have gone up is because of privatization. That is where ideology trumped pragmatism. We had, for 100 years, very affordable electricity rates in Ontario because it was a public utility. As soon as the former Conservative government started breaking it up and selling it off in 1995, our electricity rates started to go up. That was before the Green Energy Act.

The other point I'd like to make is that they talk about the negative impact of the Green Energy Act on economic growth and employment. California, which is our partner in the cap-and-trade system, has had the highest rate of economic growth in the United States. When they introduced the cap-and-trade system in California, they were the 10th-largest economy in the world. Today they are the fifth-largest economy in the world. Their unemployment rate is 4.3%. California achieved that incredible rate of economic growth while at the same time building a green economy. We could do the same. Scrapping cap-and-trade and replacing it with nothing is not an answer.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** Let me just at the outset say that one of the things I was most excited about when I was elected was actually the opportunity to work with the member for Haldimand–Norfolk. He has of course been one of the most consistent advocates for his community over the longest period of time, even when I was a staff member here back in the mid-1990s, so I really relished that opportunity.

But he also comes from a part of Ontario that has really been impacted by the Green Energy Act, in more ways than one. Obviously there's the windmills, but the rural farming heritage there, the cost of the Green Energy Act, the cost of the increase in hydro, the impact that it has had on farmers, the impact that it has had on small business owners and the impact that it has had on homeowners who heat their homes with hydro have been significant in that area of the province.

But what has been encouraging about the debate has been that there is a little bit of consistency here. The NDP seem to want the same things that we want: They want lower cost. They want energy prices to be down. They agree that the Liberal approach over the last 15 years has been a disaster. They want more money in the pockets of their residents. We all want that. We all want the cost to come down. They also want to see a plan to protect our environment, something that the Minister of the Environ-

ment and Climate Change is working on, but also something that the member for Haldimand–Norfolk has taken the initiative on his own to do. We all have the opportunity in this House to do that.

Again, it's an honour to be here with the member for Haldimand–Norfolk. It has been a great debate, Madam Speaker, because we've gotten to see a lot of consistency and a lot of the support that the members opposite are having for the bill that was brought forward. It's very encouraging, and I look forward to the speedy passage of the bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Back to the member for Haldimand–Norfolk.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I certainly thank everyone for the comments. Your ridings are in Hansard, so I won't go down that road right now.

I think we agree on all sides. We're in this House together for the next four years. I've been in opposition for 15 years. I do listen to the opposition. This green energy plan, in so many ways, was a failure, certainly with respect to cost, the lack of oversight and the job creation claims—I guess we could debate that.

But in 2009, it was the McGuinty government that essentially bulldozed it through. That was the perception down my way, with the regulatory regime. They plowed ahead. There really wasn't a cost-benefit analysis or a risk-benefit analysis or an environmental assessment as far as placement of many of those very large industrial wind turbine structures. It was driven by vested interests, it was so apparent—vested interests, companies that were not based in Ontario, which stuck in people's craw in many sectors—and the restructuring of an electricity system 100 years in the making. It was a wonderful system—I happen to think that electricity is a wonderful invention—but we end up with electricity costs and delivery charges.

As I mentioned, I heat with wood and electricity. I get the delivery charge for electricity. With wood, I can go down to my gully, up the gully or back in the woods with my chainsaw, or I can purchase wood from a neighbour. There's no delivery charge. I fire up my chainsaw and there's no delivery charge. It heats the house just as well as electricity.

As far as the different definitions of "green," I'll just leave you with a quote from Kermit: "It's not easy being green."

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I am very pleased to have the opportunity to rise in this fine Legislature on behalf of the folks from Oshawa and make comments on Bill 34, An Act to repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009 and to amend the Electricity Act, 1998, the Environmental Protection Act, the Planning Act and various other statutes.

**1730**

We're here and it sounds like we're accomplishing a lot of things, because I just listed a lot of acts and statutes. I would say that we're not doing too much. We're doing far too little when it comes to advancing our climate goals. But also, this bill is largely symbolic, and I'll speak to that.

It's sort of a continuation of what happened on the campaign. It's like we—"we" being "they"—are still campaigning for the election. Fun fact and a bit of a spoiler alert: It's over. You won. But here we are. Let's talk about the climate, because right now no one is winning.

To hear the minister opposite talk about how the NDP wants the same things as the government in terms of lower rates and in terms of affordable energy, yes, but I think where we differ is that we want there to still be a planet for our children and the children of those children and their children to be able to inhabit. I think that is an interesting part of this. We hear the government talk about how the Green Energy Act has always been bad for Ontarians. Okay, so then what? That's what's missing. There is no plan.

It's an interesting week. I was thinking, as we just had our break over constituency week to be home in our communities, that a lot of folks—well, the UN report came out that talks about the dire situation in which we find ourselves right now, on the threshold where if we don't make massive changes right now to what we aren't doing and what we should be doing, we are going to find ourselves in a world of hurt, literally, a world on fire and in torment, because we're seeing the climate change and the temperatures rise. Over constituency week, as this report came out and communities were responding and reacting and recognizing that we'd better pull up our socks because we are responsible stewards for the planet and we haven't been responsible, I thought, "My goodness. We're coming back, on the heels of this report, to this Legislature, debating conservation, debating climate, debating energy." I was really hopeful—and this is where sometimes it's too bad that I have that optimistic gene. I came here hopeful that the government might actually get up and say, "You know what? We're going to reverse course here. We're actually going to come forward with a plan. We are going to say, 'Yeah, while we're scrapping this, here's this great idea. We are going to take responsibility, because we are the government of Ontario, and we all need a place to live.'" But that's not where we are, so back to the bill.

This is the Green Energy Repeal Act. As my colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth put it—he really did sum it up into there being three main pieces to this bill, or three areas of focus. That is that hydro rates are rising; the cost of energy continues to go up. This bill does not address that. He said that this bill is symbolic. It continues that campaign rhetoric and attacks green and renewable energy but doesn't change the landscape so that we can actually do something positive. The third part is that this is another example of this government turning its back on climate action and not making decisions in the best interests of Ontarians.

I've got two desks full of papers and articles and all of the things that I want to share, so I'd better get to it.

When it comes to hydro, I think everybody has had the opportunity over the last couple of years, as we've been debating energy costs, to have a personal, constituency-based understanding of what it means to have unbelievably high energy costs and hydro bills, whether it is

a family that comes to your office and they cannot afford to keep the heat on or they cannot afford to keep the lights on, they're struggling with their family bill—we know those people. You know those people. We have advocated for those families and those individuals. But also, every person in here has a business in their riding, or a curling club in their riding, or an art gallery in their riding, or some space in their riding that cannot afford their bills. They struggle with the unpredictability of those bills. The global adjustment charge can fluctuate wildly. We as communities are all impacted by the unpredictable and rising cost of energy.

That's why it's disappointing to see this piece of legislation. It's not addressing that. Bills are up, as we heard from the member from Toronto–Danforth, basically 100%. While this particular government would frame it that all of that cost is the fault of green energy, as he broke it down, the green energy contracts and the green energy piece account for about 15%. The remaining 85%—if we look at those numbers, we're going to see quite a history—and we all know it when it comes to gas plants and when it comes to poor decisions. But here we are.

Sir Adam Beck would be rolling over in his grave at what we have done to public power and what we have done to the access to that public power. When we all are spending time in Toronto—driving down from Queen's Park there is a statue of Sir Adam Beck sitting in a chair. It is a fountain when it's nice weather.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Niagara Falls.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Yes. It is a monument to public power for the people. It's so disheartening now when you drive by it and you think how far we have fallen, so to speak, because Sir Adam Beck said that he had a dream. I'm paraphrasing; I don't have his words in front of me. Basically he said that his dream was that he would look out into every field across Ontario and see lights on in the farms; that every business would be able to have affordable power.

We have been discussing Bill 32, which is on access to natural gas, and I had given a riveting hour speech on that. The conversations we're having about access to affordable energy—we have farms, we have agribusiness, and we have families in our remote, rural and northern regions that can't afford power—they can't at all. We're having a conversation, and we've come so far from the original dream that was on affordable, cheap power for the people, for business, for growth. Anyway, what a journey to get here. Looking back at the history of that, back in 1995 when the Harris government started to privatize, they started that free fall, and then the Liberals were like, "Ooh, that seems fun. Let's jump on that," and here we are now. And this government is saying, "Well, let's keep going."

It's problematic, and I don't mean to make light of it, Speaker, but I think it's important to recognize that just washing our hands of responsibility and saying, "Hand it over to the private sector. I'm sure it will go well"—well, it hasn't. If you relinquish control entirely and wash your hands of it, then you don't get to rein them in. You don't get to look after the broader public. I think that being

responsible as government is being responsible as government. I think it's pretty basic there.

Hydro costs: Something that's interesting about this bill is, when you listen to the government talk about, "We're repealing the Green Energy Act because the Green Energy Act"—we've been listening to the Conservatives say for years that all that is wrong with the world is in the Green Energy Act. But interestingly, with Bill 34, it's sort of a symbolic exercise which is keeping the election rhetoric and conversation going. But Bill 34 isn't the solution. It lets this government continue doing what the last government had been doing, which is to make potentially costly and wasteful energy decisions behind closed doors, which, no offence, makes me nervous. We've seen it before, and I think it'll continue. But if the decisions are not measurably and accountably being made in the best interests of Ontarians, what good is that?

Something that's interesting: Most of the actual Green Energy Act—wait for it, Speaker; this is the fun part. Most of the Green Energy Act, under Bill 34, is re-enacted under the Electricity Act. They can talk about repealing the Green Energy Act, but we're shifting big chunks of it to the Electricity Act. If anybody over there would like to correct my understanding of that, please do during questions and comments.

1740

Bill 34 will revoke all the existing Green Energy Act regulations—the regulations—including energy efficiency standards for appliances, requirements for efficiency in conservation plans, disclosure of government energy consumption data—all that sort of thing. We don't know if those regulations will come back, but they're repealing them. They're moving chunks to the Electricity Act. Shh, don't tell. They are revoking the regulations. We don't know if some of them will come back, but it doesn't do anything to rein in the skyrocketing hydro costs. The provincial government—we've seen it. The first order of business right out the gate was to cancel IESO contracts for renewable energy projects that hadn't been completed or hadn't gotten to the operation stage.

Interestingly, I have a train that goes just at the back of my property. It was a lovely day and I watched the train going by, and I saw all of the windmill blades heading that way on the train, car after car after, and it was just an interesting moment to see green energy literally leaving the province by rail. But I worry because this government has worked so hard and—well, not so much this—well, it's not the government. It's the members across the way have worked so—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Order, please.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** The government has worked so—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I know, but they're going to interrupt me with clapping again—has relentlessly ensured that green—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Order, please.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Man, if they enjoyed working for the province as much as they enjoyed their own voice and clapping, imagine where we could be. But they worked relentlessly to make green energy a dirty word, which is ironic because green tends to be clean.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** A lot of them have green ties on today.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Well—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm just saying.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** All right. I'm going to continue with or without interruption.

"Green energy" actually isn't a dirty word, but when you look at contracts that are signed at top dollar right out the gate without any consideration to the math or the numbers, it's like always buying a new car and never letting someone else pay the depreciation; right?

We've got the same thing. Oh, here's a shiny new thing. The last government signed a contract that put us on the hook for high costs and a lot of decisions were made that I would argue were really not in the best interest of Ontarians, but that doesn't say that there isn't room for innovation or room for green investment. There should be, so what is the plan and where is the business case to be made when you're talking about innovation, when we're meeting with stakeholders who—if it's battery technology or different green energy options, there is no space for that as it stands now. I think that we need to be responsible and look to the future, especially when we're faced with reports that are coming out and we have the chance to learn. Let me find those notes.

I thought it would be interesting for the government to hear from the Business Insider. I pulled something that I thought would appeal to them. This is an article from October 8. It's entitled, "The Scariest Parts of the New Climate Change Report: The Goals the World Set Are Inadequate, and the Track We're on is Disastrous." This isn't necessarily a New Democrat publication; right? This is the Business Insider, so I'm going to keep reading because I might still have their attention.

"The world could see severe, catastrophic effects of climate change far sooner than anticipated, according to a new report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"And we're running out of time to thwart it....

"According to the new report, we're already close to blowing past those thresholds, into temperature zones that will have devastating consequences. We're expected to hit that 1.5-degree mark around 2040. By 2100, we're on track to see more than 3C above pre-industrial levels."

It goes on to explain what that would look like, but I thought I'd share a few—aha.

"These effects will make certain parts of the world less habitable for humans. Coastal cities like Miami or New York will have to adapt or abandon part or all of their territory. And for the millions of people who live in nations that are particularly vulnerable to warmer temperatures, significant societal disruption and migration are likely." I'm going to come back to that in a second.

Finishing up, “Scientists have been sounding the alarm on climate change for decades, yet global emissions are expected to rise again in 2018. This latest report shows that the need for action is more urgent than ever.” And this government says nothing.

We are faced with change. It is a real thing; I heard them say that earlier, so that’s good. We’re all on the same page that the world is changing, the climate is changing. Interesting piece about the migration: If we are going to have a planet that has regions that are not habitable and those families are going to be motivated to find a place that is habitable and safe for their children, we’re going to find ourselves—in North America and in different parts of the world that might have more habitable climates—with a lot more people joining us in our communities. So this is a government that says that people are “illegal” and talks about “illegal border crossers” and uses all sorts of inflammatory language. Well, literally, parts of the planet are going to be on fire.

We need to put the brakes on now. We need to do our part. We need to have clear targets. We need to not just keep talking to hear ourselves or to our banker friends or whatever. When you’re talking about people’s survival, good luck keeping them out of safe spaces. We need to ensure that we do our part, as lawmakers here in Ontario, so that we are making responsible decisions that look forward.

When we talk about our Indigenous communities, one of the things I remember learning as a teacher was about the seven generations that you needed to consider when you were making decisions—seven generations forward, right? Not just the immediate future, but your children and their children—seven generations out. Everything we do, unfortunately, has not reflected that. I think that that’s something we should bear in mind. But then, not to be unkind, it would seem that this government not only isn’t making decisions seven generations out, but I don’t know if they know what we’re doing tomorrow.

It’s something that I would like to see. Prove me wrong. I’ve got two minutes left and then it’s their turn to make questions and comments. Prove me wrong. Come up with a plan—something. How are we going to do our part? Why aren’t we? Who is the motivating force over there that is saying: “We don’t need to have a plan. Let’s pull out of all these things. Let’s not set new targets”?

Here’s another piece from the Star. This is from back in September:

“Ontario’s Environmental Commissioner Slams Ford Government Over ‘Gutted’ Climate Change Policies:

“The new Doug Ford government”—we’re not supposed to say names, right? Okay, so the new government “has ‘gutted’ Ontario’s climate change programs without providing replacements as the problems of global warming become more urgent, Environmental Commissioner Dianne Saxe says in a damning new report.

“‘We had a climate law and programs that were working. Now we don’t,’ Saxe said Tuesday.”

Everywhere you look, you see that we are falling short. We have such a different option. This is a room full of

really capable, intelligent people, with different backgrounds that they draw from. We have fantastic people that work in the government, behind the scenes, in terms of research and policy. Why can’t we come up with something that is responsible, that isn’t just answering to the different special interest groups? I don’t know who is pushing this, but it should be all of the people outside of this building, it should be the families, the children and our environment that motivate us to actually come up with strong and forward-thinking policy.

This Green Energy Repeal Act doesn’t provide us with a plan. It’s mostly symbolic. It shifts much of the Green Energy Act into the Electricity Act, and revokes some responsible regulations about efficiencies, standards and whatnot. I guess I wonder what the motivation is. This government can hopefully answer some of that. What’s your motivation? Where are we going to live, would be the great question, or where are our kids going to live?

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Under the Liberal government, we know that the electricity rates have tripled and families have been hurting. We’re driving manufacturing jobs out of Ontario, especially 15,000 manufacturing jobs just in Chatham-Kent–Leamington alone since 2003, and of course over 150,000 manufacturing jobs in this province. That’s one of the reasons why we are repealing the 2009 Green Energy Act—so that we can in fact reduce these skyrocketing hydro prices.

1750

In addition to that—and this is on a very sad note—soup kitchens and shelters have had to pack up and just say adios. They’ve had to close because of unaffordable operations because of high energy rates. In addition to that, you can take a look at the fact that turbines were erected against the consent of local citizens. That was all under the auspices of the Green Energy Act.

I mentioned this earlier today: There should have been a referendum where the people should have voted. The Liberals said that they consulted. My goodness, they didn’t. As a result of that, we’re in this mess.

I only have a few moments left, and there are a couple of things that I wanted to mention. I think that, perhaps, Ontario could be the greatest contributor to the economy of Quebec. Why? Because we pay Quebec to take our excess energy, and they turn around, take that energy and sell it to the States. That is dead, dead wrong. To them I say: Show me the money.

The last thing I want to mention is this: We made a promise to lower the cost of living for hard-working Ontarians. With today’s announcement, we’re doing just that. We’re getting started right now. As a result of that, Speaker, promise made—

**Interjections:** —promise kept.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Further questions and comments?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I listened intently to the member from Oshawa, and she put on a great presentation of what this bill actually does. It literally moves wording

from this act into the Electricity Act and does nothing to ensure that our climate is safe, that we can save the world. We have generations and generations to come in our future that are going to be harmed.

While I was doing some debate prep, because I'll be speaking to this—probably not for the next couple of days—the Climate Atlas of Canada notes that in the years from 1976 to 2005, there were 13.8 days per year when the temperature in Hamilton, in my city, was higher than 30 degrees. They predict that from 2021 to 2050, that number will rise to 34. Fifty years from now, it will be 60.

We are seeing our world on fire. We have people dying around this planet because of forest fires. We see it in our own backyard in Ontario in the number, and how it's increased, of fires.

This bill does nothing to replace what they're cancelling. There is no solution. Yes, we know it's expensive. Yes, we know the Liberals made a complete mess of the Green Energy Act. There was no transparency. There was no accountability. The contracts were very poorly done. There is no doubt about that. But what this government is introducing is not going to fix that. The contracts are already gone. They're already big internationals. This bill is not going to fix that problem, and it's going to do nothing to ensure that our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren can live in a safe environment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Amy Fee:** It's my honour today to rise on behalf of the constituents in Kitchener South–Hespeler. I hope that when I am done, the member from Oshawa understands my motivation behind why I'm supporting the repealing of the Green Energy Act.

When I was out door-knocking in Hespeler one morning, I met a mum—I may have spoken about her, actually, in the House before. She was in tears at her door, speaking to me about her hydro bill. She was trying to figure out how she could pay her hydro bill at the end of the month or buy her daughter new shoes to go to school. She was trying to almost have that debate with me of, “You're a parent. What should I do?” That was one of the harder conversations I had at the door while door-knocking, and that is certainly one of the motivating factors for me. I know that I ran on that promise to bring hydro prices down. I ran on a promise to make life more affordable for families. That's why I'm standing here today to support the repealing of the Green Energy Act. That, to me, is one of the keys as to why we formed government: to make life more affordable for families, to respect people's money and to respect tax dollars in this province.

Another issue for me of why I'm proud to support this is that we're giving some power back to municipalities. We have heard across the province about people who are frustrated with things like wind turbines and things in their communities. With this bill, we are also giving that power back, to make sure that people don't end up with energy projects in their communities that they don't want. Those local politicians on the ground in those municipalities will

have the chance to speak to their communities and bring in projects that they want and then not bring in ones that the community does not want.

Madam Speaker, I hope that the member from Oshawa understands my motivation for this today. It is certainly about respecting tax dollars and respecting the constituents in Kitchener South–Hespeler.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I'm pleased to rise on behalf of my constituents to offer some thoughts on Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act.

I want to congratulate the member for Oshawa for her speech. One of the things she spoke about was the fact that this bill is largely symbolic. She mentioned the fact that most of the contents of the Green Energy Act, which is supposedly being repealed, are simply being shifted over to the Electricity Act.

The other point of symbolism in this bill is the fact that this government proudly announced this bill as a remedy to the government trampling the rights of municipalities. But in fact, Speaker, this bill will not protect municipalities. It will not give municipalities final approval for planning decisions on energy projects.

If anyone expects this government—a government that was so determined to trample the rights of the city of Toronto that it was prepared to use the “notwithstanding” clause—to speak up and respect municipal decision-making, they are sorely mistaken, because we have seen what this government thinks about municipalities and their planning tools.

Speaker, this morning during question period, the Minister of Energy talked about the fact that this government believes in climate change. But we see this Green Energy Repeal Act, and we see what's happening in one of the committee rooms in this Legislature as this government is dismantling cap-and-trade, with no plan in place to deal with the fact that in 12 years, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we are going to be facing climate catastrophe in this province.

This government has no concern for future generations. Ontarians deserve climate action now.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Back to the member for Oshawa.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thanks. I think we've had a fair bit of clapping, and we're good now. At the risk of it happening again, I thank the member from Chatham–Kent–Leamington. But he was talking about “promise made, promise kept,” and that's what this bill is. That is exactly what this bill is. This bill is just an election rhetoric piece. It doesn't accomplish anything.

I appreciate the comments from the member from Hamilton Mountain, giving us some of that historical climate data.

Every person in this room has been watching the news last season and this season, watching the storms unfold. All of us know the difference between cat-4 and cat-5

storms now; that's a new thing for us. But in terms of flooding and fires, the insurance industry—if you want to talk to someone about the measurable impacts, talk to your insurance friends. This is a thing that's happening, folks, so let's get onside and start to make a difference.

To the member for Kitchener South–Hespeler: Thank you for making thoughtful remarks and for having listened. I appreciate that. That's not always a thing that happens in here.

But the door-knocking—we can appreciate that. Talking to real people in your community office who bring you heart-wrenching stories—we know them. Reminding them, though, of how the privatization started would be one place to start.

Also, the member from London West and the member for Kitchener South–Hespeler, their comments about wanting to do things in the best interests of municipalities—I've got one for you. With Bill 34, repealing the

Green Energy Act just so it can be shifted and re-enacted in the Electricity Act—do your math on that one, because that does not speak to what it is that you are spewing, or selling.

The re-enacted provisions: The provincial government may exempt designated energy conservation technologies from municipal bylaws. You guys can exempt them from municipal bylaws. You can strong-arm them. You put that in there. The provincial government may exempt designated renewable energy projects from municipal bylaws. Again, you are strong-arming, so let's not pretend you're not, and let's do something—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Thank you.  
*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

*The House adjourned at 1800.*







**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott  
Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
<b>Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)</b>	Pickering—Uxbridge	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
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	
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)</b>	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
<b>Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)</b>	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
<b>French, Jennifer K. (NDP)</b>	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)</b>	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
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	
<b>Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)</b>	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
<b>Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Hatfield, Percy (NDP)</b>	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	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	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, Bhutla (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	
<b>MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)</b>	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	
<b>McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)</b>	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 Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
<b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>	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
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)</b>	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
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	
<b>Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)</b>	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	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)</b>	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs 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	
<b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b>	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	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
<b>Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Yakubski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)</b>	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
<b>Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)</b>	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates  
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop  
John Fraser, Wayne Gates  
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow  
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell  
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Stephen Crawford  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts  
Ian Arthur, Stan Cho  
Stephen Crawford, Doug Downey  
Sol Mamakwa, David Piccini  
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw  
Donna Skelly  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Dave Smith  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Natalia Kusendova  
Jessica Bell, Lorne Coe  
Chris Glover, Christine Hogarth  
Logan Kanapathi, Daryl Kramp  
Natalia Kusendova, Amarjot Sandhu  
Mike Schreiner, Dave Smith  
Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Vanthof  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto  
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke  
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde  
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls  
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles  
John Vanthof  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice**

Chair / Président: Parm Gill  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian  
Roman Baber, Aris Babikian  
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jill Dunlop  
Parm Gill, Lindsey Park  
Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor  
Kevin Yarde  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Présidente: Jane McKenna  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam  
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown  
Michael Coteau, Mike Harris  
Faisal Hassan, Jane McKenna  
Christina Maria Mitas, Sam Oosterhoff  
Amanda Simard, Gurratan Singh  
Vijay Thanigasalam  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics**

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Peggy Sattler  
Catherine Fife, Goldie Ghamari  
Jim McDonnell, Norman Miller  
Suze Morrison, Michael Parsa  
Peggy Sattler, Kinga Surma  
Daisy Wai  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Randy Hillier  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Kaleed Rasheed  
Toby Barrett, Will Bouma  
Mike Harris, Randy Hillier  
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo  
Paul Miller, Billy Pang  
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu  
Jamie West  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand  
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum  
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee  
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden  
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin  
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri  
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Select Committee on Financial Transparency / Comité spécial sur la transparence financière**

Chair / Président: Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Doug Downey  
Roman Baber, Doug Downey  
Catherine Fife, Robin Martin  
Lindsey Park, Ross Romano  
Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Sandy Shaw  
John Vanthof  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim