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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 22 October 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 22 octobre 2018

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Let us begin by pausing for a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It's great to be here on a Monday. I'd like to introduce my inspiration for public service: my father, Mr. William Crawford.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: It's my pleasure to introduce to the House a wonderful resident of Huron–Bruce, Sandy McLeod. Thank you very much.

Mr. Doug Downey: I'd like to introduce Caius, who was a page here in March of this year, and his mother, Rebecca, who joins us.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I would like to welcome grade 5 students from St. Bernard Catholic School, who are visiting us here today. They will be joining us shortly.

Mr. David Piccini: I'd like to introduce my good friend Korey Walker, who is with us today. He is from the great riding of Peterborough–Kawartha, just to the north of me. It's great to have such a good friend in Queen's Park today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would like to inform the House that we have with us today, in the Speaker's gallery, teachers from across the province who are participating in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario Teacher's Forum. Please join me in warmly welcoming our province's educators to the Legislative Assembly today.

We also have with us today a special guest, the Deputy Clerk of the Parliament of Victoria in Australia, Mr. Robert McDonald. Please join me in welcoming him to the Legislature today.

I'm also pleased to introduce the consul general of Turkey, Erdeniz Sen, whom I met with earlier today. Welcome. It's great to have you here as well.

I'm going to recognize—oh, a point of order? Or is it an introduction of guests? Introduction of guests, the member for Etobicoke Centre.

Miss Kinga Surma: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise this morning to welcome, from my riding, the delegation from Consulting Engineers of Ontario, led by their chair, Mr. Jeremy Carkner of Morrison Hershfield. CEO is here today at the Legislature for their fourth annual Queen's Park Day. We have had a welcome reception this morning and will be meeting with some of my colleagues later today to discuss my favourite subject, infrastructure.

Ms. Jill Dunlop: I'd like to recognize my guest today: Richard Longtin from Lakehead University.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I'd like to welcome the family of Jacob Riddell, our wonderful page from Newmarket–Aurora, to Queen's Park today.

GAÉTAN GERVAIS

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: Cette fin de semaine, M. Gaétan Gervais est décédé. M. Gervais était le cocréateur du drapeau franco-ontarien. Il était le spécialiste de l'histoire franco-ontarienne. C'est lui qui a écrit L'Ontario français. J'ai eu le grand honneur de lui remettre la médaille de l'Ordre de la Pléiade.

I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to hold a moment of silence in honour of the passing of Gaétan Gervais, who was the co-creator of our beautiful Franco-Ontarian flag.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Nickel Belt is seeking unanimous consent of the House to have a moment of silence in memory of Gaétan Gervais. Agreed? Agreed.

The House observed a moment's silence.

ORAL QUESTIONS

SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS CENTRES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my first question this morning is to the Acting Premier. Women fleeing domestic violence or surviving a sexual assault desperately need a place to turn to when they're looking for help. The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres has been left waiting for funding that they had been anticipating for months. They have been told it's on pause. How long is this pause going to take?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Attorney General.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, through you to the Leader of the Opposition: As I said last week in this House, we take the issue of women fleeing violence very seriously, and the funding necessary is something that we are looking at very closely. We don't want to rush it. We want to make sure that we are providing the appropriate services across our government to support women who are fleeing violence, to make sure they get out of those situations and they get the services they need.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, perhaps the government side doesn't know that women fleeing violence can't put their lives on pause. The government seems uninterested in providing support to women who desperately need it.

But on some issues, the money flows very easily. Last week, the Premier announced that he would be giving his former campaign tour director a plum posting in Washington and a \$75,000-a-year raise.

Can the Acting Premier explain why women should wait when he didn't pause to hand his friend a \$75,000 raise?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, we have been working since June 7, since we were elected, to find ways to address the issues of concern across this province. I have been working closely with my colleague the minister of women and children to make sure that we are providing the supports they need.

1040

The organizations that have been funded provide important services, and we recognize that. But as you know, we were left with a legacy of deficit and debt from the previous government, so we need to make sure that we provide funding in a sustainable way to the people in this province who need it. That is exactly what we are doing.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I certainly don't recall this government talking about putting women at further risk of sexual assault in their campaign, Speaker. We are getting a clearer sense, however, of exactly where this government's priorities lie.

When women seeking support after sexual assault are told to wait and see if the counselling support they need is going to get funded, while the government strips them of their right to take time off work, and dismantles the programs designed to help them, for these women the cupboard is bare.

But when it comes to funding a patronage post for well-connected buddies of the Premier, this government can't move fast enough.

How does the Acting Premier justify this?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I reject the premise. We have been working non-stop, since we were elected, to provide the support. Women fleeing domestic violence are supported by this government, and will continue to be supported by this government in a sustainable way. We are looking across our government to make sure that we provide sustainable ways to do that, unlike the previous government, which was setting people up for supports that are non-sustainable. We are working to do so in an efficient and effective way.

POLICE SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Acting Premier.

I could say that we do agree with what the Attorney General just said: They have been working non-stop to cut

funding to those vulnerable Ontarians who live in our province. That's what they've been doing, Speaker.

Already Ontarians have seen services and programs that they need cut by this government, and it seems that even the police, who keep our communities safe, aren't immune from this government's cuts.

Can the Acting Premier confirm that her government has pressed the pause button on provincial grants that police forces were relying on for their budgets?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Mr. Speaker, as we've said in the past, the number one priority for us is to ensure public safety. As you may know, the government continues to review expenditures in light of the government's fiscal state. This will allow our government for the people to inform service delivery planning as part of a multi-year planning process. As such, disbursement of funds under my ministry's grant programs are currently on hold. However, we will continue to work with our public safety partners to ensure they have the tools necessary to do their jobs both safely and effectively.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Kingston police say "all bets are off" if they don't receive the provincial grants they were expecting this year. But they've been told this government has pressed pause on grants that support programs like crisis outreach and support teams that pair front-line police officers with mental health professionals to go to calls where somebody may be in mental health distress. Now those grants are in doubt, and police force budgets are in jeopardy.

Can the Acting Premier explain why police and people in mental health crisis are facing cuts?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: As we've stated from the very beginning, one of the things that we're looking at is ensuring that there is an integrated approach to policing. One of the things that we are looking at and one of the things that I've done is, I've gone around the province and had the opportunity to sit in different vehicles, including with Hamilton police and with Toronto police. In each of these different situations, I had the opportunity to see the COAST team at work and to see the different types of strategies that are in place. These are things that this government fully supports, is funding and will continue to fund going forward.

One of the things that we are keen on doing is ensuring that we have proactive policing, policing that will provide supports to individuals before they get into trouble, by having them embedded within the school system, and also to make sure they are part of the safety network that we have working throughout the whole province.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Once again, this is about priorities. When it comes to funding for local police services and grants that help people who are in mental health crisis, the cupboard is absolutely bare. But when it comes to jobs

for the Acting Premier's friends and Conservative insiders, the sky seems to be the limit.

How can the Acting Premier tell police that the cupboard is bare when they're handing \$75,000 in pay hikes to the Premier's friends?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Mr. Speaker, as we've said time and time again, public safety is a concern to this government. One of the things that we have done is invest a lot of time and a lot of energy across the board—from the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Health, to housing, to policing—and what we've determined is that what needs to take place is an integrated approach both to mental health and to how the government operates.

Unlike the past, where empty promises have been made, this government is taking steps to ensure that a fiscally responsible plan is in place, and that we're able to provide services not only during the period of time where policing may be involved but prior to that. Being proactive is something that this government is doing in a responsible way to ensure that the citizens of this province are taken care of and that we live in a much more balanced and secure way—and fiscally responsible, which is something a lot of people seem to forget about in this House.

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my next question is again for the Acting Premier.

Let's look at another support that this government is pulling. Parents volunteer thousands of hours in our schools every year, working hard to make a better school system for their kids. Last year they organized thousands of events across the province to help other parents deal with everything from cyberstalking and peer pressure to helping their kids be successful in math and science. Why has the government cut the funding these parents rely on?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I would suggest that the entire Ontario government on this side of the House would strongly recommend—

Interjection: And the other side too.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: And the other side, yes, absolutely—would respectfully recommend to this Leader of the Opposition and her entire party that they stop fear-mongering.

We are doing a line-by-line audit, and we're making sure that we are on track in making proper investments—a return on investment that is going to benefit parents and students and ultimately our overall learning environment in the classroom.

We have had enough of the nonsense coming from that side of the House. We're being respectful of taxpayer dollars, and we are going to get it right after the mess that we had to endure after 15 years of mismanagement.

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, do you know what? Across Ontario, we're hearing from people affected by the

cuts from this government. The minister can make whatever kinds of sticks-and-stones comments she wants, but we're doing our jobs. We're doing our jobs for the people of Ontario.

From parents who have lost programs that help them teach kids and keep them safe, to people who provide counselling and support, to survivors of sexual assault, to police who are on the front lines of Ontario's mental health crisis, they are seeing cuts and pauses. There's no way that the government can pretend that's not happening.

But if you're a friend of the Premier, this government can't move fast enough to hand you a \$75,000 pay hike. What message does the Acting Premier think that that sends to the people of Ontario?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to stand on behalf of our government to absolutely reject the premise that this Leader of the Opposition is trying to portray—

Interjection: Cuts, cuts, cuts.

Hon. Todd Smith: Hasn't been any.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:—because there hasn't been any. I think Ontarians across this province are going to be actually respecting the thoughtful manner in which our President of the Treasury Board, our Minister of Finance, our entire cabinet and ultimately our entire caucus are moving forward and respecting taxpayer dollars. The party with taxpayers' dollars is over. After 15 years of absolute waste, this government is going to get it right and we're going to take our time in doing so.

1050

TAXATION

Miss Kinga Surma: My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

We've made it very clear that our focus is on ensuring that hard-working people are not held back by unnecessary taxes—taxes that the Green Party, the NDP and the federal government have made clear that they agree with. These taxes will impact Ontario's hard-working families in more than just one way. Just this past Friday, the National Airlines Council of Canada sent a letter indicating that a price on carbon could result in the increased cost of flights and in turn push jobs into the United States.

Can the minister explain to us how the removal of the cap-and-trade carbon tax will in turn help the families of Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member from Etobicoke Centre, thank you for the question. As she mentioned and as has been mentioned, this government has made a priority about affordability for Ontario families. The members of the NDP and the Green Party have called for a \$150-a-tonne carbon tax. What that means is a 35-cents-a-litre increase, or \$216 per month, in natural gas prices.

Both the NDP and the Green Party ran on the idea that people weren't taxed enough. We actually believe that Ontario families are taxed too much. Eliminating cap-and-trade will put \$260 back in the pockets of Ontario families. Our government has promised this and will be true to our

word. We will implement a made-in-Ontario solution around climate change, one that balances a healthy economy, a healthy environment, and doesn't punish Ontario families.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Miss Kinga Surma: I thank the minister for his response. Back to the minister again: It is no surprise that the man-made global problem of climate change threatens the beauty that we so often take for granted. This summer, we saw increased forest fires and storms, resulting in floods and power outages.

Ontario is blessed with magnificent forests, lakes and rivers. Those of us who call Ontario home couldn't ask for a better place to live, work and raise a family. The quality of life enjoyed by our people as well as the success of our businesses depend on having clean air to breathe, safe water to drink and well-protected lands and parks.

Can the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks explain what his made-in-Ontario plan will focus on?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: Climate change does present a significant risk, and we are addressing it. We also need to make sure that we have a plan in place for clean air, clean water and clean land. This is why we're committed to climate change but also in the context of a balanced plan that protects the economy while it protects the environment.

There is now consultation open, and has been for a week, at www.ontario.ca/climatechange where we are getting feedback from Ontarians on how to ensure we have a prosperous economy but also ensure that we tackle this important problem. This fall, we'll present our balanced plan, a plan that deals with clean air, deals with clean water, deals with clean lands, addresses climate change, and appreciates that Ontarians have made great commitments—but we'll still do more—but doesn't punish Ontario families, Mr. Speaker.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Minister of Health. For months, experts, health care professionals and front-line harm reduction workers have said the evidence is clear: Overdose prevention sites save lives. Now, after an estimated 200 deaths since the unnecessary review started, the government has finally announced that they will allow overdose prevention to continue to operate in Ontario.

However, the government is capping the number of sites to 21, which allows no new sites to open. Can the minister explain why there is a hard cap of 21 sites?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I am very pleased to have made the announcement today that the government has decided to proceed with consumption and treatment centres that will run across the province. This is something that the previous government did not do. They were trying to prevent overdose deaths, of course, but they were doing nothing to get people into treatment and rehabilitation. Treatment and rehabilitation are the ultimate goal.

I think there is also an amount of money that we can spend. We are going to spend \$331.3 million on these treatment sites. But I think it also needs to be remembered that this is one step along the treatment process. We are also going to spend \$3.8 billion to create a comprehensive and coordinated mental health and addictions program, which is going to mean that we are going to need more detox beds, more mental health services, housing and all of the other services that are necessary. So this is one piece in a very big picture.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Back to the minister: There are 18 sites currently operating in Ontario, and three sites in Parkdale, Thunder Bay and St. Catharines that were on pause. That's 21 sites already. Cities like Thunder Bay, which had their sanctioned site paused, had applied for a second site to open over the summer, because evidence shows that they have the highest overdose rate in the entire province.

Is the minister prepared to look at evidence for the need for new sites as they emerge?

Hon. Christine Elliott: There are currently 18 sites open. They will all be able to apply, under the new criteria, as consumption and treatment centres. There are the three sites that were paused—you're absolutely correct—in Thunder Bay, in St. Catharines and in Parkdale. They will all be allowed to open as they submit their applications.

Other areas may also submit applications as well, but the determination is going to be made on if they meet the criteria, first of all, if there is a need in the community, where the locations of other services are and the ability of those centres to provide the wraparound services that people are going to need.

Because it's not a question of having a safe injection site to prevent overdoses—that is very important—but it's also about having the access to detox beds, the mental health and addiction services, the housing, the employment services and all of those other services that we need. That will be taken—

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. New question.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Dave Smith: My question today is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

I've been overwhelmed by the sheer volume of people who have reached out to me, concerned about our ability to keep our communities safe. Individuals in foreign prisons are set to return to this province after fighting for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Justin Trudeau's failure is not acceptable.

We cannot stand by while convicted terrorists are set to return to Ontario and enjoy all of the privileges of this province. Terrorists who commit barbaric violence do not deserve to be welcomed with a tray of milk and cookies from Justin Trudeau.

Minister, could you please update the members of this Legislature on what our government for the people is doing to send a message to address these indefensible crimes?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I want to thank and commend the member from Peterborough–Kawartha for doing what is right and taking the necessary steps to ensure that the Terrorist Activity Sanctions Act is brought before this Legislature. Those who choose to leave our country and this great province to take up arms against our men and women in uniform, civilian populations and our allies in no way deserve to be welcomed back to this province with open arms.

The federal government has failed to act or to do what they should be doing, and our government for the people is taking real action and delivering on promises to enhance and restore public safety throughout this great province.

Interjections.

1100

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

Start the clock. Supplementary?

Mr. Dave Smith: I thank the minister for his response. The people of this great province must know that our government is listening and we're working hard to enhance and restore public safety.

Speaker, Justin Trudeau's government is not providing the safety and security that Ontarians expect. Those who commit indefensible, heinous crimes deserve to be severely punished. The Trudeau government is not acting. Far too many Ontarians are concerned for their safety and the safety of their families.

To the minister: Could you please explain the steps that our government for the people is taking to keep our communities safe from those who are willingly choosing to commit barbaric crimes?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for this important question. The people of this great province are fed up. They deserve to know that their government will not let convicted terrorists walk around freely without any consequences. These criminals do not deserve to be provided with the same privileges as law-abiding Ontarians. Accordingly, our government is taking action that is required to ensure these individuals are appropriately punished. Our government for the people remains committed to keeping our communities safe. We will continue to be clear in our message that there will be consequences for those who choose to leave Ontario to commit indefensible crimes.

INDIGENOUS POWER PROJECT

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: *Remarks in Oji-Cree.*

This question is to the Minister of Energy. Several weeks ago, I stood in this House to remark about the tragic suicide of 13-year-old Karlena Kamenawatamin from Bearskin Lake. I mentioned how Karlena and her family had gone over seven years—seven years—without running water or electricity in their home, a state of affairs that would outrage anyone if this happened to them or their

family. Ontario Hydro remotes had made the decision to cut the electricity to Karlena's family for reasons beyond their control.

So, Speaker, I am left to wonder: Where else in this province would Ontario Hydro be allowed to get away with such an action?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I appreciate the honourable member's question.

Of course, we're working on a comprehensive plan to ensure that all of northern Ontario—all of Ontario but, frankly, northern Ontario, if I may—has the kind of reliable energy system that serves both families in isolated and remote communities as well as existing industries, that we can be competitive, that we have an opportunity to ensure that, during the harshest of temperatures, the coldest of winters, families and businesses can continue to operate with a safe, contiguous electricity system.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Ontario Hydro remotes currently operates in 24 fly-in First Nations communities in northern Ontario, but clearly something is not working.

One solution may be the Wataynikaneyap transmission project. Wataynikaneyap means "line that brings light." It's a project of 22 First Nations that will connect 17 remote First Nations communities that are still reliant on diesel fuel for power. Better lives and more opportunity for youth in the Far North is something I believe all members in this House can support, so that all other Indigenous youth will not have to grow up the way Karlena did.

Speaker, I ask the Premier and the Minister of Energy and Indigenous Affairs: Will they commit today to support the Watay Power project?

Hon. Greg Rickford: After more than eight years of my life living and working in these isolated communities and seeing first-hand the unreliability of diesel—certainly, the costs and the environmental consequences of it—there is no question that a comprehensive plan for energy transmission throughout northern Ontario, particularly in northwestern Ontario—as the member points out, more than 25 isolated communities have an incredible opportunity. It isn't just about energy transmission. It's about bundles for technology. It's about roadways. I don't think anything could be more important, when we look at north-south corridors, east-west corridors or east-west ties, than that we ensure, moving forward, that all of our communities, including the isolated and remote communities that rely on sources of energy that must change over the course of time—didn't over more than 15 years. As we say in northern Ontario, the decade and a half of darkness will be changed under this government.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS CENTRES

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Ma question est pour la ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine. Every day, more women come forward to access services from sexual assault centres, also known as rape crisis centres. As of today, there has been no increase in funding to address that demand.

As many women have stood up in this chamber before me, I would like to acknowledge their bravery and say, I stand with you and I believe you.

Less than 10% of victims report their sexual assault to police. The 90% who don't go to the police are those who are often forgotten in this equation.

Under the former government, we promised a 33% funding increase for these centres, which provide life-saving services for those who have experienced sexual violence. The funding bump of 33% would have been a significant increase, allowing centres to hire extra counsellors to decrease wait times, and enhance their services by providing much education.

The minister cannot hide this anymore. So what we would like to know is, will she commit today to maintaining this funding increase?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Thanks to the member opposite for the question. I've never been accused of hiding anything in my life.

Here we are today talking about a very important issue, one that I have talked about extensively since I was appointed to this cabinet on June 29, and that is the support for women fleeing domestic violence, those who are dealing with rape and those who are being human-trafficked. I've taken that seriously. I've raised these issues on the floor of the Legislature, and I'm really excited that on Thursday I will have the opportunity, at the Canadian Club, to talk about what our government plans on doing.

In the previous Liberal administration, they separated gender-based violence from human trafficking, from violence against women. Under our new government, we've been able to repatriate those three major pillars so that we can have a comprehensive approach to protect the most vulnerable women in this province.

I can tell you, as an advocate for those women, around the cabinet table, they will never have to worry about not being listened to or not being heard, because I will stand here and I—

Applause.

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

Supplementary?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I certainly appreciate the minister's commitment to talk in this House and get some rounds of applause from her colleagues.

I have to say, congratulations for applauding.

The problem is further than this.

I had the great pleasure of standing with members of this Legislature on our special committee on sexual violence and harassment. We toured the province. We heard very specifically of the needs. And if I recall, two of your members were on this committee and they actually advocated for an increase in funding very significantly.

Again, I hear what the minister is saying. With all due respect, speaking here in this House doesn't provide the funding that is so much needed in the communities and those organizations.

So again, I ask: Why, now that you're in government, are the same people who attended those meetings not

fighting to ensure that those survivors are not being neglected?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I had the great opportunity, since being appointed to this ministry, to travel across the province and visit shelters and speak with experts in the field, and I'm going to continue to do that.

It's a bit rich for the former Liberal government cabinet minister to be talking about funding when they blew the budget and they compromised the very core and valued public services that the most vulnerable people who rely on my ministry need.

I'll tell you something: I am going to continue to fund this ministry, and I'll have more to say in the weeks ahead. Right now, my ministry spends \$160 million on emergency centres, 24-hour crisis lines, counselling, safety planning, transitional housing, referral services and court-based victim witness assistance.

I'm excited that later today I'll be meeting with the Attorney General, the Minister of Labour and the minister of corrections so we can start charting a path forward—unlike they did for 15 years.

1110

TAXATION

Mr. Deepak Anand: My question is also for the Minister of the Environment, on affordability.

Minister, as the weather across the province changes, I'm reminded of many conversations I had during my campaign. Constituents of my riding of Mississauga–Malton told me how they dreaded this time of year. As the temperature continues to dip down, the costs associated with living go up. People would tell me of exceptional lengths they would go to just to avoid turning on the thermostat in their homes. As the weather gets colder, a quick 15-minute walk to the grocery store is no longer a viable option at minus 30 degrees. Affordability of gas for the car and heat for the home is central to our quality of life. Multiple times we heard about choosing between eating and heating.

Speaker, we made a commitment to make life more affordable. Can the minister provide an update on the progress?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member from Mississauga–Malton: Thank you for the question. He's quite right: Premier Ford and this government made a commitment to focus on affordability. We made a focus to make sure that we put money back in people's pockets.

As the Premier said, help is on the way. That help is almost here. The consultation on Bill 4 has concluded. We are now in the process of wrapping up the passage of that bill. Directly tied to the decisions made in that bill, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, we've already seen a 4.6-cent reduction in the price of gasoline and a 5.7-cent reduction in diesel.

Mr. Speaker, this past month we've seen notices from the natural gas companies saying that cap-and-trade is no longer applied. I know this is true because my colleague

the Honourable Minister of Finance shared his bill on social media so people could see.

We will continue to strive around affordability. We will continue to support families. We will continue to ensure that we meet our promises.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you, Minister, for your response. Back to the minister: It is vital for the people of Ontario that the government must fight for them, and we must continue to fight to make life more affordable. While we recognize these significant environmental changes we must face, these can be resolved without costly taxes—taxes that make life unaffordable for the people of Ontario.

The fact is that the Liberal government's cap-and-trade did little for the environment and was little more than a revenue tool—a revenue tool that the members of the NDP want to exploit. We heard that in the past as well; the member for Ottawa Centre has called for a \$150-per-tonne carbon tax.

Can the Minister of the Environment explain to this House how this tax would hurt middle-class families and how much it would cost the people of Ontario?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: The member is quite correct. The NDP have called for the highest carbon tax in the world. That would mean a 35-cents-a-litre increase on gasoline. That kind of punishing carbon tax on Ontario families would cost them \$216 a month. For the 73% of Ontario families who use natural gas, that would be \$2,500 a year. What does the NDP have against Ontario families?

Mr. Speaker, we will bring forward a climate plan that does not punish Ontario families. It will make sure that we balance the economy and the environment. We will make sure that not only the cap-and-trade program but the Liberal carbon tax is not imposed, to protect Ontario families and protect our environment.

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

M. Guy Bourgouin: Monsieur le Président, par vous, ma question est pour la ministre des Affaires francophones. La population francophone représente près de 612 000 personnes dans notre province. Alors pourquoi, madame la Ministre, est-il impossible de voter en français dans nos élections municipales?

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je remercie le député pour sa question. La question du bilinguisme et de l'accès aux services en français, c'est une question très importante pour notre gouvernement, sur laquelle je me penche. Je viens de faire une série de tables rondes à travers la province. Je parle directement aux Franco-Ontariens et aux francophones en Ontario concernant leur problème à accéder les services importants, comme le droit de voter en français. C'est une question sur laquelle on se penche, et je remercie le député pour sa question.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Le premier ministre a démontré que c'est la province qui gère et qu'il réagit rapidement lorsqu'il veut des changements aux élections municipales.

En Ontario, il y a des centaines d'écoles françaises dans 12 conseils scolaires francophones. L'inscription a augmenté de 65 % dans l'éducation de langue française dans la province.

Aujourd'hui, des millions d'Ontariens and Ontariennes se rendent aux pôles pour exercer leur droit de vote dans les élections municipales, mais 612 000 Franco-Ontariens partout en province n'auront pas l'opportunité de voter dans leur langue natale, qui est une langue officielle au Canada.

Alors, quelle réponse, madame la Ministre, allez-vous donner aux parents francophones de cette province qui aimeraient et qui méritent le droit d'exercer leur vote en langue française pour leurs conseillers et conseillères scolaires francophones?

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je demanderais au député d'en face de poser sa question au gouvernement précédent, qui a eu 15 ans pour ne pas répondre à ce problème important pour les Franco-Ontariens.

Notre gouvernement se penche directement sur les enjeux en parlant directement aux Franco-Ontariens. On travaille directement avec eux pour essayer de répondre directement aux enjeux d'importance pour les Franco-Ontariens, y compris le droit de vote.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mrs. Gila Martow: My question is to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

As I'm sure the minister is aware, starting today, members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers are taking part in rotating strikes across the country. My constituents are concerned with what this will mean for the services that they receive from our government. This job action could cause significant inconveniences for the people of Ontario who rely on Canada Post for the timely delivery of important documents like birth, marriage and death certificates.

Can the minister update the Legislature on how the Canada Post rotating strikes will impact government services in Ontario and what our government is doing about it?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks for the excellent question this morning from my colleague from Thornhill. I know Ontarians are wondering what will happen to important documents that they're expecting to receive in the mail.

With the situation limited right now to rotating strikes, ServiceOntario will continue to use Canada Post to deliver all documents, including birth, marriage and death certificates, drivers' licences and health cards. Unfortunately, though, due to the federal government's inability to reach a deal with postal workers, Ontarians may experience delays in delivery times and service guarantees may not be met. We give full credit to the team at ServiceOntario and the Vital Certificates staff up in Thunder Bay, whom I had an opportunity to meet last week. Those who are renewing documents during this time should keep their receipt as temporary proof of renewal.

I can tell you that at the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services, we're keeping a very close eye on

these rotating strikes and ensuring we're dealing with them as efficiently as we possibly can.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I want to thank the minister for his assurances and for the plan his ministry has developed. The constituents in my riding who rely on ServiceOntario to receive critical government services and vital documents will be pleased to see that our government is monitoring the impact the rolling strikes will have on the services they receive.

Mr. Speaker, labour disputes change on a daily basis, depending on how well negotiations are going. Could the minister update the Legislature on the contingency plan our government has in place to ensure continued services in the event the Canadian Union of Postal Workers' rolling strikes become a nationwide strike or if Canada Post undertakes a lockout?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks again to the member from Thornhill. We hope things don't escalate and cause a strike that would halt mail delivery right across Canada, but our government is prepared for any outcome of these negotiations. The ministry has developed a full contingency plan to protect delivery of vital documents to Ontarians in the event of a Canada Post work stoppage that would affect the entire country. We will look to alternative delivery processes for these vital events documents if necessary.

Those who renew documents during this time should keep their receipt as temporary proof of renewal, and we're continuing to encourage those who receive payments in the mail from the Ontario government to sign up for direct deposit as well. For more information, Ontarians can go to the website ontario.ca/mail.

1120

Speaker, we are ready. We are prepared. We'll ensure Ontarians continue to receive the services. As the Boy Scouts say, "Be prepared." We at MGCS are prepared today.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question is for the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, after weeks and weeks of delays, the government's so-called education consultations are already off to a rocky start. On Thursday, people in northwestern Ontario were given less than 24 hours' notice of their dedicated telephone town hall. And if they somehow found out that the sign-up link was active, they had just five hours to register to participate before the cut-off deadline. A tweet just doesn't cut it.

Mr. Speaker, does the minister think the results of this consultation will be meaningful if people aren't given a fair chance to participate, or is that the point?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Speaker, I have to say: Another week, a new day and another opportunity for me to tell the member opposite that she is absolutely wrong in her assertions. Do you know what? What we are doing across this province is kick-starting yet another phase of opportunity for people to contribute into a consultation process that we feel is comprehensive and will shape the direction of our education in the future.

I had the opportunity to sit in on that call, and I have to tell you, Speaker, that I am really enthused by the thoughtful ideas that were coming forward. People were endorsing the need for financial literacy. People were sharing very thoughtful, proactive ideas on the use of cellphones in the classroom.

Do you know what is interesting? Speaker, you'll smile when you hear this: People were actually talking about the need to understand what's driving GDP, and they would also like to see more food literacy in the class.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Mr. Speaker, that is just total fiction. What they are concerned about is the rollback of sex education to the last century, the stopping of the Indigenous curriculum writing, and the cancellation of this year's grants to parent councils that would allow parents to engage other parents in the education of their children.

It's about respect, Mr. Speaker. The scope of these consultations has only grown while the means of participating seems to be shrinking. For those very, very few who did manage to get on the northwest regional town hall, less than 15 minutes were dedicated to input on the health and physical education curriculum, which is the supposed reason for the entire consultation taking place.

Mr. Speaker, how can Ontarians trust the outcome of these consultations if the process is already showing such serious flaws?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Speaker, I have to stand up and share with you that the member opposite, the member from Davenport, is working so hard to create a narrative that is not sticking.

We have three phases of our consultation. Our first phase that we introduced far surpassed the measly 1,638 people that the former Liberal government reached out to, and now we've just kicked off our telephone town halls, and we've been really pleased with the results of that town hall. In conjunction with that, we have an online survey. I will tell you this: People from one end of the province to the other will have an opportunity to participate in that as well.

We're doing all of this because—do you know what? Under the last government, this province got on a very precarious road to absolute bankruptcy. We're respecting the taxpayers' dollars and doing so in an efficient way—

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

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: My question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. This weekend, I hosted a round table on human trafficking with my colleague the MPP for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte. We were appalled to learn that Ontario is plagued by different types of human trafficking, but most notably, sex trafficking of young and vulnerable women. These are

violations of an individual's human rights. It represents modern-day slavery, forcing individuals to act against their will. Traffickers control these women in many ways, including psychological manipulation, addiction, emotional abuse and social isolation.

Can the minister tell the House, how is it acceptable that these women and girls are falling victim to sex traffickers?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I'd like to thank the honourable member for her excellent question and for drawing this important issue onto the floor of this Legislature. I congratulate her and my colleague from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte for the round table that they had this weekend on what I call Ontario's dirty little secret.

I'd be remiss, however, if I did not applaud the Minister of Labour for being the number one champion in this Legislature over many years and for her dedication to ending human trafficking with the Saving the Girl Next Door Act. I'm really proud of the work that she has done, because it is true, Speaker, that 65% of human trafficking in Canada comes from the province of Ontario.

Let me be perfectly clear: These young women are conditioned, they are coerced, they are raped, they are addicted and they are dehumanized. I would say, if we can't make sure that they're equal, are any of us equal? This is an issue that affects a lot of young women under the age of 18. In fact, 70% of sex trafficking victims are under the age of 25.

We have more to do, and I'm looking forward to talking more about it in the supplementary. I'm also looking forward to speaking to the Canadian Club this Thursday.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Minister, for your response. I'm proud to be part of a government that's taking so much action on this issue.

After the round table I held with my colleague this weekend, I did a bit more research, and I learned that, in Ontario, roughly two thirds of the police reports every year are due to human trafficking. According to police-reported data and Statistics Canada, approximately 70% of sex trafficking victims are predominantly women under the age of 25, and 26% are under the age of 18, as the minister has stated. Additionally, data shows that the majority of persons accused of human trafficking are often young males. Trends indicate that this is a growing problem across our province and certainly in my riding.

Can the minister tell us how the government is combating sex trafficking?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I've inherited five previous ministries, and I can tell you my number one priority is to continue the strong work of the Minister of Labour in this field. I can tell you that this is not just a provincial issue; it is a community issue, it's a neighbourhood issue and it's a national issue.

Our response to sex trafficking previously was based on four pillars: prevention and community supports, Indigenous-led approaches, justice supports and provincial coordination, and leadership—I've added a fifth pillar. This past weekend I had the opportunity to meet with all of the women's issues ministers across the country and compelled them to action in creating a task force on human

trafficking, which I will co-chair, working with every other province and the federal government as well as Indigenous leaders. Together, we vowed to address this issue in all forms through a new initiative to combat sex trafficking. I'm honoured to be the co-chair for that, but I also wanted to point out that our entire government is taking this seriously. That's why later today, I'll meet with the Minister of Labour, the Attorney General and the ministry of corrections so that we can have an integrated approach to save the girl next door.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms. Doly Begum: My question is to the Minister of Finance. Auto insurance premiums should be based on your car and how you drive, not where you live. However, when comparing the same driver with the same car in parts of Scarborough and elsewhere in the province, residents of my community are paying as much as \$1,000 more for auto insurance. This is not fair, and this must change.

Can the minister explain why drivers in my community are being penalized for living in Scarborough?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much for the question. It's clear that the Liberal-NDP system of failed auto insurance is absolutely broken. Our government is now looking at the regulatory environment surrounding auto insurance in Ontario, with the potential of allowing more competition in the marketplace.

The Premier made it very, very clear: Our government is committed to ensuring fairness in rate setting, ending discriminatory practices and working towards a system that puts the drivers first.

Speaker, I'll speak more in the supplementary, where I'll have an opportunity to congratulate our PC member from Milton for his great work on this file.

1130

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Doly Begum: Thank you, Speaker—

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Doly Begum: After 15 years of Liberal failure, we have a government now that can actually do something better, but they're taking it to worse.

Rising daily expenses, from auto insurance to housing, are a growing burden for families across Ontario. Ending postal code discrimination in auto insurance rates is one realistic step the government can take to make life more affordable for all our families. Good drivers in Scarborough should not be paying more than good drivers elsewhere in the GTA.

But unfortunately, this government has decided to put forward a bill with no teeth, claiming that it will end this unfair practice. There is nothing about that.

Mr. Speaker, why is this government proposing a bill with no teeth when they have another option: to support our bill that will, once and for all, end postal code discrimination in auto insurance?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, I do want to begin by thanking my parliamentary assistant, the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte, for taking carriage of the insurance file. Thank you very much.

We congratulate also, as I said earlier, our PC member from Milton for his important work on this file. His proposed insurance initiative is a great way to combat rate discrimination in the auto insurance system.

Now that the member's legislation is tabled, we look forward to working with him and the industry stakeholders to ensure our auto system meets the needs of Ontario's 10 million drivers.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

Mr. Rick Nicholls: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Speaker, we promised the people of Ontario that our government would create good jobs and make Ontario open for business. I know from speaking with businesses and students in my riding that 15 years of Liberal mismanagement have left them behind. A key part of delivering on our promise is ensuring that students have the skills they need to fill the jobs of tomorrow.

This past Friday I was pleased to represent you, Minister, at the announcement at the opening of the National Powerline Training Centre and other infrastructure upgrades at St. Clair College, Thames campus, in my hometown of Chatham. It was an exciting development for St. Clair College as it continues to grow in providing training to students in southwestern Ontario.

Can the minister tell us about the government's plans to help Ontarians find good-quality jobs and get the skills they need?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the MPP from Chatham-Kent–Leamington for the question and for the hard work advocating for constituents.

I'm proud that the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington was able to represent the government in Chatham and congratulate President Patti France and the team at St. Clair on this exciting development.

Speaker, I want all Ontarians to reach their full potential. My focus as minister is to ensure that our young people have the skills they need to fill the needed jobs and build a career for themselves in their community.

As the member mentions, St. Clair College has opened its new 8,000-square-foot training centre for powerline technicians at its Chatham campus. This is in addition to infrastructure upgrades at St. Clair's Windsor campus.

Our government has promised the people of Ontario to create good jobs and make Ontario open for business, and that's exactly what we are doing.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you, Minister, for your hard work for the young people of Ontario and getting this province back on track.

Speaker, the people of Chatham are excited to have a new facility to help ensure that young people in Ontario can gain the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow. At the same time, Ontarians know that as we invest in our young people's education, there is a pressing need to reduce the massive burden of provincial debt and the recent \$15-billion deficit the former Liberal government hid.

Unsustainable debt loads risk the future of vital public services and threaten the ability of our government to make investments in infrastructure like the one announced at St. Clair College.

Can the minister tell us more about the investment at St. Clair and the importance of returning Ontario to secure financial footing?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Our government recognizes the crucial role that colleges will play to ensure that Ontarians have the skills they need. We know from talking with employers that there is a skills gap which is dragging down our economy. The new facility will help bring St. Clair College's powerline training program to the national level.

Unlike the previous Liberal government, we know that we have a responsibility to our young people to invest in their education and not to leave them with an unsustainable debt load for their children and grandchildren.

I am looking forward to working with St. Clair College and all of Ontario's publicly assisted colleges to ensure we can fill the skills gap, create good jobs and make Ontario open for business.

NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION

Mr. John Vanthof: My question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

Winter is coming. We've got one road, Highway 11, which will inevitably be closed numerous times and northerners will be cut off once again. We used to have an option. It was called the Northlander passenger train. In fact, I think we all agree that it was a mistake, shutting that service down. In fact, both the NDP and the Conservatives promised to bring that service back, or bring passenger rail service back, in the last election campaign. In fact, as we speak, there are community groups mobilizing to help that happen.

My question is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines: When is the Ford government going to bring back passenger rail service to northeastern Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: While this member has a track record of sitting on his hands for these important issues, we're moving forward with a reliable, effective, cost-efficient northern transportation strategy.

There are people across the vast region of northern Ontario—most of the size of Europe—who need to be able to rely on bus services with washrooms in them to get to small towns and cities, to and from medical appointments; safe highways to transfer people and products; and railroads in different parts of the region that will, again, safely transport people and their products. We're working on a strategy that will be effective for all of northern

Ontario and I look forward to that member supporting that kind of plan.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. John Vanthof: Once again to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines: I do seem to recall that during the election campaign, a promise was made to bring passenger rail service back to northeastern Ontario. It was made by the NDP and it was made by the Conservatives—including, I believe, the Premier—to bring passenger rail back. We're great looking at the whole system, but a specific commitment was made. Specific people are being cut off.

I also distinctly remember you guys have a slogan. You can help me with it: "Promise made"—but in the case of northerners, it's more like "promise maybe."

Once again, Minister, will you or will you not work with the NDP, work with northerners, to bring back passenger rail service to northeastern Ontario?

Interjections.

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

Minister?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I guess he'll huff and he'll puff, Mr. Speaker.

Here's the promise that we made: It was to respect taxpayers' dollars. Because underpinning every question in this place is the NDP's complete disrespect for the structural deficits and debt that this province has. It's like they're normalizing debt. Wait a second, colleagues: This is the normalizing debt party. I'm there; I've landed, Mr. Speaker. Through you to my colleague: Should my eternal quest to understand what the NDP stand for stop here with this discovery?

Interjection: No.

Hon. Greg Rickford: I'll continue the fight then, Mr. Speaker.

But there isn't a family or a small business in this province that would operate their financial affairs like they would propose or how the independent people sitting down the way have run this province.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Deputy Premier on a point of order.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I would just like to correct my record, please. In my answer to the question concerning consumption and treatment services, I indicated that the total cost was \$331.3 million; in fact, it's \$31.3 million.

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

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote. It's a motion for allocation of time on government order number 4 regarding amendments to the standing orders.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.

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

On October 18, 2018, Mr. Bethlenfalvy moved government notice of motion number 12.

All those in favour of Mr. Bethlenfalvy's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Kanapathi, Logan	Piccini, David
Baber, Roman	Karahalios, Belinda	Rasheed, Kaleed
Babikian, Aris	Ke, Vincent	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Khanjin, Andrea	Romano, Ross
Barrett, Toby	Kramp, Daryl	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Kusendova, Natalia	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Lecce, Stephen	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Calandra, Paul	MacLeod, Lisa	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Martin, Robin	Simard, Amanda
Cho, Stan	Martow, Gila	Skelly, Donna
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Dave
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Smith, Todd
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Surma, Kinga
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Tangri, Nina
Dunlop, Jill	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Elliott, Christine	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Nicholls, Rick	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Gill, Parm	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Hardeman, Ernie	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Harris, Mike	Parsa, Michael	Wilson, Jim
Hogarth, Christine	Pettapiece, Randy	Yakabuski, John
Jones, Sylvia	Phillips, Rod	Yurek, Jeff

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Arthur, Ian	Glover, Chris	Natyshak, Taras
Begum, Doly	Gretzky, Lisa	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Hassan, Faisal	Shaw, Sandy
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Stiles, Marit
Bourgouin, Guy	Hunter, Mitzie	Tabuns, Peter
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Karpoche, Bhutlra	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Lalonde, Marie-France	Wynne, Kathleen O.
French, Jennifer K.	Mamakwa, Sol	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Mantha, Michael	
Gélinas, France	Morrison, Suze	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 69; the nays are 34.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound on a point of order.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to just rise and offer congratulations on behalf of the House to the member from Burlington, Mrs. McKenna, on her birthday today. Happy birthday, Jane.

MEMBER'S ENGAGEMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education on a point of order.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd like to stand in this House and share sincere congratulations to my PA, Sam Oosterhoff, for popping the question. And she said yes.

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: We, too, have someone who is celebrating a special birthday today: Ms. Sandy Shaw, from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): This House stands in recess until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1151 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. Catherine Fife: This weekend, I participated in the Bridges to Hope project, organized by two Waterloo-Oxford students, Olivia Miller and Gretta Dotzert. These young women are two difference-makers. They reached out, spoke up and created a strong sense of community around mental health.

This project was inspired by a teen in the UK who attached messages to a frequently travelled bridge and it ended up preventing six suicides. These uplifting messages on bridges bring hope and awareness about mental health and now cover three Waterloo region bridges. Our students are leading the way. The research shows that peer-to-peer support can have a profoundly positive effect for well-being. Student voices matter.

We were joined by Waterloo Region District Board student trustees Oscar Judelson-Kelly and Ben Wahl, who spoke about ensuring that our schools are safe, inclusive and supportive places. Christine Strong, a young person who has lived experience with mental health, shared that her healing has been about taking that first step and not knowing how many steps there are.

We owe it to our young people to be supporting their efforts and to show that we hear them through providing resources and support. These students had an idea, and they ran with it. We have the potential to share hope at a much broader level. Certainly, an in-year cut of \$330 million by this government will not address the crisis in mental health and the wait times for counselling. When people have the courage to speak up and ask for help, help needs to be available in real time.

I urge the Ford government to follow the lead of these Waterloo region students. They have spoken truth to power. Will this government listen?

GAÉTAN GERVAIS

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: J'aimerais aujourd'hui souligner la vie d'un grand Ontarien, une grande figure de la communauté francophone : Gaétan Gervais.

Auteur, professeur et diffuseur, M. Gervais laisse un legs inestimable à l'Ontario français. Nous n'avons qu'à penser au drapeau vert et blanc, symbole des Franco-Ontariens conçu par M. Gervais et Michel Dupuis, qui a été hissé pour la première fois en 1975 à l'Université de Sudbury.

Né en 1944 d'une famille ouvrière, il a fait ses études au Collège du Sacré-Coeur à l'Université Laurentienne ainsi qu'à l'Université d'Ottawa. Il était également professeur d'histoire à l'Université Laurentienne en plus d'être auteur de plusieurs ouvrages, tout en étant un grand défenseur des droits des francophones de l'Ontario.

Sa contribution était si importante que l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, l'ACFO, du grand Sudbury octroie chaque année une bourse de 100 \$, baptisée Gaétan-Gervais, à un finissant de chacune des sept écoles secondaires de langue française du grand Sudbury, ainsi qu'à un étudiant du Collège Boréal et de l'Université Laurentienne. De plus, l'école secondaire publique de langue française à Oakville est nommée en son honneur.

Au nom de tous mes collègues en cette Chambre, j'aimerais transmettre mes plus sincères condoléances à la famille et aux proches de Gaétan Gervais et le remercier pour tout son travail pour les francophones de notre province.

WORLD POLIO DAY

Ms. Jennifer K. French: October 24 is World Polio Day. I want to highlight the vital work of Rotarians across our communities as they work to eradicate polio from the face of the earth. Thanks in large part to Rotary International and to the 1.2 million Rotary members worldwide, including the 10 Durham region Rotary clubs and our two in Oshawa, polio will soon be just a memory.

Polio is a crippling childhood disease that is terribly infectious and leads to paralysis and sometimes death. During the first half of the 20th century, polio crippled over half a million people every year. There is no cure, but there is a preventative vaccine. For as little as 60 cents' worth of vaccine, a child can be protected against this disease for life.

In 1985, Rotary International and its partners launched the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, and the incidence of polio has plummeted from about 350,000 children paralyzed every year to fewer than 20 confirmed cases this year.

On World Polio Day this year, something special is happening in Oshawa. In our new global classroom at Durham College, there's a global livestream being hosted by the Oshawa Rotary Club and the Oshawa-Parkwood Rotary Club. The World Polio Day livestream will broadcast through a network of colleges worldwide and to

Rotarians all around the world, including to special guests in Pakistan, where it will be 3:30 in the morning.

The world is 99.9% polio-free, but the fight to end polio is not over. Rotarians around the world will not stop fundraising, fighting and advocating until our world is polio-free. For this important work and all of the caring and community work that Rotarians do across Oshawa, Durham region and the world, we say thank you.

LEONARD “RED” KELLY

Ms. Jill Dunlop: Earlier this month, Detroit Red Wings president and CEO Christopher Ilitch announced that they would be honouring Leonard “Red” Kelly by retiring his number 4 jersey.

Kelly, born in Simcoe, Ontario, played 13 seasons with the Red Wings and eight seasons with the Toronto Maple Leafs. He was elected into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1969 and in 2001 he was inducted into the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame.

Mr. Kelly was a top defenceman. He played on eight Stanley Cup teams, won three Lady Byng trophies and one Norris trophy and, in 2017, he was named one of the 100 greatest NHL players in history.

Not only was Red an incredible hockey player and coach, but he also had a great sense of civic duty, serving as a federal member of Parliament for three years, from 1962 to 1965. His core values, such as hard work, determination, ambition and passion, inspired communities throughout North America. Red was, and continues to be, an inspiration for so many, so much so that two constituents from my riding of Simcoe North spent two years telling Red’s story. David Dupuis and Waxy Gregoire are two writers from Penetanguishene who co-authored a book entitled *The Red Kelly Story*. We were all thrilled when the biography won the Ontario Speaker’s Book Award in 2016. Both men were proud they were able to have a part in recounting Red’s life, one that was lived well, on and off the ice.

Red even coached our own member from Haldimand–Norfolk, MPP Barrett.

I’m looking forward to Mr. Kelly’s jersey retirement and special celebration on February 1, 2019, and I hope more people continue to learn about his great legacy.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mr. Wayne Gates: I’m rising to speak on an issue that’s incredibly important to me: proper access to mental health services in Niagara.

Over the past few weeks, our community has been shaken to its very core following the heart-wrenching loss of two members of our community—members of our community who have struggled and felt they had no other choice but to end their lives.

Over the last few weeks, our community has come together, like it always does in times of tragedy, to raise our collective voice and say to our fellow citizens, “We love you”; to reach out to those who are battling mental

health issues and tell them we love them, we care for them and we’re there for them.

But we need help, Mr. Speaker. We need to ensure that residents have access to mental health supports any time they need them and that proper funding is in place to ensure these programs are available. Outside of political parties, we must do this together as elected representatives.

Over the next few weeks, I’m going to introduce legislation which will call for support of mental health services in Niagara. I hope we can come together, regardless of political party, to ensure that these supports are increased. I hope we can do this so we never need to have another memorial for a wonderful resident taken from us far too soon.

I hope we can collectively say that we care and that we take care to do better.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to take an opportunity to talk about the importance of parent involvement in children’s education. I think that anyone who is a parent or who has been involved in education knows that that relationship can be very important and that there are many, many ways to be involved in a child’s education. The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that sometimes parents and schools need some support to understand exactly how to do that and to develop skills and being involved. That’s exactly why Parents Reaching Out Grants were established. Since 2006, there have been 22,000 Parents Reaching Out Grants that have been allocated around the province. When you think there are 5,000 publicly funded schools in Ontario, that suggests that the vast majority of young people in this province and their families have been affected and helped by a Parents Reaching Out Grant. Over 900 regional and provincial Parents Reaching Out Grants have also been granted.

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Let me give you some examples. Bluewater District School Board, Huron Heights Public School: \$975 for Helping Parents Understand Mental Health. Conseil scolaire Viamonde: Educated Parents = Involved Parents, \$1,000. A regional grant went to Halton District School Board’s parent involvement committee: \$12,500 for 21st Century Student Success: Creating a Culture of Equity, Inclusion and Well-Being.

These are important grants, Mr. Speaker. I recognize that they are on hold, but that suggests that they are at risk.

Likewise, we’re being told that the students’ SpeakUp project grants are on hold. Those grants help students to raise their voices. They’re very important. They should be continued.

PERSONS DAY

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: On October 18, we marked the anniversary of Persons Day in Canada. This day marks the historic decision in 1929 to include women in the legal definition of “person.” This decision gave women the right to be appointed to the Senate of Canada and paved the way

for women's increased participation in public and political life.

In 1927, five women, who have since become known as the Famous Five, launched a legal challenge that would later mark a turning point for women's rights in Canada. These five women from Alberta were journalists, politicians and activists who asked the Supreme Court of Canada if the word "person" in section 24 of the British North America Act included female persons. The Supreme Court later decided that the word "person" did not include women.

The Famous Five did not give up. They took their case to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain in London, which was then Canada's highest court of appeal. On October 18, 1929, Lord Sankey, Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, announced that the word "person" should include females. "The obvious answer," he said, "why should it not?"

On Persons Day we pay tribute to the Famous Five—Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards—for their persistence and their work to create a more equal and inclusive society.

The decision to include women as persons under the law was a milestone victory for women across Canada. Not only had the Famous Five won the right for women to serve in the Senate, but they paved the way for women to participate equally in all aspects of life in Canada.

We can all do our part to carry on the legacy of the Famous Five by encouraging women and girls to participate in political and public life and celebrating the achievements and contributions of women and girls at home and in our communities.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

M^{me} France Gélinas: I rise today to speak about the terrible driving conditions in the west end of my riding. In July of this year, my office started to receive complaints of dangerous driving conditions linked to the work being done on a four-kilometre stretch from Sleepy Hollow Road to Worthington Road on Highway 17: bad signage, no traffic management, reduced visibility due to uncontrolled dust, loose gravel flying everywhere. There were no signs advising drivers to slow down for the gravel section. Only after many complaints did the Ministry of Transportation finally get involved.

There were many damage claims. We brought these forward to the ministry, which responded in writing: "With respect to vehicle damage, Interpaving Ltd. is responsible for addressing any damage caused by their construction operations.

"In the event that Interpaving does not address your constituents' concerns, claims to recover damage may be submitted to the ministry of government services"—and he gave us the address.

Over 25 people have contacted our office about damage to their vehicles, including Carole Clance, Jack Kosmerly, Donald Law, Marc Lelievre and Leila Zazulan. All that

they are getting is the runaround, with Interpaving saying, "Go to the ministry," and the ministry saying, "Go to Interpaving." This is not right. The construction is still going on. It is still dangerous. This government needs to do better.

MADE IN YORK REGION

Mr. Billy Pang: A couple of weeks ago, I visited the ventureLAB at IBM in Markham for their first annual Made in York Region event. This event showcased the creative and entrepreneurial spirit that businesses in the Markham region possess and their contributions to York region's vibrant local economy.

Markham, in particular, hosts more than 1,500 of these high-tech and life science companies and continues to attract foreign direct investment from more than 210 foreign companies. The companies that I encountered operate in different areas, from health care technologies to legal consultation applications. However, they all shared one thing in common: They were started by individuals with a vision and a desire to improve the lives of our communities.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to supporting these small businesses, as we acknowledge that they are job creators in our increasingly technologized economy and, as they continue to grow, will help Ontario become an economic hub for business. We have done this by vowing to cut the small business tax rate and lower the hydro costs for these same small businesses. We promised that small businesses will be supported by this government.

ABB BURLINGTON

Ms. Jane McKenna: Last week, I had the opportunity to tour and spend some time with the people who run ABB in Burlington. It was exhilarating to tour the facility and learn a tiny bit about the truly amazing and vital work that they do.

ABB is a Swedish-Swiss multinational headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. They operate mainly in robotics, power, heavy electrical equipment and automation technology. It is the fifth-largest Swiss company by revenue.

This is the kind of company the world is talking about. ABB actually built a major portion of the power grid in Canada. As urban centres develop farther and farther away from power sources, we need to find new ways of efficiently transporting energy from where it is available to where it is needed.

ABB is a pioneer of high-voltage direct current transmission, enabling grids to transport greater levels of power over longer distances with minimal losses. ABB refers to this time in history as the fourth industrial revolution. As robotics and artificial intelligence applications continue to gather momentum, ABB is applying the pragmatic to the promise.

I am very impressed and immensely proud to have ABB operating in Burlington. I want to extend my gratitude to Ark Kalinowski, Stephanie Medeiros, Trevor Butcher, Ravinder Basanti-Johal, Shelley Babin, Kevin Deree and Carolina Gallo for taking the time out of their busy day to show me what they do and outline how it is done.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for members' statements.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Mr. Speaker, I believe we have agreement for me to seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the order of precedence for private members' public business.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Guelph is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to put forward a motion without notice regarding the order of precedence for private members' public business. Agreed? Agreed.

The member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 98(c), a change be made to the order of precedence for private members' public business such that Nathalie Des Rosiers assumes ballot item number 34 and Mike Schreiner assumes ballot item 51.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Schreiner has moved that, notwithstanding standing order 98(c), a change be made to the order of precedence for private members' public business such that Nathalie Des Rosiers assumes ballot item number 34 and Mike Schreiner assumes ballot item 51.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

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INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

TERRORIST ACTIVITIES SANCTIONS ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 PUNISSANT DE SANCTIONS LES ACTIVITÉS TERRORISTES

Mr. Dave Smith moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 46, An Act to amend various Acts to impose sanctions for persons convicted of terrorist activities / Projet de loi 46, Loi modifiant diverses lois pour imposer des sanctions aux personnes déclarées coupables d'activités terroristes.

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): Would the member for Peterborough–Kawartha like to explain his bill?

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill amends a number of acts to provide for sanctions for any person convicted of a terrorist offence under any of sections 83.18 to 83.221 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The child of a parent who is convicted of a terrorist offence is considered in need of protection under part V of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017.

As well, a person who is convicted of a terrorist offence is not eligible for any of the following:

- a licence under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997;

- health insurance benefits under the Health Insurance Act;

- a driver's licence under the Highway Traffic Act;

- rent-geared-to-income assistance or special-needs housing under the Housing Services Act, 2011;

- grants, awards or loans under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act;

- an income support or employment support under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997;

- assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997; and

- coverage under the insurance plan under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

PETITIONS

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I have a petition 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 name and give it to page Armita.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Vivian Tannock from Lively in my riding for mailing me these petitions. It reads as follows:

“Save the Breast Screening ... 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 breast cancer 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, will affix my name to it, and ask page Honora to bring it to the Clerk.

CLIMATE CHANGE

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: This is a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

“For a Meaningful Climate Action Plan.

“Whereas our planet is undergoing significant warming with adverse consequences for health, for agriculture, for infrastructure and for our children’s future;

“Whereas the costs of inaction are severe, such as extreme weather events causing flooding and drought;

“Whereas Canada has signed the Paris accord which commits us to acting to keep temperature rise under 1.5 or 2 degrees Celsius;

“We, the undersigned”—and some of them are graduates from the sustainability master’s at University of Ottawa, so I’m happy to note them—“call upon the government of Ontario to develop GHG reduction targets based on science that will meet our Paris commitment, an action plan to meet those targets and annual reporting on progress on meeting the targets. We call on the government to commit to providing funding through carbon

pricing mechanisms for actions that must be taken to meet these targets.”

I agree with this petition and sign my name and will give it to Olajire.

WEARING OF POPPIES

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to thank the good members of Legion Branch 194 in Hornepayne for the following petition:

“I Wear My Poppy with Pride and Respect.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the poppy is a powerful symbol of remembrance worn by millions the world over with respect and gratitude for those who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect peace and freedom for all people;

“Whereas the poppy has been the principal emblem of the Royal Canadian Legion since its inception in 1925;

“Whereas the poppy is an enduring symbol of sacrifice that was initially inspired by the Canadian poet and soldier John McCrae while in the trenches in the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium, during World War I;

“Whereas the use or reference to the universal poppy symbol for purposes other than remembrance and respect for fallen servicemen and -women and peacekeepers worldwide may be offensive and disrespectful in the minds of their family, friends and comrades;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to: educate and promote the poppy as a universal symbol of remembrance and sacrifice, and that its heritage and origin from Canadian roots be highlighted. With this positive focus and purpose in mind,

“We further petition LAO to demonstrate leadership in this endeavour by exemplifying respect and pride in the poppy symbol when referred to by members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario and provincial political parties.”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Rose, who will bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Suze Morrison: I have a petition here entitled “Stop the Premier from Cutting Mental Health Care.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas” the Premier of Ontario “has announced a \$335-million per year funding cut to mental health care and services;

“Whereas an estimated 12,000 children are waiting up to 18 months for mental health care, and there are 63% more children in the ER for mental health issues than there were in 2006;

“Whereas a cut to already threadbare mental health funding will mean longer waits for care and fewer services—which can result in mental health conditions being exacerbated, and more people living with mental illness spiralling into crisis;

“Whereas front-line care workers and first responders are doing the best they can, but coping with a shortage of resources;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse” the Premier’s “\$330-million per year funding cut to Ontario’s mental health services.”

I fully support this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and providing it to page Armita to deliver to the table.

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INJURED WORKERS

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I have a petition here from the injured workers group in Thunder Bay. The petition is called “Workers’ Comp is a Right.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 sign this petition and give it to Marcel.

POET LAUREATE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: “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....

“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 Andre to bring up to the table.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael Mantha: I have a petition from the good people of White River entitled “Stop the Cuts to Indigenous Reconciliation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario is situated on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, many of whom have been on this land for at least 12,000 years;

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

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

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

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

“—reinstate the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;

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

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

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

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Marcel to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Joyce Guenette from Val Caron in my riding for sending me these petitions. It reads as follows:

“Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

“Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

“Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

“Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition.”

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

SERVICES DE SANTÉ DANS LE NORD

M. Michael Mantha: « Sauvez le Service pour le dépistage et le diagnostic du cancer du sein.

« À l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« Attendu que le premier ministre, Doug Ford, a promis qu'il n'y aurait pas de pertes d'emplois d'infirmiers et d'infirmières; et

« Attendu qu'à Sudbury, nous avons déjà perdu 70 infirmiers et infirmières, et que Horizon Santé-Nord ferme une partie du Service pour le dépistage du cancer du sein; et

« Attendu que les coupures au Service pour le dépistage et le diagnostic du cancer du sein de Sudbury entraîneront des délais plus longs, ce qui est très stressant pour les femmes atteintes du cancer du sein; et

« Considérant que les compressions au Service pour le dépistage et le diagnostic du cancer du sein de Sudbury est un pas en arrière;

« Nous, soussignés, demandons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario :

« D'accorder le financement à Horizon Santé-Nord afin d'assurer aux femmes du Nord un accès équitable à des programmes essentiels tels que le Service pour le dépistage et le diagnostic du cancer du sein. »

Je suis complètement d'accord avec cette pétition. Je la présente, avec ma signature, à la page Amber.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I recognize the member from Burlington on a point of order.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I think it sounded like I said the word “Swish.” I'd like to correct it that it is the word “Swiss.”

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STANDING ORDERS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 17, 2018, on the amendment to the motion regarding amendments to the standing orders.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Piccini has moved an amendment to government notice of motion number 5 relating to changes to the standing orders, currently government order number 4. Is it the pleasure of the House that Mr. Piccini's motion carry? That's carried.

Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 5 relating to changes to the standing orders, currently government order number 4.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion, as amended, carry?

All those in favour of the motion, as amended, please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion, as amended, will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1339 to 1349.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Members please take their seats.

Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 5 relating to changes to the standing orders, currently government order number 4.

All those in favour of the motion, as amended, will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Karahalios, Belinda	Rickford, Greg
Baber, Roman	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Babikian, Aris	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Bailey, Robert	Kramp, Daryl	Sandhu, Amarjot
Barrett, Toby	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	MacLeod, Lisa	Scott, Laurie
Bouma, Will	Martin, Robin	Simard, Amanda
Calandra, Paul	Martow, Gila	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Dave
Cho, Stan	McKenna, Jane	Smith, Todd
Coe, Lorne	McNaughton, Monte	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	Miller, Norman	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Nicholls, Rick	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Elliott, Christine	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Fedeli, Victor	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Fullerton, Merrilee	Parsa, Michael	Wilson, Jim
Gill, Parm	Pettapiece, Randy	Yakabuski, John
Harris, Mike	Phillips, Rod	Yurek, Jeff
Hogarth, Christine	Piccini, David	
Jones, Sylvia	Rasheed, Kaleed	

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): All those opposed to the motion, as amended, will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Bell, Jessica	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bisson, Gilles	Hassan, Faisal	Singh, Sara
Bourgouin, Guy	Hatfield, Percy	Stiles, Marit
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Kernaghan, Terence	Vanhof, John
Fife, Catherine	Mamakwa, Sol	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Mantha, Michael	Wynne, Kathleen O.

French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France

Monteith-Farrell, Judith
Morrison, Suze
Schreiner, Mike

Yarde, Kevin

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 64; the nays are 25.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

GREEN ENERGY REPEAL ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 ABROGEANT LA LOI SUR L'ÉNERGIE VERTE

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 15, 2018, on the motion for 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): Further debate?

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I first seek unanimous consent to split my time with the member from Don Valley West.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member from Ottawa–Vanier is speaking unanimous consent to split her time. Agreed? Thank you.

Back to the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: C'est un grand plaisir pour moi de me lever pour discuter du projet de loi 34.

The future will be green, or there won't be a future. This bill is entirely symbolic because it responds to the long-standing opposition of the Conservative Party to green energy.

I commend the government for having included many of the dispositions that—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Stop the clock.

I'm having a very difficult time, even with the earpiece, hearing the member for Ottawa–Vanier. Anybody who is not staying in the House and wishes to carry on a conversation: Please take it outside so that I can hear the member.

Back to the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I wanted to say that I commend the government for including many provisions of the Green Energy Act in the Electricity Act, particularly the ones on conservation and energy efficiency.

I will make two points. The first one is: I am concerned about section 4 of the bill. I would recommend that the government review that section and reconsider it. Secondly, I want to speak to the need to continue to support a green sector.

Number one: Section 4 of the bill treats renewable energy differently than other types of energy. It's one thing not to want to give favoured treatment to renewable energy—and I think that was the point of the government—but it's something else to create an added burden for people who want to invest in renewable energy.

Section 4 says that the Environmental Protection Act is amended by allowing the following clause: That it's possible to prohibit “the issue ... of renewable energy approvals in prescribed circumstances, which may include circumstances in which the demand for the electricity that would be generated ... has not been demonstrated.”

So essentially, the point of this provision is to prevent some renewable energy projects from going on if the demand for them has not been established. In my view, this is unnecessary. If there's no market for the energy that's being produced, the producer will not be in this market. The danger with creating added steps for renewable energies is that it makes them less competitive, and it creates a disincentive for investors from investing in green energy projects.

Green energy has created many jobs in Ontario. Indeed—I think I have the numbers here—since 2009, 42,000 jobs have been created in the green energy sector, with over 30 solar and wind manufacturers right here in Ontario. So there's no reason, really, why we want to prejudice that sector. I think it's okay and I understand that the government wants us to be neutral toward that sector, and that's what I'm recommending. Indeed, the long-term energy plans of the previous government mandated neutrality from now on—being agnostic as to which types of energy we were going to consume in order to ensure price competitiveness.

We know that with the rise in technology, many of the renewable energy projects may become very competitive on price. We should not deter ourselves or prevent ourselves from benefiting from this increase in competitiveness in the green sector. Indeed, I think many of the people who are commenting on the bill recognize that it's one thing not to want to favour green energy, but it's something else if you want to create an added burden. It's not necessary to have these provisions, and I encourage the government to review its position on this.

The second thing that I want to reflect on is the importance of not undermining the green energy sector. The future of our competitiveness depends on having a strong green energy sector. Throughout the world, governments, industry and societies in general are moving toward wanting green products. There are some hiccups. There are some climate change deniers. There are some ultra-conservative governments that continue not to want to recognize the impacts of climate change on the environment—

Interjections.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I'm not talking about you; I'm talking about throughout the world.

Interjection.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I could, but that's not my point. My point is, as I said, I want to make sure that our

competitiveness continues to be ensured in Ontario. To be competitive in the future, you will have to have products that can compete under GHG emissions. We know that the trend will continue. We can predict that competition between products will be about the price, but also about the number of GHGs that are emitted during their production.

We need a technology that continues to be at the utmost leading edge in Ontario. And that's where we were: We were the world leader in continuing to support green energy. We don't want to lose that part. We don't want to go too far in that context. We have created the expertise in green energy. Indeed, Toyota came to Ontario because there was the ability to create its electric car because we had the expertise on staff. We don't want to lose that.

I think we need to continue to be neutral toward green energy and support the green sector generally in order to ensure that Ontario and Ontarians continue to be ready to compete in the future.

Merci, madame la Présidente. I pass the torch to my colleague.

1400

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Madam Speaker, I'm very happy to have a chance to speak to Bill 34 today.

It's a reality that our climate is changing. Humanity is at risk. When I was on a trade mission in my previous incarnation to Vietnam, I was made aware of the fact that parts of that country and vulnerable islands around it are actually sinking, that there is such a desperate need to take action. Closer to home, we see heat, extreme fires and flooding, rising insurance costs, bizarre weather patterns.

And yet, part of the wave of right-wing populism that has overtaken the United States and other jurisdictions and, I would suggest, is taking hold to some extent here is a renewal of permission for climate change denial. That's why this Conservative government cancelled cap-and-trade. That's why they want to cancel the Green Energy Act. That's why they're jumping on the Saskatchewan bandwagon to fight the federal government's climate action strategy. All of this may be good politics—

Interjections.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I hear the heckling from the other side, because they see it as good politics. But it is dangerous and destructive policy.

These actions threaten our children, our grandchildren and our economy, which I would think is something that the party in power today would care about. Both the Green Energy Act and cap-and-trade were part of a coherent strategy and part of Ontario doing its part and leading the way, to pick up on what my colleague from Ottawa-Vanier said, in terms of the development of new, green, clean technology.

It is impossible to explain to children what this government is doing. There is no rational way of saying that the health of the Earth is not important to the adults running the province. There's no way to say that in a way that children can understand. But let's put aside that

emotional argument for a moment. Let's just talk about the economic argument.

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario recently released her report, *Climate Action in Ontario*. I know that the bulk of the report was about the cancellation of cap-and-trade, but it also touched on the cancellation of projects that were facilitated by the Green Energy Act. I think it's important that we understand, as I said before, that these initiatives were part of a whole strategy to allow Ontario to lead the way. She talks about the government's unilateral cancellation of contracts harming business investment and investor confidence. We're talking here about the reputation of a jurisdiction. If a jurisdiction can't be one that can be relied upon by business—business loves certainty, and if business can't rely on a jurisdiction to stick to its word, then that's a problem. What the commissioner said is, "Many businesses hurt by the government's recent decisions had been confident in investing in Ontario due to its hard-earned reputation for having a stable and predictable regulatory and legal environment. As these businesses potentially face millions of dollars in uncompensated liabilities, they (and others) may invest elsewhere instead. They can also be expected to spread the word about their adverse experiences in Ontario." Madam Speaker, I think that is a very, very damaging and problematic direction for this government to take this province in.

When I travelled to Paris to the meeting on climate change, because the coal-fired plants had been shut down, because we were developing clean, green technology, Ontario was seen as a place that people could look to from around the world as a place of innovation and as a place where there was the possibility of experimentation and new technology being developed. That is being undermined by the current actions of this government.

The short-term notion that somehow this "good politics" can trump the long-term benefits of good policy that actually was going to allow us in this province to continue to develop new technology—the reason the member from Ottawa-Vanier talked about the neutrality on the electricity generation, Madam Speaker, is that there are new technologies that are being developed every day. We knew in our long-term energy plan, for example, that storage was going to play a very important role in the future. We need to make sure that we've put in place a framework that allows all the companies that are looking at us and that have looked at us as a jurisdiction of innovation continue to do that.

My fear is that this bill, combined with the other actions that this government is taking, is going to move us out of that role of leadership in the development of clean technology. I remember that I would sit at the Premier's table with former Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall—who was also not interested in taking part in the national move to fight climate change—and he would say, "Well, you know, Canada is a very small percentage of the problem. Canada can't do this alone. We need to look to the larger jurisdictions like China, India and other developing countries."

Well, I would say that now those countries are coming on board. At the same time, even at the time that the Premier of Saskatchewan was making his commentary, the reality is that what Canada can do—and particularly what Ontario can do—is lead the way in the development of technology.

When we look to businesses in this province, yes, they're developing new technologies for Ontario, but they're developing those technologies for other jurisdictions as well. That means that companies will come here, invest, and develop technologies that can be used all over the world.

We are already known for our clean water technology. That water technology was developed because of a concerted investment in that sector and the development of new technologies, unfortunately in the wake of a tragedy here in Ontario, the Walkerton tragedy. The reality is that those technologies have been developed. They can be used here, but they can be used elsewhere, and that's exactly what the Green Energy Act was allowing us to do. That's what cap-and-trade was allowing us to do: reinvest in companies that create jobs and develop technology that can be used all over the world.

I am very worried that the direction that we're going—cancelling projects and cancelling legislation that actually was driving that innovation—is taking us in the wrong direction. I'm going to start to cough, so I'm going to stop. But this is dangerous legislation.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Just take your time. Madam Speaker, a point of order, so that we can allow the member to take a glass of water. I realize that that may not be a point of order, but I think sometimes we should just help each other out.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. We will stop the clock briefly.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: My colleagues, Madam Speaker, are supplying me with Halls. They're not the cherry ones.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Sorry. I apologize. What I really want to say is that we need to make sure that whatever we replace the plan that was in place with, that whatever we do in Ontario, we pay close attention to those issues that I've raised, that we understand that we have a role to play and that we have to take part in a global move to fight climate change, and that we can't abdicate our responsibility by saying that we've generally made a lot of progress.

1410

I hear the Minister of the Environment saying that Ontario has come a long way. Ontario has come a long way because of intentional investments and policy that put in place a framework that allowed us to do that. We can't now remove all of those supports and change those policies so that they're unrecognizable and expect that we will continue to have that progress and that we will continue to meet those targets. The Green Energy Act was part of that strategy. So whatever we do to move forward in

this province, we need to make sure that we put in place policies that are actually going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and that are actually going to fight climate change in the way that we have been over the last decade.

Likewise, we need to make sure that the gains that have been made in terms of economic progress because of the innovation in this province, because of the ability of our well-educated workforce, the investment that has come here because of the Green Energy Act and because of our reputation as a strong green jurisdiction—we need to make sure that that continues. My fear is that with these actions that are being taken by this government, that may not happen. Businesses, innovators and scientists around the world will look around Ontario and will say, "You know what? We're going to go somewhere else because this is a jurisdiction that can't be relied upon to honour a contract. This is a jurisdiction that seems to be abdicating its responsibility and turning away from the green initiatives that it had put in place over the last decade."

So I would implore the government to look at those issues, because this is a government that has said that it's very concerned about economic growth and that it's interested in being open for business. The repeal of the Green Energy act flies in the face of that. The repeal of the Green Energy Act actually says, "We're going to shut the door to innovation. We're going to shut the door to businesses that previously might have looked at Ontario because of our strong regulatory regime and because of our strong support for these innovations." They will look elsewhere. That is not good for Ontario in the short term; that is not good for Ontario in the long term.

It also means that the talented young people who are going through our post-secondary system and who have looked to jobs in this province in the green, clean tech sector are going to go somewhere else; they're not going to stay here. We want them to stay here, and we need an environment and an economy that will encourage them.

I hope that the government will reconsider some parts of this legislation.

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

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to add my voice to the debate today. There's something that I need to focus on and that I can't let slip by. The member from Don Valley West said that we need to leave the emotion out of this and focus on economics. Well, really and truly, that really stuck with me because the reason she's encouraging people to leave the emotion out of it is that we know that the flawed green energy Liberal ideology has absolutely failed Ontarians.

I welcome the opportunity to focus on the economics of their failed policy because it has left Ontario in disarray. It has driven manufacturers out of this province. It has caused a lot of fiscal stress on companies who are still trying to operate. The global adjustment fees alone have just wreaked havoc on the manufacturers that have chosen to stay home in Ontario and try and weather the storm.

Well, as our Premier has said many, many times before, as of June 7, help has arrived. We actually get the economics of the failed Liberal ideology. We understand that in

order to move forward we needed to return autonomy to our municipalities that should have had a voice as opposed to having it ripped away by the former Liberal administration. That was an absolute travesty.

Another thing that I want to share with you is that the member from Ottawa–Vanier said we need to be leading by example. Speaker, you’ve heard me speak about this in the House before: It was the Progressive Conservative government of Ontario in years past that led the way and started the closure. We take full credit for starting the closure of coal plants in Ontario under the very capable leadership of the then-Minister of Environment, Elizabeth Witmer, and the Minister of Health, Jim Wilson. I applaud them for leading the way in that regard.

One thing I will never applaud this Liberal government for is the FOI in telling their bureaucrats to stand down when it came to health issues.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Education: I think we both agree the government certainly could have done things differently. I’m not going to argue with you on that one.

The basic issue is, what do we do in regard to carbon emissions? There are only three levers that we have as government. You can regulate your way by decreasing what people can emit into the atmosphere. There’s a cost to doing that. We’ve done it before.

I live in northern Ontario. A place called Sudbury—that’s not where I live but it’s a place in northern Ontario. We made it so the emissions had to be reduced in Sudbury. When I was a boy growing up, they were using Sudbury as a test bed for the Apollo landings. The astronauts for Apollo 11, Apollo 12 and Apollo 13 all went up to Sudbury and they walked around Sudbury on the rocks out there because it was a place that looked the closest to the moon.

You can do a regulatory approach, you can do a carbon tax or you can do cap-and-trade. I think the value of cap-and-trade is that it moves it to the polluter having to pay. Then you take the money from those polluters and you use that money to reinvest in industry so other industries, including themselves, can use that money in order to reduce emissions into the atmosphere.

Here’s a bit of surprise that I think a lot of government members haven’t realized: China just today launched their carbon market. They’re going to be the largest carbon market under a cap-and-trade system in the world. This is China doing this. They are not exactly known as the beacons of environmental policy. Mind you, I’ve been to China; they’re spewing all kinds of stuff into the atmosphere. The current Premier promised two years ago that they were going to put in place a carbon market in regard to a cap-and-trade system, which is now just being launched today.

The only government that’s going backwards in the world is the Doug Ford government. When China is leading Ontario when it comes to climate change, I think we’re in trouble.

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

Hon. Greg Rickford: Madam Speaker, I was all fired up to respond with a few comments to the member from Don Valley West. I hope she’s okay. She had quite a coughing spell there—the same kind of coughing spell many people have every time they open their hydro bill.

Madam Speaker, with all due respect to the previous government, we are in a serious situation. We are paying among the highest rates for energy bills around the world. Let’s get that straight, Madam Speaker. When it comes to attracting business, it’s on our policies that new businesses and families are finally saying, “Okay, we have a chance here.”

To my friend from Timmins: Let’s be perfectly clear. He’s asking for a lower price of gas because, like his constituents out in northwestern Ontario, most of us drive big pickup trucks. We want a reduction.

Natural gas bills now: People carrying fuel are saying they appreciate very much that the carbon tax, through the cap-and-trade system, is now off their bills.

We still have some work to go. The supply chain, specifically with petroleum, is a tough act to nail down, Madam Speaker. But I would point out that what people are appreciating right now, what businesses have asked us for—and I have been out meeting with industry leaders across this province: steel, mining, forestry and manufacturers. Not one of them—not one, and we’re talking about hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them—has come up to me with a deep appreciation of the energy policies of the previous government. That’s pretty profound. I would have thought, in the normal course of doing one’s affairs as the Minister of Energy, that somebody would come up and say, “You know, there is something good about this.” They haven’t. They’re looking for relief.

It’s not that there is not a place for renewable energy in our energy priorities. It means that it went too far, Madam Speaker. People deserve lower rates, and that’s exactly what we’re delivering.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Questions and comments? Questions and comments? The member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Speaker. I didn’t realize I was going to do two minutes.

Allow me to say to the young people in the gallery today: Welcome. You’re here listening to a debate on repealing the Green Energy Act. The Green Energy Act is something that will impact you as you grow older because it’s talking about the environment, and in your school classes you will learn about air pollution.

1420

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Address the Speaker.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I’m sorry. I am addressing the Speaker but making reference to the children in the audience. Thank you for that.

The Conservatives didn’t want me to talk to the children whose future is at stake when we talk about green energy in this province, Speaker. That says a lot about my good friends on the other side of the aisle.

The point of the debate this afternoon is, they want to stop green energy from going forward, green energy being windmills, green energy being solar farms, moving us away from the pollution that comes out of the exhaust pipes of vehicles, that comes off the exhaust pipes of natural gas plants. There's all kinds of bad stuff going into the air, Speaker, which makes it hard for some people to breathe. The cleaner we can make the air, the cleaner the environment.

The member for Ottawa–Vanier started off her 20 minutes this afternoon by saying that the future will be green or there won't be a future, and that bears repeating: The future will be green, or there won't be a future. That's what I think the young people in the gallery today should listen to, because when they go back to school and do their school projects on the environment or green energy, they'll remember the debate they heard today and who was standing up for the future and who was trying to shut down the debate this afternoon.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. Back to the member from Ottawa–Vanier for a wrap-up.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you for the interventions that I heard from the MPPs from Timmins and Windsor, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Energy.

I hope that at least my comment about the need for neutrality between different types of energy consumption is heard by the government. It's not something to say that we went too far to support too much green energy, but I don't think we can go too far the other way and then undercut green energy and create some additional burdens for people who want to invest in energy. You don't know what the future of energy will be, because there's lots of development and technology. Green energy is becoming more and more competitive price-wise, as well as allowing us to be competitive on the international scene and leaders in the new way in which all governments, all societies, will want to see their world. Therefore, it's our responsibility to tread carefully in trying to undermine everything that was done before. It's a tendency that occurs in new governments to say, "We're there. We're new. Everything that was done before is probably bad because we have the truth."

I just want them to be a bit careful and not undercut things that did go well for Ontario. The fact that we have the technology here to allow continued investment in green energy: It's our responsibility to the future. It's our responsibility to ensure that we have a future, that we have a future that is green and that we have all of the technology and the human resources that are there to support the new way in which we need to produce businesses and products.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'm pleased to rise today and speak on Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act, 2018.

Our government, the people's government, is focused on rebuilding the province's economy and restoring trust and accountability to government. Since day one, our government has focused on lowering hydro rates and

reforming our energy system. This piece of legislation is another important component of achieving these goals.

One of the first actions we took as a government was to cancel 758 expensive and wasteful energy projects. This represents a \$790-million savings for electricity customers in Ontario. The Green Energy Act led to the disastrous feed-in tariff program that caused skyrocketing electricity rates for Ontario families and took away powers from municipalities to stop expensive and unneeded energy projects in our communities.

Over the course of the next few minutes, I will outline how Bill 34 will lower hydro rates, respect municipalities and attract more businesses to Ontario.

One of the greatest costs Ontarians faced under the previous Liberal government was skyrocketing hydro rates. Under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals, hydro rates tripled. At its peak, families in Toronto were paying, on average, \$160 per month for hydro. My constituents in rural Ontario were paying even more. The average family in a low-density community was paying \$330 per month.

In 2017 alone, wind and solar added \$3.75 billion in costs to electric bills.

We've all heard about these horror stories. Families had to decide whether to pay their hydro bill or put food on the table. This is shameful. In a country such as Canada, in a province as wealthy as Ontario, families should not have to decide whether to feed their children or pay their hydro bills.

In 2015, the Ontario Energy Board revealed that 60,000 households in the province had been cut off. This represented a 20% increase over the previous year.

In 2016, the Auditor General found that Ontario rate-payers overpaid \$9.2 billion for green energy.

The Liberals' Green Energy Act was the largest transfer of money from the poor and middle class to the rich in Ontario's history. Thousands of green energy contracts were awarded to companies that together donated \$1.3 million to the Liberals.

A common complaint I heard at the doors during this year's spring election was the cost of electricity. Some of my constituents took steps to reduce their energy consumption, but their hydro bills still went up.

The Green Energy Act was not designed to promote energy consumption. It was simply a way to enrich Liberal insiders and their friends.

As I mentioned earlier, some constituents in my riding of Perth–Wellington saw their hydro bills triple. The businesses saw even higher hydro bills. Hard-working business owners have seen their bottom lines shrink due to the previous government's mismanagement and mis-handling of the energy file.

I think of Conroy Schelhaas, owner of the Forest Motel in Stratford. Despite investing over \$90,000 in energy-efficient upgrades, Conroy paid over \$21,000 for electricity. His energy bills continued to skyrocket with no relief under the previous government.

In Milverton, Mike Carter is in a similar situation. Mike operates the Food Town grocery store. Like Conroy, he invested in energy-efficient lighting. He replaced his

freezers and refrigerators. But rather than reap the benefits of energy-efficient upgrades, the opposite happened. Hydro One increased his delivery charges by more than double. His bill went up by 30%.

It is not only our small business owners who felt the squeeze due to high energy rates. Some of our most vulnerable have suffered due to increasing hydro. Under the previous government, hospitals, long-term-care facilities and schools were forced to cut back the quality of care and teaching due to rising hydro rates.

This is just the tip of the iceberg.

Speaker, Perth–Wellington is home to some of the most productive agricultural land in the world. My riding is home to thousands of farm families who produce high-quality food for Ontarians and the world. Many of these agriculture operations require a continuous supply of electricity 24/7. Under the McGuinty-Wynne Liberals, their hydro rates skyrocketed. Dairy, pig, chicken and egg farmers were paying thousands of dollars per month for electricity. These agriculture producers had no choice but to pay these hydro bills. If they did not keep the hydro on, their animals, quite simply, would die.

I know this is not an isolated incident.

I heard from hundreds of businesses in my riding about how hydro costs are becoming one of their biggest expenses. One business in my riding was spending almost \$200,000 a month on electricity. That is \$2.4 million per year.

The long-term viability of doing business in Ontario was threatened by the Green Energy Act.

My riding of Perth–Wellington is home to many different manufacturing plants. From Toyota to Hyundai, many of the major car manufacturers assemble parts in my riding and employ thousands of people. They are required to meet certain targets from head office. The rise in hydro prices discouraged the future expansion of some of these manufacturing plants. The head offices of these companies would compare the costs of expanding in Ohio versus Ontario. Many plant managers told me that expansion was just not viable when the price of electricity was so much more affordable at their US locations. For the past nine years, Ontario was placed at a competitive disadvantage compared to our American trading partners.

1430

What is even more disappointing is the fact that Ontario was indirectly subsidizing American businesses. Under the previous Liberal government, Ontario was selling cheap electricity to the United States at a loss. In 2015, the province of Ontario lost more than \$1.7 billion. Consumers in Ohio, Michigan and New York enjoyed cheap electricity while Ontarians had to choose between feeding their families and paying their hydro bills.

Under the Green Energy Act, the Liberal government even had to pay wind and solar companies to not produce electricity. In 2017, 26% of electricity generated from these two sources was curtailed. The Green Energy Act drove families into energy poverty and lined the pockets of Liberal insiders.

Bill 34 is good for the middle class, businesses and municipalities. Repealing the Green Energy Act is one of the first steps to restoring trust and accountability between municipal governments and the province.

I have a good understanding of municipal politics. Before being elected in 2011, I served two terms on the North Perth council. I know that some of my colleagues also served on their local municipal councils at some point in their careers. We know that all politics is local, especially at the municipal level.

The Green Energy Act was probably one of the most draconian pieces of legislation when it came to the rights of municipal governments. The previous Liberal government bullied Ontario's municipalities into accepting unnecessary green energy projects. It took away the planning rights of municipalities.

I witnessed first-hand the rights of municipalities being trampled on. The wind turbine lobby groups continuously attempted to build industry wind farms in my riding of Perth–Wellington. This was despite clear opposition to these wind farms being built. Over the course of the Green Energy Act, 80 municipal councils passed resolutions, motions or bylaws regarding industrial wind turbine development and the Green Energy Act. In my own riding, these municipal councils included the townships of Mapleton and Wellington North, the municipalities of West Perth and North Perth, as well as Wellington county.

Instead of working together and consulting with the municipalities, the previous government took a heavy-handed approach. They turned neighbour against neighbour as developers quietly signed deals to lease privately owned lands—time and time again, a process characterized by a lack of openness and transparency.

I am reminded of the Conestogo Wind Energy project and the fight against this project not so long ago, in 2013. The Conestogo Wind Energy project was another in a long line of projects that were pushed on our municipalities. In this instance, it was a partnership between the previous Liberal government and Invenergy Canada.

To provide some context, the Conestogo Wind Energy project called for 26 turbines to be built between North Perth and Perth East, near Listowel, Ontario—a massive project. It was met with great opposition by the residents of North Perth. The community spoke loudly and clearly against this project. A public survey showed that a staggering 96% of respondents opposed this project. Some 74% of the households in the project area participated in this study. That's almost three out of four households in opposition. The message could not have been clearer.

To prevent this project from going through, I reached out to the previous government. I hand-delivered to the Liberal Premier a copy of the Conestogo project's municipal consultation form. This was the form submitted by the municipality of North Perth. I specifically remember a letter in that package from North Perth mayor Julie Behrns, loud and clear, written in bold type with Mayor Behrns's message: "This project does not have municipal support."

It is fair to say that steamrolling a project through the consultation phase, against the will of the municipality and its residents, is reason enough for opposition, but to add insult to injury, there were other serious reasons for opposition. Speaker, included in that package were pages and pages of evidence documenting serious problems and faulty assumptions with the industrial wind farm proposal. Make no mistake: There were serious deficiencies with the Invenergy proposal. Let me take a moment and outline a few of these deficiencies.

Renewable energy approval—REA—documents provided by Invenergy omitted non-participating noise receptors related to active building permits. It should also be noted that these existed well before the draft site plan was released. Furthermore, Invenergy was fully aware of these building permits before the plan was prepared. The list continues on. There was also a noticeable and startling lack of preparedness on the part of the project. This included a lack of a traffic management plan; a lack of detail concerning the watering and mitigation plans; and no plan to prevent electrical contamination in an agricultural area. Given our riding's reliance on agriculture, these findings were both striking and startling.

As Mayor Behrns said in her letter, "The documentation provided is not sufficient to meet the government's requirement for meaningful municipal consultation with the municipality." Meaningful municipal consultation was not there, Speaker. This is a direct contrast to what the previous government had promised in their throne speech from earlier that year. As said by the previous government, "Communities must be involved and connected to one another...."

"They must have a voice in their future and a say in their integrated, regional development.

"So that local populations are involved from the beginning if there is going to be ... a wind plant ... in their hometown.

"Because our economy can benefit from these things, but only if we have willing hosts."

It goes without saying that the residents of North Perth were not willing hosts. Fortunately, this story does have a happy ending. The Ontario Power Authority, or the OPA, and the Conestogo wind power partnership "mutually agreed" to terminate the contract for the Conestogo wind energy project. It was truly a victory for residents, grassroots organizers and council members in North Perth and the township of Perth East, who stood up to the previous government and Invenergy.

As I stand here now, I am pleased to say that because of local leadership, no industrial wind farms were built in Perth county over the course of the last nine years. I believe this is in part due to the municipal governments and community groups working together to protect the rights of our rural communities.

Other communities were not so lucky, Speaker. Hundreds of municipalities across Ontario had these wind and solar farms imposed on them. Health concerns surrounding these individual wind farms were ignored by the previous government. Documents released under the

freedom-of-information act revealed that the previous Liberal government ignored warnings from their own environment ministry. They were told that the province needed stricter noise limits on turbines. They had no reliable way to monitor or enforce them, and computer models for determining residential setbacks were flawed. Speaker, this is shameful.

To make matters worse, the previous Liberal government ignored the majority of these noise complaints from property owners and municipalities. Through another freedom-of-information act, it was revealed that officials from the Ministry of the Environment chose not to investigate or deferred responding to approximately 68% of all noise and health complaints. That's incredible, Speaker.

While the former Premier and her Minister of Energy ignored these complaints and concerns, billion-dollar green energy companies were suing rural Ontario farmers. In 2015, three multi-billion-dollar wind turbine companies were seeking \$340,000 in legal damages from four farm families. These families were simply trying to prevent the construction of industrial wind turbines near their homes. Some of the turbines were going to be 750 metres from their house. You have to ask yourself: Would you want an industrial wind turbine less than a kilometre from your home? I certainly wouldn't.

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Thankfully, our government is listening to our rural communities and municipalities. Bill 34 will restore municipal planning authority related to the placement of renewable-energy generating facilities, restrict appeals on municipal refusals and non-decisions, and enhance the government's authority to make regulations prohibiting the issuance of renewable energy approvals where the need for the electricity has not been demonstrated.

The repeal of the Green Energy Act is good for municipal governments. Our government is restoring trust and accountability to government. This piece of legislation is an important first step.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle may claim Bill 34 will somehow reduce Ontario's environmental protection. However, our proposed legislation will maintain provisions related to energy efficiency and conservation standards. We will give people the information they need to make decisions to help lower their energy costs. This includes such things as 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 moved to other acts.

The Green Energy Act actually encouraged non-environmentally-friendly practices. Farm families outside of Wallaceburg, Ontario, witnessed first-hand what an industrial wind turbine farm can do to their water. The local residents commissioned a hydrogeologist at their own expense to study why their well water was brown. They found that the vibrations from the wind turbines are causing the black shale particle count to jump. These industrial wind farms are actually contaminating the local water supply.

The effects of the McGuinty-Wynne Green Energy Act will be felt for decades to come. Speaker, after years of skyrocketing electricity rates, your hydro bills will finally start to come down. We're cleaning up the Liberal hydro mess and making sure our electricity system works for the people once again.

During the process of getting the wind farm cancelled in Perth county, which I'm very proud to have been a part of, it was something to see churches torn apart and people in our local schools separated over these issues, and the government just didn't care. So now we have people renting buildings to start a new church up because we couldn't agree with the bunch over here. I hope this is solved in the future. They're all great people and they're all good people. They should not have had to be put through this whole business. It was certainly shameful on the government's part.

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

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Order. The member for Timmins.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, that was interesting.

Just a couple of points that I want to make in regards to the speech.

The first part was the assertion that green energy is what caused the price of electricity to go up. It's not green energy, per se. It was the private contracts. There are ways of delivering green energy projects in a way that would have allowed the price to stay at what it was. The problem was that the previous government—first with the original FIT program and then with the second FIT program—was paying above the cost that it cost us, the public utility, to generate electricity to build these windmill projects or solar projects. So it's not green energy, per se. The government is obviously saying that for a reason, because they were opposed to green energy. So this is a great way for them to be seen as being opposed to green energy in a way that is less harmful. But green energy wasn't the issue; it was the contracts and how they were structured.

The second thing—I agree with the government—is that one of the difficulties in the previous legislation is that municipalities lost the ability to do their own planning. That's a real issue. I'm with the government in understanding that something has to be done.

Here's the problem with this legislation. What a lot of people don't know is—in my first read of the legislation—the only energy that's affected when it comes to removing the ability of the municipality to say no is green energy; in other words, windmills and solar panels. If you want to build a non-utility generator of some other type next to somebody's house, the municipality won't be able to say no because it's not covered by this legislation.

Again, this is more about the politics of green energy than it is about trying to fix the problem. And there is a real problem about how you give local citizens the ability to have a say about planning in their own community. We should have that discussion seriously about all energy projects, not just about one particular type.

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

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: In 2009, under the Dalton McGuinty government, the Ontario Green Energy Act was enacted—an act that aimed to increase Ontario's use of renewable energy such as wind power, solar power, bio-fuels and small-scale hydro power. This act initially sounded good and probably was well intended, but recent research analysis shows that this energy act had, and will have, disastrous impacts on Ontario's energy rates and was seriously threatening economic competitiveness for the manufacturing and mining markets. We were receiving very little environmental benefits for the cost. This act needlessly put Ontario into a situation where we would be paying high energy costs for decades.

If this act continues, Ontario would soon see itself having one of the most expensive electricity costs in North America. High energy costs would be devastating to Ontario's economy. We have already seen major price increases for large energy consumers, and researchers are anticipating additional hikes of 40% to 50% over the next few years. Because of these price hikes, we estimate that the manufacturing and mining sectors will be hard hit, with returns to investment in manufacturing likely to decline by 29% and mining by 13%.

By repealing the Ontario Green Energy Act, we are opening Ontario for business, putting more money—

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: There's a lot of what I'm hearing from my colleagues across the way that we're going to agree on—one of them, as far as what is the root cause of the problems with the Green Energy Act and why it worked and why it didn't work. The problem that we're looking at was not the wind or the farms; it's looking at those contracts. Look at the contracts and the implementation of this.

First of all, to the member who took the lead as far as bringing his comments forward: I agree with you; taking away the local, democratic right of municipalities to determine their choice, as far as they wanted to have it or not, was wrong. What was also wrong was for the government to say, "We know best. We're going to pass this over to the private sector. We're going to give them lucrative contracts—because they know best—and we're going to let them decide as to where they go. In the meantime, we're going to take away that right from municipal leaders." I agree with you. This was an opportunity for some municipal leaders—because not all were opposed; not all didn't want to have it. What is the biggest thing that we heard when we were over at AMO? "Give us new revenue-generating tools for municipalities." This was an opportunity where some municipalities who were in favour, whether of wind or farms, could have generated that opportunity. But no; what the government of the day said was, "We're going to take away that democratic right of yours. We know best. We're going to put it into the private sector."

Well, what about the public? We've just watched this government—and again, we agree on the fact that they sold off Hydro One, and how that boondoggle decision increased our rates—the same way they rolled out the implementation of the Green Energy Act. We see those things; we don't dispute that. But to throw everything on, saying that everything that came out of green was wrong—I believe this government is misleading the public in saying so.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you very much, Speaker.

Applause.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's all good? Are we good to go? Are the cameras rolling? Lights, cameras, action! All right.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Chatham-Kent–Leamington, I apologize. You couldn't hear it over the excitement.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: First of all, I want to thank the NDP for the round of applause. Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Mr. Michael Mantha: That was for me, not for you.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Oh, that was for you? Oh, I'm sorry. The member from Algoma–Manitoulin, forgive me.

But do you know what? There are a few points here with regard to the Green Energy Act that I'd like to point out; they're very simple. When you talk about world pollution, Canada only contributes about one half of 1%—that's 0.5%—of the world's pollution. Yet we are forcing Ontarians—this is the former Liberal government—to foot the bill. Well, come on. We're not going to foot the bill for that kind of stuff.

It was interesting to note as well that the former Liberal government was trying to do a lot of business with the Chinese, probably the largest polluters in the world. Interestingly enough, too, when those westerlies blow across, they dump right into Ontario. They're dumping into us, and it's affecting us as well.

Let's talk about industrial wind turbines for just a moment. The riding of Chatham-Kent–Leamington has over 500 industrial wind turbines, which have destroyed the landscape. Obviously, we know that this has just driven hydro costs right up. Property values are depreciating like crazy. Of course, there is also—and it's up for discussion right now; we're looking into it—the pollution of water wells due to the piledriving of industrial turbines in the North Kent wind farm. We need to determine exactly the actual cause of that. Our government is taking the necessary steps, slowly but surely, to ensure that that particular issue is taken care of.

Again, we have to remember that it was the NDP that propped up the Liberal government in support of the Green Energy Act.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the member for Perth–Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I want to thank the members from Timmins, Brampton West, Algoma–Manitoulin and Chatham-Kent–Leamington.

The members of the opposition certainly agree on some of the things we've found issue with in the Green Energy Act. It's not that we don't agree that green energy can play a part in our energy sector. It was way overpriced, for one thing. That's one of the biggest problems: It was way overpriced.

But also, government ignored some of the health concerns. There are people who are not living on their properties because they can't stand the vibration, or whatever it is, when these turbines are turning. The government has ignored them. In fact, companies are suing these people now over some of these issues, and that's just not fair.

I think there certainly is some agreement with the opposition that the Green Energy Act was flawed.

Unfortunately, the government at the time that brought in this legislation wouldn't listen to anybody else. Whatever reason they were doing this for, I don't know. I do know that setting rates as high as 80 cents for solar when they first brought this thing in was ridiculous, when most of us were paying, what, five or six cents for hydro. They were giving solar companies—they started them off at 80 cents. I don't know who dreamed that up. And I don't blame the people who took advantage of that. Why wouldn't you? But now we're seeing the results, where people are having difficulty paying their bills.

I think that as we move forward with this legislation, which I believe is a great piece of legislation, it will give some comfort to the people of Ontario that we are actually working to get their hydro rates down, or working to make it less costly here.

We're also giving a signal to manufacturers that had left the province in the previous number of years, because of hydro rates, that maybe there's opportunity, that Ontario is open for business again and we would welcome them back, as we would with new industry starting in Ontario.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's a pleasure to stand in place today on behalf of the good people in Windsor–Tecumseh and try to make sense out of this proposed bill to repeal the Green Energy Act.

As we all know, the Liberals introduced the Green Energy Act, and it was a flawed bill; I think we can all agree on that. But I believe the concept was sound. What they wanted to do was create a new industry, create thousands of new jobs, stimulate the economy, but it came with no real business plan in the sense that the offshore companies tapped to introduce the windmills, for example, set a price for power that was unsustainable and the McGuinty Liberals either didn't understand that or didn't care.

I think if you look at the record, George Smitherman as energy minister was driving the train on that, the green energy train. Dwight Duncan was the conductor and Dalton McGuinty had his fingerprints all over the paperwork. To her credit, Ms. Wynne, the member from Don Valley West, rebrokered that sweetheart deal, cut the premiums by something like—I don't know—was it 40%? But it was such an outrageous deal to begin with that that

40% reduction wasn't enough of a cut by any stretch of the imagination.

But here are some simple truths, Speaker. Green energy is good. The Liberal green energy plan was bad. Renewable energy is clean energy. Air pollution is bad. Climate change is real, and getting away from burning coal was a good thing; turning back to coal would be bad. Billions have been saved in medical bills. We don't have as many people, especially the young people and the very old, with asthma and other breathing problems caused by air pollution, so there's been a huge savings on the medical file by closing those coal-burning plants. Smog days are extremely rare in Ontario now that coal is out of the picture. Yes, green energy has worked. The price of green energy based on the flawed Liberal scheme has not worked, just like the Conservative and Liberal privatization schemes of our energy sector have not lowered the cost of energy in Ontario.

Speaker, I mentioned pollution. I wish to tell you for a moment about a man who used to represent my riding when it was called Windsor–Riverside, before it became Windsor–Tecumseh. His name was Fred Burr. He was here from 1967 to 1977. He was a true environmental visionary, and his is a story we are all well advised to recall.

Fred was the first MPP to speak of wind energy and solar energy. He didn't advocate for outrageous pricing by any means. He didn't say we should strip the rights of landowners and municipalities, but he wanted people to consider the alternate sources of energy. He was one of the first members to champion the anti-smoking crusades in the workplace. He warned of the mercury pollution in fish in the St. Clair River. He raised concerns of freon gas and what it was doing to our atmosphere. He pressed the government to make organ and tissue donation possible in Ontario.

Speaker, you may have heard of George Kerr from Burlington, a Conservative MPP. In fact, George Kerr, in 1971, was named as the first Minister of the Environment in Ontario, and he was the first Minister of the Environment in any government in Canada. George Kerr credited Fred Burr, who had raised so many environmental issues, as being the force that pushed Bill Davis into creating the initial Ministry of the Environment—high praise indeed and well deserved for a former New Democratic representative of the riding that I am honoured to represent today.

Fred Burr, 50 years ago in this House, said, "Mankind will die of massive epidemics of respiratory diseases and suffocation within the next hundred years. There is an aerial sewer 12 to 14 miles thick all around the earth and there is just no more space to dump this pollution in" our atmosphere.

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Speaker, as I said, it's a good thing the Liberals got rid of the coal-burning plants in Ontario, which put an end to smog days and to breathing problems for many people, especially young children and the elderly. Millions, if not billions, of dollars have been saved in the health care

budget by closing those polluting coal-burning energy plants.

I know that former Conservative MPP Elizabeth Witmer, who served as the Minister of the Environment for a year in 2001 and 2002, may have closed the first coal-burning plant, but then nothing happened for quite a while, until the Liberals finally got serious about air pollution several years later.

Speaker, as a former municipal politician, I, like so many others in this room, was outraged when the flawed Green Energy Act of the Liberals trampled all over the planning acts and other official plans of Ontario's municipalities. I didn't think it was possible. How could they do that—strip away the property rights of individual landowners and dictate to elected municipal politicians that they couldn't do anything about it?

I accept that municipal governments are the creatures, if you will, of provincial governments, but the Liberal Green Energy Act, in my opinion, took advantage of that relationship. And if "creature" is the operative word here, then the Liberals were, to borrow an old Hollywood movie title, the creatures of the Black Lagoon—unwanted, unpopular and unforgiven.

Those chickens finally came home to roost four and a half months ago, and not soon enough for some people, Speaker. However, what we have in front of us today, the Conservative bill to repeal the Green Energy Act, is sloganeering at best.

As my good friend from Toronto Danforth, my party's energy critic, Mr. Tabuns, said when this Bill 34 was introduced: "Hydro prices are still rising and they are out of control. Bill 34 will do nothing about that—nothing."

He went on to say: "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."

The member for Toronto Danforth also stated: "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."

Speaker, as you know, Ontario's Environmental Commissioner was writing recently along many of these same lines when commenting on the Conservative plan to gut the Liberal cap-and-trade plan.

First, though, a quick reminder: The Environmental Commissioner is an independent officer of this Legislature. She's non-partisan, just like our Auditor General. The Conservatives trumpet the views of the Auditor General when she comments on the Liberals' so-called Fair Hydro Plan. They tell us her views are non-partisan, and we should pay attention to them, as she is an independent, non-partisan officer of the Legislature. So logic would dictate they must feel the same way about the other independent officers of the House, such as Dianne Saxe, the Environmental Commissioner. She has no political axe

to grind. She's mandated to oversee our environmental policies.

Ms. Saxe issued a crucial report, some say a damning report—their words, not mine—on the way the Ford administration is cancelling the Liberal cap-and-trade program without having a replacement plan in place.

Here is one of her quotes from that official report: “Dismantling a climate change law that was working is bad for our environment, bad for our health, and bad for business.”

To top that off, she adds—and this is a memorable quote, Speaker—“When pollution is free, we can expect more of it....”

I suppose, in a way, it's like buck-a-beer. If it's cheap, you buy more of it—if you can find it, Speaker. I know it's very difficult at the liquor stores, the LCBO and the Beer Stores to find a buck-a-beer—but that's beside the point. It's too bad we didn't see the government bring in a plan for a buck-a-loaf of bread or a buck-a-jug of milk.

Anyway, the science on climate change is sound, and we do need a plan to deal with it. Al Gore, the former American Vice-President, was in Toronto recently, and he said, “We cannot go on using the sky as an open sewer.”

As I was saying about my party's energy critic, the member for Toronto–Danforth, Mr. Tabuns, he called this bill more messaging than content. He detailed how and why hydro rates have shot up so much during the Conservative and Liberal regimes and explained how little of that increase was actually attributable to the Green Energy Act. It was privatization, initially by the Harris Conservatives but continued under the Liberals and their outrageous sell-off of our public energy assets, and then their egregious and outrageous so-called Fair Hydro Plan, which will see hydro rates continue to rise despite this bill repealing the Green Energy Act. We see in front of us the shortfalls of the previous government built on the foundation of the shortfalls of the government before them—a government that haphazardly started privatizing electricity and led us down the road we're standing on today.

The previous government didn't campaign on a plan to sell off Hydro One, to privatize the electrical grid and sell off valuable public assets, but they did it. Not one of them in the election before last went door to door, saying, “I am going to sell Hydro One when I get into office.” But they did it. They did it on the back of the initiatives from the government before them, under Mike Harris. They did it on the backs of Ontarians and what was in their best interest, putting profits over people.

The rates Ontarians are paying for hydro are directly related to the decisions made under the Harris government. As much as our current government would like to point their fingers at the last Liberal government and place the blame on the Green Energy Act, the fact is that hydro rates were already on the rise when that act was enacted in 2009.

As my colleague the member for Toronto–Danforth so eloquently put it when he spoke to this last week: “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....” It didn't have to be this way but, more importantly, it doesn't have to be this way going forward.

Repealing the Green Energy Act won't address the problems of rising hydro rates. It won't address the problems facing our environment. For years, we've heard the calls for change, the need for action regarding climate change and the consequences of inaction, so the release of the United Nations climate change report earlier this month shouldn't have surprised anyone. The report said exactly what was expected: that, to some degree, the environment was in trouble and immediate action is needed. What was perhaps shocking was just how dire the situation actually was. Speaker, 12 years: We have only 12 years to take action and to reverse the trajectory that we're currently on; 12 years to meet targets and to take action. This government is responsible for at least a third of that in the next four years, and that's a scary thought, based on the history and what history has shown us.

What's at stake here is above ideological differences. These are science-driven facts from the world's leading scientists on climate change. It's directly tied to how we move forward regarding Bill 34. As my legislative assistant, Mike Gibbons, puts it, the Liberals and Conservatives have been carpooling to work since 1995. These Conservatives, who didn't like the way the Liberals were driving the car for the last 15 years, had them pull over so they could switch drivers. The Conservatives didn't check their mirrors. They didn't adjust their seats. They were so eager to have a chance at driving this car once again that they didn't take any time to consider what the Liberals were doing wrong or how to adjust for it before starting their turn at the wheel.

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No, instead they were going to do things differently, without any forethought. They quickly pulled out onto the street and started driving the wrong way, into oncoming traffic. This is where we find ourselves today: with a government that is, in many ways, continuing with the same patterns of the government before them—patterns of reckless decision-making. It's like carpooling karaoke, Speaker. They've been singing off key, the Liberals and the Conservatives, on the energy file, singing from the same old songbook now for the past 15 years.

I saw my friend from Chatham–Kent–Leamington on television last Friday night. He was at an opening of a new hydro-pole-climbing—

Interjection.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Yes, yes, yes—in Chatham. St. Clair College had a new faculty open up where they're actually going to climb hydro poles and teach them how to do it safely.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: National Powerline.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: It's a national training facility, and my friend from Chatham–Kent–Leamington was there and he was speaking at the microphone and he said, “I'm trying not to say it, but I want to start singing, ‘I am a lineman for the country / And I drive the main roads.’” I

thought it was funny. When he was speaking this morning, I sent him a note saying that he is the lineman for the county.

But getting back to this, it's funny the amount of hyperbole that's coming from across the aisle. The government says it wants transparency, and so do we, but we have yet to see it from the government's Bill 34 and how it will afford this government the ability to continue doing what the last government was doing. What they have been doing together is making decisions behind closed doors. We've seen it time and time again in the short time that this government has taken the wheel. I've addressed it with regard to the backroom deals made with the owners and operators at racetracks across the province and on the abhorrent lack of transparency that this government displayed as it slashed away at Toronto city council during an election that was halfway through—zero consultation.

This government has said that Bill 34 will protect municipalities, that it will be a remedy to the government. But it's trampling the rights of municipalities based on the actions of this government to date. I fail to see how this is the case. This government has shown that they will trample the rights of municipalities without a second thought and they do not respect any aspect of the municipal decision-making process.

Speaker, I digress, but I would enjoy pointing out the differences in what this government is saying versus what they're doing. The issue at hand is why we should not repeal the Green Energy Act. Reducing hydro bills for Ontarians by 12%, as the government wants to do, is a great start but it needs to be backed up. How will you do that? Where are those numbers going to add up?

In the last election, as you know, Speaker, our party ran on reducing hydro rates as well. The difference is, though, that we backed it up. We provided a costed platform with details on this file and how we would achieve our goals: by returning Hydro One to public ownership and control, to ensure that it serves the public interest; by protecting hydro so future governments can't sell off Hydro One without the permission of the public through a referendum; and, again talking about transparency and accountability, re-establishing an independent, transparent public oversight of Hydro One.

But there are immediate steps that can be taken, and they could do it in this bill if they chose to. You could look at eliminating the time-of-use pricing. You could look at equalizing delivery charges. And why aren't these pragmatic approaches to this issue being considered by the government? I ask you, Speaker, why not?

Instead, the price of hydro in Ontario continues to rise. Bill 34 does nothing to fix the problem. The bill won't curtail privatization, it doesn't diminish skyrocketing hydro costs and it dismisses pressing environmental concerns. What it does do is afford this government the ability to potentially make the same costly and reckless decisions behind closed doors that the previous government made.

We need transparency. We need more time to talk about this bill. I just say to my good friend from Chatham–Kent–

Leamington, as the member from Perth–Wellington said, that the bill split families, split church groups. In Chatham–Kent, the mayor was out there lobbying for as many windmills as they could put up. Even though some people in the community said, “We don't want any more,” the leader of the municipality was out there soliciting as many as he could get.

Thank you for your time.

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

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: It's a pleasure to rise to comment on Bill 34. I took from the great speech that we just heard that what we should be doing is improving the Green Energy Act, not repealing it completely. Part of it, I think, is because of the following.

I remember when I started running less than two years ago, actually—I was elected less than two years ago, and during the electoral campaign I had to get to understand very well the energy file because it was very much top of mind. I had the chance to sit with different experts, trying to understand what's the future—we are where we are—of energy in Ontario and where are we going? I was pleased that eventually, with the long-term energy plan, we had the vision to say, “We're going to be neutral. We may have made a mistake to be overly generous to start the renewable energy”—because it was not a competitive industry in Ontario. We invested in it to make sure that they became competitive, and now they are. Now they can compete for contracts, and we should allow them to compete on contracts.

I agree with giving powers to municipalities. The problem here is that only renewable energy contracts are subject to constraints. I think all energy projects should be similarly treated. It's better to be neutral versus the different types of energy so that they can really compete on price.

I think that's part of the difficulty that we have in this bill. It's not that it's seeking to improve; that's fine. It is that maybe it takes a singular approach to say, “The only place where we really want to create some constraint is in the renewable energy sector.” That, in my view, is a mistake. We should be neutral and we should continue to accept that green energy is a good thing for Ontario.

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

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: It's a pleasure to rise and debate today on the Green Energy Act. It should be no surprise to anyone in the province of Ontario that the Progressive Conservative government, under the leadership and Premiership of Doug Ford, would want to repeal the Green Energy Act. We have, since 2009, been a party that has consistently stood against this reckless policy that was brought in by the previous Liberal administration. It stripped local decision-making; it subsidized, at a very high cost, power that we didn't need; and it drove up people's hydro bills at a time when Ontario was losing jobs in manufacturing.

I know a colleague of mine earlier alluded to the fact that this has been divisive in communities and it has been

controversial in communities. Therefore, I think we have broad support, and we have a strong and very clear mandate for us to move this forward. That's a real credit to our Minister of Energy, who has taken this file on very quickly.

If there is one thing Progressive Conservatives have been known for since 2009, it is opposing this reckless policy that has divided many of our communities right across Ontario, including my former riding of Nepean–Carleton.

I also want to point out that when the member opposite talks about the Auditor General, as a former energy critic, as a former finance critic and as a former Treasury Board critic before we formed government and I was appointed to cabinet, I read all of those auditor's reports. The Auditor General said that for every one job created by the Green Energy Act, four more were lost. Some 330,000 manufacturing jobs were lost under the watch of the previous Liberal administration—which was supported, by the way, 97% of the time by the NDP.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: One of the things that I want to stand and speak to today is the issue—and I want to reiterate some of the comments that my colleague has made: that this act does nothing to address the affordability of hydro and, really, the affordability crisis of hydro that we're seeing in this province.

In the last 10 years, we've seen hydro bills in Ontario go up by 100%, which, quite frankly, is outrageous. As my colleague from Toronto–Danforth said in his opening remarks on this when this bill was tabled, the green energy portion of those increases can only account for about 15% of hydro bills. So when the Conservatives are standing up here and saying, "We're seeing our hydro bills go through the roof because of the green energy program," it's simply not true.

1520

The real culprit here, as folks in the NDP have been saying for a very long time now, is the privatization of hydro. If, as my Conservative colleagues are always saying, you want to be putting more money back in people's pockets, look at the real culprit. The real culprit here is privatization.

We need solutions to address the hydro affordability in this province, but it's not found in this act. You're going in the wrong direction.

There are solutions that are to be found. We can bring hydro back into public ownership. We can look at things like the disproportionate rates of delivery charges that folks in rural areas are facing compared to ridings like mine in downtown Toronto. We can look at eliminating time-of-use billing, which it has been shown simply doesn't work.

There are solutions to be found to the affordability of hydro in this province, and they're not found in this bill. I'm very, very concerned. I really hope that my Conservative colleagues will take a second look at this one.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I rise 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 repeal the Green Energy Act and make life easier and more affordable for Ontario families and businesses.

As the chair of the law and economic program at the University of Toronto, Michael Trebilcock, says, "The Liberal record on energy is one of the biggest boondoggles in the history of Ontario." It is one reason why we lost 350,000 manufacturing jobs over the last 15 years, including many well-paying jobs in the auto industry.

While I was out campaigning, it was heartbreaking to meet employees from former firms that were shutting down production in Ontario. Campbell Soup was closing their Etobicoke plant, just east of Mississauga Lakeshore. It had been in operation since 1931. Some 380 jobs will be lost to places like Texas and Ohio.

Procter and Gamble is moving 480 manufacturing jobs from Ontario to West Virginia. This isn't just loss of Ontario jobs; it is counterproductive in the fight against climate change: 95% of the energy produced in West Virginia is from coal-fired plants. Driving our manufacturing out of Ontario down to coal states is not an acceptable plan, either for our economy or for climate change. That's why we need a new, effective and made-in-Ontario solution.

I invite everyone to submit their ideas to the Ontario.ca/climatechange. I'm confident that our Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks will present a plan that will reduce emissions but that also respects families and taxpayers, and ensures Ontario is open for business.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for a wrap-up.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I want start by thanking the member from Ottawa–Vanier again. When she started the debate this afternoon she said, "The future will be green, or there won't be a future." I think that's something we have to take into consideration.

The Minister of Community and Social Services—I agree with some of what she said. She said that the Green Energy Act was poorly written, a bad act, and it had high prices, but the minister failed to accept that clean energy, renewable energy, is good. Air pollution is bad, yes; air pollution is bad, but climate change is real.

The member for Toronto Centre, thank you. The member reminded us that this repealing the Green Energy Act bill will not do anything—not one thing—to lower hydro rates, despite the messaging that the Conservatives may be putting forward this afternoon. The facts are that it was the privatization of hydro—started by the Conservatives, continued by the Liberals—that has led us to where we are now, with rapidly rising hydro rates.

The member for Mississauga Lakeshore, my friend, a former Unifor member at a Ford plant, talks about green

energy costing 300,000 manufacturing jobs. It was a global recession that had a lot more to do with a retraction in the automotive industry as opposed to the Green Energy Act in Ontario.

Look, coal is bad; coal is dirty; coal causes air pollution. We don't want to go back to those days. We do not want to go back to burning coal in Ontario. When you talk about how the automotive plants are booming in places where they burn coal—let us hope this is not where we're headed for Ontario.

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

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It's an honour, as always, to speak in this assembly.

Before I speak, I have a few guests here I'd like to introduce. I have my father-in-law, Dr. Ahmed Mahmood, who's from the great riding of Burlington, my neighbour Jane McKenna's riding. Also with him is his daughter, my sister-in-law, who actually serves Canada in the foreign service and does great work for this country, currently serving in Accra in Ghana—she's back, on vacation—Sadia Mahmood.

I'd like to start out and give you my perspectives on Bill 34 and a little bit of background, and discuss the previous government's legislation with respect to the Green Energy Act.

The primary role of government in Ontario should be, above all else, to listen to and support the people of Ontario. As elected members of that government, we must do everything in our power to focus our efforts so that we can do just that. However, there are too many people who, through no fault of their own, are not able to succeed as they used to.

For 15 years, Ontarians had a government that focused on things other than the principle that guides most others: standing up for the people. Whether by making daily life more affordable, more accessible or more efficient, government needs to take action. Efficiency, accessibility and affordability: With these three ideas as guiding principles, government can help shape a society into one where individual responsibility and individual freedoms are allowed to shine—if you work hard, you will succeed; if you help society by employing people, we all benefit. We need to keep our ability to self-regulate best practices. However, when the government repeatedly makes life harder for the people it governs, then it has failed; it has failed the people, the businesses and the community organizations that rely on government to help them continue to do the positive work for their communities. The previous government did just that. With red tape and excessive regulation, the former government made it harder for trade and commerce to occur. They made it harder for community organizations. And they made life harder for business people, farmers and families.

One such act of the former government was the passage into law of the Green Energy Act. At a time when Ontario's economy was beginning to show real, tangible signs of recovery from the 2008 financial crisis, the previous government decided it would be prudent to

introduce legislation that would make life for everyday Ontarians more expensive. The government decided that the costs for this program would be borne by both current and future ratepayers with funds borrowed, further adding to our provincial debt. The Green Energy Act caused hydro rates in this province to nearly triple since its inception. This has had the effect of making life in Ontario more unaffordable for everybody, but particularly low-income families. The increase in hydro rates meant that people across this province had to choose between heating and eating. My constituents in Oakville have seen the rate of poverty grow greatly, unfortunately, over the past decade, where now close to one in eight children live at or below the poverty line. When there are hundreds of thousands of people living paycheque to paycheque, how can a government come to the conclusion that it's responsible to triple the cost of a primary living expense?

During the campaign, the Premier often said, "People have to choose between heating and eating." He was not pandering. That sentiment is all too real for many people, and was exacerbated by the previous government with their Green Energy Act.

The Green Energy Act hurt the people of Ontario, taking hard-earned funds from their wallets—but also from their employment. Higher hydro rates affect every business in every sector of this economy, though it has a disproportionately high effect on those in sectors which are major consumers of electricity. Countless numbers of manufacturing jobs have left this province since the inception of the Green Energy Act.

1530

To name an example among numerous others: In 2010, a smelter in Timmins that employed 700 people moved less than 100 kilometres across the provincial border to Quebec in pursuit of lower costs, notably hydro rates. That is 700 fewer good-paying jobs in the province of Ontario because the previous government overpaid for electricity we did not require.

For industry, mining, refining or large-scale manufacturing, including the Ford automobile plant which is located in my riding, the tripling of rates meant that for an industry already struggling, we were only going to hurt them more through increased costs.

Mr. Speaker, government has a fiduciary responsibility to be responsible with public funds. The Green Energy Act was poorly designed and a policy that caused long-term harm to our great province.

It's important to note, however, that while large-scale industry has been affected by increased hydro rates, small business across the province has been hurt too.

A staple of downtown Oakville, a local restaurant that I go to quite often, was actually forced to shut during lunchtime. Why? Because the cost of opening during lunch, which is a little slower time of the day for them, unlike dinner, was no longer affordable. Imagine a restaurant not being able to open for lunch. It just doesn't make sense.

The owner told me there were three main reasons why they no longer opened for lunch Monday to Thursday:

business labour law reforms through Bill 148, and high taxes but, most especially, high hydro rates.

When restaurants are open less, it means they employ staff for fewer hours, they buy less food from across Ontario and they are unable to provide for their families.

Some critics of this repeal might believe that the benefits of this program will outweigh the rise in costs that Ontarians have faced, but I know my colleagues, myself and, most importantly, the majority of the people of Ontario will respectfully disagree.

In 2017 alone, the IESO reported that wind and solar power added over \$3.7 billion in extra costs to our electricity bills. In that same year, 26% of that same \$3.7 billion of new electricity was sold to US states or neighbouring provinces at far below the cost to produce, resulting in overcapacity in generation and an inefficient electricity system with wasteful costs.

Mr. Speaker, that alone is almost \$1 billion of taxpayers' money. For that sum of money, the province could have subsidized the construction of almost 1,000 affordable housing units for the city of Toronto. It could have helped the province fund apprenticeship training programs for thousands of trade jobs. And it could have paid down the provincial debt.

Year after year, this province has insisted that these energy projects were good for the province. But our government has reviewed the books and concluded that, just as we have seen time and time again, the Green Energy Act stands as yet another example of negligence and waste.

Just last week, the Financial Accountability Office released its Financial Review of the Decision to Cancel the Cap and Trade Program. In that report, the FAO outlined that the cap-and-trade program came at a cost to consumers of almost \$3 billion. We need to, and we will, do better.

The Green Energy Act represents the single largest wealth transfer from the lower and the middle class to the wealthy in Ontario's history. Liberal insiders owning large multi-million- and multi-billion-dollar companies benefited while life became less affordable for the people of Ontario. Contract after contract, we saw familiar names make financial gains at the expense of taxpayers. This is why people across Ontario were so happy with the cancellation of more than \$790 million of unnecessary and wasteful energy projects, as part of our plan to cut hydro rates.

In February 2017, the then Minister of Energy made a speech to the Economic Club of Canada in which he stated that the Green Energy Act has led to sub-optimal outcomes for consumers and increased rates and prices in electricity for families and businesses in Ontario. The minister also stated that the feed-in tariff system led to over-manipulation of the province's energy sector and the removal of competitive incentives for energy producers.

Under this feed-in tariff system, the government had agreed to long-term contracts which would pay the energy producer at rates up to 40 times higher than the current market rate. In one example, notably the \$7-billion Samsung deal, the province agreed to a contract rate of 13.5

cents per kilowatt for wind energy and 44.3 cents a kilowatt for solar. This would eventually decrease to 10.5 cents and 29.5 cents per kilowatt, respectively. But that still was at a time when the average cost of electricity was 8 cents a kilowatt. Why did we agree to pay money for generating capacity only to pay exorbitantly for that new electricity, when a quarter of it went down the drain?

Yet the minister said his party's plan for renewables was only partly to blame for this increase in hydro rates. How can anyone, let alone a government, be only partially responsible for something that is more expensive if they alone are responsible for signing and approving the price for consumers? This shows a lack of understanding of the problem and a lack of accountability for the consequences to the people of this great province.

The previous government was not the only party that showed a lack of understanding on this file. The current leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, the member for Hamilton Centre, also voted in favour of the Green Energy Act. The Green Energy Act was supported by the Ontario NDP. Why did the opposition choose to support overpaying producers for hydro they are producing? Why do they support borrowing money to pay for these contracts that will result in harm to people and industry? How can they defend reverting to the government borrowing money so that they themselves can pay to reduce energy bills for the people across Ontario? This all came at a time when the third-largest capital expenditure in the province, after health care and education, was interest servicing the debt. How could the NDP support this? What is their defence of their actions? The people of Ontario need to know. What your party has voted for had a tremendous impact on people's lives and their families' lives. Why did the province have to choose winners and losers of green renewable technology, yet end up choosing the methods of generation that cost above market price?

Ontario used to be the economic engine of Canada. We are no longer the economic engine of Canada. In fact, over the past decade, we are now ranked 10th out of 10 provinces in economic growth.

Interjection.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Disgraceful.

We have seen our credit rating drop multiple times, and we have a higher debt per capita than Quebec. Never in my lifetime has this been the case, and it should not be. But a lot can change in 15 years.

The previous government stripped away the ability for Ontario companies to prosper. In the Auditor General's annual report from 2011, then-Auditor General Jim McCarter stated, "For each job created through renewable energy programs, about two to four jobs are often lost in other sectors of the economy because of higher electricity prices." This was seven years ago, Madam Speaker, and yet more contracts were signed and the people of Ontario kept paying for their government's negligence.

In the same report, the Auditor General highlighted a report conducted by the Ministry of Energy and the now-dead Ontario Power Authority that found that "10,000 megawatts of electricity from wind would require an

additional 47% of non-wind power, typically produced by natural-gas-fired generation plants, to ensure continuous supply.”

The hits just keep coming, Madam Speaker. On top of paying far above market price for electricity, we can only use that electricity half the time. Like I mentioned earlier, why did the government choose to focus on two green energy production methods that were both more expensive than the current rate but also intermittent and less reliable?

With wind and solar, the power they are designed to generate would only work under a few conditions. For solar energy, it needs to be sunny in order to achieve an appropriate amount of electricity to meet the demand of the grid. When it's not sunny enough, the solar panels' impact on the total grid power generation is negligible. At certain times of the day, such as after dusk and dawn, solar power is only usable in the form of its stored capacity. No new power is being generated. Wind power is also an intermittent source of electricity, because when the wind doesn't blow, power does not get generated. In fact, there is a net loss of power because wind turbines consume a small amount of the electricity. Even when it's too windy, for safety reasons, wind turbines actually need to shut down in order to protect the equipment and the environment around the turbine itself.

Why did we sign contracts for intermittent power when the goal was to replace one of the most reliable power systems in the world? I ask the members in this House: Would you buy a new house or a new car only to have limitations on what you can do with it? That would be ridiculous.

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It seems that at every turn, the Green Energy Act has been a proven failure. It has failed to provide a green replacement for electricity previously generated by coal energy and it has failed to produce affordable electricity for the people of Ontario. The only reason for a program to have failed this miserably would be as a result of a lack of research into the problem that you're attempting to solve. Did the Liberal government demand any research into the business plan for the implementation of contracts signed under the Green Energy Act? Did they research the effects of renewable energy, specifically the feed-in tariff program, on the economy?

For one of the hallmarks of their act, namely job creation in the green technology area, they sure seem not to have done their research, or perhaps did not care about the facts. In study after study from Germany, Spain and Denmark, the results were not in their favour. Included in the Auditor General's report from 2011 was a detailed cost-benefit analysis on this exact issue, along with results of studies from these three countries I just mentioned.

In 2009, German researchers found that while job prospects in the renewables field were compelling, the job figures omitted the fact that every job created in the renewables sector resulted in job losses in other sectors. There was also a drain on economic activity caused by higher electricity prices. The study also found that the cost of creating each renewable job came to the tune of

US\$240,000. Now, not all jobs for renewables cost that much; however, in Germany, where two of the main sources of renewable production are solar and wind, that is the average cost.

The 2009 study conducted in Spain found that for every job created in the renewables sector, about two jobs were lost elsewhere in the economy.

In the Danish report from 2009, it found that a new job in the renewables sector does not amount to a new job, but rather generally comes at the expense of another job in another sector. The study also found that those renewable jobs created under green energy policy, such as the Green Energy Act, would come at a cost of between US\$90,000 and US\$140,000.

In 2011, a UK study found that up to four jobs in the economy were lost, primarily due to higher electricity prices, for every new one in the renewables sector.

If all of that was believed not to be the case, what about a study that looks specifically at Ontario? Surely the government would believe that. In November 2010, a study was conducted about Ontario job projections by the Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress from the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto. That study noted that the claim about creating 50,000 new jobs was unclear as to how it was reached and it did not specify whether the figure was net or gross. The report then found that, like studies in other countries, the creation of green jobs would result in job losses elsewhere in the economy, particularly in industries that use a lot of electricity.

Additionally, in a study mentioned in the Auditor General's report in 2011, it was determined that every new job created in the renewables space would cost \$179,000 per year.

It is clear why the Green Energy Act needs to be repealed. It caused hydro rates to increase exponentially, cost Ontario residents tens of billions of dollars, resulted in subpar energy production infrastructure, resulted in massive job losses and forced the additional creation of non-renewable and non-green energy production.

Bill 34 does not mean, however, that we are now throwing away environmental protection, like the opposition would have you believe. We understand and appreciate the importance of preserving the environment for future generations. Bill 34 will re-enact several parts of the Electricity Act, 1998, which focus on conservation, monitoring and compliance of electricity use, as well as rates and consumption. It includes provisions that restrict the sale or lease of applications or products that do not meet prescribed efficiency standards, and the act requires energy providers to make energy data available so as to verify their accordance with regulations. Bill 34 will also see amendments made to the Environmental Protection Act in various sections, covering a variety of issues.

We are cleaning up Ontario's hydro system and making sure that our electricity system works for the people once again. Bill 34 will make people's lives more affordable, much like what this government has done time after time. We scrapped the Drive Clean program, we stopped the

automatic driver's licence renewal fee, we scrapped the tax on natural gas, we scrapped the cap-and-trade carbon tax, and we will continue to work day in and day out for the people of Ontario.

For 15 years, Ontario families and businesses have been forced to pay inflated hydro prices so that government could spend on unnecessary and expensive energy schemes. The days of sweetheart deals for energy insiders and unpopular projects forced on local municipalities are over, and I am proud to stand here in this chamber to raise my voice in support for Bill 34.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Be seated, please.

Questions and comments?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I would like to make some comments. When he talks about the Green Energy Act, let's be clear: There was no NDP person ever at the bargaining table when they negotiated those contracts. I've bargained 150 collective agreements in my day, and the Liberals probably would have been smart if they would have hired me. But at the end of the day, it wasn't just the Green Energy Act; it was transportation. So when you stand up here day after day and say that the NDP participated in that, it's misleading.

And then you talked a little bit about Bill 148, when you talked—

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: Withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Then you talked about Bill 148 and how a restaurant was closing at lunchtime. You know what? I'm from the tourism sector, and we have all kinds of restaurants in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Virgil and Niagara Falls. I'm going to ask you: Is it too much to ask an employer, under Bill 148, to give those employees two days off a year? This was raised during his speech. I'm saying that I think it's fair. You talk to those employees. Do you want an employee to come to work and be serving food when they're sick or they have the flu, or they're a single mom or a single dad and they can't pay their bills? I have so much respect for the employers in the province of Ontario that I believe they support giving their employees two days per year off. I don't think there is any doubt about that.

Everybody is trying to ask—you want to keep it at \$14. Do you know where the "\$15 and fairness" came from? It came from Walmart, the richest corporation in the industrialized world today, and they wouldn't pay their employees properly. Do you know what they did? They put a sign up—

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I recognize the member for Perth–Wellington on a point of order.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I believe the member is not speaking to the bill that's been presented to the House today. I would ask that he direct his comments to Bill 34.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): During questions and comments, members can speak to what they would like.

I'm going to give the member for Niagara Falls back the 17 minutes—no, 17 seconds—that he had left on the clock for a wrap-up. Back to the member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I think that's a great ruling, Madam Speaker.

I'm going to help my friends and colleagues on the other side of the road. I have 20 minutes after these two minutes, so I know you guys are looking forward to that.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to say a few words.

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

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to add my voice to the debate today. I sincerely congratulate and thank the member from Oakville for his very thoughtful comments on how the previous Liberal Green Energy Act absolutely was destroying small business. The examples he shared are perfect reasons why we need to be repealing the Green Energy Act. So thank you for that, very much.

The reality of the whole picture is, the Green Energy Act was nothing but a money grab. The only thing green, as the Minister of Energy has said before, was the green that was going into the pockets of people who were developing industrial wind farms on properties and in municipalities where they were not wanted.

Further about that, I need to be very, very clear. Going into the era of the Green Energy Act, who created the first Minister of the Environment? The PC government of Ontario. Who was responsible for shutting down the first coal plant in Ontario? The PC government of Ontario. And who really is standing by business, manufacturers and people who have been absolutely paying right up to the hilt in terms of expensive energy costs for the experiment known as the Green Energy Act by the Liberal government? The PC government of Ontario is standing up for all of those people.

1550

I want to be perfectly clear in saying that we're doing this because people watching today and people in this House need to know that when the Green Energy Act was introduced, Ontario was producing less than half a percentage point of global carbon emissions. That's something that gets glossed over by the former Liberal administration; that's something that gets glossed over by the opposition. Every time I brought a PMB into this House, the NDP vote against me. They don't care about the proper essence of—

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was interesting to listen to the member from Oakville talk about the act to repeal the Green Energy Act. The idea is just that: They are taking away an act, but we don't have a plan to replace it.

When they talked about communities that did not want a green energy source, such as wind power, that was a mistake from the Liberal government to not give local people a voice. But there were many communities who were in favour. They were many First Nations communities that wanted into the Green Energy Act, and there were

many mayors—and I will point to the mayor from North Bay, who is now the Minister of Finance, who was one of the first ones in line to get green energy by putting solar panels on top of his work area when he used to work in North Bay.

To say that it had been rolled out correctly—no, absolutely not. The NDP have always been clear that we would give people a voice; we would give communities a voice. We would allow them to form a co-op—and you didn't have to be a for-profit, attending the luncheon of the Liberal government at \$1,000 a plate to get a contract. It would have been if a community had wanted one.

I can tell you that in my community, we have those huge slag piles. This is after you mine. You have the rocks; they melt. We see this. There are big, black rocks—nothing that we're proud of. There was this co-op that was going to cover all of this—they're facing south—with solar panels to help raise money for a non-profit agency. When you repeal something, all of this goes out the window. Nothing good comes of that.

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

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: It's a pleasure to rise in debate today, and may I compliment my colleague from Oakville on his fine speech. I understand his father is in the gallery today. You said this morning that he was an inspiration to you, but I'm sure, after your speech, you've certainly inspired your father, as you have all members of our caucus today, in standing up for the people of Ontario.

As I said earlier, it should be of no surprise to anybody who has ever followed Queen's Park that the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario would want to repeal the Green Energy Act. Simply put, we have been fighting this legislation and we have been fighting what has been going on in our communities since 2009. You don't have to take my word for it; you can look at Hansard.

We have travelled throughout this entire province. I can tell you, the Minister of Education was elected because of her fight against these wind turbines, as was the government House leader; as was the chief government whip; as was the member from Perth-Wellington; as was the member from Chatham-Kent. They were strong opponents, as was I as the former energy critic.

As I've said, for every job that was created, we lost four more. That's not a political statement; that is a fact from the Auditor General of Ontario. We lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs as a result of this policy. As a result of this policy, people had to choose between eating or heating their home.

I would go in my old former riding of Nepean-Carleton, which had some rural areas, and I remember visiting a senior. In the middle of the afternoon, in the cold Ottawa weather—well below minus 30 degrees Celsius—she was wearing a coat with a blanket around her. I asked her why, and she said, "I can't afford to heat my home."

That is the legacy of Kathleen Wynne, and that is the legacy of that opposition party.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'm going to remind members that we refer to other members by either their title or their riding, not by their names.

Back to the member from Oakville for wrap-up.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Thank you to the member from Niagara Falls, the Minister of Education, the member from Nickel Belt and the Minister of Community and Social Services for all of your input. I know you all care about this.

This is an important file. It's called the Green Energy Act. I don't know. Maybe it was good from a marketing point of view to call it that, but it should have been called the red energy act, because it has done nothing but bleed money left, right and centre.

Some 75,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province as a direct result of high hydro costs—there have been more manufacturing jobs lost—as a direct result of this act. That's what the Auditor General said.

Local municipalities have had no say in their own municipalities, in their own neighbourhoods. That's going to change. We're going to empower local municipalities again, and we're going to help bring Ontario back to being the economic engine of Canada. It was the economic engine of Canada. It was the leading place in Canada to do business. It was the province that people looked up to.

Over the last 10 years, we have gone from first to 10th in economic growth.

Liberal members may point to a data point or two which might show that we did okay, but the reality is—I come from an investment business where we look at the medium and long term. Over five to 10 years, this province has moved from first to 10th place. That's a fact. That is a disgrace. We need to change that.

When I see Quebec with lower unemployment than Ontario, that's the first time in my life I've seen that. That's a disgrace. They were always the weak sibling; we were always the stronger province. A lot of that has been business that has moved from the province of Ontario, unfortunately. Quebec also has lower debt per capita. Obviously they've done something right in attracting a new business environment into Quebec. A lot of it has been a direct result of high hydro costs. That's why they've left.

I'm looking forward to repealing this act in the very near future.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I think it's fair and reasonable to start my comments today by congratulating everybody who has put their name forward to run in the elections. Get out and vote.

I will say that somebody I am supporting from my riding, Shannon Mitchell, works in my office. She's a young single mom who is running for school board trustee. So I want to say congratulations for running.

I will let them know right off the hop: You don't win all the time. I'm a perfect example of that. It took me seven times before I got elected. But don't give up. I just wanted to say that, and congratulate them.

I'm going to start, before I get into my formal comments, with some of the things I've been listening to all afternoon. It tells you how exciting my life is: I actually

watch this on TV when I'm not sitting here. They talked about hydro and the cost of hydro, and then they talked about 300,000 manufacturing jobs.

I'm not going to go over that speech again, because I did that the last time I stood up, and I told you it was caused by a high dollar, a petro dollar and some of the things that had happened. I said that. You continue to say it, but it's not accurate.

And then you talked about how you want to listen to municipalities. I remember you guys saying that. You've been saying it, actually, since June: You want to listen to municipalities, except Toronto. You don't want to listen to Toronto. You just forced on them whatever you want to do there.

Hydro costs: You've all said it all day today, including my friends; I'm not sure where you are, but you're my buddies, so I'll just say that you said it earlier today. You talked about hydro costs, but you never talk about why hydro costs started to go up in the first place. You never take credit, and you should take credit for this. You were proud of this in 1995, when you took over government. What did you do, under Harris? You guys can tell me; you guys are here. The PCs can yell it out. What did you do? You privatized it. At a time when we had the cheapest hydro anywhere in the world, you decided to privatize it. And do you know what happened through the course of that privatization? Does anybody know? It was the union, CUPE, that took the PCs to court to stop it. That's history, but you guys never mention the history of it.

The member from the riding of Don Valley West is here. I'm not going to use her name or anything like that, but I do respect the position she had for a number of years. She'll tell you straight out—I've gone to her and I said, "The worst mistake your Liberal government ever did was sell off hydro." I didn't hide from that; I went right up to her and said, "You know what? Don't sell it. Don't listen to the big business out there giving you bad information. Do not sell Hydro One."

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Then it even gets a little more interesting. As I was telling her that, guess what the PC Party ran on under Tim Hudak and the finance minister today? They ran on selling hydro completely. Do you remember this? You guys were here; you guys were here then. Tim Hudak and—can I say "the finance minister"?—he signed the paper. It's his picture—a nice picture. He didn't have a mustache, but it was a nice picture. He signed it. It was a white paper to sell it all, to privatize the whole thing—not 60%; everything. Through the course of that time, our hydro rates have gone crazy.

The fact that you stand up here day after day, and you talk about heating our homes or buying food because of the cost of hydro, but you never take credit for any of it—because some of that is because of your decisions.

It was the NDP, by the way, that said from day one—I said it 100 times, and I've said it here 100 times in my speeches. I think one of the members talked about, "Check Hansard." Look up Wayne Gates. I've said it 100 times, around hydro costs, that we should never have sold it off. I'm going to continue to say that.

I want to say that some of the comments that are being made over there—let's be fair, let's be reasonable and let's be accurate. Let's try to do that. I'm trying to be diplomatic, Madam Speaker; I hope you can appreciate that. It doesn't happen that often. But at the end of the day, they're the issues that I listened to today. I wanted to raise them to say, "You guys are saying this, but let's at least"—well, I can't say "tell the truth," because she'll tell me I have to retract it. I'm just saying.

Now I'm going to get into my formal comments on my thing. I've got 20 minutes, I'll see how it goes; okay? I'm not so sure I'll read it all, but I'll go through it.

First of all, Madam Speaker, I'd like to thank you for allowing me to rise and speak today to cap-and-trade. When I was preparing for my speech—

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Oh, sorry. Sorry. Bill 34, the green energy repeal. Is that better? Thank you for correcting me. I appreciate it. I got wound up a bit, there. It's okay. It's all good. There's nothing wrong with showing emotion, man.

When I was preparing for this speech, I wasn't sure where to begin. I can't help but feel that we're discussing today what might be one of the most important topics we may discuss in this Legislature. I've said it before and I'll say it again: I believe that stopping climate change is the challenge of our generation.

This goes beyond Ontario and across the world. This is a fight we're all in together. I repeat that: It's a fight we're all in together. It's a fight that's going to need every one of us working together, working as a team. Whether you're a New Democrat or a Conservative or a Liberal or a Green Party member or a member of any other party in the world, we cannot let climate change win.

Just last week, the world was shocked when the United Nations released one of the strongest reports I've seen in a long time on the issue of climate change. It could not have been more blunt. It could have hit us all over the head like a baseball bat. We have a handful of years—I'll repeat that: a handful—maybe 12, if we're lucky, before it's too late. Think about that—12 years before we've done damage that cannot be undone. I'm not saying this; experts are saying it. In that 12 years, in order to avoid this destruction, not only do we have to act fast; we have to be bold. There's just a little over a decade to save this planet. I'm going to repeat that so everybody understands what we're up against: There's just over a decade to save this planet.

We've seen the extent of this damage. Every summer, we see more and more hurricanes that were once called once-in-a-generation. I believe it was Windsor that had once-in-a-generation twice in six months or eight months. Insurance companies won't even insure them anymore. Think about that. That \$264 that you're going to save—do you know what it's going to cost me if I have one of those once-in-a-lifetimes? Tens and tens of thousands of dollars to get my house back.

We've seen floods that have destroyed tens of thousands of homes in places that have never experienced

floods before. We see more drought that dries up farmland and causes entire populations to move. We've already seen a crisis of migration that is caused, in part, by climate change. These crises all touch us as residents of Ontario and residents of Canada. In some ways, we've been spared the worst of it. We haven't been spared. Wildfires—how many have watched that on TV over the last year or couple of years?—rage across northern Ontario and into BC. You know the number of people who are dying from forest fires and floods? We just had one in Quebec; I think 35 just died. We just had a hurricane—I was down in Myrtle Beach—in Florida; I think 37 people died during that time. It's happening everywhere.

The Arctic in our Far North is melting. The food we're used to is starting to disappear from coast to coast to coast. Families who are struggling to escape the worst damage of climate change are coming to Canada, where a rising attack on their rights is causing us to see a new political movement that I never thought I'd see in this country, and we're seeing this right across the world as countries slam the door on human beings trying to get their families to safety.

I always talk about the fact that I was blessed, quite frankly, to be born in Canada. When you think of children who didn't have that, who aren't from Canada, who are from countries that don't have what we have today—and what are we doing? We're saying, "You're not welcome." Madam Speaker, we can try and explain away many of these events, but the United Nations report explains it all. These are early signs that the worst—the worst—is yet to come.

I'm a proud grandfather and a dad. There are very few things I love more in this world than my grandchildren and my kids. When I can, I'm going to try to support them to the best of my ability. I'll try to be there for their skating competitions, their dance recitals. I want them to know their grandpa loves them and supports them. When I'm at these events, this topic weighs heavily on my mind. How can any of us leave them a world facing the challenges laid out in that report? How can any of us do it? How can we tell them that we knew that we had 12 years to stop the worst of this damage, and yet we've decided not to act? We can't possibly be that greedy, can we? When their world is being destroyed by climate change, we can't possibly look them in the eye and say to our kids and our grandkids, "Sorry, guys, the money was more important." Can we? I don't think so.

Madam Speaker, this leads me back to what we're debating here today. I know that other members in this House have explained why this is a bad business deal; how businesses that played ball and did their part to tackle climate change are being punished while other businesses that fought to be able to pollute are being rewarded. Does it make sense? I don't think it does. I've heard members explain to this government that in the business world you can't just walk in and rip up a contract. For all their talk of supporting businesses, you'd think the party on the government benches would have thought of that first, but it seems they didn't. There's also a cost. I'm sure the government has read it, but the comments from the Financial

Accountability Officer have proven that pulling out of this program is going to cost \$3 billion. Yes, you heard that right: an extra \$3 billion that the taxpayers of Ontario will be on the hook for.

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This is interesting. I know you're all listening intently. Does adding \$3 billion extra onto the provincial books help businesses? Does it help seniors struggling to cover the cost of their medication? Absolutely not. It only helps the businesses that refuse to do their part in the fight against climate change.

There are also court costs that this government is happy to take on—the cost of fighting the federal government in the courts—more taxpayer dollars this government is all too happy to throw away. Think about this—I raised this today during my member's statement: They could be using this money to support mental health services in Niagara. But instead, they're too busy spending it on court battles they don't need to have.

I want to talk about mental health in Niagara just for a couple of seconds. In the last three weeks, we've had two people jump off the Burgoyne Bridge in St. Catharines and take their lives. Let me tell you about one; I'm not going to mention his name because I haven't asked the family to do this. He was 19 years old. They took him to the hospital, by the way. He had told the family and the police he was going to jump off the Burgoyne Bridge. Do you know what happened? I want you all to listen to this. This is why we have to do more for mental health. After a few short hours, they released that young man—released him back into the public, with no help and nowhere to go. They didn't keep him, like the act says, for 72 hours. And do you know what that young man did? It brings tears to your eyes. He left the hospital, he went to the Burgoyne Bridge and he took his life. That's why each and every one of us has to do more to help young people suffering from mental health and make sure they get the help they need.

I know I'm off-subject a bit. I apologize for that, but it's in there.

Instead of money going to residents, it's going to go to government high-priced lawyers that they can square off against high-priced lawyers.

Madam Speaker, this goes back to a point I was making earlier. I'm absolutely shocked to see the lengths this government is willing to go in their attempts to stop anything that will deal with the climate crisis in this world—and in Canada and Ontario. In the last few weeks, we've seen our Premier leave the province and hold rallies with other right-wing leaders across the country, who are all too happy to get together with one another and celebrate the dismantling of a system designed to combat this challenge. Instead of being here in our province to see the crisis we have in health care, with hallway medicine, or to see first-hand what the underfunding of our schools has caused, the Premier is spending time holding rallies. It's startling how little he wants to do to fight climate change. It's a big mistake.

Like I said earlier to the member, the biggest mistake the Liberal Party ever made was sell off hydro. I'm going

to say to the PC Party: We can't wait. The biggest mistake you'll make is if you don't attack climate change head on, make no mistake about it. You'll see the effects before your term is up, whenever that is.

I hope the government is listening to this, because this is an important part of their legacy. History will remember this. Future generations will remember this. They will remember that there was a time when we knew what was happening and we had the ability to stop it, and instead of working together, our Premier spent his time out of the province celebrating the ways they want to do nothing.

Madam Speaker, this means something to the people of Niagara. In the Niagara region, we have thousands of people who work in the tourist industry. They're able to do that because millions of people around the world come to Niagara to see our natural heritage. They come to the Falls to see the wineries, the beaches, to taste the food—and, yes, they go to the casino.

Do you know what's going to happen when temperatures rise and it starts affecting the grape and wine industry?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Stop the clock. I recognize the Minister of Education on a point of order.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: With all due respect, the speaker opposite has completely trailed off away from Bill 34, and we would respectfully ask for him to focus on the bill at hand.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you for the point of order. Start the clock. Just a reminder to all members to stay on the bill they are supposed to be speaking to.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Right now, Niagara produces some of the best wines on the planet, and fruits and vegetables, and those entrepreneurs provide jobs for people. What's going to happen—this may help you. What's going to happen to them when climate change affects their grapes that they're growing or the fruits that they are growing? What's going to happen to the thousands of farming families who work alongside their children on their farm? In 20 or 30 years, when they can't farm because of the effects of environmental damage, how will their parents respond when they are asked why this generation did nothing?

Madam Speaker, it's already happening. Niagara has some of the best golf courses in the province. We actually have one of the oldest in Niagara-on-the-Lake. People come from around the world to relax and use our golf courses and provide jobs. With the effects of climate change, the temperature is rising in Niagara. That now means we have to deal with an infestation of ticks. Ticks are everywhere. This was not a thing decades ago, but now ticks are everywhere. We've talked about Lyme disease in this House many times, and the struggle to get coverage for Lyme disease. Now, because of rising temperatures, you have to be careful around long grass on the golf courses. This isn't just me talking. This is coming from educated professionals, and they are telling me there are

all sorts of consequences like this that are going to happen across the province of Ontario.

The point is, climate change is already affecting us, but it's bound to get a lot worse unless we do something about it, unless we have the courage stand up and say this was the challenge of our generation and we faced it head-on.

I see my time is up, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Stan Cho: It's always a pleasure to rise in the House. Through you, Madam Speaker, to my mother watching, thanks for lunch today. She refuses to accept that I'm 41 years old.

There were some great comments by the member from Niagara. Some, I agreed with; some, I disagreed with. What I will say is this: I do agree wholeheartedly with the member's statement that this is a fight that we're all in together. Let me reject the notion that somehow this government is set on stopping the prevention of climate change; that is absolutely not true. Climate change is absolutely real and it's man-made and it is our generation's challenge to tackle. But I will echo the member from Ottawa-Vanier, who said that the repeal of the Green Energy Act has also—Bill 34 has kept some of the good parts of the Green Energy Act. We're talking about conservation and paying attention to climate change and doing something about it moving forward. What we're saying, and this is the point for me, is that the Green Energy Act was burdening Ontarians.

Five years ago, I changed every light bulb in my office myself to the most environmentally friendly options that were available at the time, and the hydro bill just kept going up and going up and going up, to the point where it had doubled in less than seven short years for our business. That's the story of all Ontarians across this great province. They are struggling to make ends meet. What we had wasn't working. It's time to hit the reset button and try to tackle that again. That's what it comes down to.

The member from Niagara also said that we are telling our kids and our grandkids that money is more important. I reject that. That is absolutely not what we're saying. May I remind everybody in this House that we are almost \$340 billion in debt, and every second that passes by, 24 hours a day, we are paying \$3,000 in interest payments on that debt. What kind of message is that to send to our future generations? We can tackle climate change and be fiscally responsible at the same time.

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

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Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm glad to add my remarks to the 20-minute speech from the member from Niagara Falls on the Green Energy Repeal Act. Interestingly, it's called the Green Energy Repeal Act so that this government can say that they did what they said they were going to do in repealing this act. Fun fact, though: The meat and potatoes of this particular act are just being shifted to the Electricity Act. So it isn't that we're changing all of the

things; we are shifting them so they can say that they've repealed it because that's what they said during the campaign. Good for them; they've repealed it. But most of it is moved to the Electricity Act, and then some things have been changed in regulation. So it's an interesting, fun game.

The member from Niagara Falls said that stopping climate change is the fight of this generation. I would respectfully remind the member that it's the fight for my generation as well. No? Nothing? Okay. But for the generations to come as well, because if we're going to say to this government, "You don't have a plan. Where's your plan?" here's a bigger, better question: What are we going to do about the planet? You don't have a plan to replace this, but we may not have a planet to live on—fun, interesting thing.

The Minister of Education is concerned that we're not talking on these benches about the Green Energy Act, that we've been focusing on climate. Yes, and I'm going to link those things, because the word "green" in green energy—we are talking about environmental and conservation initiatives. That's part of the title. We have some latitude with that, but what we're seeing across the province is the lack of confidence in this government.

When they can just light contracts on fire, when they can just do away with them because "Nah-nah-nah-nah-nah, we're the government; we don't like them," well, that shakes the foundation for business folks across the province. They're not sure what you're going to do next.

Yes, we have to be bold. The United Nations released a report about climate change and the member said that we have to be bold, but bold doesn't mean lighting the province on fire. It means protecting us from it.

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

Mr. Toby Barrett: I listened to the comments from the member from Niagara Falls—spirited comments. I picture the member talking that way over breakfast every morning. I don't know. But he knows a bit about electricity, being from Niagara Falls, and I appreciate that he lets me come down to Niagara Falls on occasion and doesn't give me a hard time.

We all recognize that Hydro One is an important company. You talked about Hydro One at the beginning of your remarks. One thing that did stick in people's craw, and we made an issue of this during the election, was that the CEO was making something like \$6.2 million last year and a number of his colleagues were making \$14 million—gosh, I don't know, maybe more than \$14 million.

I understand we have found a negotiated solution to Hydro One to help minimize the cost for the ratepayer. Regardless of whether it's a public company, a private company or a private company with strong government oversight—and I know the member advocates returning it to public ownership. I don't know what that would cost. I've heard this argument before.

Actually, last winter, Gord Wilson, a former president of the Ontario Federation of Labour—that's back when Mike Harris was Premier—invited me to a debate in my

riding, in a redneck corner of my riding, Port Rowan, and Norm Jamison was invited. We had a very significant evening debating a lot of what we're debating here. Norm Jamison kind of took a strip off me at the very end, which I found quite heartening. He passed away shortly after that. But we had a really good evening, and it's just heartening to see that so many people are involved in this debate. It's not over with yet. People in this House will be talking—

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm pleased to join debate. I've been listening intently, not only while being in the chamber but up in my office. I heard some of the previous debate, and it seems to have focused around some general themes that we've heard in this place before.

I want to thank the member from Niagara Falls. He's passionate, no doubt. He gets to look at that massive, groundbreaking, fundamental, province-building piece of ingenuity every day, Niagara Falls, that at one point produced the vast majority of power for this province under a public regime. If we put it into context of where we were and where we are today, that's what New Democrats see as being fundamental to the problems that we've seen in our electricity system and the escalating costs. It is the privatization of our overall system.

The member from Willowdale: I appreciate his comments around climate change and the need to address it, and the fact that it is man-made. Unfortunately, your singular comments are just that: They are singular. They are not reflective of the broader narrative of your party. We're not hearing that enough. I hope that your influence as a new member can support those important endeavours we need to all work together on. It's unfortunately refreshing to hear that from this government.

We would like to see a plan, a plan that actually addresses climate change, a plan that puts a price on carbon, a plan that keeps us at a threshold of global warming, that contributes to our partners around the world—our trading partners, developing nations that need support in technological advances that could be born right here in Ontario. But we don't see that plan in Bill 34. In fact, my colleague from Willowdale alluded to how the majority of the Green Energy Act just goes into another entity. The only thing I can find that is really ground-breaking is that the province now allows—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Allows clotheslines—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. Back to the member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The member wants to have some of my time. I'm just trying to help you out a bit.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Clotheslines; clotheslines. They allow clotheslines now.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Anyway, I want to say thank you very much for all the comments, but I'm going to finish by saying what I think has to be said.

I know in my speech I talked about my kids and my grandkids, but it isn't just about my kids and my grandkids, quite frankly; it's about all the kids in the world. It's

about your kids, your grandkids, people in Third World countries—anywhere in the world. It is the crisis of crises. We have to figure this out, and we'd better do it quick.

I'm going to finish by saying we need to make sure we have clean water. Without water—and I believe that's going to be one of the biggest crises in the world; it's going to be clean water. We may even have a world war over clean water coming up. We've got to make sure we have clean air, because if we don't have clean air, guess what? None of us are here.

I just want to finish by saying, like I said to the Liberal Party before about hydro and the biggest mistake they ever made, that the biggest mistake you will make in government—it will be your legacy if you don't help fix our climate and our planet. Without the planet, none of us are here.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to standing order 47(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there have been more than six and one-half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

Minister of Education?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: We wish the debate to continue, please.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise today to defend Ontario's place in the growing clean economy.

Bill 34, let's be clear, is mostly a symbolic act, because the previous government had frozen new renewable energy contracts and the Ford government has gone even further now and cancelled renewable energy contracts that were in their preliminary stages of approval.

But, Madam Speaker, symbolism matters. It matters to investors in the \$26-trillion clean economy. Bill 34 sends a message to job creators and investors in the clean economy that Ontario is closed for business, closed to the fastest-growing sector of the global economy. Even the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has criticized the Ford government for cancelling contracts and putting a chill on investment and job creation in this province.

The previous government bought a bit of renewable energy when the price was high. But now that the prices have dropped dramatically, the Conservative government is getting out of the renewable energy business. This buy-high, sell-low strategy makes no sense whatsoever. It's bad for business, it's bad for the economy and it's bad for the environment.

Earlier this year, the state of Colorado put out a tender for any form of energy. They went with wind-plus-storage and solar-plus-storage, not because they wanted green energy but because it was the cheapest energy. It was cheaper than nuclear, it was cheaper than coal and it was cheaper than oil and gas. So why is this government abandoning renewable energy at precisely the time the prices have dropped so dramatically?

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Let's be clear: I was critical of the Liberal government's implementation of the Green Energy Act. Way back in 2009, I told them I was opposed to the way they were putting corporate power before community power, and I was opposed to the back room deal with Samsung. I urged the government, and I urge this government, to follow international best practices in places like Denmark, which requires 20% local ownership for renewable energy contracts, so we can create local jobs, providing local economic benefits with local decision-making. I encourage this government to not let the previous government's poor implementation strategy of renewable energy lead to you throw the baby out with the bathwater.

I ask you to continue moving forward with renewable energy as a low-cost source of clean power for this province. This is something I call on you to do: Let's have an independent public review of all sources of energy moving forward so that we can make the best choice that puts the people of Ontario first.

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

Mr. Paul Calandra: Let me just commend the member: At least in his comments he stuck to the bill. Although we have differences of opinion on many aspects of the bill, at least he stuck to it.

There is a broad agreement, I would think, at least from this side of the House and some of the comments I've heard from the opposition, that in fact conservation is important. That's why it has been left in the bill. There's broad agreement that what the previous government did with respect to eliminating municipal consultation and municipal approval of these green energy contracts was bad, and there's broad agreement that it's a good idea for them to have an opportunity to have a say. That's what this bill puts in there. There's obviously broad agreement that the previous contracts that were signed by the previous government were bad for the people of Ontario. The Auditor General has confirmed that. Various studies with respect to our manufacturers and the impact that the high hydro rates and energy prices have had on them also confirm that as well.

I think where we're having some disagreement, obviously, is the fact that the NDP in particular seem to assume that the Green Energy Act is an environmental policy, and it's not. Environmental policy should not be exclusively on the back of hydro ratepayers, because when you put environmental policy exclusively on the back of ratepayers, you have what we have had in this province: a loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs. More importantly, the green energy sector, including our wind and solar—we've put them behind, because people have such bad faith in those technologies now because of how it was brought forward by the previous government. That's not to say that these technologies aren't important in the future, but right now we have a great supply; it's handled by our nuclear sector at a low cost, a low price. We should be proud of this technology. I think that's what this act does and—

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm glad to be able to comment on the remarks from the member from Guelph as he was discussing the Green Energy Repeal Act. His comments took us back to remembering the contracts being bad for the economy and bad for the environment. There is no one in this party who is going to hold up the Liberal government and say that they made good choices or even did their homework on a number of these contracts.

During the campaign, Madam Speaker, you will remember that the NDP said that when it came to renewing or reviewing these contracts, we were going to do it responsibly—to not continue with some and renew those on a case-by-case basis. But we have this government, which is doing things very differently and creating such instability in our province that it isn't just that people don't have faith in green energy anymore; it's that people are no longer having faith in the business capacity of this government when it comes to contracts.

I actually appreciate the comment from the member from Markham–Stouffville about the fact that the faith of the folks in the province is shaken by green energy in general. As the member from Guelph talked about, we need to be able to innovate. We need to be able to review different up-and-coming technologies and make sure that, going forward in this province, we are making not just clean and green decisions; they have to be economically viable. They have to be in the best interests of communities.

To hear this government talk about the changes in this bill as giving municipalities a say—what they're not mentioning but is written in the bill is that it gives this provincial government the ability to override the voices of those municipalities and their say.

We've seen that happen recently. Today is election day. We all know what we're talking about when it comes to overriding the voice of municipalities. So I get a little twitchy when the government holds that up as a positive.

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

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I want to thank the member for Guelph for his comments. He referenced two things that I want to speak a little bit about.

The prices for renewable energy having come down was always anticipated. It was always anticipated that there would be a high cost, and as the industry was jump-started and as it matured, those prices would come down. That's exactly what has happened, whether it's wind or solar.

The other thing is that the reality of the implementation—I know the member of the government spoke to this; the member for Guelph spoke to this. I would be the first to say that there were issues that could have been dealt with differently. In fact, when I became the Premier, I had the opportunity to make some changes. Now, we can argue about whether we went far enough. The fact is that municipalities did need more of a say, and we put in place more supports for municipalities.

I think it's a bit rich, coming from this government, as the member of the NDP has just said, to talk about local democracy when we look at what's happening in Toronto today. People are voting for half a council, Madam Speaker—half the council they thought they were going to.

The fact is that the Green Energy Act was intended to jump-start an industry. It was also intended to be part of cleaning up our electricity grid, and that's what we've done.

For the members of the government to say that we're talking about energy and not electricity makes no sense. You have to talk about these things together. That's what the Green Energy Act was about. The Green Energy Act was part of a broad strategy to clean up our air and clean up—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The Minister of Community and Social Services will withdraw.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): You have to go back to your seat to withdraw.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Withdraw.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. Back to the member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Madam Speaker, I don't have any idea what she said. But the reality is that energy and electricity, and a plan for a clean electricity grid, and a plan for clean, renewable technology are one and the same thing. They go together, as they should, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Questions and comments? The member for—my apologies—Simcoe-Norfolk.

Ms. Jill Dunlop: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was happy to have the privilege to debate this bill last week, and today to make comments to the member from Guelph.

We believe that Ontarians should have a voice in and be able to say what is happening in their backyards and communities.

Many former members were fine with railroading communities, cutting down trees and installing solar and wind farms on fertile agricultural grounds. I'm sure those same members live in ridings where you cannot cut down a tree without a laundry list of permits, but because of where we are—rural areas—we are ignored. We were not consulted, and our constituents were not treated with the respect they deserve.

Members also seemed to forget how devastating these projects were to local wildlife and the surrounding biodiversity. When I knocked on doors of my constituents in the riding of Simcoe North, I was consistently asked why our government was overpaying for energy we did not need. Many thought this wasted money should be spent on other crucial services.

The Green Energy Act was damaging to consumers and businesses, and this is why I am proud to be part of a

government that puts an end to ineffective and wasteful initiatives.

We are committed to helping businesses grow and prosper in this province. I believe in supporting skilled trades, and I know that manufacturing jobs are an important part of Ontario's economy.

The previous government used to tout that these billions of dollars given to a variety of companies would help create thousands of jobs in the new green economy. We now know that many of these jobs were short-term construction, and the waste was extraordinary.

Our government understands that throwing billions of dollars away to create a handful of permanent jobs is wasteful, and this is why we are proud to be repealing the Green Energy Act. We are committed to looking out for the best interests of Ontarians and Ontario businesses. Promises made, promises kept.

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The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Before I go back to the member from Guelph, I want to apologize to the member from Simcoe North. I pronounced your riding wrong.

Back to the member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I just want to say thank you to the members from Markham–Stouffville, Oshawa, Don Valley West and Simcoe North for your comments.

I will have to say that there was one comment that came from the members opposite that I want to point out we agree on, and that's that conservation should be the top priority for this province. The lowest-cost source for our energy needs is conservation. We should be funding as many conservation programs as possible, because I can tell you that the best way to help people save money is to help them save energy. We will have agreement if that's the approach the government is going to take. But I cannot support the approach this government is taking by sending a message to global investors in the clean economy that Ontario is closed for business.

It's very rare when a global report like the new economy report comes out. It was chaired by the former president of Mexico and specifically cited Ontario. It was a global report, but they actually took the time to cite what's happening in Ontario and what a chill this government—the Ford government—is putting on investment in the fastest-growing sector of the global economy by cancelling renewable energy contracts and by saying that Ontario is closed for business. It has prompted the Business Roundtable of Canada and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce to all come out and criticize this government for not respecting contracts and not respecting investment in the renewable energy sector.

In my final seconds here I want to ask the government: When you look at prices for energy you have to look forward, not backward. You wouldn't price a new car based on used-car prices. That's why I'm challenging this government to have an independent public review of all new sources of power generation. What are the prices going forward so we can make an informed decision?

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm pleased to join my colleagues to speak on Bill 34, the Green Energy Repeal Act, 2018. We promised a government that puts the needs of everyday people first—another promise our government for the people is delivering on.

I would like to quote our Premier, Doug Ford: "The Green Energy Act presents the largest transfer of money from the poor and middle class to the rich in Ontario's rich history. Well-connected energy insiders made fortunes putting up wind farms and solar panels that gouge hydro consumers in order to generate electricity that Ontario doesn't need. Today we are proud to say that the party with the taxpayers' money is over."

That theme went through our campaign and got us to where we are today. The people of Ontario were tired of a government that not only didn't listen to them, but they were gouged at every opportunity.

The two opposition parties can point fingers all they want, but remember that when you point a finger, three of them point back at yourselves. They worked together to push through the Green Energy Act when experts around the province warned them of the dangers of not using the science to develop energy policies for Ontario.

The summer before I was elected, Professional Engineers Ontario published a research paper on the problems with the Green Energy Act. They highlighted that a system such as ours, which relies on central power stations, cannot be converted easily to a distributed power format, and such a plan would generate unneeded surplus power that simply couldn't be ignored or destroyed.

Thus we see the problems with the Green Energy Act. Unneeded, unpredictable and comparatively expensive, supposedly green energy is dumped into the system when our much cheaper water and nuclear systems are fulfilling all the demand. Remember, you can't destroy excess power. It must be used or other, less expensive, sources throttled back.

In the water world, water was diverted around or spilled over dams to avoid generating power. That was cheap power that was already paid for but not being used.

In the nuclear world, thanks to an innovation by Bruce Power, they developed a way of dumping substantial amounts of steam, enough to account for a measurable amount of excess power. But, remember, the steam had already been paid for. One might wonder why Bruce Power was the only nuclear power producer in the world to develop such a system, but it's sad to say that it was self-inflicted. The Liberal and NDP governments had ignored all of the warnings, pushing the Green Energy Act on our utilities, who were forced to make the best of a bad situation.

The Liberal government bragged that they would be the number one producer of green energy in the world, but at what cost? The only way to attract the amount of investment required to build facilities on the scale they wanted would require a guarantee of return on capital unattainable anywhere else in the world, and that's exactly what they did. The 80 cents per kilowatt hour was more than double what Germany had agreed to, and they were

in second place. To be fair to Germany, they quickly realized how their price was unsustainable in their program and cancelled theirs.

A person just north of my riding was awarded one of these rich contracts. He decided to delay the construction for a period, as allowed in the contract, until the technology had brought down the cost of materials, as everyone predicted it would. He was attending a solar conference in the US, and one of the presenters asked, "What was the price that everyone was receiving?" When he said it was 80 cents per kilowatt hour, first it was laughter, then disbelief. No one believed him. The rate of return was outrageous. The wind turbine guarantees are the same: They're strictly outrageous.

What was the result? A huge construction of unneeded power generation and capacity—and the problems started. Auditor General's report after Auditor General's report hammered the Liberal government on the dangerous and ill-thought-out plan. First, they tried to justify it to close coal plants, but they were proven wrong, as efficiencies obtained by Bruce Power alone more than allowed for the power they needed to close these plants. Then they originated a plan where they had wind turbines simply shut down, not producing the power, but with sensors added to the turbines, they would be paid for the power whether they produced it or not—a completely ridiculous plan, but they sold it as a solution.

All this time, especially during the minority Parliament, when our party would introduce motion after motion to stop the foolishness, the NDP helped the madness continue by voting for the Liberal minority government.

It's particularly satisfying today to finally debate a bill that will end the calamity. The Liberal government could no longer hide the facts, and the people of Ontario gave the Doug Ford PC government a massive majority and a mandate to clean up the mess. But, unfortunately, the Wynne Liberal government, with the support of the NDP, have saddled the people of Ontario with a huge bill that must be paid back through outrageously high energy bills for decades to come.

I see people come through my constituency office, and they are in trouble. They can't afford to pay the hydro bill and their taxes and have enough money left to put food on the table. I was talking to a local senior couple just a couple of months ago, and the lady said that they would have liked to go to the local fair that day, like they always used to do, but it was \$10 and they just couldn't afford it in their budget. That's a common thing I hear across my riding. People cannot afford to do anything but simply cut back and try to put food on their table. As I said, the couple is like the vast majority of Ontarians, who don't have a generous government pension plan. They have been experiencing years of expenses escalating at rates much higher than the money they were managing to put aside. When your pension increases by \$10 or \$20 a year, how do you cover hydro increases of hundreds of dollars a year, property taxes of hundreds of dollars a year and more? You can only save so much by doing your laundry at night and turning your thermostat down.

The Liberal government just didn't get it. The increased minimum wage doesn't help people who can't work either because there's no work available or they just can no longer work. That is why our government for the people promised to work for the people. The Liberal carbon tax was nothing more than another tax for an out-of-control-spending government, and experts were clear that the plan would not allow Ontario to meet its targets. It only resulted in life being more unaffordable and the business environment being more uncompetitive. Under the Liberal government, energy rates tripled, hurting families and driving manufacturing jobs out of Ontario.

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Let's be clear: The Green Energy Act helped Liberal insiders get rich while families across Ontario were forced to choose between heating their homes and putting food on their tables. The Green Energy Act made it much harder for businesses in Ontario to stay in business; thousands of jobs were lost across Ontario because manufacturing plants were too expensive to operate. Ontario lost more than 300,000 manufacturing jobs, not to China or India but to our neighbours south of us. The Liberal government's mismanagement of our economy and massive spending to cling to power at all costs cost Ontarians their good-paying jobs. It's time to put people first.

With the repealing of the Green Energy Act, we're also proposing amendments to several existing acts, including the Planning Act and Environmental Protection Act. The proposed legislation would give the government the authority to stop wasteful energy projects where the need for electricity has not been demonstrated.

As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I am comforted to see the amendments that would give municipalities back their voice when it comes to making future energy decisions. I share the belief that the people of Ontario should have the final say about what gets built in their communities. By restoring municipal authority for the placement of renewable energy facilities, we're ensuring that future projects have the support and buy-in of local communities. Because municipalities have told us time and time again that they felt ignored when wasteful green energy projects were forced upon their communities.

Madam Speaker, let me tell you about the plight of residents of North Stormont. They had been battling against a huge multinational corporation, and they were promised that if they were an unwilling host, they would not receive the project. The small rural township passed what they thought was needed, a resolution that would designate them as an unwilling host, and sent it off to the Liberal government. They turned down a huge amount of money from the project company, approximately \$500,000 a year, because the residents did not want the problems and the issues associated with wind turbines. Madam Speaker, \$500,000 is a huge amount and would go a long way to pay for roads and infrastructure in a small rural township of approximately 6,000 residents, the smallest population in SDG. Potential health issues, noise issues, groundwater issues were just not worth the money in their minds.

Speaker, I think I'm running out of time—I thought I had more—but this township is fighting it. These air-clad contracts are very tough to cancel, but we're working on it and we promise to deliver.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Congratulations to my colleague the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry on his speech here today. His unique way of bringing down the tone in this House is quite mesmerizing, if I might say so.

I did I listen intently to it, and he hit on some of the key points that we've heard time and time again from the Conservative government, although he did digress into some speech around the minimum wage—I caught that. He talked about what he believes to be the negative effects of a rising minimum wage.

May I remind this House that the member makes at least \$116,500 a year, roughly, as a member—if he's not a parliamentary assistant; that would bump him up. Let him be the first to advocate for a pay cut for MPPs. If that's what he believes, that we're all making too much money in this province and we should take a cut, I would like to see that bill being circled around his caucus and see how much support he would glean from his colleagues—

Interjection: How much support would you give?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: You know what? I would do this job for free because it is a service to our communities, and it's one that I believe we should all do. So let's see your leader put that bill on the table and I'd be the first to support it.

I don't think that's exactly what they are intending to do. They've already proven themselves to be at the trough. They've nominated and appointed some of their own partisan members to high positions within the bureaucracy, and are paying them quite handsomely. So I don't think that that's a narrative or a point that the member has any legitimacy on, because we've already seen this government have no regard for taxpayer dollars when it comes to partisan appointments.

I'd love to see them at some point focus on the challenges that we have when it comes to green energy and when it comes to renewable energy and climate change. We've yet to see that, and certainly not in this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Thank you to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for your informative speech that you just gave.

I'm honoured to rise today to speak in support of the repeal of the disastrous Green Energy Act. It has been a long time since we sat in this chamber, as members of Her Majesty's loyal opposition, and complained as loudly as we could that the Liberal government was taking the people's hard-earned tax dollars and spending them in ways that didn't make sense.

Hydro costs skyrocketed, and we were giving excess hydro away and, even worse, paying other jurisdictions to take it out of our hands. Manufacturers were hurting, and

households were stretched to the max just to heat their homes and keep the lights on in wintertime. Ontario's long-held dream of reasonable hydro rates for all, and assurance that our hydro power would remain in the hands of the people, became the stuff of history books.

What the Liberal government did to Ontario Hydro in the guise of progress was nothing short of a failed experiment with the taxpayers' money. Thankfully, our Ontario PC government, led by Premier Doug Ford, has good news to bring to the families and people all across Ontario. Today, I'm very proud to speak to the fact that we are scrapping the Liberals' Green Energy Act. If passed, this legislation will repeal the Green Energy Act in its entirety.

Instead, our government is making changes to make life more affordable. We cancelled 758 expensive, unnecessary and wasteful energy projects as part of our plan to cut hydro rates by 12% and save the people of Ontario \$790 million on their hydro bills. We're going to lower your hydro bills by 12%.

We're restoring accountability and trust in government. The Liberals' Green Energy Act will soon be gone, and not a day too soon. We are making our electricity system work for the people once again.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments? I recognize the member from Timmons.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Pardon the voice—a bit of a cold.

Part of the difficulty in what the government is doing here is that we both agree that the previous government, when it came to their green energy program, had some approaches to it that caused electricity prices to go up. We know that the big decision to allow contracts to be signed at as much as 85 cents per kilowatt hour with the private sector in green energy was just ridiculous. Having those kinds of prices made absolutely no sense. It was a question of the government of the day trying as hard as they could to get green projects online. I don't fault them for trying, but that was paying somebody way more than it's worth. We were even signing contracts, up to about a year and a half ago, at 30-some-odd-plus cents per kilowatt hour when it comes to what we were paying for electricity.

And here was the worst part: All of that electricity that we signed contracts for, we have to buy. Even if we don't need it, even if we don't use it, we have to pay for it because that's the way that the contracts were written. So clearly, there was a problem, and that had to be dealt with.

The issue for us, as New Democrats, is that the government should have looked at green energy as an opportunity for communities to be able to get into the green energy program.

For example, the community of Hearst has a lot of wood waste that they've got to get rid of. Rather than burying it, you can make steam and utilize the steam to make electricity, and everybody is the better. The municipality gets the steam in order to operate the things that they need to operate. The plywood mill would be able to get the steam that it needs to operate. It reduces everybody's

costs. Then sell that electricity into the grid, rather than taking projects that were 85 cents per kilowatt hour, as they did. Clearly, the government made some choices.

What this legislation does is not deal with that issue. It deals with only one part of the problem, which tells me that we're going to continue down this path and we're still going to have a problem.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments? I recognize the member from Brantford-Brant.

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It's a very nice tie.

Mr. Will Bouma: Yes, I'm going very Dutch today. The House of Orange.

I'd like to thank the members from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, Essex, Burlington and Timmins.

I especially appreciate the words from the member from Timmins, because I think this is an issue where we have to think outside of the box. We've heard this afternoon how the Green Energy Act is anything but green. We wasted our nuclear energy by throwing away the steam. We wasted our water power by opening up the sluice gates to let the water go by.

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I've heard from my residents in my small town of St. George who retired at a certain income level. They couldn't keep pace with the rising energy costs and had to move out of town because of that.

Fundamentally, what was wrong with the Green Energy Act was the fact that it took away a natural market. Any market that has to be invented and created and supported by a government—I think the government, then, is going outside of what their mandate is.

Our job is to create an environment for businesses to succeed but not create those businesses on our own. That's why I so appreciate the words from the member from Timmins, because to have those opportunities for small communities—in Brant, we have Brant Municipal Enterprises—to get together, to work with municipalities around them and come up innovative ideas in order to create energy from what otherwise would be waste—I think that's where we have to be looking. So I really appreciate that.

Rather than saying that we'll pay all this money for things, why don't we look at changing the rules to enable smart people to come forward with very good ideas in order to create energy?

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Before I return to the member for his comments: Just a reminder to everyone in the House that the point of our being here is to advance debate. So when the noise and the antics prevent debate, perhaps it's a little counter-productive.

To the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry: It's yours.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I want to thank the members from Essex and Burlington—I want to acknowledge the member for Burlington's birthday today again—and from Timmins and Brant.

The member from Essex mentioned the minimum wage. As we were talking about, there are better ways of doing it. When we look at since this legislation was put in place, the spike in food bank users—that's not because we're paying more minimum wage. It's because there are more people on unemployment, and the rising prices, which are estimated to be about another \$1,000 a year because of that. People don't have the money. Seniors don't have it: the \$100 for the increase on their the property taxes, or the \$400 for their hydro increases. Where do they come up with \$1,000? It's just not there. So they're the people at the food banks. They're the same people who are not going to the local fairs because it's \$10. They just can't afford that.

I think there are better ways of doing that. That's what we try to propose. Of course, the previous government and the NDP as well love higher taxes. To them, it's the only way to go.

The member from Timmins talked about trying to use new ways. The former Premier talked before about how they knew prices would come down. Well, if you knew prices were going to come down, why did you issue iron-clad contracts for 20 years at a fixed price that guarantees an obscene rate of return? These projects are paid off in seven years. There are 23 years of just free money coming in at a higher price than anybody in the world is offering. What makes you think Ontario ratepayers should pay that? But we're stuck.

People were making it great and it went into the bank, but the regular ratepayer is in trouble.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to start where I left off on my first two-minute hit, and I want to start by saying the word "clotheslines." That is the word that I got hung up on.

Interjection.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: You got it. It was terrible. I'm sorry. That was terrible. My apologies, Speaker.

Perhaps it's because it's an antiquated technology or an antiquated way to dry your clothes, although my neighbour next door has a clothesline. I'm envious of that wonderful fresh air smell that they have on their sheets.

But the fact this bill, Bill 34, essentially prohibits municipalities from refusing people to have clotheslines is one of the only measures that I see as an actionable item in this bill. That's it. They're proposing clotheslines for everyone. What's next? Washboards—a washboard subsidy.

This is not a solution to our energy needs. This is not a solution to climate change. It certainly is an interesting component to this bill. I would not have expected it. But if you look closely at this bill, what it does is simply take—this is a branding and a PR exercise. This is what this is. Anybody who has any critical eye to the effects of this legislation would see it as such. It essentially maintains the vast majority, the bulk of the previous Bill 150, the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, which was 79 pages long and had 12 schedules. It maintains the

vast majority of that bill, Speaker, and brings it into a new bill. Some of my colleagues on the other side have pointed out that they maintain some of the beneficial aspects of the previous Green Energy and Economy Act. But this complicated discussion and debate that we're having is not going to be solved by this bill; nor are our challenges around sustainability, energy planning in this province, or addressing and playing a role, as a province, to address climate change.

New Democrats have been quite clear, on our side, on what we see as the need for this province to give some stability to the system—and one is a return to public ownership. They will bemoan the implementation of all forms of green energy—solar, wind, geothermal, anything that says “green” on it, anything that is an alternative form of creating or turning a turbine or generating an atom—but they're not talking about the financing regime; they're not talking about how we're paying for this. That's really at the heart of this issue.

Where did we get off the track? Well, Speaker, this was born out of the Mike Harris era, when Mike, in his infinite wisdom, brought in what was called the standard offer program. That was the precursor to the feed-in tariff program. This is common knowledge. We all saw this. It was, at the time, something that made sense to the government of the day, where they could open the doors to deregulation, privatization, and start offloading their responsibility within our energy generation and distribution. Mike brought in the privateers. They said, “We'll set up shop and we'll pay you a standard offer on those atoms.” This is how it went, and until—my colleague from Niagara Falls pointed out that they were taken to court on their thrust towards privatization by CUPE, at the time. It put the brakes to it, but not before they deregulated, left us with a massive stranded debt that continued to burden people. They left us with the global adjustment charge, which was this massive charge that people had never seen before on their bills. This was all born out of that exercise of privatization. We were absolutely critical of it at the time. In fact, our leader at the time, many would know, was Howard Hampton—wrote the book on it. It was called *Public Power*. He talked about how that era was really the beginning of the end of our public utility—and those rates that were at affordable rates and were competitive with any jurisdiction. That was the beginning of the end. What we saw subsequent to that was another rebranding exercise of the standard offer program into the feed-in tariff program and the various incarnations of that—the microFIT program. These were all elements of what essentially is privatization.

Again, it doesn't matter how you turn the turbine; it doesn't matter how you generate that atom; it's how you pay for it and who you're paying.

What New Democrats have long advocated for is that this should be a public benefit—from public ownership and managed by the public, by a competent government. We haven't seen one in quite some time, one that actually understood that it was their responsibility to utilize the resources, all the levers of the province and utilize it as a

strategic incentive like they do in Manitoba and in Quebec, where you have the number one and number two cheapest hydro rates.

Interjection: Russia.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I believe my colleague just said “Russia.” He's trying to equate Quebec and Manitoba, under their public utilities, as Communist Russia. No. They are actually the number one and number two cheapest hydro rates. If you're doing any research on this, you will know that. It's not anything you can argue against.

Why did we waver from that? Why did we get away from it? Well, I would argue, Speaker, that the barbarians from finance were at the gates of the Mike Harris regime and the Dalton McGuinty regime and Kathleen Wynne, and they had the red carpet rolled out for them, for P3s, to privatize our electricity system. We will find common ground in the fact that those contracts were incredibly lucrative—lucrative for Bay Street and lucrative for those multinational and international companies that have come in and set up shop.

1710

We could have done it a different way. There could have been mutual benefit for First Nations under a public regime. There could have been benefit for municipalities under a public regime. It could have been done at a scale that didn't disenfranchise neighbours to neighbours and set communities apart from each other and against each other. There was a different way, Speaker, but they've abandoned it, and nothing in this bill will bring that back.

There's nothing that addresses the discrimination that we see in rural ratepayers under the rural delivery charge. That's a promise that we made as New Democrats in the election: that we would get rid of that discriminatory charge. This does nothing for your rural constituents to give them fairness in pricing—absolutely nothing. It does nothing to address time-of-use billing. That doesn't make sense for average people in Ontario, who can't control when they do their laundry and don't have access to a clothesline.

Speaker, this is a branding exercise. Bill 34 is nothing more than simply changing the title of the bill and circumventing what the larger issues are. In fact, the government has launched into a public inquiry on the previous government's utilization of the finances and their accountability of it, and we've found something quite interesting already. I would applaud the government for initiating this. It's something that I think is a worthwhile exercise. We'll see what we come out with at the end. But what we know already is that by adopting the previous Kathleen Wynne Liberal government's financing regime, this government is going to add roughly \$46 billion onto ratepayers. You've charted no other path. You've not presented any other option but to go along with the status quo of what the previous government did.

Again, I would argue that the reason there are only seven of them there is because they didn't heed our advice. They didn't listen to the warning. I'll take my last minute, Speaker, to put it on the record that you're going down the

same path. Maybe it might take four years to get there, but this is the wrong path. You have to do it differently. We know what the motivations were of the previous Liberal government: to drive down costs at the expense of future ratepayers, at the expense of other generations. You're doing the same thing, and our Auditor General has warned you about that.

We see nothing in this bill that addresses any of the debt-financing mechanisms that are going to offload that debt onto future generations—no plan whatsoever. And you would think that this government, as they tout their fiscal savvy, would be the ones to present some sort of comprehensive finance regime or something that makes mathematical or economic sense for us to address that massive debt that still exists within our electrical system. There's nothing. They're just taking it off the shelf of the previous Liberal government.

Speaker, I've appreciated the time. I wish I had an hour; I wish I had several hours to talk about this. But I cede my time to the floor, and I thank you for your indulgence.

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

Mr. Billy Pang: I appreciate the member from the opposition that he kept saying, or the party kept saying, that they want hours of debate. Well, we can give years of debate on the same thing when we are not doing anything on it. So when we are talking about the Green Energy Act, all we know is that it's a waste of money, just as the opposition members mentioned that even the Auditor General told us in 2016 that Ontario consumers have to pay \$9.2 billion extra on the Green Energy Act. In this scenario, we can understand that it's a waste of money. This government, when we ran our campaign, had a clear mandate that we want to cut the waste, and this is one of the ways that we are cutting the waste. We understand that democracy is a process of trusting people to make good decisions.

In 2009, when the previous Liberal government implemented this Green Energy Act, I think most Ontarians, including maybe myself, thought it was a very good idea that we go green. Unfortunately, after nine years, which is 2018, we can see that what the previous government left behind is a \$312-billion debt—not just a deficit. A deficit is a number, but debt is real money. It's real money that we're talking about. Every year, just to pay for the interest is \$12 billion.

Because of that, Ontarians made another choice. Democracy, as I mentioned, is because we trust that the people can make a good choice. Therefore, in 2018, people made a choice: They chose this government to run an affordable and efficient government. Therefore, we are supporting this bill.

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

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I want to make my comments about a couple of things that have been said in debate.

One is that we don't need more electricity—that this is electricity we don't need or that we don't need other

forms, ways, of making electricity. In the *Globe and Mail*, the IESO says, "Ontario faces an electricity shortfall within five years and will need a combination of greater conservation efforts and new sources of power to meet customer needs."

In my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan, the generating plant that was converted from coal to biomass is closing. It wasn't used very often—that is true—but it is a reliable source of energy that you can call on at any time. I heard people talk about wind and solar power as not being something that you can rely on, but this is something you can rely on.

The other thing is that we hear a lot about creating jobs and stimulating the economy. This generating plant generates—obviously, there are jobs attached in the forest industry, in the plant itself, and also at Lakehead University and Confederation College they have a unit that is developing biomass technologies. I think that's something to be considered in this debate.

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

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: I'm pleased to stand here today and debate this. It's interesting: We're here to debate, the two official parties and the two independent parties. We don't agree on a lot of things, but we're debating this and hoping that those who are paying attention will listen and form an opinion.

My colleague from Markham–Stouffville said that the Green Energy Act is a waste, and it is. It should have been called the "mean energy act," not the Green Energy Act, because of what it has done and what it has failed to do. The left has tried to paint things with these great words. The Green Energy Act: It sounds lovely, doesn't it? But what it's done is create wind farms in communities that did not ask for nor want wind farms, it has created additional pollution in these communities, and it has taken the rights away from the municipalities to have a say in what goes on in their cities. How much more Big Brother can you get when you have big government imposing these things on these rural towns, like Chatham–Kent–Leamington, like—

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Lambton–Kent–Middlesex.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Lambton–Kent–Middlesex. Thank you so much.

Mr. Jim McDonell: North Stormont.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: North Stormont. Thank you.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Perth–Wellington.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: Perth–Wellington. I could go on. These wind farms are leaving pockmarks on the landscape of our communities.

The proposed legislation will be making amendments to the Planning Act and the Environmental Protection Act which include restoring municipal planning authority related to the placement of renewable-energy generation facilities, restricting appeals on municipal refusals and non-decisions, and enhancing the government's authority to make regulations prohibiting the issuance of renewable

energy approvals where the need for the electricity has not been demonstrated. To me, that is us saving money. It's saving energy, because we know that excess energy was being sold to the States for pennies on the dollar—wasteful and shameful. So I stand here and I support this.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's always interesting to listen to my colleague from Essex talk about green energy. Let's face it, the repealing of the Green Energy Act is not going to change all of the privatization of our electrical system that has taken place and that the Conservative government intends on keeping. Some 60% of the shares of Hydro One have been sold to the private sector, which wants to make money on their investment. This is why they are in business: to make money. There's nothing wrong with business—except that I'd like to go back about 100 years. How could it be that for 100 years, we were able to sell hydro at four cents a kilowatt hour? Way back from Mr. Beck, who brought us the first—no, not close to where you live, close to where he lives—

Mr. Wayne Gates: Niagara Falls.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, Niagara Falls. For 100 years, through two world wars, we were able to keep energy costs at four cents a kilowatt hour. Then the PCs decided that the private sector was going to do things better, cheaper, and everybody was going to benefit. What happened? None of that happened. The privatization started and costs started going up. You move to the Liberal government, which privatized 60% of Hydro One, and the costs keep going up.

If you are serious that you want to bring costs down, maybe you could take profit out of the equation, because when you live in northern Ontario, access to electricity is not a luxury; it is a necessity. And necessities in Ontario should not be taxed the way they are and they should not make profits for people on something that we have no choice of.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. Back to the member for Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Merci à mes collègues de Markham–Unionville, Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Cambridge et aussi Nickel Belt. My colleague from Cambridge spoke about the fact that municipalities were cut out of the decision-making process and then eventually, as I recall, there was some sort of a formula whereby municipalities could eventually declare themselves as unwilling hosts—although that didn't ultimately play any role in whether they got a green energy project or not. Now this government, under this rebranding approach and marketing approach of getting rid of the Green Energy Act in Bill 34, has ostensibly declared that now municipalities can veto these projects. That isn't technically the case, Speaker, and I wish and I hope they are going to be clearer about that, because municipalities are going to need to know what their legal ability is here.

What they have done is it prohibits appeals to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal and the OMB, but it doesn't

necessarily mean that the province can't circumvent that at their will. In fact, the minister retains the power to declare a provincial interest, allowing the minister to amend the municipal plan if the municipality fails to do so to the minister's satisfaction. I get it, Speaker; I understand that. And now I guess the government is admitting that they do as well, because energy delivery, energy generation and energy distribution are their responsibility. I don't think it would be prudent for a government to handcuff themselves around the future needs of the province. So they have fully admitted that in a weird kind of way, but they are retaining that power. Let it be known that municipalities, under this new crafting of this bill, still don't have full veto power under any proposed green energy projects.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I rise today to speak on the subject of repealing the Green Energy Act.

I'm going to start by making it a habit, as I did in my last speech on the new standing orders, to begin and end my addresses by emphasizing the why behind our government for the people's course of action. In this way, I hope to complement the great practical arguments my colleagues in government have already put forward for our decisions on this issue and more to come. But let's be clear: The Green Energy Act is an energy issue. It's not so much an environmental issue, as the Liberals under the McGuinty-Wynne governments would have us think.

The McGuinty-Wynne governments actually paid big dollars. I can recall when industrial wind turbines started popping up all over the place. You would have thought that the agricultural land down in Chatham-Kent–Leamington was actually fantastic for growing industrial wind turbines, because that's basically all we saw, in addition to the solid soil and cash crops that we grow down there. We have been inundated with over 500 industrial wind turbines.

Let's talk about that for a moment. The industrial wind turbines: Yes, we know that they have in fact been a big part of the cause of rising hydro rates.

But in addition, there are other issues tied in with that which are all related to the Green Energy Act, those being the health issues. I have had people inundate my office with health issues. It's not so much the NIMBYism—not in my backyard—but people have actual health issues pertaining to that. It could be flicker; it could be low-impact vibration that's impacting young children, as a matter of fact, who get this buzzing in their ears. People think, "Oh, it's all in your head." Well, that's where your ears are. However, I will say this: It's real to these people. I often would say to people, "You know, some people have a greater sensitivity to sun than others. Therefore, some people have a greater sensitivity to the impact of these industrial wind turbines, because of the low vibration, than others do."

I would also like to point out that when I talked about the soaring cost of hydro—again, let's take a look at the exorbitant prices that the McGuinty-Wynne governments

were paying. When they first started out, I believe, with industrial wind turbines, putting those turbines especially in my area, they were paying somewhere around 35 cents a kilowatt hour. For solar panels—they told us at the time it cost around \$100,000 for a person to invest in a solar panel—they were paying somewhere around 80.2 cents per kilowatt hour.

I will say, Madam Speaker, that that's not a case for a good business case. When in fact, back in 2011, when I was first elected, the rates were under 10 cents a kilowatt hour, probably somewhere around six cents a kilowatt hour—and I'm ballparking it right now. But six cents a kilowatt hour, 80.2 cents a kilowatt hour, is not a very good business case, and it has been costing the taxpayers and ratepayers of Ontario billions upon billions of dollars over the years, just because someone had a bright idea. It was the flavour of the day. It sounded healthy. It sounded encouraging. It sounded like, "Let's save the environment."

I said that this isn't about the environment; this is about energy costs. That's what the Green Energy Act was really all about.

Then someone decided that this was the way to go. Well, do you know what? We have been fighting that all along, that this is not the way to go.

It's sad to say, I'm hearing the official opposition talking about how—I mean, that's the role of the opposition. They kind of go after the government. I get that; I get it. But we have to remember that when the Green Energy Act first came out, it was the NDP that supported the Liberal government in the Green Energy Act.

We have opposed it all along. The main reason why we are opposing it is because we have to put a stopgap on our losses. It has been costing the province of Ontario way too much money, and we have to stop it and start to correct that path. It will be slow; it may be painful. But do you know what? It will be worthwhile. It will be absolutely worth it in the long run.

I don't recall something being put forth as a ballot item. Today, we're talking about municipal elections. Well, I think that sometimes there should be referendums at these municipal elections whereby the people in a municipality have an opportunity to vote on certain issues.

This would have been a real good one for the people of Chatham-Kent and the people of the province of Ontario to initially vote on, back when this came out, back somewhere around 2009.

The next municipal election would have been back around 2010, if my quick math serves me correct. It should have been brought forward, to give people an opportunity to decide whether they wanted industrial wind turbines and solar panels and so on.

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It has just been increasing hydro rates, it has been creating health hazards, it has been ruining landscapes, it has been devaluing property all along and it has also, sadly, pitted neighbour against neighbour. That's the reason why we are, in fact, saying, "Listen, we are not in favour of the Green Energy Act." That's why we are

repealing the Green Energy Act. It's just not sustainable. It truly isn't.

I've got all kinds of notes here that I could go on and on about, but some of the things that I might very quickly get into is the fact that—let's take a look at how our government for the people's decision to repeal the Green Energy Act better serves social sustainability, economic sustainability and environmental sustainability better than the agenda of the previous government ever did.

Let me demonstrate just very quickly here how the Green Energy Act severely damaged social sustainability and communities across Ontario—I won't have time to get into the other two. I am a firm believer in the proposition that the best social program is a job. A job provides structure to your life, allowing for the best use of time to produce a monetary surplus.

Again, this is all because of rising hydro rates and everything else. What has it done? It has cost businesses big dollars to the point where they either have to lay off—there you go, people losing jobs—or, in fact, they pack up and they go somewhere else, or they just completely shut down. Again, that still costs people jobs.

In my riding of Chatham-Kent-Leamington, we have lost in excess of 15,000 jobs since 2003. These are manufacturing jobs, to say the least. That has just devastated the economy. Hence, that's why I think—and I might probably get a little feedback back in the riding on this comment—that's one of the reasons why our council said, "Listen, let's just bring in all these industrial wind turbines, because we're losing all these jobs and it's going to mean revenue for the municipality." I get that, but I don't agree with how they've gone about it as well.

I talked about how a job provides structure to your life in allowing for the best use of time to produce monetary surplus through work, an emotional surplus in your relationships and, of course, a cultural surplus in the ability to do more fruitful things in your free time. These types of surpluses are needed by all families of all backgrounds to live a happy life and to build a happy community. A job is not sufficient for a good life, but it's necessary for a chance at one.

Again, very quickly, the Green Energy Act is responsible for the loss of over 150,000 jobs in our province over the last 15 years, and that is not a healthy way to go about sustainability and people living in a healthy province doing the things they need to do and would like to do.

There's just so much here that I could talk about, but one of the things that I do want to make sure that I get to is that when we take a look at pollution—I said earlier that repealing the Green Energy Act is not about the environment; it's about energy. But I will add this: When you take a look at total pollution for our nation, for Canada, Canada contributes to about a half a per cent—a half a per cent; how big are we? But we contribute to a half a percent of the total pollution worldwide—global.

So to say that the Green Energy Act was, in fact, a good idea is simply Liberal and NDP spin, because it has cost Ontarians billions of dollars. Again, I mentioned it once, I will mention it again: It's important to remember that they, the NDP, propped up—

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

M. Guy Bourgoin: On entend parler de la cancellation de l'énergie verte. Ce ne sont pas toutes des mauvaises histoires, parce que je peux vous dire que dans ma région de Kapuskasing, sur le bord de Mushkegowuk, on a plusieurs projets de « hydro dams ». On n'a rien qu'à voir le Lower Mattagami, le Kap River project et puis aussi le Smoky Falls. Ce sont tous des projets qui ont été faits avec les Premières Nations. On peut dire que c'est du succès. Ce n'est pas juste la négativité, là; on a du succès. Les Premières Nations en bénéficient, et aussi le gouvernement va produire l'énergie verte, ce qui est bon pour la province et bon pour l'environnement. Ce n'est pas juste une partie qui en profite, comme on a vu avec les moulins, ou les turbines à vent—les « moulins à vent », si on peut utiliser ce terme. Pour les Premières Nations, ç'a créé beaucoup d'emplois. Ç'a créé, pour les communautés, du travail qui est stable, qui amène beaucoup à leur communauté et qui génère beaucoup d'argent pour qu'ils puissent devenir plus indépendants et faire plus de choses pour leur communauté.

Mais cette énergie verte, quand on parle de ces projets d'hydro—on en a plusieurs dans la province; ça ne s'arrête pas juste dans ma circonscription. On semble oublier tous ces projets d'hydro qui amènent de l'énergie verte. On tape sur la tête de tous les autres projets, quand on a des projets qui ont du succès, qui sont bons pour l'énergie et puis sont bons aussi pour la planète. On semble oublier tous ces bons projets-là.

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

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to share a little bit after listening to this debate intently all day on Bill 34, the Green Energy Act and the repealing of that. I stand here proudly as a member who has been here since 2011, and I've said every day that we need to repeal that act. We're going to return the municipal decision-making back to the people who deserve it in those local municipalities. It was truly an affront to democracy to strip that power away from those municipalities, the people closest to the people, those municipal politicians.

The Green Energy Act is going to cost Ontarians across this great province \$133 billion. Just think what that could be doing for our schools or hospitals, the less fortunate and many, many other people who we're given the privilege to serve. At the end of the day, it ended up being the highest energy rates in North America as a result of this environmental experiment disguised as energy policy. How anybody can defend that you would pay 82 cents a kilowatt for solar power, an intermittent power supply, when you're actually turning off Niagara Falls at three cents per kilowatt, the cleanest, greenest, freest form of power that we have? I can't understand that.

The government and the opposition actually supporting that you would actually pay the US and Quebec to take our surplus power at the end of the day, making our businesses doubly uncompetitive, I can't understand that. And 150,000 jobs have been lost over a number of years because of this poor policy.

Madam Speaker, the NDP, in one of their most recent questions and comments, talked about private industry. I just want to ask on the record here: Bruce Power is private industry. They actually provide baseload power. They're going to re-tube eight nuclear units that are going to provide us the power for the next 50 years, and billions of those dollars are coming from private industry and private investment, not costing the taxpayer a cent. They provide well-paying, good-paying union jobs, and at the end of the day, again, provide that baseload, environmentally sensitive, emissions-free power. At the end of the day, I just want to ask on the record: Do you not support Bruce Power, private industry, providing all those great jobs and giving us the baseload power that's going to cost the taxpayer nothing?

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was interesting listening to the member, although he ran out of time to explain his point of view on Bill 34. The actual repealing of the Green Energy Act changes very little moving forward. Our previous leader, Howard Hampton, wrote the book on power and basically made it clear that the cleanest, cheapest, most renewable sources of energy are all of the rivers that we have all over northern Ontario and all over Ontario. We have been—I'm sitting beside the member from Niagara—using this as the baseload, but this is green energy. When you say that you want to repeal green energy, does that mean that all of those programs, all of those dams that have been established, that belong to communities, that belong to all of us, are on the bad side? Are only the privately owned sources of energy—because you have to realize that it was under Mike Harris that they decided that the private sector does things better, cheaper, whatever, whatever. None of this was true.

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A few lucky, connected PC insiders—sure—got to line their pockets and got really, really rich. Why? Because each and every one of us pays too much for hydro, and that means there are people I represent in Nickel Belt who will see their bills starting to go over \$1,000 a month every month after the month of November when it gets colder and darker. This is wrong. Nobody should be having to pay that money.

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

Mr. Paul Calandra: I now understand where the problems have been coming from with the NDP because, throughout the debate, as I said, we agree on a lot of things. We agree that the contracts were overpriced. We agree that municipalities weren't treated very well. We agree that green energy could be an important source of power going forward, but I now understand that the NDP, unfortunately, doesn't realize that we actually like hydro. We think it's a really good source of electricity. It's low-cost energy, Madam Speaker. It's something that has done well. Niagara Falls has done great for Ontario. What we disagree with, of course, is paying quadruple the price for green energy projects at a time when we didn't need the power.

The member for Niagara Falls—I like him. I don't know him as well as I will, hopefully, four years from now, but he referenced Stephen Harper, and I might as well, on this day, take an opportunity to really praise the work of our former Prime Minister, who understood that it was important to cut taxes, that you had to make investments when the time is called to make those investments. We made some of the largest investments in Canadian history in infrastructure, but what we did differently than the Liberals was, we returned the budget back to balance. We left a healthy surplus. We cut taxes for the people of Ontario to the lowest level in 50 years, and we did that while growing the economy and cutting carbon emissions. Imagine that. Without a carbon tax, we were able to do all of that without bankrupting the province, without bankrupting individual families.

Finally, here in the province of Ontario, after 15 long, dark years, we have a government for the people that is back on the right track, that is going to put more money back in people's pockets, but more importantly, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is going to come through with a plan that will respect not only taxpayers, but will make this the cleanest and greenest province across this country, Madam Speaker, and I know that you look forward to it as much as I do.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the member from Chatham–Kent–Leamington.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: First of all, again, I'd like to thank those who participated in the final 10 minutes. First of all, I'd like to thank the member from Muskegowuk–James bay. I'd also like to thank the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, as well as the member from Nickel Belt and the member from Markham–Stouffville. Thank you very much for your insights and your participation in this.

The Green Energy Act has been extremely contentious for many, many years. We've been fighting this, first of all, as opposition and now as government. Now that we're in government, there's something that we can seriously do about changing the way in which the direction that the former Liberal government had us pointed in and we can put a stop on it, as I mentioned earlier.

The idea of nuclear power, water power—listen, that's green. I'm okay with water power. I'm okay with nuclear power. We talked about coal before, and there's some new technology with that. I'm not suggesting anything with regard to coal right now.

Again, one of the things I want to mention is that we talked about willing hosts and unwilling hosts. It's kind of sad, Speaker, when you think about unwilling hosts and how communities were against the putting in of industrial wind turbines. They were unwilling and yet the government still allowed that to go through, and I'll give you an example. Just north of my riding in the riding of Lambton–Kent–Middlesex we have the North Kent Wind farm that's created a lot of environmental issues as a result of that, but the insight with our government—we did say that we were going to stop some of the wind farm developments, and we did in Otter Creek.

Very quickly, our government is fixing the fallacy that the Green Energy Act was good. We promised to change all of that. Promise made, promise kept.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: With respect to the act to repeal the Green Energy Act, Bill 34, sometimes we talk about municipalities or we talk about urban areas, and sometimes we forget to talk about First Nations that are on-reserve. I know when we talk about the loss of green programs and some of the energy, when we talk about understanding the green energy programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions—when I think about that, I think about my communities.

I know, growing up in my home community, there are a lot of people who still use wood-burning stoves. When you do some quick math, we have about 10,000 homes within the Nishnawbe Aski Nation territory—the 49. Also, within my riding of Kiiwetinoong, I have 31 First Nations and 27 fly-in communities. Every now and then, when any legislation that comes through, any repeals, there's no engagement; there's no discussion; there's no consultation with our people as First Nations.

I believe that one of the key areas that could be looked at is providing training for wood energy transfer technology and the capacity for installations for these homes. I say that because in our communities it's a federal responsibility. That's where governments play Ping-Pong with First Nations lives, on some of the acts that are in play, whether it's federal or provincial.

When we talk about wood-burning stoves, if everyone had proper installation and good technology for those stoves, it actually would prevent house fires. There is a program called Amber's safety campaign in the north that the Nishnawbe Aski Nation has. It actually, again, saves lives. The certification of these programs—the wood energy technology transfer training has already made an impact. But some communities, some First Nations, are starting to see where they're losing this important program where some of the installations were beginning to occur.

An example is Wiikwemkoong—not part of my riding, but it's in a First Nation community. They had a modern wood heating pilot project, where it reduces greenhouse gases. They disposed of older, low-efficiency wood heating systems and replaced them with high-efficiency modern wood heating systems. These are some of the impacts that it has, whereby the funding is pulled back. There is a financial impact, obviously.

Not only that, there are community and regional impacts. An example is what I spoke about: community capacity development and training—that service training for the wood energy technology transfer, where in the actual community, individuals from Wiikwemkoong have recently completed this training and the installations are not happening now.

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There is cost-effectiveness as well, and the social housing programs in the community do have a benefit of the cost—there's cost-effectiveness. And we talk about

carbon-neutral and heating appliances installed in this community. We believe that this will have a benefit to the community as a whole.

As an impact, as well, in Sioux Lookout—and not only that, Kenora District Services Board—the immediate cancellation of many energy-efficient programs, rebates previously financed through some of the revenues that have taken place. The GreenON energy rebate program was cancelled immediately. Kenora District Services Board was initially optimistic that the funds committed to the services board would be considered allocated and therefore would not be clawed back. The cancellation of this program will have significant impacts on the future capital programming operational costs of social housing stock within the district. This has a financial impact. The planned allocation has resulted in \$467,000 invested directly to Kenora District Services Board's owned housing stock, and a significant portion of this would result in a direct reduction to the KDSB capital plan, renewal plan that they have. The funds would have been used to complete the energy-efficiency-related building upgrades, through the installation of the heating cost management systems that can reduce heating costs up to 40%. The remaining cost was to be distributed to the participating local non-profit housing providers and used for energy-efficiency-related capital upgrades. This really has an impact, especially in the north, because there's such a high need for social housing in our communities. These projects would have assisted in the replacement of major building systems that have reached the end of their life cycles, and resulted in non-profit providers entering into an end-of-operating-agreement era with sounder financial outlooks and reduced capital reserve deficits.

An example is, Sioux Lookout Non-Profit Housing Corp. was set to receive \$81,000 for LED lighting upgrades. Kenora District Services Board is disappointed that allocated funds will no longer be delivered to the district. The program would have had a positive impact on the 10-year capital plan—as well as reducing the housing portfolio's operational budget and environmental footprint.

We will continue to lobby the government and various funding agencies for energy-efficiency-related programs that will aid in the creation of a sustainable, environmentally social housing portfolio within the district.

Again, it's really important that our people are engaged. When I talk about wood stoves—I spoke about 10,000 homes that need some type of energy-efficient green energy approaches. As I travelled in my riding, I remember a gentleman coming to me who still burns wood for his heat. People sell their wood by truckloads. I remember this discussion I had with him, that he pays \$150 per truckload, and during the winter he burns two truckloads per week. If you do the math, for a person who's on old age pension, that's how much it costs just to have that wood heat. Any wood stove projects in the north are so critical, and green energy certainly has an impact on our people in the remote north.

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

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Madam Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Sorry.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1755.

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Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, 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	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	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	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / 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	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	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	
Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakubski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / 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**

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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
Mitzi 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
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Deepak Anand, Doly Begum
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
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**Select Committee on Financial Transparency / Comité spécial
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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