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Jeudi  
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Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott  
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Todd Decker

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO**

Thursday 25 October 2018

**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO**

Jeudi 25 octobre 2018

*The House met at 0900.*

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

**NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT**

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Before I ask for orders of the day, I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Waterloo has filed with the Clerk a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts.

The order for second reading of Bill 47 may therefore not be called today.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**GREEN ENERGY REPEAL ACT, 2018**

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 22, 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 Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to the order of House dated October 24, 2018, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Rickford has moved second reading of 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.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

*Second reading vote deferred.*

**TIME ALLOCATION**

**Hon. Todd Smith:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or

special order of the House relating to Bill 32, An Act to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That the vote on second reading may not be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the Standing Committee on General Government be authorized to meet on Wednesday, October 31, 2018, and Monday, November 12, 2018, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. for public hearings on the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 32:

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 4 p.m. on Monday, October 29, 2018; and

—That the Clerk of the Committee provide a list of all interested presenters to each member of the subcommittee and their designate following the deadline for requests to appear by 6 p.m. on Monday, October 29, 2018; and

—That each member of the subcommittee or their designate provide the Clerk of the Committee with a prioritized list of presenters to be scheduled, chosen from the list of all interested presenters received by the Clerk by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, October 30, 2018; and

—That each witness will receive up to 10 minutes for their presentation followed by 10 minutes divided equally amongst the recognized parties for questioning; and

That the deadline for filing written submissions be 6 p.m. on Monday, November 12, 2018; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 p.m. on Thursday, November 15, 2018; and

That the Standing Committee on General Government shall be authorized to meet on Monday, November 19, 2018, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That on Monday, November 19, 2018, at 5:30 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Tuesday, November 20, 2018. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill

shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

That, upon receiving the report of the Standing Committee on General Government, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

That, notwithstanding standing order 81(c), the bill may be called for third reading more than once in the same sessional day; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 10 minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 14—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

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

Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Speaker, this is becoming a habit. The government, yet again, is using time allocation, which I am opposed to, New Democrats are opposed to.

I understand from time to time there may be an opportunity where a government has a bill that's controversial that they may want to move, but this particular bill, the one that we're time-allocating now, the natural gas bill, is hardly a bill that is so terribly contentious that you should be time-allocating it in the first place.

Let me get to the point of what I think is the real problem when we use time allocation. Here, the government has put forward a bill. The bill is a bill that the government, I would assume, is proud of and is happy to introduce and do, which will allow natural gas development in small urban areas of northern and rural Ontario. If the gas company decides to install natural gas infrastructure, they'll be able to pass on the cost to an entire class of customers, in that case, residential.

It's something that's moving in the right direction. I don't have a problem with what the government is doing there. I spoke yesterday about what I think the weaknesses in the bill are. But here's my point on the time allocation: By not engaging the public adequately when it comes to public hearings, we diminish this House and I think we diminish a connection to the democracy when it comes to individuals living across Ontario.

It was in this House for years that when a government introduced a bill, it very seldom passed first, second and third reading in committee in one fall or one spring session. Normally, what would happen is the bill would be introduced in the House, let's say in the fall. In the winter intersession, the committee would be on the road. It would travel for two, three weeks to different parts of Ontario—not just Toronto, but places like London, Kitchener, Thunder Bay, Sioux Lookout and other places. The people who were affected by the bill got a chance to come in and to give their thoughts about what the bill was. Was it good? Was it bad? Does it need amending? But also, they got to connect with the members of the committee who are there in their community visiting.

A lot of people would come to these committee hearings only because it was the first time they've ever seen a body of politicians show up in their community. It allowed them to sort of look and observe and talk to the local member and talk to the members who were there on committee and to connect to the Legislature. I think that served us well for a couple of reasons. First of all, from the democracy side of things, it allowed us to connect with citizens in a way that they say, "Ah, that's my Legislature. They're coming to talk to me. They want to know what I think about this particular bill that I like or dislike." I think it gave the public at least a sense that somebody was trying to listen to them.

**0910**

But when a government uses time allocation and the government says, "No, no, no, no we're not going to have any public hearings"—we've had all kinds of bills where the government hasn't even sent it into committee; they've gone from second reading to third. But where they have sent it into committee, they've said, "Let's have the committee hearings in Toronto for two days." Well, that's okay for people living in downtown Toronto and maybe Brampton and a few other places, but if you're in Kitchener-Waterloo, if you're in Timmins or Sudbury, if you're in London, if you're in Ottawa, if you're in Kiiwetinoong or Sioux Lookout, well, it's a little bit harder to be able to get down here for a 10-minute presentation on a bill in the city of Toronto.

In the case of my good friend the member from Kiiwetinoong, if you live, let's say, in Kingfisher Lake, it would cost you probably about \$2,000, 2,500 bucks, to get down here in order to be able to connect with the committee. Is that fair? That's making democracy inaccessible to certain people, based on the geography of where they live. If we're a Legislature that supposedly is democratic and we're saying, "We need to be able to connect with people so that people have confidence in what we're doing," well, we're certainly not helping that along by not allowing committees to travel.

What has now happened, because of time allocation and this government and previous governments that have more and more used time allocation as the norm—not as in Normand, but the norm—most members don't even know how committees operate, and the public is completely disconnected now. You have a whole generation of people, both in this House and also out in Ontario, who haven't been connected to the political process of Queen's Park for years. It has probably been about 20 years since committees travelled in any real kind of way.

It was always, when bills such as this came to the House, that you may have a short debate at second reading or a long debate at second reading, depending on how contentious it was, but there would be an agreement, because you didn't have time allocation, for it to go into committee and to travel. The political parties would get together and say, "We've got to go to Kingston; we've got to go to Waterloo; we've got to go up to Sioux Lookout," and a schedule would be made out and people would know well in advance that we were coming. It wasn't one of



these things where a bill like this one gets referred into committee and people have a week to get ready in order to come and present at committee the next week. People actually had time to get prepared. And people would show up at committee. I was in committee hearings in places like Fort Frances, Sioux Lookout, Attawapiskat, Moosonee, Kingston, all over this province. You always had a pretty good turnout of the local public who showed up at these committee hearings because people are interested in what we're doing, especially if it's a bill that's going to affect them.

So in this case, the government is trying to do something about expanding natural gas services into areas where there's a lack of infrastructure. Good for them. Does this bill do that entirely? No, but at least it goes in the right direction. But I can guarantee you that if you took this bill on the road and you went to places in rural southwest Ontario, southeast, central and northern Ontario, there would be people showing up, because it is a real issue for many. For individual homeowners who live at the end of government road 1 or rural road 3 or wherever it is on the outskirts of the community, not having natural gas means heating your home is anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 more per month, depending on the size of your home and how well you're insulated and what you're using to heat it with. So a lot of people want natural gas in their community, and they want natural gas brought to their door, but it's not happening because the natural gas company doesn't have the customer base to bring natural gas to their particular area.

So I can guarantee you that there would be a whole bunch of people who would be interested in coming, and it would be a great opportunity for the government. How does a government that is purporting to move the yardsticks forward on an issue that's important to people get hurt sending a bill into a committee to travel? There are some people in northern Ontario, as there are some people in rural Ontario, who are going to end up getting natural gas as a result of this bill. That's just a fact. The government would be well-served, if they're proud of that—and they should be—to go out and engage with the public and say, "Here's what we're looking at doing for you. This is what your government and the Legislature is trying to do to make your life easier." But instead, the government has decided that the way it operates is, it does everything here à la time allocation. They rely on the Toronto media to explain to people out in southwestern, southeastern, central and northern Ontario what's going on in this place. I can tell you, it's broken telephone tag, because most people don't read the Toronto Star where I come from. They don't read the Toronto Sun. They read the Timmins Daily Press. They read Timmins Today. They listen to MCTV. MCTV has more of a northern Ontario flavour. They will talk about this place somewhat, but they don't cover it in any kind of detail.

But I'll tell you, when the committee goes to Sudbury, or the committee goes to Timmins, or the committee goes to Kapuskasing, MCTV and the Daily Press and all the local papers show up and they write about what the

committee did. They talk to the committee members. They talk to the public. And then there's a discussion within our community about, "Hey, did you hear natural gas may be coming to our neighbourhood?" How does the government and how does the Legislature lose when you do that?

Instead, this place has gotten into a really bad situation where everything that happens in this Legislature is run by the person who occupies the corner office—being the Premier. This Legislature is about members; it shouldn't be about the Premier. When I first came to this place, that's not the way the place worked. The Premier had lots of authority because he is the one who appoints who is going to be in cabinet and who is going to be on committee and who is going to be a parliamentary assistant and, certainly, that has influence—to line members up. There's no question about that. I've experienced that in the same way that this government is experiencing that.

But the difficulty is, members now are almost at the end of a remote control switch when it comes to how this place operates, because the Premier says, "Oh, we know how to get that done within two weeks. Todd, go make it happen." And the government House leader comes in and does time allocation and moves it through, and everybody, because you've never seen this place operate outside of time allocation—Madam Speaker, there are only three members of this whose who ever sat in Committee of the Whole. Do you know what Committee of the Whole is? I bet you that most people don't. There are only three members in the current assembly who ever did it. There are only three members of the current assembly who ever travelled in a real way when it came to committees. Do you know what would happen? When we used to go out travel in the real way, like when we used to travel bills for two and three weeks—there are maybe three of us who were there when that was the normal practice. Am I saying the government in the past never travelled a bill? Of course they would travel the odd bill, but we didn't do it the way we do business in this House because of time allocation.

My point is, what has now happened is it's become the new norm around this place. The new norm is that we time-allocate everything. Bills go to Toronto committee at Queen's Park for two weeks. Maybe it doesn't; maybe it goes right to third reading. The public is not connected anymore. People living in rural and central and northern Ontario are out of the loop. Unless the government goes to them or the local member goes to them, they don't really know what's going on. And we wonder why people don't have confidence in politics, why they don't have confidence in politicians and political parties? It's because of these kinds of things. I'm not saying it's only this; there are other things as well—time for another debate. But what it does is, it disconnects the public from this institution.

What I really, really find sad is that this assembly is supposedly about individual members, because every member of this House—I don't care where you sit—you are sent here to represent your constituents. I don't believe for two seconds that there's a member in this House who doesn't want to do the best thing for their constituents. We

all come here for the same reason. How you would do it and I would do it is different. You look at it in a particular way because of your ideology, as I have an ideology and I look at it my way. That's fair. That's what debate is all about. But my point is that individual members should have the ability to exercise some power in being able to control what happens in this House, because it's our House. It doesn't belong to the Premier. The Premier is one of the members of the assembly. The rest of us make up this assembly. It is, I think, a failure of our system, by introducing the types of rules that we have in this House that allow time allocation and other things to happen, that has taken the power away from members and put it in the Office of the Premier. Your political fortunes are tied to how good or how bad the Premier does, not how good or how bad you do as individual members.

**0920**

I'll give you an example. Let's say I am a rural member from the Conservative caucus somewhere in southwestern Ontario and my community might benefit from this particular bill. As a member, I would want people in my constituency to know about it, if I was one of you. I would exercise my power that I had in order to get the government to agree to send the bill to committee and send it to my community. You have tools to be able to do that. I've done it myself when I was in government. I would say, "All right, you know what? I think I'm going to talk for longer at second reading than you want me to," because we used to be able to take the floor and speak until we were done. There wasn't a 30-minute or a 20-minute or a one-hour time for debates; it was for as long as you wanted the floor.

I remember I did it on a particular bill having to do with sustainable forestry development. I wanted the bill, along with my colleague Len Wood, to go to Kapuskasing. The government was saying, "No, no, we'll go to Timmins," because Timmins is like—everybody goes there. We said no, that's the problem. Kapuskasing feels that they need a little bit of attention, too, and there's a lot more forestry activity going on in that area, between Hearst to Smooth Rock Falls, than there is in Timmins. Timmins is sawmills and waferboard, and there they're pulp, paper and sawmills. There's a whole different synergy about how that industry works.

So Len and I told the government, "That's all right, we'll just speak for longer at second reading." And that's what Mr. Wood and I did, the member for Cochrane North and myself, the member for Cochrane South at the time. We threatened our government, we threatened the minister at the time—which was interesting, because Len was the parliamentary assistant—and said, "Well, we're just going to speak longer. If you don't let us go to our community"—and I was backing my friend Mr. Wood—"we're just going to take up more time in the House."

Guess what the government did? The government said, "Okay, we're going to Kapuskasing." And that was a really good thing, because then the foresters, the people who work in the forestry industry, the First Nations communities, the cottagers, everybody who was affected

by forestry showed up at the—was it at Centre de Loisirs or was that the municipal complex? But it was full in there. There must have been 100 people who showed up at that committee hearing on that particular bill, because there were people who were concerned about what the government was doing. That was part of the reason that Len and I wanted the bill to go there, because there were some people in industry who were saying, "Oh, if you put sustainable forestry development in place, we're going to have to shut down the mill."

We wanted people to come to committee, to ask those questions and get answers in order to be able to see that, in fact, the bill was about preserving the industry, growing it and allowing it to survive in the new market that we have today. No company in the world—I shouldn't say in the world. No company in Ontario wants to try to sell in a market where they're not taking the environment seriously. Mining and forestry, if they don't do a good job of those things, their products may not be purchased. It's as simple as that.

So my point is, time allocation is a disservice not only to MPPs, it's a disservice to the public and the people who we represent. Time allocation—essentially what it's done is it's taken the power that we had as individual members away and put it in the hands of the Premier. I don't care if it's your Premier, my Premier or the Liberal Premier; it's the same thing.

I would hope that at one point, members maybe talk to the Clerks or others who have been around here and try to give some pushback to your government. Say, "Listen, what would have been wrong with travelling this bill?" You wouldn't have got beaten up on this bill, I can guarantee you. You may not want to travel your scrapping of Bill 148, because I think you will get beat up on that one. There's a lot of people who are upset.

I want to say to the minister across the way that what happened to you was totally unacceptable. That is not the way that democracy works, I can tell you, because when I was in government, we had somebody bomb one of our offices. I don't know personally, but I can understand, for your staff and your constituents who go into your office and yourself, how traumatic that can be. I wouldn't argue for two seconds that something like that should be condoned. I hope they find whoever did this and do what the law requires when it comes to that.

But my point is, I can understand why sometimes governments don't want certain bills to travel. I'll give you a little story. When we were here elected in 1990 and formed government, our first budget—the story was, we opened the books, when we got elected in September, and we had about a \$9-billion deficit. The Liberals had run on a surplus. Now, we had Bob Rae at that time. He used to be a New Democrat. You might not know that, but I thought I'd let you know. But anyways, we were at caucus—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I'm about to take an extra couple of minutes here, my dear whip.

We go into caucus and they unveiled the books being about \$9 billion in deficit at the end of September. A

number of us in the caucus said let's do exactly what the Conservatives are doing now. Let's have the auditors come in and look at the books and really make it public that the deficit isn't ours; the deficit was that of the Liberals.

Bob said, "Oh no, we're not going to have any of that." Maybe that should have been the first sign that he wasn't a New Democrat. But, like you guys, I was a brand new member. I went, "Oh, he's been around here for a while and he's the boss. I guess he knows what he's doing." So you fall in line, right?

From then up to the budget, we got hammered pillar to post by the business community and by the Conservatives of the day, under Mike Harris, for having spent our way out of the recession. Well, God, we inherited a \$9-billion deficit, right? And we ended up getting pinned with the whole thing.

I'm going somewhere with this. So then we get to the budget. The budget is tabled and the budget ends up being \$10.5 billion. Why? Because we spent an extra billion dollars on anti-recession initiatives. One was a wage protection plan. If you were an employee and you lost your job and the employer didn't pay severance and you didn't get your holidays, we paid you and we went after the employer. The other was infrastructure. Surprise: We were spending on infrastructure at a time of a recession, and a lot of infrastructure was built as a result. We went from a \$9-billion deficit to a \$10.5-billion deficit.

So the budget gets tabled. We end up in the House. We end up in debate. We didn't have time allocation, so the Conservatives used the rules to their example—they were the third party—and they held the bill in the House by doing all kinds of things. By the way, the idea of reading zebra mussels? That was Mike Harris's bill. That's him. I think he did it on that particular issue.

But my point is, it forced the government to travel the bill. We took the budget, which was never done normally because it was always that budget bills are not travelled. We travelled the pre-budget consultation, and then we did the bill here in Toronto. So we had to give in. As a result, we travelled across Ontario, I think it was for three weeks, in order to give people a chance to speak to the budget. It served the interests of the public because the public got to have their say, but it also helped the government and also helped the opposition to advance their message with those people they were trying to communicate to.

My point is time allocation, aside from it being the guillotine, as my friend the member from—the Minister of Transportation; I can never remember the riding. He used to give very colourful speeches in this House. He used to always end time allocation and say, "Mr. Speaker, the guillotine." Bang, he used to slap his desk. I don't know what happened. He's not concerned about time allocation anymore. Neither are any of the members who sat in this House before.

I would only say, if we really believe that the public should be centre to what we do, we should not use time allocation. We should use committees to be able to travel bills so that the public has their say and they can see themselves within that legislation.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I will put on the record a few thoughts, along the line that my colleague just did.

I see that the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport and I, as well as many other MPPs, had the opportunity to travel when we were on the Select Committee for Mental Health and Addictions. Why I'm bringing this forward is to support what the member from Timmins just said, that there is value in going out and hearing what people have to say.

**0930**

You've put forward this bill to expand natural gas. You know full well that the expansion of natural gas was also in our platform. Our platform is still online; you can go see. You will see that the NDP supports the expansion of natural gas. We dedicated \$100 million to that end. So this is not something that we're going to push against you on. This is something that we could, frankly, work together on. If you come and travel rural and northern Ontario, you will hear about projects that the people have been working on. You will become, I would say, very interested in the possibilities that exist.

If certain parts of rural and northern Ontario had access to natural gas—I can tell you that in my riding it would allow a whole bunch of agricultural projects to go forward. I cannot see the PCs or the NDP saying, "No, we don't need more agriculture in Ontario." It's partly linked to climate change, which is not too good, but we are now able to grow things in my riding, in Nickel Belt, that we were never able to grow before. Because of climate change, because the summers are longer and warmer, we're now able to do this.

If we were to have access to natural gas, you would see a whole bunch of possibilities. But you can only get to learn about those things if you go out of this chamber, if you go out of this bubble. But you have gone in the exact opposite way. You have gone and put a time allocation. A time allocation means, "I don't want to hear from you."

There are many of my colleagues who live in northern and rural: the member from Algoma, the member for—

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** Kiiwetinoong.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** —Kiiwetinoong—sorry about that; I forgot for a minute. The member for—I have them by name, and I'm not allowed to name them, so I'm going to stop this.

There are many members in my caucus who represent northern and rural areas who have not had a chance to be heard, who did not have a chance to put forward the great opportunities that this bill brings forward.

This is good news. This is not partisan. This is something that we have in common. We both want this. So why did you feel the need to put in a time allocation and say, "No, we don't want to hear from you"? Nothing bad will come from people who stand up. Even better things would come if you would take the time to travel the bill.

Coming back to my opening statement with the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions: I'm going by memory, but I'm pretty sure we visited over 25 different communities.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Exactly.

**M<sup>me</sup> France G  linas:** Yes. The minister agrees.

We went to a number of fly-in-only First Nations communities. We went from eastern Ontario to Windsor to southern Ontario to many communities in the northwest and the northeast. It brought a change in attitude toward the people living with mental illness. It gave a lot of families, finally, an opportunity to be heard. I would say that some of the stories that we heard were gut-wrenching and really difficult to listen to, but it gave us this deep appreciation as to the need for change and the need to do better, by listening to families who came forward.

For many families who came and talked to us on this particular topic, it gave them the opportunity to turn the page and to be somewhat at ease that MPPs had taken the time to come to their community and had given them an opportunity to be heard, to share their story. Some of their stories were actually shared within the report. The report was very well received. It was published. We had the first publishing, and then we had to print some more and send some more because the people of Ontario were interested, no matter what riding they came from.

If you take away the people's opportunity to connect to us—for a lot of people, we—the 124 of us—represent every corner of this province. But some of those corners are pretty far away from Toronto. For those people, sure, they see us on TV. Unfortunately, what gets shown in my neck of the woods is the bad behaviour that happens during question period. So they get this very biased view as to what the work of an MPP is, what the work of this Legislative Assembly is. If the work of this Legislative Assembly is to scream insults at one another, that gets covered on TV. But the hard work that we do to make this province better—the media have very little interest in that. The people who live further away from Toronto, and most people do, don't ever get to see that until you travel. It is too late for this bill. I would tell you that it is an opportunity lost unless you decide to travel the bill for third reading. I don't think I've ever seen that done, but I wouldn't be opposed to that if it ever came to that.

This is something that people in rural and northern Ontario have been waiting for for a long time. There are many communities that are ready with good projects that would change the communities for the better. It would improve the health of the businesses, of the people, of the community as a whole, if they could be connected to natural gas. They have looked at ways of getting that done. Often, they even have a price tag attached to it, where different stakeholders are willing to share to make it happen. But none of those stories will come here.

And what happens when people are not heard? What happens when people don't really know? Well, human nature—we always assume the worst. It's not because we are bad people; it's simply because we are human beings and this is how human beings behave. If we don't know about something, we will assume the worst.

It is not hard for somebody who is interested in bringing natural gas to their community—and I could name you very many just in my riding, from Ivanhoe Lake to Foleyet

to Mattagami, Gogama, Westree, Shining Tree, Bisco-tasing, Ramsey, Cartier and many other communities. They're all interested in being connected to natural gas for the simple reason that heating with electricity is unaffordable. They would be interested in any form of energy that allows them to heat their homes at a price they can afford. Right now, the hope is that you get connected to natural gas. So when the media report that there is a new bill called the Access to Natural Gas Act, you pique their interest. They are interested in this. They are hopeful. But then it's radio silence. Once you go to radio silence because you never got to travel the bill and you show no interest in hearing their stories, in hearing their solutions, then they revert back to being human beings, and human beings will assume the worst.

They will assume, having been at the press conference that announced this bill—it was supported by the home builders' association. It means something that it was the home builders' association and not the farmers that were around the Premier when he made this announcement. For the people in rural and northern Ontario I represent, the home builders' association—this is not for us. When we see this, we really look at, "Okay, the home builders' association supports this. This is not for us." This is for urban areas that want to grow bigger, where the home builders' association wants to build new developments around existing big centres. They want to give the natural gas company—we have a monopoly in Ontario—the right to add \$1 or whatever a month more on everybody's gas bill.

**0940**

It doesn't take much of a suspicious person to say, "Well, look at this. The government is giving the gas company the right to come and get a dollar out of my pocket every month so that the home builders' associations don't have to pay to bring gas to the new sub-developments that they're building in and around big centres." And then people become very cynical. They look at the access to natural gas, they look at where they live in northern and rural Ontario that I represent, and they say, "This is not for me. This is not for me."

Had you taken the time to come anywhere in north-eastern Ontario, you would have been welcomed with open arms. You would have heard of good ideas, good projects to make access to natural gas available to rural and northern Ontario. But no; you went the other way. You decided you would bring time allocation, and time allocation is a fancy word that says, "We don't want to hear from you anymore. You've spoken enough. Sit down and be quiet." Nobody likes to be told to sit down and be quiet. Nobody likes that.

I know that we are early into the mandate of this government, but please look into this the next time your Premier and House leader talk about time allocation. Look to the people that you represent: Are they interested in the bill? Would they have been interested? Because lots of you represent rural Ontario also. I represent northeastern rural Ontario, but a lot of you represent rural areas. Why didn't you give the people that you represent an opportunity to be heard? I'm sure there are good projects in the ridings of

all of the MPPs that represent rural Ontario. Nickel Belt is not the only one in that situation. Why didn't we hear from your constituents? Once you start to hear those ideas, it builds something positive. It builds hope. You hear from one rural area that had an idea, and you say, "Oh, well, maybe that would work in our area also." All of a sudden, you make something positive for the entire province and you bring positive energy throughout. None of that will happen with that bill.

People often look at politics as people shouting insults to one another across the aisle, because this is often what happens during question period, but you had an opportunity with that bill to show that, no, the work of an MPP is to bring changes for the better for our province. When we work together, we are able to achieve that. I can tell you that when we have travelled together, you get to know one another better. You get to see where there are opportunities to work together. We move Ontario forward together better. There are way more good ideas in 124 people's heads than there are in 63 people's heads. If you take the time to listen and see what links us together, we will do something better.

But none of that will happen. We will end the discussion on this bill today. By the time the news gets out to northeastern Ontario and the communities that I represent, the only thing that will be reported will be negative. The only thing that people will talk about will be that they never had a chance to be heard, that this looks very much like the government will give the big gas company the opportunity to come into my pocket, come into my wallet, and take more money out of it every month so that the big home builders don't have to pay to install gas in their new suburban development.

What good comes of that? What good comes of that when for a minute we could have done so much better? You could have given the different MPPs that come from rural areas a chance to be heard. You could have given my colleagues that come from northern and rural areas a chance to be heard. But all of this will never happen.

I hope that we take this as a learning moment and that the next time you bring a bill forward where you know that we are in favour—it was in our platform—and you know that there are opportunities to work together, let's take those opportunities. Don't just say that you want to work with us; act upon it. That's an opportunity missed. This is something that was in our platform. This is something that we have spoken positively about. This is something that you also wanted to do. Why didn't we show Ontarians that, yes, the Legislative Assembly can work together to move things forward for the betterment of our province, and that there are opportunities to work together in a positive way?

There is a buildup effect that people see. People don't like to see conflict. A lot of people don't like the 30 seconds on the news where people scream at one another. It turns them off of politics completely. Myself, I don't like it, and I'm not alone. There are a lot of people who turn off politics completely because they don't like to see this.

We had an opportunity to show a new face to politics. We had an opportunity to listen. We had an opportunity to show that, yes, there are areas where we can work together for the good of the people.

This is a huge opportunity lost. The people have seen a lot of conflict coming out of Queen's Park since the last election. We had an opportunity to change the channel. We had an opportunity to show a different face of Queen's Park to the people of Ontario, and we missed it. That's because your Premier and your House leader decided to put on a time allocation motion.

Next time, think of our responsibility, each and every one of us, to the people of Ontario and, when we have the opportunity, to show the people of Ontario that there is a positive side to politics, that the money that is spent for Queen's Park to work is for the betterment of all of us. Then maybe they would look upon politics in a better way. Maybe rather than getting 50%, 52%, 53%, 57% of voters to the polls, maybe we could be at 80%, like other jurisdictions manage to do. Then, when people are part of the democracy, when people feel that they are heard and that we have their good at heart, good things will come of that.

I'm conscious of the time and I'm supposed to share my time, so I will sit down and stop speaking, as they wanted me to do.

I hope that we don't see time allocation on every single bill. Look at the opportunity to do something positive every now and again. Don't let those opportunities go by. There are many opportunities to be in conflicts here; they come by the thousands. The opportunity to work together, to be positive, to give a different face, a different voice of politics to our constituents and to Ontarians is something that you should not let go by. I hope all of us learn from that.

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

**Ms. Laura Mae Lindo:** I also wanted to add a few thoughts to this particular debate, first by thanking the members from Timmins and from Nickel Belt. I'm going to draw on a couple of the threads that they've put forward.

I think it has been really clear throughout the debate that when it comes to access to natural gas, we agree that the vision is good; the goal is good. I think where the concern comes in right now, as I stand to discuss the impact of time allocation, is that we've now moved yet another bill into a space where we're talking about access to democracy, and that's the piece, I think, that is so worrisome.

**0950**

When we allow a bill or an idea that we have to be discussed by the public, we have an opportunity to make it better. We have an opportunity to have people explain why a particular idea that we have, while on the surface it looks fantastic, may not actually work for them because of experiences that we've never had. Historically, that has been the way that we've increased democracy and access to democracy for populations that before weren't even allowed to provide an idea, to put their idea on the table.

This morning I was thinking about this and I realized we've spent a lot of time for a variety of bills that have not

gone for public consultation talking about the negative side of that. I want to try to flip it and use the time that's allotted today to talk about the benefit—what the positive changes have been—when we have actually gone out and spoken to the public.

There's a quote from Ally Freedman of Equal Voice's Daughters of the Vote. She says, "For far too long women, especially Indigenous women, have not been at the decision-making table. I cannot sit back anymore and wait for someone to come along. The future is female and the future is Indigenous. Now is my time to make a difference."

I was thinking about that. If we take a bill like the Access to Natural Gas Act out into the world, to communities that are outside of Toronto—it's even difficult for people who are in my riding of Kitchener Centre to get to Toronto because there's no viable transit to get us here in short periods of time, and you have to be able to get back. Sometimes you can only make it one way, which is why we are fighting so hard for transportation in Kitchener. If you have an opportunity to travel the bill to where the people are, they can actually follow through. They can decide that it's their turn to stand up and to make a difference.

I also think that they would be extremely excited to think that the people who are living in what some think is a bubble here at Queen's Park are coming outside of the bubble to engage with them. That indicates that they take their experiences seriously.

But it's not just generalities. There have been real changes for the positive, for the good, that have happened when we've gone outside and listened to people whose experiences are different.

When I think about women having an opportunity to vote—we've often stood up and everybody has given a standing ovation to say we're going to commemorate this day in history when women were finally considered people, when women were allowed to actually be in spaces and elect somebody who could speak for them—people didn't realize at the time that if you were a different kind of woman, those rights were no longer yours. It wasn't until we went out and listened to those experiences that we were able to make some of those changes right here.

There was a time when, if you were a queer woman, you didn't have access to the same rights as a straight woman. There's no way that any of that would have changed in law unless we gave an opportunity to the public who had experiences as a queer person trying to, for instance, have the rights to family, to be married, to have children, to have those children actually be considered in law their children—their charge—even though they were doing absolutely everything that would be like a straight parent.

In my opinion, we wouldn't be able to move our system forward unless we went out and spoke to the people.

In fact, there's a huge history of this right here. I know that in 1851, women were officially excluded from voting in all Canadian legislative elections in British North America—in 1851. If the men—at that time, white men,

who were elected officials—hadn't had an opportunity to engage and actually intervene, then women wouldn't have been able to vote.

I was thinking a lot as well, as both my colleagues were speaking, that the balance of power both within this House and outside are now in question. With a bill like the natural gas bill, if all of the decisions are being made in a small little office, how are the other officials that are on any side of this House able to speak to the individual and specific concerns, the nuanced concerns, in their own ridings when they go home after our day at Queen's Park is done? When they go home and they have to go to northern or rural Ontario, they have to speak to communities that—as my colleague from Nickel Belt was saying, "I can see the natural gas pipeline, but I can't access it." How do you go home in good conscience and argue that this bill is good?

But if we as elected officials went there and were able to hear those experiences and actually see what we're talking about, then we could make a change. We could adjust the bill in a way that would ensure that real access is there. But time allocation doesn't allow for that. As my colleague from Timmins had stated before, you can put the days that I'm allowed to come in and speak into the record, but if it's going to take me two days to get here and over \$2,000 to organize my travel, I can't engage. And if I can't engage, I disengage completely from the process. That piece, that attack on democracy, is part of what is now happening.

It always appears like it's a gentle change or a gentle challenge to my everyday experience. Access to natural gas seems like a wonderful thing. The name of the bill—fantastic. You don't realize the nuances until somebody is in front of you and they can say to you, "Here. Here's the bill. Take a look." Then I don't realize what needs to be changed, as the person who has the power to do so, until I have somebody in front of me who's saying, "This is what the impact is. The impact is that I can't actually get access to this because it's too expensive for the company." There is a multitude of reasons why. But we're never going to get there unless we actually talk to people.

There was a time when being allowed to vote as a woman on the surface appeared like we had solved the problem, because we gave the vote to women. However, when we gave the vote to women, there were requirements. You weren't allowed to actually vote as a woman unless you owned property. Well, what if you had just been enslaved the day before and now slavery was abolished? How quickly are you going to be able to access property to be able to then access your vote? Unless we actually listened to those experiences, nobody would have known. I bet you there were a number of very well-meaning people who thought that they had already solved the problem when they put into law that women were people and that they could vote. But it was not, until we sat down and thought about all of the other little pieces of what was required and what that actually meant for real people.

The sad thing for me, as I was looking though this, is that it's taking us so long as a collective to learn this

lesson. I was looking through—this is a very cool magazine, *Heritage Matters*. I did not realize that in 1960, all Indigenous women could vote federally, but were still excluded from voting in some provinces—1960. This isn't a historical kind of, "It's so far gone"; 1960 is not that long ago.

So if I'm standing in this House in 2018, trying to argue that it's a good idea to put a bill into the world so that people with real experiences can speak back to the bill, speak back to the vision, provide some kinds of language that would allow them to ensure that their experiences are captured in our bills, how many more of these timelines are we going to have that explain who's not having access? How many more of these timelines are we going to have to look at that will explain that a bill that on the surface looked fantastic is not actually working for the people? I think that that becomes the ongoing refrain on our side of the House, that many of the ideas in generalities make sense, but when it comes to our individual ridings—which is the reason why we're here, to provide that experience—some of them don't work.

**1000**

That leads me to one other idea, Madam Speaker. The issue is that I am just one person from Kitchener Centre and my experience is also one of privilege. It's a privilege to be standing in this House. It's a privilege to know that I will be able to spend time at Queen's Park, hopefully influencing legislation and the sort of day-to-day realities of the people from Kitchener Centre. But there are loads of people that live in Kitchener Centre whose experiences are so different from mine that I'm still learning about what it is to live in Kitchener Centre.

So with a bill like this, I can't even imagine how my colleagues from Timmins, from Nickel Belt feel when they are one person from there sitting in this House. The reason that they're asking for bills to travel into their ridings is so that we can get the multitude of experiences incorporated into these bills, so that the ideas that we have, the vision that we have can become a reality for the people.

I think that that piece is missing when you stop the amount of time, when you allocate a deadline on the amount of time that we're going to engage with people whose experiences are different from the experiences of the people that are sitting in this House. That is troubling on a number of levels, because our experiences are not being put into any of the bills that are here.

I think of the amount of the benefit—in fact, every single person in the House has explained that it's really beneficial that we have such a diverse government, that we have such a diverse caucus etc., and that's fantastic. But we should listen to the experiences of people that are different and incorporate those experiences, those realities and what they actually need into our bills. We can't do that if we're going to ask people, at such short notice, to try and get here.

Given the fact that we've also all agreed that there's a crisis in affordable housing, there's a crisis in poverty across this province and that that's part of what our job is to address, it actually is a false option to think that by

allocating a few hours of time at Queen's Park in Toronto to discuss this bill, we're doing anything that would allow people to engage. How are they going to get here? How can they afford to be here? Ontario is quite a large place. Who's going to foot the bill to have them come here? If we are working for them, then why are we not providing them with access in the way that they need it so that they can speak to what they need to have in this bill?

I was trying really hard to stay positive, but it gets really sad when I think about the fact that individuals are not able to engage in this democratic process. It's an upsetting reality that every week that goes on that we stand in Queen's Park and have the same kind of argument, I go back to my riding—and I'm going to make an assumption that other people go back to theirs as well—and have to have this same argument with constituents, constituents who are unhappy that they don't have an opportunity to engage. They have no opportunity to explain why it's important to put an actual requirement for natural gas to be accessible in Indigenous communities, in rural Ontario, in northern Ontario, why that language not being in the bill is troubling.

Since we all agree that what we're trying to do is to work for the people, to give access to the people, it's mind-boggling to have to go back and look at the people and explain to them that there are a select few in this House that don't seem to want to talk to them. I don't know how else to explain this to them.

At some point, I'm hoping that in future bills, very soon, we'll change that, because I also want to believe that, on all sides of the House, people want good for this province, that they were elected because what they want is to see their constituents thrive, that they want to see their constituents have all of the things that everybody else has. But we can't do that if every time there's a bill proposed or a vision put on the table, we don't allow difference of opinion to impact the bill. It's not saying that we aren't going to give access to natural gas to people. We're saying if we want them to have access, let's ensure that they have access. In my world, that seems pretty simple.

Then it goes back to this place of, why would the government not want to share this bill with the people? That's the piece that's troubling. That's the piece that leaves a lot of people outside of this House wondering, "Why do they not want to speak to us? Are they really working for the people if they don't want to work for me?" That, to me, is something that, unfortunately—as much as I can try to stay positive and optimistic—as individuals in government, they have to actually make a choice. It's political will again. They have to make a choice to change that perception. Time-allocating every bill and not allowing the public to engage is not going to help.

In this particular setting, while we sit at our seats, we can't actually have this discussion in a way that would be a little bit more meaningful. But when people are in their caucuses, when there is another discussion about, "Okay, we're going to time-allocate this one," I'm hopeful that maybe people, as individuals, will think about their constituents, whom they have to face when they go back into their ridings.

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

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** Good morning. I want to thank the members opposite for sharing their perspective on the bill.

Obviously, we believe, in this party, the Progressive Conservative Party, that accessing natural gas is an important step in a prosperity agenda of the province. We do believe, in our estimation, that giving up to 30,000 more individuals access to affordable, cheaper sources of energy is good for the economy and will help us create jobs, particularly in rural and remote parts of this province that have faced difficulty largely because of the incompetence of the former government. But we realize that there's more to do to make energy affordable not just for industry but also for the consumer, for families, for moms and dads, for small businesses, for seniors, for all of us who aspire to have access to natural gas.

When we look at the average savings to the consumer—because this goes back to a principle that our party has really made the centre of why we're here to serve. We're here to make life affordable for the workers and for the people of this province. We are here to unleash the economic potential of this province. We are going to do that incrementally, step by step, by moving forth with initiatives, common-sense plans, that ultimately will return money back to the people and make it more affordable for consumers to live in this province. Just as a compelling proof point of how we're going to achieve that objective, how we're going to realize that objective here in the province of Ontario: An average consumer making the switch from electrical heat or propane or oil to natural gas will result in a saving of anywhere between \$800 and \$2,500 per year. That is a good thing for the people of this province.

When you add that to so many benefits to the consumer of this province—when you look at our elimination of the cap-and-trade carbon tax which, as you will know, Madam Speaker, and as all members of this House will know, that alone is saving over \$250 per family per year, back into the pockets of workers and families in this province. That is precisely where that money belongs.

We philosophically disagree with—with great respect to the members opposite, my colleagues the New Democrats, the Liberal Party, the Green Party—people who believe that we ought to see government as a tool to expand revenue. This province is not ailed with a revenue problem; we're ailed with a spending problem. We have now the largest subnational debt in the world. This is not a talking point. This is a very sobering point for anyone who has a child, for anyone who has a niece. I have two beautiful nieces.

We all know that there's more to do. So, Madam Speaker, I would submit to you that this bill will help make life more affordable and make a difference for our economy. It will create better jobs in Ontario, and I call on all members to support it.

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

Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 14 relating to allocation of time

on Bill 32, An Act to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** Orders of the day. Deputy House leader.

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** No further business, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky):** There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1011 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to introduce to the Legislature this morning two people I had a wonderful meeting with: Michael Diamond, as well as Janet Daghish. Janet is the national director for Bayshore HealthCare. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's my pleasure to introduce Allan Madden, executive director of South East Grey Community Health Centre in Markdale. I have to say, he's one of the most innovative guys I've ever worked with. Allan, welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** It is always a pleasure to welcome students from Don Valley East. I would like to welcome Caroline Wang and Douglas Koehler. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'd like to remind everybody that this is School Bus Safety Week. In that light, I'd like to welcome two representatives from the Ontario School Bus Association, Pat Sanvido and Chris Harwood.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** I would like to welcome the wonderful kids of St. Simon Catholic School and their teacher, from Humber River–Black Creek. They'll be arriving at 11:30.

**Mr. Amarjot Sandhu:** I would like to invite all members of the House to join me in congratulating Richa Pandya from Brampton West, who is the page captain today. I would also like to welcome her parents, Jatin and Sejal Pandya. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to welcome two wonderful young men from Thornhill.

Alex Sakhnovich is a grade 11 co-op student helping in our constituency office. He goes to Stephen Lewis Secondary School, which is also located in my riding. He is going to be working directly with Rebecca Engelberg from my constituency office, who is here, and Nathan McMillan.

We also have Ben Gelman. He was a really dedicated volunteer on this last campaign, and I want to thank him for all of his hard work.



Thanks, boys.

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** I'd like to welcome the grade 10 students from Clarkson Secondary School. They're on their way in right now.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Today I'd like to welcome Debbie de Wit from the Seaway Valley Community Health Centre. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** Mr. Speaker, our Sergeant-at-Arms's daughter Holly Gordon is here in the east public gallery.

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** I would like to introduce Aneki Nissan, the founder of the Centre for Canadian-Assyrian Relations. He's also the past president of the organization.

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** Good morning. *Remarks in Ojji-Cree.*

It is my honour to introduce family and friends of the late Steven Fobister, Sr., who are here with us at Queen's Park today. They are in Toronto for a vigil honouring Chief Fobister's life and fight for justice. His family: Sylvia Wapioke, Robert Williamson, Alana Pahpasay, Annette Pahpasay, Diane Fobister. And the council: Chief Rudy Turtle, Councillor Jason Kejick, Councillor J.C. Kokopenace. Please join me in welcoming them to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I know they haven't joined us in the chamber yet, but I'd like to welcome the governor of Ondo State from Nigeria and his delegation who were here today to meet with myself and other members of the Legislature. Welcome to Queen's Park.

#### WEARING OF PINS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Point of order, the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to seek unanimous consent to have everyone in the Legislature be able to wear Rethink Breast Cancer pins here in the House. We will also have a photo on the staircase for all the members immediately following question period.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow the House to wear Rethink Breast Cancer pins. Agreed? Agreed.

#### VISITOR

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Are there any more introductions of visitors? The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**Hon. Steve Clark:** Thanks, Speaker. I want to introduce to you, and through you to members of the assembly, a friend of mine, Peter McKenna. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** It is now time for oral questions.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

**Mr. Gurratan Singh:** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. My community of Brampton is one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada. It's also one of the youngest cities in Canada, filled with families building a better life for their kids. That's why we were excited at the prospect of a university campus in our community. It was a chance to create jobs and bring educational opportunity to Brampton. I know that the people of Milton and Markham felt the same way about their plans for campuses.

Why did the government break their promise to these communities?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. We promised the people of Ontario to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances. Part of that process means making tough decisions about projects across Ontario. Our government is being forced to clean up the irresponsible and reckless financial decisions of the previous Liberal government. We now know, thanks to the independent commission of inquiry, the depths of the waste and mismanagement of the previous Liberal government. To describe the previous government's actions, the Auditor General used words like "conceal," "bogus," "deceptive" and "unreliable."

In an election year, they made empty promises to Ontarians for programs and projects they knew they could not afford, leading to a \$15-billion deficit while hiding the cost from the public. The Liberals have shattered the trust of Ontarians, and our focus is on restoring trust and accountability—

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

*Interjections.*

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

Start the clock. Supplementary.

**Mr. Gurratan Singh:** Back to the minister: We know that hundreds of people invested significant time and effort moving these projects forward over many years. We also know that significant investment has already been made. The town of Milton estimates they spent over a million on consulting costs alone. York University noted that donors and the York region had already committed over \$42 million. And the province has already flowed \$11 million.

Yesterday, the minister could not, or would not, say how much this cancellation was costing. Can the minister tell us today how much the government has already spent on campuses they're now trying to kill off?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Our government was elected to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances, and that's exactly what we are doing. Due to the independent commission of inquiry, the depths of the waste and mismanagement of the previous Liberal government are now clear. In an election year, the Liberals made empty

political promises to Ontarians for programs and projects they knew the province could not afford, hiding the costs from the public and creating a \$15-billion deficit that Ontario has today. The Liberals shattered the trust of Ontarians. Our focus is on cleaning up the irresponsible and reckless financial decisions of the previous government and restoring trust and accountability in Ontario's finances.

1040

*Interjections.*

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

Start the clock. Final supplementary.

**Mr. Gurratan Singh:** Back to the minister: We've already seen this government is not very good at planning things. They spent \$3 billion to not have a climate plan, and now it looks like they will spend millions to ensure that Brampton, Milton and Markham don't have university campuses. They're not just wasting provincial dollars; they're taking money from universities, from communities and from donors.

When will the minister tell us how much this government is spending to kill university campuses in Brampton, Milton and Markham?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question, but frankly, I reject the premise of that question. We have been clear that only this government is committed to enhancing financial accountability and transparency.

The previous Liberal government, propped up by the NDP, who supported them on 97% of their votes, made empty promises in an election year for programs and projects they knew they could not afford, leading to a \$15-billion deficit, while hiding that cost from the public. The Liberals shattered the trust of Ontarians. Our focus is on restoring trust and accountability in Ontario's finances.

#### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** This question is also for the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. The new campuses weren't just going to provide educational opportunity; they were also going to create economic opportunity with jobs. Brampton estimated construction would add more than 1,800 jobs, and ongoing operations would add more than 1,500 jobs, according to the city. The PC member for Markham said, in this very room, that Markham's new campus would bring 400 jobs and half a billion dollars in economic activity.

To the minister—keep in mind that there are students in the gallery here behind you: Why is this government opposed to creating jobs in Milton, Brampton and Markham?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. We promised the people of Ontario to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances. Part of that process means making tough decisions about projects across Ontario. Our government is

being forced to clean up the irresponsible and reckless financial decisions of the previous Liberal government.

We now know, thanks to the independent commission of inquiry, the depths of the waste and mismanagement of the previous—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I would ask the member to take her seat.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** But you might get another chance. Start the clock. Supplementary.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** To the minister again: Conservative members sitting in this House told their communities that these projects would proceed. Yesterday, the new mayor of Brampton, a former MPP that most Conservatives on that side of the House happily followed for many years, said that he had counted on the support of the Conservative member for Brampton South.

During the campaign, they were clear: New campuses would create jobs and opportunities in three 905 communities that get taken for granted way too often. So the question to the minister: Why did you break your promise?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Frankly, I reject that premise. Our government was elected to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances, and that is exactly what we are doing. Due to the independent commission of inquiry, the depths of the waste and mismanagement of the previous Liberal government are now clear.

In an election year, the Liberals made empty political promises to Ontarians for programs and projects they knew the province could not afford, hiding the costs from the public and creating the \$15-billion deficit Ontario has today. The Liberals shattered the trust of Ontarians.

Our focus is on cleaning up the irresponsible and reckless financial decisions of the previous government, and restoring trust and accountability in Ontario's—

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

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Thank you to the minister for that recording—I mean, for that “answer.”

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I—

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** The government—

**Interjections:** Sit down. Sit down.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** That's not helpful. I would ask the member to rephrase that question.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll rephrase it.

The government has been smearing the plans of these communities as a “Liberal scheme,” but these weren't Liberal plans. They were community plans that have been worked on for years and years. Not only that, they were plans the Conservative candidates also promised to back.

I'll quote the MPP from Milton: “We will do everything we can to make this project a reality ... whether it takes \$90 million or there's more we need to do.” Promise made—

**Interjections:** Promise broken.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Why did the government lie to the people of my community?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member knows the rules. The member will withdraw.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Withdraw.

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

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. Frankly, Speaker, I reject the premise of that question.

We have been clear that only this government is committed to enhancing financial accountability and transparency. The previous Liberal government—dropped up by the NDP, who supported them on 97% of their votes—made empty promises in an election year for programs and projects they knew they could not afford, leading to a \$15-billion deficit while hiding the costs from the public. The Liberals shattered the trust of Ontarians, and our focus is on restoring trust and accountability in Ontario's finances.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Jamie West:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. Workers in Ontario are struggling to make ends meet, as we all know, and paid leave could make a huge difference in the lives of workers who are working on or just above minimum wage. The right to a day off work because they are ill or caring for a loved one isn't a luxury; it's basic decency. It's part of being human. It's concerning that the government is taking these rights away.

We've just learned that they've also quietly released a memo that says the Ministry of Labour is going to significantly curtail proactive inspections that catch bad bosses when they break the law. Can the minister confirm that the government is not only taking away basic protections on the job, but is also planning not to enforce the few protections that remain?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** Mr. Speaker, we are replacing the previous disastrous personal emergency leave reforms and replacing them with a straightforward package of eight job-protected days for every worker in the province of Ontario every year. You continue to demonize businesses. Businesses want good employees. They want to work with their employees.

1050

There are job-protected days for employees. The member is talking about a memo from the Ministry of Labour. Mr. Speaker, the backlog that occurred in the Ministry of Labour—I think he should be asking the previous members of the Liberal government where that backlog came from, because it wasn't from us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm just going to take this opportunity to remind all members to make their comments through the Chair.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Jamie West:** Back to the minister: The memo didn't come from the previous government. It came from your government.

Most employers in this province play by the rules and have good relations with their staff. We believe in good

bosses. The Employment Standards Act is designed to catch the ones who don't, the bad bosses, the ones that none of us should support, the bad bosses who try to pay people less than minimum wage or sometimes don't pay them at all.

According to the leaked memo, staff at the ministry say there is a huge backlog of complaints. Strangely, the government response is to cut down on enforcement. Minister, what is the point of having laws to protect working people on the job if the government has no intention of enforcing them?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** This was a low-level internal memo from August. There is a backlog. We should be looking to the members of the previous government to explain the backlog.

We've been engaged in 100 days of action to turn this province around. This is the latest example of fixing the problems left by the previous government at the Ministry of Labour. It's introducing Bill 47, because fixing the job-killing aspects of the previous government's Bill 148—let's end the backlog into Ontario's job creation. I encourage all members of the Legislature to support Bill 47 because that's what the real impact to workers who really want work in the province—

*Interjections.*

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

Next question?

#### CHILD ABUSE

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** My question is to the Honourable Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. Last year, Ontario's 49 children's aid societies served more than 100,000 families across the province. Their work is vital to providing a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth to thrive. More importantly, they help bring awareness to child abuse and neglect by advocating for strong familial ties and connecting with one's community.

October is Child Abuse Prevention Month in Ontario. Would the minister please tell us what we can do to help keep Ontario's children safe?

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** I appreciate the member from Eglinton-Lawrence bringing this up in question period. It's an extremely important issue, and it's one that may be uncomfortable but we should all talk about. I think that's the first step: communicating that it's wrong to hit, sexually abuse or manipulate a child, whether it's emotionally or otherwise.

I've had the opportunity to tour the province with my colleague the government House leader, and to visit shelters where children were staying who were also abused, as were their mothers. I've also had the opportunity to go to Cornwall with my colleague the honourable member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry, and stand with 600 people who condemned violence against children and child abuse at the Children's Treatment Centre there.

We all have a duty to report. It is the law. Children's aid societies are available to take your call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Speaker, let me be perfectly clear: As responsible adults, it's up to all of us to be the eyes and ears of vulnerable children.

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

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** Minister, thank you for that answer. We have accomplished so much in 100 days in this government for the people. A lot of our work has come from making government more efficient. In fact, bringing the ministries that you oversee together as one was done to better serve children.

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility, as you said. I was pleased to hear that concerns can be reported 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

You spoke yesterday about sex trafficking and its role in manipulating, coercing and abusing young girls. Can the minister tell us how pooling resources between ministries, as this government has done, has helped us to keep a watchful eye over the most vulnerable in our province?

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much, again, for the supplementary. I appreciate her bringing up sex trafficking as an issue that we should all be vigilant about. It's a growing problem in the province of Ontario, and later today I'll address the Canadian Club in Toronto about Ontario's dirty little secret, where girls as young as 11 years old are sold into the sex trade. That's unacceptable, and that's why my ministry is working with the Attorney General, the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education so that we can direct more of our resources in this province to combatting the sex trade of young girls in this province.

My ministry funds programs and services focused on improving outcomes for children and youth, including initiatives to find stable homes, prevention services and supports for our youths as they transition into adults. But let me be perfectly clear: The sex trafficking that is happening across Ontario is a scourge on our community. It funds the guns and gangs issues that we have in this province, and we are going to make sure as a government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, that we stop it.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Minister of Labour. Mary Beth is a prominent autism advocate for my community. She is a single mother raising a son, Gregory, with a developmental disability. She is incredibly frustrated by this Conservative government's decision to scrap vital labour reforms, particularly the cut to emergency leave days. In her own words, Mary Beth writes, "Every day I see parents try to hold down jobs and take care of their loved ones with disabilities. Every day I see elderly parents suffer, working themselves into early graves. Two sick days wasn't much but it was better than nothing."

What does the minister have to say to Mary Beth and thousands of parents like her?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** I acknowledge parents and the struggles that they have with child care, especially with autism, but that's why we are making changes, which is Bill 47, to try and get better-paying jobs in the province of Ontario. The best thing we can do for people in the province of Ontario is create an economy where good jobs are produced, businesses want to advance and produce good-paying jobs, and that will help—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You know, serfdom was a really good idea.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Member for Timmins, come to order.

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** —parents like you just mentioned, so that they can find better-paying jobs in the province of Ontario and they have the flexibility to be with their children when they are needed to be.

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

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** To the Minister of Labour: I actually have several parents in my riding who had to quit good-paying jobs, \$25- or \$30-an-hour jobs, because they don't have protected sick days. Parents of children with developmental disabilities face unbelievable hardships every day. They wait years for their children to get Passport funding once they turn 18. They face decades-long wait-lists for supportive housing. Their planned increase to Ontario Disability Support Program benefits was recently cut in half by this Conservative government, and now parents like Mary Beth will have to forfeit their income if they have to take an emergency day off work to care for their child.

How does the minister justify this outrageous disregard for working parents and caregivers?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** Minister of children's services.

**Hon. Lisa MacLeod:** Thank you very much for the question. I appreciate the member opposite talking about that.

Look, the Ford government completely supports people with disabilities and their families. The member opposite is aware that this government is not only putting forward legislation that is open for business, but we will follow up next month, on November 8, as the member opposite knows, in reforming our social assistance and making sure that we lift more people out of poverty and back onto the workforce. Those policies and those programs are being developed right now.

I can tell the member opposite that a year from today, we're going to see more people working. Those with children that are disabled are going to have greater supports than they've ever had, and that's because, unlike the past 15 years where they had a disjointed patchwork of programs, this government is working together for the people.

#### VANDALISM OF CONSTITUENCY OFFICE

**Mrs. Nina Tangri:** My question is for the government House leader. Yesterday, we saw a reprehensible act of political violence committed against our Minister of

Labour. The constituency office of the honourable member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock was broken into. Windows were smashed, furniture was destroyed and the walls were spray-painted. Yesterday this chamber was united in condemning these vile acts.

**1100**

Mr. Speaker, could the government House leader explain to the Legislature the position of the government, and how vital civil debate is to our democracy, and tell us why these acts of political violence are unacceptable?

**Hon. Todd Smith:** Thanks to the member from Mississauga–Streetsville for the question. Let's be honest about what's happening here this week. On Tuesday, the Minister of Labour announced the Making Ontario Open for Business Act, a great act that our government has been campaigning on for a long, long time. Since then, the members of the government have received threatening phone calls and messages and even death threats.

One union leader, when asked what kind of action he was organizing against our government, said, "Stay tuned." Then a leader from 15 and Fairness refused to condemn this act on the minister's constituency office, during a CTV interview yesterday.

Ontario is a democracy. We should have a passionate debate on the big issues, and we respect the rights of peaceful protesters. But what happened to the Minister of Labour's constituency office is a criminal break-in, and it should not be condoned by anyone. It crosses the line, Speaker.

These groups want our government to back down. They want the government for the people to back down. I'm here to tell you we will not back down and we will—

*Interjections.*

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

Start the clock. Supplementary?

**Mrs. Nina Tangri:** Thank you to the government House leader for his response. Civil discourse, which includes the right to peacefully protest, is a cornerstone of our democracy. However, members of this chamber continue to receive threats online, and rhetoric continues to be ratcheted up.

As the minister mentioned, yesterday during a CTV interview, a leader of the group 15 and Fairness was asked to condemn the attacks and vandalism of the constituency office of the honourable member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock. They refused to do so. Instead, they said they could explain it.

Mr. Speaker, could the government House leader tell this chamber why this type of inflamed rhetoric is dangerous not only to the members of this House, but is an affront to our democracy?

**Hon. Todd Smith:** Thanks again to the honourable member for the question. We all agree that we can and should have passionate debates on big issues, and that we should respect the rights of peaceful protesters.

However, the criminal activity that we're witnessing not only harms the members in the Legislature, but it harms the people of Ontario and harms our democracy.

That's why we are demanding that 15 and Fairness immediately and unequivocally condemn vandalism, violence and intimidation tactics in all of their forms. The people deserve a clear answer from 15 and Fairness. Either this group supports the use of violence and intimidation, or they oppose it.

Speaker, we will not back down. We're going to proceed with debating and doing everything we can to pass the Making Ontario Open for Business Act. We will not be deterred by this type of criminal activity, Mr. Speaker. We will—

*Interjections.*

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

Start the clock. Next question.

## OPIOID ABUSE

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** My question is to the Minister of Health. The opioid task force that advised the Ontario government on the growing overdose crisis has been left in limbo for the last four months. Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. David Williams, said that the task force was an important part of the province's effort to turn the tide on the opioid crisis.

Can the minister confirm today if she has secretly decided to pull the plug on this expert panel?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** I want to thank the member very much for the question. The opioid issue is one that we take very seriously. That's why we announced the consumption and treatment services sites that are going to be applied for by a number of groups across the province of Ontario.

The task force was one of the groups that made recommendations to our group in reaching an evidence-based decision. They provided very valuable information. There are no plans whatsoever to disband them.

What we are planning to do is to continue to speak to them about what's going on, what they're hearing and what other services we need to bring forward. They're performing a very valuable service.

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

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Back to the minister: The opioid task force has not heard from the minister's office for the last four months. So far, the Ford government has refused to declare the opioid crisis a public health emergency, paused the opening of the overdose prevention sites, wasted four months on an unnecessary review when the evidence was clear, and pitted communities against each other by placing a hard cap of 21 sites. Now the minister has also prevented the opioid task force from doing their work.

Does the minister want the opioid crisis to escalate, with more people dying every day?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** With the greatest respect, I would indicate to the member, through you, Speaker, that the information that she has is not correct. In fact, we have been in touch with the opioid task force. We consulted with them through our office with respect to the whole issue of the evidence-based decision-making we were

doing. They were actively involved in a telephone conversation with us. They actively gave us information. They gave us their conclusions, and we took them into consideration as we were coming to our final recommendation. So the task force has been consulted with. We have listened to what they've said and we have moved forward with it.

With respect to what we're doing going forward with the 21 sites that groups can apply for, we are confident that that is going to provide the assistance that we need to get people into treatment and rehabilitation when they indicate that they are ready to do that.

There is more work to be done. We need more detoxification beds; we need more mental health and addictions services. That is something we are concentrating on as we are building—

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

#### STUDENT ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. On Tuesday, the minister announced that she will be cutting \$300 million from post-secondary education. Yesterday, she made it clear that OSAP would be the next item on the chopping block.

History has a strange way of repeating itself here in this Legislature. The previous Conservative government cut billions from education, resulting in low high school graduation rates and post-secondary enrolment.

Minister, can you please explain how your cuts will produce positive educational outcomes in the province of Ontario and how you will avoid the mistakes of the previous Conservative government?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for that question. Quite frankly, I reject the premise of that question.

We promised the people of Ontario to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances. Part of that process means making tough decisions about projects across Ontario. Our government is being forced to clean up the irresponsible and reckless financial decisions of the previous Liberal government.

We now know, thanks to the independent commission of inquiry, the depth and waste of mismanagement of the previous Liberal government. To describe the previous government's actions, the Auditor General used words such as "conceal," "bogus," "deceptive" and "unreliable." In an election year, they made empty promises to Ontarians for programs and projects they knew they could not afford.

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

**Mr. Michael Coteau:** Again, back to the minister: When you ask Ontarians what they value most with regard to government services, they'll usually answer health care and education. OSAP provides dreams to young people who will take on the challenges that globalization will bring forward.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that in the minister's previous work, she advocated for a two-tier health care system. My question back to her is, are these cuts leading to a two-tier education system here in the province of Ontario?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. But frankly, Speaker, I am shocked that that member has the audacity to ask that question. They were part of the previous Liberal government that created the \$15-billion deficit that Ontario has today. They fully embraced political financial decisions that the Auditor General described as "bogus," "deceptive" and "unreliable." I will not take lessons from members on that side of the chamber.

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#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Mike Harris:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Earlier this week you announced that our government for the people would be introducing the Making Ontario Open for Business Act. During our campaign and since the June election, we've heard from job creators in our communities about the detrimental impacts of Bill 148. We heard that Bill 148 was a vote-buying attempt by the Liberals right before an election.

I understand that the minister has spent the last four months reviewing the job-killing Bill 148. Our bill, if passed, will remove the worst burdens on Ontario businesses while protecting the province's most vulnerable workers.

Despite the NDP's fear-mongering tactics—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member to withdraw his unparliamentary comment.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Withdrawn, sir.

We heard from many independent job-creating entrepreneurs who applaud the work our government is doing to provide real benefits for Ontarians with this new bill.

Can the minister please elaborate on the in-depth review of and consultations on Bill 148?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** I thank the member from Kitchener-Conestoga for the question. I'm proud to rise in the House today to speak about the great work our government is undertaking.

Our government is committed to serving the people of this province. Unlike the previous government and unlike the opposition, our Progressive Conservative government listens to the people. It's true. Despite the official opposition's anti-business rhetoric and fear-mongering tactics, our Making Ontario Open for Business Act will indeed remove the worst burdens on Ontario businesses while protecting the province's most vulnerable workers.

I took the last four months to examine every part of the job-killing aspects of Bill 148. With every provision I asked myself, "What was the impact on Ontario's economy? Does this provide a real benefit for the people? How do we ensure that Ontario is open for business?"

The reforms we are introducing are deliberate and thoughtful, unlike the—

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

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

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Thank you, Minister, for your answer. I know that our job creators and workers are glad to hear that you had these priorities in mind when you reviewed and consulted on this job-killing bill.

I understand that the Making Ontario Open for Business Act, if passed, will implement a package of reforms that will help unlock the job-creating potential of Ontario's economy. I am also encouraged that this legislation, if passed, will continue to protect and preserve important provisions for current workers in our great province.

The minister's practical approach to this legislation is clear. Our government is ensuring that our workers in Ontario have categorized personal leave days. Our government is ensuring that minimum wage workers will receive a \$14 wage in addition to continued increases, starting in 2020, tied to inflation.

Can the minister tell this House what other benefits this bill will deliver to the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Laurie Scott:** Thank you again to the member for the supplementary question. As mentioned, the Making Ontario Open for Business Act will guarantee that Ontario workers will have a \$14 minimum wage, which is one of the highest minimum wages in Canada.

We will introduce a consistent, simple system where Ontario workers will now have a straightforward package of annual leave days: three sick days, three family responsibility days and two bereavement days every year for every worker.

As a former nurse, I understand the importance of supporting the domestic or sexual violence provisions. Our government is committed to job protection of the domestic or sexual violence leave for all Ontario workers.

Businesses should have the confidence of reasonable and predictable regulations, and everyone who works should have the confidence of a good job and a safe workplace. That's what the people wanted on June 7, and that's what we will continue to do.

#### MERCURY POISONING

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

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Premier. Two weeks ago, I rose in this House to ask a question on behalf of the family of Steven Fobister Sr. and the people of Grassy Narrows, as did the Leader of the Opposition.

At that time, there were fitting tributes to the former Grand Chief from both sides of this place. But what I asked went unanswered.

Will the Acting Premier rise now and acknowledge that Steven Fobister Sr. lived with and died from the effects of Minamata disease?

**Hon. Christine Elliott:** To the government House leader.

**Hon. Todd Smith:** I acknowledge the question from the member opposite, and the members who are here from Grassy Narrows in question period this morning.

I would also acknowledge that our government is taking the situation in Grassy Narrows very seriously. Already, our minister for northern affairs, Greg Rickford, and our Minister of the Environment, Rod Phillips, sitting directly behind me, have been to Grassy Narrows to meet with the chief and the elders. I know that they are going to be continuing that type of dialogue in the days and months and years to come.

Unfortunately, what happened in Grassy Narrows is an historic tragedy, to be quite honest, in that region. I know that our government is committed to working extremely closely with the members of Grassy Narrows and Wabaseemoong to come to a proper conclusion in this case.

Just to continue our commitment to northern Ontario, our Premier and our Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry are in northern Ontario, making more positive announcements.

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

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** My question is to the Acting Premier again: Since, as the Minister of Indigenous Affairs was very quick to mention, he had direct experience with former Chief Fobister in Grassy Narrows, this government should have no problem acknowledging that Chief Fobister was sick from mercury poisoning.

Will the Acting Premier and the Minister of Health, on behalf of this government, commit today to compensate everyone in the community of Grassy Narrows, and the others who are affected by it, for the ongoing impacts on their health and livelihoods due to mercury poisoning?

**Hon. Todd Smith:** Again, thanks to the member opposite for the question, and welcome to the members from Grassy Narrows.

I can tell you, in direct response to that question, it's shameful that it took the previous Liberal government as long as it did without doing anything for that community.

Our government has already taken immediate action to ensure that people who receive mercury disability payments are properly compensated, by retroactively indexing payments to the rate of inflation. That includes the folks in Grassy Narrows. These payments have been frozen for over 30 years, and that's unacceptable.

On behalf of the Minister of Indigenous Affairs, this is one small part of the work that we're doing to address the long-standing challenges faced by the people in Grassy Narrows and Wabaseemoong.

Our government continues to work with the First Nations community there and the federal government to clean up that river system, which has caused so much heartache for the people in that community, and to take care of the people who are sick in that community, and help put the communities on a path towards a better future.

## SKILLS TRAINING

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** My question is again to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Speaker, I am proud to be part of a government which is committed to making Ontario open for business and creating good-paying jobs for the people of Ontario. I have heard from employers in my riding that we have a skills gap that was ignored for 15 years by the previous Liberal government, dragging down Ontario's economy.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, the skills gap costs Ontario's economy up to \$24.3 billion in lost GDP. That lost GDP means that the skills gap costs government \$3.7 billion in lost revenue.

Can the minister tell us how the government's Making Ontario Open for Business Act will, if passed, reduce red tape and create better jobs for the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** Thank you to the member for the question and her strong advocacy for the people of Simcoe North.

Our government for the people is delivering on our promise to cut red tape and make Ontario open for business. We are committed to creating more better-paying jobs and making it easier for apprentices to join the workforce. That is why our legislation, if passed, will reduce red tape for workers and employers in the skilled trades sector. Our commitment is clear: If you are prepared to do the work, then you deserve a shot at the job.

1120

We are hearing positive feedback across the skilled trades sector. President and CEO of Colleges Ontario Linda Franklin said, "Apprenticeship training in this province is awash in red tape. We're pleased the government is taking serious action to streamline and improve skills training."

We want all Ontarians to reach their full potential by reducing red tape in the skilled trades and creating good jobs for the people of Ontario.

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

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** Thank you to the minister for her hard work to make Ontario the engine of Canada's economy once again. I am proud that our government has listened to businesses that face constant roadblocks to hiring the next generation of willing workers in Ontario.

Speaker, because of aging demographics, we need to do more to get young people into the trades so that there will be skilled individuals to fill the jobs of tomorrow. Skills Ontario estimates that 40% of all jobs created in Canada over the next decade will be in the skilled trades, and 21% of Ontario's skilled trades workforce is expected to retire this decade, emphasizing the need for immediate action.

Can the minister tell us more about how the government's plan will make Ontario open for business, reduce red tape and create better jobs for the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Merrilee Fullerton:** We are a government for the people and a government for workers in the skilled trades. We listened to employers about what steps government could take to create good-paying jobs in the skilled trades. Our plan will create good jobs across Ontario.

To quote Wayne Arthur, owner of Arthur Electric in Milton, "We're delighted the Ontario government is making it possible for us to open our doors to more apprentices. We'll be hiring anywhere from four to six apprentices." Gerald McCann of Cynergy Mechanical Ltd. in Etobicoke said, "We'll be hiring a minimum of five new employees." Dennis Endrizzi of Beckett Electrical said, "This announcement allows us to hire anywhere from five to eight apprentices." Jim Moyer of Waltec Electrical Services in Bolton said, "We will be hiring an additional four apprentices ASAP."

We promised the people of Ontario to create—

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Stop the clock. Order. Member for Timmins, come to order. Start the clock.

Next question?

## POLICE SERVICES

**Mr. Ian Arthur:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and through you, my question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Kingston's violent crime severity index rose 53% in 2017 over 2016. That is the highest spike in Canada. Despite this, the Conservative government is withholding a much-needed Policing Effectiveness and Modernization Grant. The grant was approved and was paying for front-line law enforcement teams.

Why is this government cutting police officers' salaries right now in Kingston?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you for that question. First of all, I want to make it perfectly clear that the government continues to review its expenditures and it's looking to determine how best to allocate funds that are needed for policing. As you can appreciate—we look in the galleries and we see all these kids who are inside the House today—our primary concern is to ensure public safety.

We made an initial investment of \$25 million in guns and gangs. There's a second phase that we will be working through, and we are concerned with respect to issues with respect to policing. We will look at the issue in Kingston as we're reviewing the other parts around the province.

We do support the police and we are providing them with the tools they need to be able to perform their—

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

*Interjections.*

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

Supplementary?

**Mr. Ian Arthur:** My question was about front-line officers in Kingston.

Like many police forces around the province, Kingston was using the money to fund a COAST program and give officers the resources and expertise they need to respond to emergencies where mental health is a factor.



The Ford government cut \$330 million in annual mental health funding already. Now they are withholding money—

*Interjections.*

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

**Mr. Ian Arthur:** Now they are withholding money that was designated for front-line mental health workers, for interactions where the safety and security of people and officers was at stake. How can the government justify cutting the spending?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister.

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** At this time, the ministry has provided approximately \$750,000 in funding to the city of Kingston and/or the Kingston Police Services Board. As our government continues to review expenditures in light of the government's fiscal state, it would be inappropriate to speculate what the final amount might be.

But let's be clear about this: We have a \$358-billion debt. We have a deficit of \$15 billion. Our government is responsible. It will provide police services the tools and the funding they need to do their jobs. We are going to do it in a responsible way and ensure the safety of the public. That is what our mandate is, and that's what we will do.

#### HORSE RACING INDUSTRY

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. I understand there was an exciting announcement made this morning in Sarnia by the member for Sarnia–Lambton. Over the past few weeks, we have heard about the fantastic work that's being done to support the horse racing industry after it was decimated by the Liberals and, sadly, with the support of the NDP. We were all excited to learn that Kawartha Downs and Ajax Downs will be keeping their slots. We are also happy to hear that continued support has been accepted by racetracks in Fort Erie and Dresden.

It's clear that our government is making good on our commitment to support the horse racing industry. Could the minister please inform the House about this exciting announcement that was made in Sarnia this morning?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you to the member for Perth–Wellington. I am thrilled to share the exciting news that the member for Sarnia–Lambton made this morning. Slots will be returning to Hiawatha racetrack. This agreement in principle helps repair the damage done by the previous Liberal government after it decimated the horse racing industry. Hiawatha had their slots taken away in 2012, and now our government is bringing them back. This agreement completes our program to provide support to the horse racing industry. The previous Liberal government laid waste to this important industry. The Premier promised that we would put an end to the Liberals' destruction and provide the industry the support it needs

to grow and prosper. This is yet another promise made, promise kept.

*Interjections.*

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

Start the clock. Supplementary.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** Thank you to the minister for that response. I'm so happy to hear that our government is making good on another campaign commitment. The horse racing industry is important right across Ontario, but particularly in rural Ontario. I'm proud of the action our government has taken to support the industry and support rural Ontario. After 15 years of Liberal devastation to this province, horse racing can once again grow and prosper in Ontario.

Hiawatha is just the latest in a series of accomplishments for this industry. Could the minister please explain how our government has kept our promise and supported the horse racing industry throughout rural Ontario?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate Bob Bailey, the member from Sarnia–Lambton, for his leadership on this file. He was instrumental in the return of slots to the Hiawatha racetrack. After the Liberals decimated the horse racing industry, rural Ontario will now benefit from that member's hard work. With the return of slots to Hiawatha, our program to support the horse racing industry is now complete. In all communities where slots were removed or to be removed, they have either been restored or returned to the racetracks wanting them or the tracks made a business decision to accept enhanced support for their racing operations. Either way, Speaker, Premier Ford made a promise, and that promise has now been kept.

**Mr. Jeff Burch:** Except Fort Erie. Not Fort Erie.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Niagara Centre, come to order.

Next question.

#### POLICE SERVICES

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** My question is to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Criminal activity in northern Ontario is increasing, yet the Conservative government does not seem to care. The Thunder Bay Police Service has been very proactive in reaching out to the member from Vaughan–Woodbridge for support and has received silence in return. In fact, the acting Thunder Bay Police Service chief made a desperate plea to the member as Thunder Bay is feeling the effects of drugs, gangs and firearms coming into our community, but the plea fell on deaf ears.

Speaker, Thunder Bay desperately needs a provincial grant to assist the police in tackling guns and gangs. Will this government finally respond to Thunder Bay's request?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** As we've stated, public safety is our primary concern. We're committed to examining current community funding programs and their effectiveness in reducing gun violence and gang-related activity in Ontario.

What we did was, we started with where the problems were greatest, which was in Toronto, with the guns and gangs grants that were provided of \$25 million. Our intention was, is and continues to be to talk to the stakeholders, to talk to the various police services, and to determine, as a second phase, what needs to be done. We are conducting those investigations and round tables at the present time with the hope and the anticipation of being able to deploy funding to assist all the police services where issues are prominent.

We know that the issues are prominent in Thunder Bay. I'm very well aware of Thunder Bay, Ottawa and the other jurisdictions that are feeling—

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

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** The police are facing serious challenges in Thunder Bay and all across this province. Thanks to the government's mental health funding cuts, police are even more than ever dealing with individuals in mental health crisis. Yet the minister is refusing to fund the grants that support that important work.

Why is the government refusing to support police in their efforts to handle the growing mental health challenges in Thunder Bay?

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** I thank the member for the question, but I do not agree with the premise of it. We have a very good speaking relationship with all of the police services in the province. One of the things that we will continue to do is to deal with the various stakeholders to determine what the needs are in the various police services around the province.

Part of the work that has been done to date is to visit various police services. As we continue, we're determining what the needs are, because the policing needs in different parts of the province are not the same, necessarily, as the needs in Toronto or in other places, so we continue to do the work.

Our primary concern is to ensure public safety, and we're dealing with that. We're dealing with that in the places where it's most prominent, and we'll continue to do that to ensure that police services have the tools and can deliver the services necessary throughout the province to keep it safe.

## TOURISM

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Tourism accounts for over 4% of the province's gross domestic product. It's an industry that supports over 390,000 jobs and generates over \$34 billion in economic activity.

The tourism sector has seen some incredible growth in the past two years, with year-over-year increases in visitor spending of nearly 6%. Can the minister explain our government's plan to maximize the economic impact of the tourism industry and how it will ensure the industry continues to further grow and thrive?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** I'm happy to, and thank you to my friend and colleague the MPP from Whitby for this

important question. I think he underlines what we sometimes forget when we talk about our tourism questions and our tourism operators, that in fact they are an economic driver in the province of Ontario.

I was very pleased to attend the annual tourism summit in Windsor earlier this week. We talked about the importance of what an economic driver does. Those tourist operators really are looking for certainty from the province of Ontario. That's why I was so proud to announce how Bill 47 is actually going to assist and make sure the tourist operators can continue to build their business and can continue to provide and offer a premium tourist destination when people choose Ontario as their site of choice when they spend their tourism dollars.

I'd be pleased to talk more about what we discussed in the supplementary.

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

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Back to the minister, and thank you for that response: I'm very pleased to hear that we're moving quickly to get Ontario back on track, Speaker.

The previous provincial framework surrounding the tourism industry fell short of transforming words into action. It also was unsuccessful in clearly setting out the roles and responsibilities of both the government and the industry. And it did not define the role of our regional tourism organizations.

In the end, our tourism industry still lacks the tools, resources and clear vision required to achieve its full potential. They know, Speaker, that there is so much potential for businesses and Ontario communities like my riding of Whitby.

Can the minister elaborate on our government's clear vision to create jobs and growth in our new tourism strategy?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** During the tourism summit—and I must say, the theme of this year's summit was "Tourism Matters." It really drove home the importance and the value that we have in an economic sector that, frankly, goes north, south, east and west in the province of Ontario. No matter where we live in Ontario, we are impacted and we have the ability to benefit from tourists visiting our province and spending money in our communities, and building those businesses.

Part of what we did at the economic summit earlier this week was announce a consultation. We want to make sure we get this right. Right from the beginning, when I was meeting with the tourism stakeholders at AMO in the summer, they talked about how we needed to change the direction in the province of Ontario, to make "open for business" mean something, to actually ensure, through the changes that we are implementing with Bill 47, people will have the certainty they need to invest in the province of Ontario and make sure tourism—

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

## AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** My question is to the Minister of Finance. This government recently approved auto insurance rate increases as high as 11.6%. This is the fourth consecutive quarter the government has allowed auto insurance rates to increase.

Why is the minister allowing insurance companies to jack up their rates when Ontarians already pay the highest auto insurance rates in the country?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Please tell me you're ready, Parm.

Let me remind the newer member of the deal that the NDP struck with the Liberal Party. This is exactly the disaster that became the insurance industry prices of today. A deal was cut by the Liberals to have the NDP support their budget if they made a stretch-goal promise that nobody on either of these sides ever intended on reaching fruition.

We hear you loud and clear, but you really should be talking to your leadership in the party to understand that you are part of the problem here and certainly have never been part of the solution.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Members, take your seats. Once again, I'll remind all members, please make your comments through the Chair.

Supplementary.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** Thanks to the minister of condescension and obvious arrogance. People in my—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Place your question.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** People in my community of Humber River–Black Creek are paying more for their auto insurance than other Ontarians just because of where they live. This is just unfair.

There is no good reason good drivers in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood should pay double what other drivers in the GTA pay. That is why the NDP have put forward a bill that will end postal code discrimination in auto insurance once and for all.

Will the minister stand up for drivers in my community who are being penalized just because of where they live, and support our bill to end postal code discrimination in auto insurance?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** The Premier has made it very clear, Speaker, that our government is committed to ensuring fairness in rate-setting, ending discriminatory practices and working towards a system that puts drivers first.

Our member from Milton, Parm Gill, has worked on this file and presented a private member's bill. His proposed initiative is a great way to combat rate discrimination in our auto insurance system. He has done this right. He consulted with shareholders right across the province and wrote a great bill, unlike the NDP member from Brampton East, who wants the GTA to be considered a

single geographic area and have all of his own members' rates skyrocket.

## VISITORS

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

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to welcome Rebecca Grundy to the Legislature today, and just remind all members of the photo that will take place on the staircase for Rethink Breast Cancer.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Point of order: the member for Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank all of the people who support Rethink Breast Cancer and who came to Queen's Park—thank you for coming—and remind every MPP that they are offering us a lunch in room 228. Please come and listen to what they have to say.

## CORRECTION OF RECORD

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

**Hon. Michael A. Tibollo:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to correct something. I believe I used the number of \$354 billion. It's \$338 billion.

## VISITORS

**Miss Kinga Surma:** I want to welcome a school from my riding that is coming to visit us here at Queen's Park. Wellesworth Junior School will be here with us today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Ernie Hardeman:** I'd like to introduce the grade 12 class from the Rehoboth Christian School from Norwich in my riding of Oxford to the Legislature today. Welcome. We're very happy to see you here.

**Hon. Todd Smith:** Our director of legislative affairs in the Premier's office, Cody Welton, will be delivering a very educational and informative speech in the Ontario Room in the Macdonald Block at 3 o'clock this afternoon to Queen's University students. I know it's going to be outstanding.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** I would just like to congratulate Bob Menka on his recent engagement.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I would remind the members that we do have introduction of visitors at the start of question period. That's an opportunity to do these opening pleasantries as well.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### GREEN ENERGY REPEAL ACT, 2018

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

Deferred vote 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 Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1143 to 1148.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Members, please take your seats. Would the members please take their seats.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I would ask for the attention of the House, please.

On October 15, 2018, Mr. Rickford moved second reading of Bill 34. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

|                        |                        |                             |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Anand, Deepak          | Harris, Mike           | Piccini, David              |
| Baber, Roman           | Hogarth, Christine     | Rasheed, Kaleed             |
| Babikian, Aris         | Jones, Sylvia          | Roberts, Jeremy             |
| Barrett, Toby          | Kanapathi, Logan       | Romano, Ross                |
| Bouma, Will            | Khanjin, Andrea        | Sabawy, Sheref              |
| Calandra, Paul         | Kramp, Daryl           | Sandhu, Amarjot             |
| Cho, Raymond Sung Joon | Lece, Stephen          | Scott, Laurie               |
| Cho, Stan              | Martin, Robin          | Simard, Amanda              |
| Clark, Steve           | Martow, Gila           | Skelly, Donna               |
| Coe, Lorne             | McDonell, Jim          | Smith, Dave                 |
| Crawford, Stephen      | McKenna, Jane          | Smith, Todd                 |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy         | McNaughton, Monte      | Surma, Kinga                |
| Downey, Doug           | Mitas, Christina Maria | Tangri, Nina                |
| Dunlop, Jill           | Mulroney, Caroline     | Thanigasalam, Vijay         |
| Elliott, Christine     | Nicholls, Rick         | Thompson, Lisa M.           |
| Fedeli, Victor         | Pang, Billy            | Tibollo, Michael A.         |
| Fullerton, Merrilee    | Park, Lindsey          | Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. |
| Ghamari, Goldie        | Parsa, Michael         | Wai, Daisy                  |
| Gill, Parm             | Pettapiece, Randy      | Walker, Bill                |
| Hardeman, Ernie        | Phillips, Rod          | Yakabuski, John             |

**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

|                      |                          |                 |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Armstrong, Teresa J. | Harden, Joel             | Morrison, Suze  |
| Arthur, Ian          | Hassan, Faisal           | Rakocevic, Tom  |
| Bell, Jessica        | Hunter, Mitzie           | Schreiner, Mike |
| Berns-McGown, Rima   | Karpoche, Bhutula        | Singh, Gurratan |
| Bisson, Gilles       | Kernaghan, Terence       | Stiles, Marit   |
| Burch, Jeff          | Lindo, Laura Mae         | Tabuns, Peter   |
| Coteau, Michael      | Mamakwa, Sol             | West, Jamie     |
| Fraser, John         | Mantha, Michael          |                 |
| Gélinas, France      | Monteith-Farrell, Judith |                 |

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 60; the nays are 25.

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

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated October 24, 2018, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

## TIME ALLOCATION

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion number 14 related to the allocation of time on Bill 32, An Act to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998.

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

**Interjection:** Same vote.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Same vote? Same vote.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 60; the nays are 25.

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

*Motion agreed to.*

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

*The House recessed from 1153 to 1300.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Doly Begum:** On Tuesday afternoon I was visited by two of my constituents, brothers from Scarborough Southwest. They came to Queen's Park to share with me their very recent and tragic ordeal of losing their father. After being admitted to Scarborough Rouge Valley hospital in June, the struggle this family went through trying to navigate our under-resourced and overburdened health care system was nothing short of a nightmare, ending with the death of their father in September.

This family is not alone. I know my colleagues across the aisle hear stories like this from their own constituents often: families being told that hospitals are not allowed to transfer patients, that there isn't enough time to see the right specialist, that there are no beds available.

I'm deeply troubled that this government has cut back on the planned funding so critically needed for our hospitals while at the same time telling the public that they're increasing funding. This is a cut, plain and simple, coming at the worst of times. This puts families in peril and puts unfair pressure on doctors, nurses and support staff. I know and believe this is not because our nurses, doctors and hospital staff do not want to help, but we have burdened them with so much responsibility for giving the best care possible but tied their hands with fewer and fewer resources.

Scarborough Rouge Valley is the third-largest hospital in Ontario, and yet they have received zero provincial infrastructure funding over the last six years. During this time the population of Scarborough increased significantly. This is a hospital that includes a large number of low-income communities and that has been operating at nearly double its capacity.

I implore the minister and the Premier to start taking the health and well-being of the communities in Scarborough, like those across the province, with the compassion and urgency needed.

#### TOGETHER WE STAND FOUNDATION

**Ms. Andrea Khanjin:** I'm excited to stand in the Legislature today to tell you about an important initiative started by my good friends Rick and Lillian Ekstein. They launched the Together We Stand Foundation.

Lillian and Rick are proud first-generation Canadians. Their family was a victim of the Holocaust, and they are so grateful they chose to settle in Canada.

In order to give back to Canada, they wanted to honour the behind-the-scenes heroes: families who find themselves separated from their loved ones who are deployed abroad defending and promoting democracy and our national interests. These families sacrifice time together to let us enjoy our freedom.

Canada currently has over 2,000 highly trained Canadian Forces personnel serving a variety of missions. Their families will celebrate the holiday season separated from their loved ones while they protect our interests abroad. It's time we recognize their sacrifices. Over the holiday season, each family of deployed personnel will receive a wonderful package of gift cards filled with donations. If you want to learn more about Rick and Lillian's initiative, please visit [twsfoundation.ca](http://twsfoundation.ca).

Please join me in giving a round of applause and thanks to Rick and Lillian for rallying Canadians from coast to coast to support a cause that celebrates Canadian military families while their loved ones are deployed abroad.

*Applause.*

#### OPENING OF MINE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Speaker, guess where I was yesterday. I was with the Premier and the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines and Indigenous Affairs, referred to as the minister of everything; that's what he was referred to as by the Premier. That certainly is a mouthful.

Anyway, I was in White River along with the communities of Hornepayne and Pic Mobert. We were opening up the new mine over at Harte Gold. Hornepayne and White River have always been recognized for a strong forestry sector. Now they're in the ball game. Now they're also within the mining sector. Pic Mobert and Harte developed a new partnership, a real business-to-business, community-to-community. I was proud to be part of the opening ceremony. There was a pipe song and a bear song,

and I think people there were a little bit taken aback with regard to my singing skills with the drum.

There was one thing that was missing from there. There were a lot of dignitaries who were missing, but my friend the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North, Michael Gravelle, was not there. Michael, I hope you're doing better. We are looking forward to seeing you back here.

This was really about building relationships and partnerships. There's another thing that was missing there, one sentence that could have been said by either the Premier or the minister, and that is very simple. It's the biggest step that we can do for reconciliation. It is recognizing that we were on the traditional lands of the Pic Mobert First Nations people. It would have been perfect. It's something that I put out not to criticize, but just to tell the government: Remember our First Nations people. It is truly something and a relationship that we need to embrace.

#### CANCER TREATMENT

**Miss Christina Maria Mitas:** Cancer is a disease that affects far too many people in Ontario. It claims too many lives and forces people to endure often lengthy and painful treatments. Everyone in this House would like to see a cure for cancer, but even as we hope for our doctors and scientists to find a cure, we must ensure that we are continuing to offer people with cancer the treatment and support that they need.

One of the groups that provides support to young women with breast cancer is called Rethink Breast Cancer, and they visited us here at the Legislature today. My colleague from Eglinton–Lawrence welcomed them at their luncheon on behalf of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Rethink Breast Cancer is an organization of young women who support other young women with breast cancer. They campaign for change and work to improve breast cancer services, treatment and education for young women specifically. They remind us that young women do, in fact, get breast cancer, and that these young women need support that is tailored to their specific needs.

Thank you to Rethink Breast Cancer for all of the work that you do and must continue to do until a cure is found.

#### TEC HUB

**Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell:** This afternoon, I am proud to speak to the House about the new Confederation College Technology, Education and Collaboration Hub. I had the honour of attending the grand opening of the facility last Friday.

This facility will have an immediate, positive impact on the workforce and business community of my riding and throughout northwestern Ontario. Although some equipment has been moved over from the pre-existing buildings at the college, former president Jim Madder is fundraising \$5 million to fully equip the TEC Hub. The region's advanced manufacturing, technology and resource sectors will be well served by the facility, as it will hold research, incubation and technology transfer services.

The TEC Hub will help develop a workforce that is skilled and employment-ready in technology and trades. Importantly, it will provide specific programs for Indigenous learners, including pathways for skilled trades. The TEC Hub will work collaboratively with innovators in the region. Community partners will be invited to participate in research development, and local entrepreneurs will be offered space to pursue their own projects.

Overall, the TEC Hub will create opportunities and contribute to the development of a skilled, employment-ready technology and trades workforce in our community and in Ontario. I would hope that the government contributes to ensure that the new TEC Hub is fully outfitted.

#### EVENTS IN SIMCOE NORTH

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** This Saturday, members from across my riding of Simcoe North will be celebrating former mayor of Tay township Scott Warnock's retirement.

Scott has spent 21 years tirelessly serving the residents of Tay. He served nine years as councillor and 12 years as mayor. He has been a strong champion for Tay, has worked hard to represent small-town rural values and has always focused on cultivating local awareness and interest. Scott has consistently emphasized the importance of transparency and building partnerships in politics and in the community.

In my first few months serving as the new member of provincial Parliament for Simcoe North, Scott was incredibly gracious and always willing to offer guidance and assistance whenever and wherever possible. Scott has been unwavering in his dedication to his community. He has always worked hard to bring positive changes to the township of Tay. He has been diligent in creating connections and fostering good working relationships across our riding and across the province. I am thankful for his service and honoured to recognize him here in the House today.

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I also wanted to take this time to congratulate all the successful candidates who ran in the townships of Oro-Medonte, Ramara, Severn, Tay and Tiny, the city of Orillia, and the towns of Midland and Penetanguishene—especially my mother, Jane Dunlop, who is the acclaimed deputy mayor of Severn township. I want to thank all those who put their names forward to run in these elections; it takes a lot of time, effort, commitment and sacrifice. Regardless if you won or lost, you gave all your communities a choice, and this is integral in supporting the democratic process. I look forward to working with all those who were elected as we continue to make the communities in Simcoe North thriving and prosperous.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr. Sol Mamakwa:** My comments relate to Bill 4, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act. The cancellation act means there's no legislation in Ontario to protect the environment. Especially in the north, climate change will continue, to the detriment of the people of the Far North. I would like to give some examples of what climate change looks like in the north.

Windigo First Nations Council, in an area that encompasses a Far North region, stated the following: "We are restricted to only two forms of transportation to connect us to goods and services, economic opportunities, and our families in other communities." One is very-high-cost remote air services; two is unreliable winter roads. Due to climate change, winter roads have become unreliable, expensive to maintain and impassable.

The impacts of climate change and rising temperatures are more pronounced in my region. The result: Our winters are no longer cold enough to create consistent and long deep-freezes to ensure our winter roads are safe and secure.

I just wanted to talk about the impacts. Our airports are our lifeline, and we can't rely on those anymore.

#### TYSEN LEFEBVRE

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** It gives me great joy to announce that Tysen Lefebvre, a young man in my riding, is close to accomplishing his goal that has been almost five years in the making: raising \$1 million for Make-A-Wish Eastern Ontario.

Tysen was born with Pfeiffer syndrome, a rare genetic disorder affecting the shape of his head, hands and feet. At just nine days old, he went through the first of 27 gruelling surgeries he would need.

Fast-forward to November 12, 2012: Make-A-Wish Eastern Ontario made Tysen's dream come true when they flew him out to meet his idol, Adam Sandler. Shortly thereafter, Tysen, being the remarkable young man that he is, decided he was going to pay it forward. He set a goal to raise \$1 million in five years for Make-A-Wish Eastern Ontario so that other children could live out their dreams, just like he did. Since then, he has been working tirelessly, attending countless community events and even postponing surgeries in order to fundraise for his "Mission to a Million."

With only four days left and roughly \$54,000 left to raise, I want to wish Tysen the best of luck. I encourage everyone to head over to [missiontoamillion.ca](http://missiontoamillion.ca) and donate to help Tysen reach his goal.

#### MULTIPLE MYELOMA

**Mr. David Piccini:** Yesterday, the Legislature welcomed multiple-myeloma patients from across Ontario. They were here with Myeloma Canada to increase awareness of the impact of this relatively unknown cancer of the bone marrow. Patients met with many legislators and government officials to share their stories and increase awareness of this incurable cancer.

Multiple myeloma impacts thousands of Canadians each year. Due to the lack of awareness of this disease and its symptoms, many patients go undiagnosed for a long time. Myeloma Canada Research Network is actively conducting research to improve patient outcomes and currently has 24 centres across Canada. With increased funding for research to find treatments and better access to

new medicines, patients may be able to live longer and spend more time with their loved ones.

I'd like to thank Myeloma Canada for taking the time to raise awareness yesterday; Martine and all of her staff at Myeloma Canada; and encourage everyone to take a moment to read about myeloma and spread awareness in their respective communities.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOMS ACT, 2018

#### LOI DE 2018 POUR DES ÉCOLES SÛRES ET AXÉES SUR LE SOUTIEN

Ms. Thompson moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 48, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to education and child care / Projet de loi 48, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation et la garde d'enfants.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Would the minister care to explain her bill?

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** Absolutely. I'm pleased to come to the House today to introduce a bill that, if passed—the short title of the act will be known as the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act. It is geared towards keeping our children and students safe and ensuring they are better supported in their learning environment.

## 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, affix my name and give it to page Eiliyah.

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### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** I would like to table the following petition:

"To Ensure the Safety of Residents of Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Justin Trudeau government is not doing enough to protect the people of Ontario from convicted terrorists; and

"Whereas safety, security and peace of mind is of the utmost importance to the Ford government; and

"Whereas Ontario residents who have not been convicted of criminal acts could find themselves unable to gain access to various privileges they enjoy; and

"Whereas there are no provisions to prevent convicted terrorists from accessing privileges in Ontario;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 46 and disallow anyone convicted of a crime under section 83 of the Criminal Code of Canada and any international treaties that may apply from receiving:

"(1) a licence under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997;

"(2) health insurance benefits under the Health Insurance Act;

"(3) a driver's licence under the Highway Traffic Act;

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

"(5) grants, awards or loans under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act;

"(6) income support or employment supports under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997;

"(7) assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997;

"(8) coverage under the insurance plan under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997."

I support this petition and I will affix my name to it.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**M<sup>me</sup> 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, 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, will sign it and will give it to Sophia.

### ANIMAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas certain commercial operations known as ‘puppy/kitten mills’ have been reported to keep animals in precarious conditions in breach of provincial animal welfare laws; and

“Whereas dog/cat breeding in accordance with the law is a legitimate economic activity; and

“Whereas it is the duty of any government to ensure the laws of Canada and Ontario are respected and that the health and well-being of innocent animals is protected;

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

“That the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services work proactively with all amateur and professional dog/cat breeders, as well as consumers, with the intent to tackle confirmed animal cruelty cases in puppy/kitten mills and to educate all stakeholders about animal welfare standards.”

I support this petition and I will sign it.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Joel Harden:** It’s a pleasure to introduce this petition on behalf of Karen Bartlett and other folks in the neighbouring riding to me, in Ottawa West–Nepean. It is called “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.”

Speaker, I will be signing this petition and passing it to page Jiire for the Clerks’ table.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Dave Smith:** I have a petition to the Parliament of Ontario.

“To Ensure the Safety of Residents of Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Justin Trudeau government is not doing enough to protect the people of Ontario from convicted terrorists; and

“Whereas safety, security and peace of mind is of the utmost importance to the Ford government; and

“Whereas Ontario residents who have not been convicted of criminal acts could find themselves unable to gain access to various privileges they enjoy; and

“Whereas there are no provisions to prevent convicted terrorists from accessing privileges in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 46 and disallow anyone convicted of a crime under section 83 of the Criminal Code of Canada and any international treaties that may apply from receiving:

“(1) a licence under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997;

“(2) health insurance benefits under the Health Insurance Act;



“(3) a driver’s licence under the Highway Traffic Act;

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

“(5) grants, awards or loans under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act;

“(6) income support or employment supports under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997;

“(7) assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997;

“(8) coverage under the insurance plan under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.”

I emphatically support this petition, have affixed my name to it and will give it to Sophie.

### CLIMATE CHANGE

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** 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, 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 support this petition. I’ll be signing my name to it and giving it to page Maya.

### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I have a petition from my constituents in Guelph.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Progressive Conservative Party promised to continue the Basic Income Pilot during the 2018 election campaign;

“Whereas there has been no indication that the Basic Income Pilot was not working to lift people out of poverty and the government refuses to release any official economic analysis or facts to support the elimination of the program;

“Whereas basic income programs have received support from across the political spectrum and from esteemed economists as a financially responsible and effective way to eliminate poverty;

“Whereas people in Ontario on ODSP and Ontario Works are currently living far below the poverty line;

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“Whereas the cancellation of the Basic Income Pilot will damage the lives of our most vulnerable citizens and

end up costing us more in health care, policing and emergency services.

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to restore the Basic Income Pilot program.”

I support this petition. I have sent a letter to the Prime Minister on this petition. I will sign it and ask Armita to bring it to the table.

### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** This petition is titled “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; and

“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 fully support the petition on behalf of my constituents of Parkdale–High Park and I will be adding my signature to it as well.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Ms. Jill Dunlop:** I have a petition entitled “Petition to the Parliament of Ontario to Ensure the Safety of Residents of Ontario.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Justin Trudeau government is not doing enough to protect the people of Ontario from convicted terrorists; and

“Whereas safety, security and peace of mind is of the utmost importance to the Ford government; and

“Whereas Ontario residents who have not been convicted of criminal acts could find themselves unable to gain access to various privileges they enjoy; and

“Whereas there are no provisions to prevent convicted terrorists from accessing privileges in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass Bill 46 and disallow anyone convicted of a crime under section 83 of the Criminal Code of Canada and any international treaties that may apply from receiving:

“(1) a licence under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997;

“(2) health insurance benefits under the Health Insurance Act;

“(3) a driver’s licence under the Highway Traffic Act;

“(4) rent-gear-to-income assistance or special needs housing under the Housing Services Act, 2011;

“(5) grants, awards or loans under the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities Act;

“(6) income support or employment supports under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997;

“(7) assistance under the Ontario Works Act, 1997;

“(8) coverage under the insurance plan under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.”

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

## PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

### LIABILITY FOR CLIMATE-RELATED HARMS ACT, 2018

### LOI DE 2018 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ À L’ÉGARD DES DOMMAGES LIÉS AU CLIMAT

Mr. Tabuns moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 37, An Act respecting civil liability for climate-related harms / Projet de loi 37, Loi concernant la responsabilité civile à l’égard des dommages liés au climat.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Thank you, Speaker. Before I go any further, I want to welcome those who have joined us today for this important debate. I appreciate you taking the time to come and listen.

Who is going to pay? Who is going to pay for climate damage? That’s the question before us. When thousands of people’s basements fill up with sewage for the third time in a row after a major storm has overwhelmed the

sewer system, who is going to pay? When people who are already struggling to pay their bills are hauling out water-logged couches and other furniture to put on the front lawn, who is going to pay to help replace that furniture?

When people have to abandon their homes—as they are doing now in the United States—because of constant flooding, who will pay for their homes? Who will pay for relocation? When cities have to completely rebuild their sewer systems to deal with a climate of more extreme weather—and that’s an issue that Toronto is going to have to grapple with; we’re talking tens of billions of dollars—who is going to pay?

Is the province is going to pay? The Premier says he is for the people. He and his Minister of the Environment say that working families shouldn’t have to pay for climate action. Will he be standing up for working families when a disaster hits? Will he support this bill and turn to the companies at the heart of the problem and get them to pay?

Will insurance companies pay? Increasingly, they will not be paying. In September of this year, the Windsor Star reported, “With insurance policy renewals coming in over the past year, after two massive storms in 2016 and 2017 that hit Windsor and Tecumseh, some local homeowners are learning their coverage—due to flooding claims—is no longer being provided.” Many Windsor residents are now on their own, and they won’t be the last homeowners to see their coverage end. The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, in her climate report, noted that insurance companies were looking at ending home flood coverage for up to 10% of Canadian homes—10%.

Will oil, gas and coal companies pay their fair share? This bill tries to address the question of getting oil, gas and coal companies to pay their fair share of the costs that will go into the hundreds of billions of dollars. Will they pay all of it? No, they won’t. All of us—we will all be stuck with a bill. We will all have to pay. We will all see our lives get tougher and more expensive. But oil, gas and coal companies should pay their fair share. They cannot simply be allowed to stand aside while the rest of us take on these expenses.

People in this province now, working hard to cover their existing bills, will find themselves shelling out thousands to deal with the cost of climate change or doing their best to get their governments to back them up, while at the same time those governments will be dealing with costs in the tens or hundreds of billions of dollars to deal with the damage from climate breakdown.

This bill simplifies the process of suing fossil fuel companies for the cost of damage from their operations and their products. The bill makes it more likely that governments, businesses and individuals will be able to secure compensation for measures to prevent such damage. This bill doesn’t apply a liability to small companies. Jim’s corner gas won’t be caught up in this bill—too small. Only companies whose emissions are globally detectable—so we’re talking about massive emitters—will be liable: the likes of Exxon, Shell and BP. The bill sets a threshold for determining if an extreme weather disaster is tied to climate change.

The science is developed. Climate scientists can now say with good confidence that climate change has made a particular storm more intense or more likely to happen than it would have been without climate change. Hurricane Harvey dumped 1.5 metres of rain on Houston in 2017. That storm cost \$125 billion. One million cars were destroyed. Climate scientists can say with confidence that the hurricane was three times more likely to have happened because of climate change.

The ability to sue for funds to provide protection against further damage is incorporated in the bill. If Toronto or Windsor or Hamilton has to rebuild its storm sewer systems to deal with much bigger rainstorms, then the legislation allows governments to sue for those costs in order to prevent future risk to life and property. We're seeing damage now which we have to pay for. We're going to have to invest a lot to protect ourselves, our homes, our cities. The stakes are very high.

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We're not talking about the far future. Let me just note again some of the costs that people in Ontario are already having to deal with. I mentioned Windsor earlier. In 2016, the Windsor Star reported that on Thursday, September 29, record rainfall hit Windsor-Essex county and resulted in a declared state of emergency in both Windsor and Tecumseh. It's estimated that the insured loss reached as much as \$108 million, with no telling how much there was in losses that weren't covered by insurance. That was September 2016.

Then, in 2017, August 28 to 29, rains brought major flooding to Windsor, Tecumseh and other parts of Essex county. The Windsor airport broke a rainfall record. Over 1,000 basements were reported flooded, and water levels were waist-high in some areas.

In just two years, Windsor got hit with hundreds of millions of dollars in flood damage, in both years from record rainfall.

Speaker, it's not just insurance companies that will be called on to help people in trouble. The provincial government will be asked to step up to the plate. In September 2017, my colleague from Windsor-Tecumseh, Percy Hatfield, asked Minister Mauro, at that time, if he was going to rewrite the conditions for disaster relief because, as things stood in Windsor, people were not getting the support and assistance that they needed, and he noted, "especially for those who can no longer qualify for private insurance"—increasingly a problem we're going to deal with across this province.

A lot of people are not going to be able to qualify for private insurance against flooding in the future. Governments will either have to step in to help people, or eventually people are going to have to move out of those areas because they're no longer habitable. It's going to be pricey no matter which way it falls out.

And it's not just Windsor that has gotten hit. CTV reported about Toronto in July 2013: "A severe storm in Toronto flooded parts of the city, knocked out power to thousands, and shut down roads and sections of the city's subway system Monday, as nearly 100 millimetres of

water fell across the area in a matter of hours." At the storm's height, 300,000 people were without power. People had to be rescued from a GO train trapped by floodwaters in the Don Valley.

Speaker, the insurance industry determined that the preliminary cost of that disaster was \$850 million. It was one of the most expensive natural disasters in the province's history. But that is only a small taste of what's heading towards us if we don't see the action that's necessary. The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy earlier this decade calculated that the national cost of climate change to Canada for damages would escalate from roughly \$5 billion per year in 2020 up to \$91 billion per year around 2050.

Governments are going to have to act, not only to prevent climate breakdown but to put in place a mechanism for recovering damage costs from industries that are at the heart of the problem. I haven't seen a calculation for what it will cost to adapt or make the investments in Ontario for the adaptation that we need, but the city of New York is engaged in a lawsuit now against major oil companies who are at the heart of this climate problem. New York City has already committed \$20 billion to protect that city from rising seas, more extreme weather events and higher temperatures. One city—\$20 billion. Here in Ontario, we're looking at a very big cost.

We need legislation to ensure that those companies, the fossil fuel companies that are extraordinarily wealthy, are paying their fair share of those costs. It cannot all be left to the shoulders of average Ontario families; it simply cannot be.

We have a precedent for this kind of legislation. Ontario passed tobacco liability legislation a number of years ago, and many other provinces in Canada have done the same. We've done this in part because, in the United States, a group of states got together and sued Big Tobacco, and they were able to secure settlements in the hundreds of billions—in fact, an ongoing, in-perpetuity payment from the big tobacco companies to American states to cover their health costs from tobacco of \$9 billion per year. You're talking very big damages, you're talking a lot of human suffering and pain, and you're talking a lot of liability on the part of those tobacco companies.

Some have argued that there's a big difference between tobacco company legislation and climate legislation. In fact, the Alberta faculty of law has looked at this issue and said that there's great similarity, that changes in the United States to their legislation allowing use of statistical modelling broke the dam and allowed lawsuits to actually reimburse states for the costs incurred by use of this legal product.

The reality is that fossil fuel companies have followed the same playbook as the tobacco companies. They have denied the scientific reality, even though they themselves knew what was going on. In the New York lawsuit, they write, "For decades, defendants have known that their fossil fuel products pose risks of 'severe' and even 'catastrophic' impacts on the global climate through the work and warnings of their own scientists and/or through their

trade association”—the American Petroleum Institute. “Yet each defendant decided to continue its conduct and commit itself to massive fossil fuel production. This deliberate decision placed company profits ahead of human safety, well-being, and property, and foisted onto the public the costs of abating and adapting to climate change.”

We should not have them foisted onto us. We need to put legislation in place so we can recover costs from companies that have made so much from this industry.

I have a few seconds left. I want to thank Greenpeace. I want to thank West Coast Environmental Law for the invaluable advice they gave in the development of this bill.

I want to say to the government and Premier Ford: You say that you stand up for working people. You say that working people shouldn't carry the burden of costs for climate action. Will you stand against these fossil fuel companies and make them pay their fair share?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Donna Skelly:** I rise today to speak in opposition to Bill 37, the private member's bill put forward by the member for Toronto—Danforth.

The plan proposed by the honourable member in this bill would essentially punish fossil fuel producers for anything that could be interpreted as a climate-related harm. What's worse is that there is no requirement to prove that the harm was done on purpose or negligently—simply that harm was done.

This bill proposes a very subjective threshold to prompt punitive suits against employers who bring good, well-paying jobs to Ontario. I wonder why the member opposite wants to blame businesses for environmental changes that they may not have had any direct involvement with.

We can all agree that there are challenges that climate change presents to our environment, and that is why our government is committed to a made-in-Ontario approach to fighting climate change.

The proposed bill creates the potential for extensive damage towards job creators based on a definition of climate-related harm that is broad and wide-ranging—wide-ranging because it seems to include everything from economic losses to increasing costs relating to public education campaigns.

Mr. Speaker, in contrast, this government was elected to reduce red tape, not create more. That's why we introduced the Making Ontario Open for Business Act this week. That's why we're cancelling the previous government's cap-and-trade policy, which only increased prices and made life for everyday Ontarians more unaffordable. The Financial Accountability Officer even issued a report that highlighted the benefits of removing barriers such as cap-and-trade on Ontarians. Then why would we want to erect more barriers?

In addition, a progress report on Ontario's cap-and-trade program claimed that “after a year of carbon pricing, there is no evidence that the policies ... are reducing carbon emissions.” So if taxing businesses doesn't seem to work, why would suing them be a better option?

That's why we have also stood against the Trudeau government's carbon tax. We cannot be supporting proposals that would chase jobs away from Ontario rather than bringing in much-needed investment to improve our economy and make Ontario an economic powerhouse once again.

The proposed act contains several flaws. For example, the bill does not establish an explicit right of action. The bill contains no limitation of liability, which means that the government could actually be a defendant in a case brought against it for exploratory work. Anyone can make a claim of climate-related harm, whether it be the government or other fuel suppliers. It seems that a person with no relationship to the accused fuel producer can put forward a case.

**1350**

Several legal questions remain. These include: Who could be the subject of a claim? What is considered a globally detected level of greenhouse gas emissions? How could liability be split between multiple defendants? There are also significant policy concerns regarding who should pay for the harms, the types of harms to be addressed and how the proposed act would affect consumers and the industry.

We have made progress in terms of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions in Ontario and we need to continue, which is why we need to be able to use the talent Ontario has in science and engineering to help create technological advancements and new innovations that fit in the 21st century. Investing in innovation and new technology is a much better idea than suing businesses to get real results on climate change.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Bhutila Karpoche:** I too want to welcome everybody in the galleries who have come here to observe the debate. I want to give a special shout-out to two constituents from Parkdale—High Park: Rita Bijon, who is here in the members' gallery, and Marian Booy, who is in the visitors' gallery. Both are part of a group called Green 13, which does incredible local grassroots environmental work in my riding.

I also want to thank the member from Toronto—Danforth, who is our official opposition critic for environment and climate change, for this incredibly important piece of legislation that addresses one of the most pressing issues of our time. I think the timing of this bill couldn't have come at a better time because right now we have a Premier, we have a cabinet and we have a government that have completely buried their heads in the sand with regard to climate change. The member from Toronto—Danforth is showing the much-needed leadership that Ontario is lacking on this issue.

This bill, Bill 37, An Act respecting civil liability for climate-related harms, has the power to champion people. This bill gives government as well as individual citizens the ability to work within the law to bring big business—the big polluters—to justice. This bill is about empowering everyday people to take direct action on climate change.

They can go after the big corporations, the big polluters, that are destroying our planet.

As members of this House, as legislators, it is our responsibility to enhance the legal framework of our province so that those who are responsible for climate degradation—the oil, gas and coal producers—are held liable for the irreversible damage they have caused.

In 2017, a journal called *Climatic Change* produced and published some damning evidence against the big polluters. Speaker, did you know that two thirds, a whole 66%, of historical greenhouse gas emissions came from the products and operations of just 90 companies worldwide? That's right: 90 companies are responsible for the effects of climate change that have hurt and will continue to harm billions of people on this planet. Just 90 companies are dictating and ruining the lives of a planet of seven billion people.

I don't think it's asking much for the Ford government to accept scientific evidence on climate change. We need to base our decisions on evidence. Our constituents deserve the mechanisms and the right to sue for damages that they sustain at the hands of big polluters.

One of the most important parts of this bill, I think, is also recognizing the health impacts of this bill. As providers of public health care in Ontario—because we have a public health care system here in Ontario—we have the responsibility to ensure that our health care system is not even more overburdened due to the factors of climate change.

There is plenty of research, plenty of evidence, to make the connection between climate change and health. In 2018, the World Health Organization published that the key social and environmental determinants of health, very basic things like clean air, clean water, sufficient food and secure shelter, are all factors that are being harmed and affected by climate change.

It is estimated that climate change causes about 250,000 deaths per year. Let that sink in: 250,000 deaths per year due to climate change. Respected leading peer-reviewed journals like the *Lancet*, the *British Medical Journal* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association* have all identified climate change as the biggest global health threat of the 21st century.

I'll explain to the members of the House how it works. When you have rising air temperatures, it has a direct effect on health. How? When the temperature increases, so does the ability for the transfer and transmission of diseases, particularly infectious diseases that are carried through vector-borne diseases. A hotter planet means more people getting sick.

In Ontario, we've heard quite a bit over the last few years about the need for an Ontario Lyme disease strategy. Guess what? Diseases like Lyme are spread more easily when it's hotter. Asthma attacks and other breathing-related issues all become more frequent and more severe. Warmer temperatures also mean more pollen and worsened allergies. Warmer temperatures also mean more heatstroke. Day by day, as our planet gets hotter, more and more people experience these illnesses and conditions. I ask the members

opposite: Are you going to stand by and let the big polluters profit as the health of Ontarians gets worse?

The member from Toronto–Danforth also talked about the impact of flooding and drought due to climate change. Here locally in Toronto and Ontario, we have witnessed the impact of more severe and more frequent climate patterns over, I would say, even just the last few months.

I'm running out of time. I want to say finally that the cabinet Minister for Community and Social Services is asking the federal government to pay for the costs of refugee supplements here in Ontario. Guess what? Climate change is contributing to the global refugee crisis because we have people who are forced to move from their homes due to drought and due to rising sea levels. All these factors are contributing to people having to migrate to different parts of the world. I will tell the minister: If she allowed this bill to pass, she would actually, instead of the federal government, be able to get that money directly from the big polluters.

I urge each of my colleagues across the aisle to vote in favour of this bill. I think we owe it to the people of Ontario. We owe it to the children, to the future generations, to give them the tools to protect themselves, to protect our province as climate change continues to worsen.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jeremy Roberts:** I am pleased to rise today in opposition to Bill 37, brought forward by the member for Toronto–Danforth.

In ancient myth, there was a terrible man named Procrustes. Procrustes was the son of Poseidon. He owned a small inn that was situated on the road between Athens and Eleusis. Inside this inn, Procrustes had only one bed. It was a large iron bed. Many guests travelled along this road, and they would often stop at Procrustes's home for the night.

**1400**

Unfortunately, this night was often their last. Procrustes was ideologically obsessed with having every single person fit exactly into his bed. When his guests would fall asleep, he would strap them down and then, using his tools, he would either stretch them to fit his bed or cut off their legs if the poor person happened to be slightly too tall. In his mind, Procrustes had a one-size-fits-all bed.

Of course, over time, it came to be obvious that Procrustes was evil and wicked. In his fabled travels, the great hero Theseus killed Procrustes by stretching him on his own bed—poetic justice in the end.

As with many things from ancient times, the story of Procrustes has come down to us in our vernacular. To this day, the word "Procrustean" means "one size fits all."

I share this story today, Mr. Speaker, because unfortunately this bill proposed by the member opposite is entirely and unfortunately Procrustean in its composition. It would seem that in his ideological pursuit for radical climate policies, he would be more than happy to saw off the legs of the Canadian economy if his solution didn't quite fit the reality. This is a story we see far too often with the opposition NDP.

On the government side, we are not quite so foolish. Just as we voted down the former Liberal government's cap-and-trade carbon tax, which hurt businesses and families, so, too, will we vote down this bill, which is as detached from reality as Marvin the Martian.

Problems like climate change demand pragmatic governments with pragmatic solutions. That starts with three principles: (1) balancing economic and environmental needs, (2) finding a solution that actually solves the problem, and (3) protecting our future generations.

Naturally, this bill accomplishes none of those goals. By forcing employers to pay more on their environmental outputs and making them liable for every ill that happens to befall society, we are at best driving them out of our jurisdiction and at worst driving them out of business altogether. Given the realities of our economy today, these do not seem like prudent choices.

This solution also does not deal with the problem at hand. Studies have repeatedly shown that putting a price on carbon would require an enormous cost that would be untenable by businesses and consumers.

Lastly, this policy would do nothing to protect future generations. By destroying our economy, it would drive up unemployment and food shortages, leaving a bleak future ahead and stifling the entrepreneurial innovation that will be at the heart of a long-term sustainable solution to this challenge. Bad for policy balance, unviable solution, devastated future: I struggle, Mr. Speaker, to see how anyone could think this is a sound policy idea.

I have always felt that we should try and learn the lessons passed down to us through the generations. Instead of stretching the body of the Canadian economy, we know that to fix the problem we need to tailor the solution. Let's change the size of the bed instead. If the opposition NDP don't start presenting pragmatic solutions, I fear that their electoral chances in the future may go the same way as Procrustes: brought down by dogma and inflexibility.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** The issue of climate change is one that has always deeply concerned me, so I'm very proud to be speaking on this bill. As a mother of young children, it is this issue that has deepened my despair and also raised my motivation to act. As every parent is aware, it is very distressing to engage in the very loving task of raising children and doing all of the things that you need to do to raise children—from teaching them to read to brushing their teeth to getting them to school on time to getting them dressed—all the while knowing that they're growing up in a world that is increasingly dangerous and increasingly unstable. It's climate change that is one of the reasons why our future and our children's future is becoming more and more grim.

We have a responsibility to lead on climate change. This Conservative government isn't leading; it's taking us backwards. We're cancelling green energy projects so we do not encourage green electricity and we're cancelling cap-and-trade legislation so big polluters don't have to pay their fair share. Big polluters should be paying their fair

share, and this act allows citizens, businesses and governments in Ontario the right to sue big oil and gas corporations for climate-change-related damages caused by their products and that they're continuing to cause.

There are some very good reasons why individuals and businesses and governments should have the right to take these companies to court. Here are a few.

These companies, despite what we have heard earlier, have known that their products cause climate change and that climate change is dangerous for decades. Instead of sharing this information, the companies have suppressed it and launched a decades-long campaign to convince the public that climate change isn't real. Just this week, the New York Attorney General sued ExxonMobil after a three-year investigation, showing that Exxon has long known the impact of climate change and has deliberately hidden that information from its shareholders, even though it knew full well that it would impact the profits those shareholders could make.

Not only have those companies hidden that information and run a campaign to bring about climate change denial, but they have suppressed the ability for us to introduce and move forward and bring about the uptake of green energy alternatives, such as electric vehicles and such as introducing sensible climate change legislation, which they have actively opposed.

So they've hidden information, they've launched a climate-change-denying campaign, they've suppressed market alternatives and they've suppressed sensible solutions to climate change. Given all of that, it seems very fair to me that governments and businesses and individuals should be able to use the courts to make our case in court that the biggest emitters of carbon should pay their fair share for damages caused.

The costs of climate change and these damages are enormous, and they are being borne by you and me and governments right now. These costs are outlined in the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario's report, and include things like an increase in damages for disaster relief, an increase in managing wildfires and an increase in upgrading our out-of-date infrastructure, such as our sewage system that can no longer handle the extreme rainfalls and flooding that Toronto is experiencing right now because of climate change.

These are costs that you and I currently pay for, and we believe that we should have the right to go to court to have our biggest polluters pay their fair share and contribute to the cost of climate change, which they have profited from.

Climate change harms everyone. It is the biggest environmental crisis we face, and we need real action from all of us. That is why I support the climate liability act.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate? I recognize the member from Peterborough-Kawartha.

**Mr. Dave Smith:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have to put my glasses on, because I thought I recognized Ric Flair, but no, it was you.

I'm not sure how I can follow the member from Ottawa with what he was saying there, referring to Greek mythology and such. When I look at this proposed bill, there are a few things that have jumped out to me. I'm going to read a little bit from it.

"Enhanced legal tools are required so that governments"—I can agree with "governments"—"businesses and individuals can ensure that coal, oil and gas producers contribute their fair share...." What this basically is saying is that an individual could come forward with litigation, or a business or an organization could come forward with litigation. We already have something in Ontario called SLAPP to stop that type of litigation from coming forward when it's there really to impede things.

I'd like to point out a couple of more things in the bill, as proposed: "the costs of constructing, renovating, repairing or improving infrastructure...." This is a self-fulfilling prophecy. What we found in committee, from one of the presenters, is that the concrete industry right now has to use fossil fuels in the production of it, and yet we're going to be asking the concrete industry to be involved in the "constructing, renovating, repairing or improving" of that infrastructure.

1410

So we're going to sue the fossil fuel industry, and then we're going to require the fossil fuel industry to contribute once again, which allows us to sue them one more time, as we continue going through that. So doing those types of repairs that we know we're going to have to do just continues to perpetuate and adds to those lawsuits for that industry.

Interestingly enough, in Ontario we have a \$125-million industry in pulling fossil fuels out of the ground. That industry would leave Ontario under this. It would, in essence, reduce some of the greenhouse gases, but it wouldn't be reducing them the way that the member is intending; it would be reducing them by removing that industry from this province. Once the industry is removed from the province, who then would we sue in this province? Because we wouldn't have jurisdiction to sue outside of the province. So it's really one of these cases where the unintended consequences of this bill make it completely unworkable.

I admire the member for trying to think outside of the box and come up with a solution, but he was there, hearing all of those witnesses; he would know that there are other solutions to it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The member from Toronto—Danforth has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** So little time, so much to say.

First, I want to thank the members from Flamborough—Glanbrook, Parkdale—High Park, Ottawa West—Nepean, University—Rosedale and Peterborough—Kawartha for commenting on this bill.

It's extraordinary to me, Speaker; I had no idea that this government was to the right of the Republican Party in the United States, but today I have found out that that is the case. People will be aware that the tobacco liability lawsuits that went on in the United States were, in fact, largely led by Republican Attorneys General, who were saying,

"This legal product is causing substantial financial and health damage and we need to recover money." They didn't go on about, "Gee, maybe tobacco companies won't continue selling tobacco." They said, "Our people, our states are being damaged, and we want to recover costs from them." So I'm impressed that you make the Republicans look to the left. I laud you for your honesty and directness.

The other thing that's extraordinary to me is, when I was on Toronto city council in the 1990s, as head of the board of health, I was pushing for smoke-free bars and restaurants, and exactly what I've heard today is what I heard then. The fact that you could go into a cancer ward and watch people in their last hours because they've been exposed to tobacco, because tobacco companies had lied about their products, was of no consequence to them. The fact that people were dying in Toronto was of no consequence to them. And clearly, the fact that Ontarians will be bankrupted individually or that people will lose their lives is of no consequence to this government.

Speaker, we face costs in the tens or hundreds of billions of dollars, and disruption of our lives. If the companies that are at the heart of this, that have moved heaven and earth to stop action on climate change, are allowed to keep every penny, the people of this province already facing financial difficulties will face huge burdens in the years to come.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND TOWING  
INDUSTRY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE COMITÉ D'EXAMEN  
DU STATIONNEMENT ACCESSIBLE  
ET DU SECTEUR DE REMORQUAGE

Mrs. Martow moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 39, An Act to require the establishment of an Accessible Parking and Towing Industry Review Committee / Projet de loi 39, Loi exigeant la constitution d'un comité d'examen du stationnement accessible et du secteur de remorquage.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I just want to remind some of the—well, not older as in age—the not rookie members here in the Legislature, that this is really my third time introducing legislation that deals with consumer safety and safety on our roads. It's really important to me that we modernize our system of accessible parking, the tow truck industry and other aspects of our roads. I would really like to see more work being done in terms of not just accident prevention but cleaning up accidents on the highways, smart traffic light meters. There's a lot of work to be done, but today we're focusing on accessibility parking and the tow truck industry. They both fall under consumer services and they both follow this patchwork across the province of Ontario, where each municipality is setting its own rules

and, in terms of the tow truck industry, charging its own licensing fees.

In the area of my riding, which is north of Steeles, you can have an accident at the corner of Steeles and Yonge and it can make a difference which side of the road you're on whether the tow truck that shows up can pick you up or not, because on the northwest corner it's of course the city of Vaughan, which I live in; the northeast corner is the Markham side of my riding; and south of Steeles Avenue is Toronto. So all of a sudden—

**Mr. Stan Cho:** Willowdale.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Willowdale, of course. Thank you. The member from Willowdale is reminding me.

So, of course, what happens? The tow truck drivers have to register licences with each of those separate municipalities in order to deal with different accidents. Then we have Mississauga, with their own set of licensing rules. We want to see a much more modern and streamlined approach to the tow truck industry. I'm going to bounce back and forth a little bit between the accessibility parking issue patchwork and the tow truck industry patchwork.

CAA was here earlier today to advocate support for this bill, and I think that they've actually spoken to many members in the Legislature. Teresa Di Felice was here. She is the assistant vice-president of government relations. Basically, what they would like to see—and I'm not saying that this bill has to enforce anything that I'm really suggesting here. I'm just going to be suggesting, and other members are going to get up and make suggestions. What we're really proposing is to create a task force to meet with all of the different—I guess anybody in Ontario will have the right to send a letter to anybody on the task force to really look at ways that we can improve public safety and consumer confidence.

In terms of the CAA and what they want to advocate for, one of their suggestions is that we should have a separate driver's licence. Perhaps instead of a G, it would have a T for towing. It would mean that you have an actual licence for towing in Ontario, and it's good for the province of Ontario and everybody knows that you have the proper training.

One of the suggestions that I've heard is that we have an Uber-like system, like the GPS tablets in the Uber cars: If you're not in that system, you're not going to get the call, but somebody who is the closest to the accident is going to get a ping saying, "You're the closest. You have 30 seconds to say if you're going to take the call to go and pick up the client with your tow truck." The second and third are told, "Ping! you're on standby. Be ready to respond. Let us know if you're available and we'll put you in the lineup."

There is so much technology now. I remember that a former leader of the Progressive Conservatives, Tim Hudak, when he spoke previously on this initiative, said that there is an app for everything, and he's absolutely right. The technology is out there. The software is out there. We just have to advocate for better use of technology.

We want to see consistency across the province. We want to see consistency in training, in regulations, in consumer protection and in safety. We want to allow municipalities, though, to have a say. We are not discounting the municipalities to be allowed to be involved in the decision-making, either on the task force or maybe to have their own say, somehow being involved in a registry of some kind, so that we can have their input as well and their opinions as well.

Obviously this bill aims to assist motorists in their time of need by streamlining the patchworks in the tow truck industry, as well as, as I said, the accessible parking permits throughout the province.

So many have come and spoken to me ever since I started this initiative. You know what they say, "Walk a mile in my shoes." Well, spend a minute in their wheelchair, Mr. Speaker, because the difficulties that they face, the challenges that they face every day whether they're at their home, whether they're at work, whether they're in a public place or whether they're just in their vehicle trying to find parking—they need to get to jobs just like the rest of us, to appointments just like the rest of us and to recreational activities just like the rest of us.

When somebody is using an accessible parking permit without the proper permit—perhaps it's a legal permit, but the person who it's for is not in the vehicle at that time, but perhaps it's a fraudulent permit.

**1420**

We know the Toronto police have done blitzes and they estimate that between a third and a half of all accessible parking permits in the city are fraudulent. So think about that, Mr. Speaker and members of the House. People go out and they just photocopy the permits and laminate them and put them on the dash. I know the government worked hard over the last couple of years—the previous government—to bring in some better systems with bar codes and things like that, but as we always say, too little too late. We're way behind using technology to make our roads safer here in Ontario. We have transponders that can be used. We've often been to underground parking lots where you see the red lights and green lights and you know if a spot is available or not. Accessible parking spots could have a transponder on the permit, there could be a transponder at the spot, and if you park in that spot without having the proper transponder, perhaps a security or enforcement person is alerted.

We see other jurisdictions across the United States where there are different types of accessibility parking spots. There are the spots that are one colour, perhaps blue, which are wider and have a ramp and are only for those people who need the wider spots and need the ramps, and then maybe nearby there are other spots that aren't as wide and don't have a ramp, but they are for people who have maybe less visible disabilities. Perhaps they have a cardiac problem; perhaps they have brittle bone disease and they could slip and fall on the ice and injure themselves very, very easily.

I want to talk a little bit about what we can do to ensure that people have confidence in our systems. One of the



things we have seen is that when people feel there is a lack of confidence that the people parking in those accessibility spots should be parking there—it is often the case that they should not be parking there, but we don't always know for sure; some of those disabilities, as I said, are invisible. We want to ensure that we don't have vigilantism, where people are approaching somebody. We've heard of YouTube videos where somebody threw a hot coffee at somebody because they felt they weren't parking in the proper spot. You can see the blood pressure rising very, very quickly. I would like us to ensure that everybody who is using our roads and using our parking lots has the confidence that proper procedures are in place for protection of those who are using them properly, but also to ensure that people aren't going on some kind of vigilante spree. We hear of people taking pictures of licence plates and posting them on social media. I would advise people to certainly report it if you think somebody is using a spot fraudulently in my city—report it to the officials, the enforcement officers, or even the police.

Why do people use a fraudulent accessible parking pass or park in a spot without a pass? We know that in Toronto you don't have to pay for parking if you have an accessibility parking permit. We know that you're able to park on the roads during rush hour when otherwise you wouldn't be able to. So obviously the incentive is there for people to save money, to be able to park longer and to be able to park where normally they wouldn't be able to park. I think that anything we can do to help those in our community who are struggling sometimes—that's why we are here. We're here to help our communities and to feel that we've achieved something.

I'm looking forward to hearing a lot of support today from all of my colleagues in the House, but I'm also looking forward to people putting ideas forward to let us know what they think some of the better uses of technology are, some of the better safety initiatives. I'd like to hear what people think about a provincial licensing system on the driver's licence for tow truck—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** More red tape? Oh, man, you guys are bad.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** The member from Timmins is mentioning more red tape. I think if we work with municipalities—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You guys are creating more red tape. Oh, God, I can't believe it.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I think what adds to the red tape, Mr. Speaker—I'm trying to listen to him while I'm talking, which he's enjoying but I might not be enjoying it quite as much.

I think what adds to the red tape is when I hear of people like Michelle Zaldin in Thornhill, who has a daughter, Paige, who has cerebral palsy. She said that all of her appointments with Paige initially were with specialists in Toronto and she was very well aware of the accessibility parking rules in Toronto, and it never occurred to her that Vaughan, where she lives, has a completely different set of rules. She got a ticket for parking in Vaughan where it's legal to park in Toronto. Of course, she fought that ticket.

That's quite a lot of paperwork for all of us, in the enforcement offices and all of us here in the House, when we get letters from constituents complaining and worrying about why there is a system like this.

I think that we're here, actually, to reduce paperwork, not to create paperwork. We're here to cut down on it, to streamline. We're here to support our enforcement officers, our police officers, the staff at municipal offices who get all the complaints—I've spoken to them as well. They say, "Oh, you wouldn't believe how many calls we get from people who get parking tickets and they say, 'Well, I'm allowed to park there in Toronto.'" I guess Toronto has fewer accessible parking spots, so they allow people to park on their roads, where in Vaughan they feel we have enough accessibility parking that they don't have to.

We know that there are a lot of times where people are paying fines, they're being dinged and nickel-and-dimed, they feel, because they didn't follow the rules. I think that people who have challenges with mobility have enough problems without carrying a binder in their car—which maybe the member from Timmins would think is the right thing to do—with all of the different rules and regulations for every municipality across Ontario.

I'm looking forward to continuing the debate today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** I will be happy to support this. I will be sharing my time with the member from Timmins. I'm glad that I'm going first. He's a tough act to follow.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** That he is.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** Yes.

I want to thank the member for raising this. It's interesting to see accessibility parking as well as the towing industry review packaged within one bill. Nonetheless, it's very good to see this before us today.

I also want to thank very well known AODA implementation activist David Lepofsky and our own critic for seniors and accessibility, who weighed in on this issue.

I'd like to share some of the points brought forth by Mr. Lepofsky as well. He questioned that, if the government wanted action, why would the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility not release an options paper on the issue rather than have it tackled as a private member's bill? He raised this because he said that an options paper could be produced within two weeks, not the eight-month timeline proposed by the bill. The minister could agree to prepare this paper and release it to Legislature, followed by a public consultation, allowing people with disabilities to weigh in.

He also asked why the government did not take action on other issues important to people with disabilities, including unfreezing the work of the AODA standards development committees. In fact, last Friday, the accessibility director had implied that the freeze was lifted for only one of the committees.

Finally, in 2012, the government enacted the public spaces accessibility standard under the AODA, which includes provisions on accessible parking. The govern-

ment was required to appoint a date. This has not happened, meaning the previous government violated the law, and the current government remains in violation.

Nonetheless, in my own family, my late father had disabilities severe enough that they precluded the ability to operate a vehicle at all. All of us, if given the gift to be able to live long enough, will face accessibility issues. But for individuals like myself, it's hard to truly imagine what it is like for those facing disabilities and severe disabilities. Barriers to them are like a brick wall covering a door. So any initiative to deal with this is appreciated.

Also, it was sad to hear the stats about so many people—a third to a half—violating potential accessibility passes to park. It's very disgusting, and certainly not something that anyone in this House would condone. So I'm glad to see action being taken on that.

With regard to towing, I can remember being a teenager, a long time ago—

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Not that long.

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** No, actually, about 20 years plus—and seeing a car being towed away. It was after nightfall. This tow truck driver hopped a curb. The car became loose and was being dragged along the asphalt. The sparks lit up the night, seriously. You can bet that when that person went to retrieve their car, if that tow truck company could get away with it, I wouldn't be surprised that they wouldn't have talked about the mistake. Later, they would find out what happened to their bumper or whatnot.

**1430**

Changes in this industry are necessary. We know that the previous government took action in 2014, but it took a year for committee meetings to occur and then another year for changes to occur. Some of the changes required a valid commercial vehicle operator's registration certificate to happen, access to credit card payments, and itemized invoices for when you require a tow truck driver. But again, even for the certification, many operators waited till the last minute.

I want to thank the CAA as well for providing very important advocacy. I'd like to read their towing bill of rights, which was released in August, because it is helpful and these are great suggestions.

(1) You have the right to decide who can tow your vehicle and to what location unless otherwise directed by police.

(2) A permission-to-tow form must be signed before towing starts, unless you have an auto club membership.

(3) The towing company must provide you with an itemized invoice before receiving payment.

(4) The final bill cannot be more than 10% above the quoted price.

(5) If you choose, you can pay by credit card.

(6) During business hours, you can access your vehicle to get your personal items while it's stored at a towing facility.

(7) A tow operator must notify you of where your vehicle will be towed.

(8) Tow operators must disclose if they are receiving a financial incentive for towing your vehicle to a particular vehicle storage facility or repair shop.

What this bill will provide is, hopefully, provincial licensing, training and consumer protection. Only 5% of all municipalities have standards on this issue, so bringing standards everywhere across the province is something that's welcome.

There should be consistency in towing regardless of where you break down, with simple, clear rules for operators and consumers. There's currently no single mechanism for motorists to complain about towing issues. If someone complains in Toronto, an operator can simply move to Brampton or another jurisdiction, and you won't know.

There is no consistent training. So we welcome the possibility of training and an actual licence, as described.

We hope that this will happen in a timely manner, that the consultations that occur will have really good consumer advocates—people knowledgeable on accessibility and disability issues—at the table, and we hope that change is implemented a lot quicker than the change from before.

Thank you very much to the member for her work.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Dave Smith:** I'd like to thank the member from Thornhill for bringing this forward and for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of it. I'm very much in favour of it. As most people know, I've been involved with the special needs community through hockey for a number of years now. It's disheartening to see the abuse that has been used with special needs disabled parking permits.

In the greater Sudbury area, Greater Sudbury Police Constable Dan Kingsley, who works in the traffic management unit there, is on record as saying that people use disability access permits that are not in their names. I'll quote him on this, "I've stopped people getting out of their vehicles and checked their permits and seen that it was for a spouse. Where is that spouse? Oh, he died two years ago." There's a misconception that the permit is issued for the vehicle. It's actually issued for the driver or the passenger under different circumstances. This was something the CBC had reported on. I think it's very true that a lot of people are under the misconception that it's the vehicle that is allowed to park there; that it is not specifically for that one individual.

What we know is that with the building code right now, about 1% of parking is designated as accessible but approximately 14% of Canadians have a disability that impacts their daily activities. There's a little bit of a miss, then, where we only have 1% of parking that is available for those who need it. On top of that, we have so much fraud and we have so much abuse of the system that there truly isn't 1% of those parking spots that are actually available for people. I saw it a lot at hockey rinks. Don't get me wrong; I love the game of hockey. I've been involved with it for a long time. But it's disappointing to see parents coming up who pull into the accessible parking spot because their son is a goalie or because their daughter

isn't strong enough to carry the bag, or because they're in a hurry and their dogs are in the back of the car or they have the other kids and they can't take the time to go to one of the parking spots that are designated for them. Instead, they use that spot that is designed for someone who has a disability. Then the person with the disability has to travel through the parking lot to find a spot. Really, we're taking away opportunities for them.

The other thing that has been disheartening for me is, you'll see that there is a spot designated for someone who has one of these disabilities, and another vehicle will pull up right alongside them and not leave enough room for the wheelchair to get in, not leave enough room for them to actually open the door on the van so that the wheelchair could get in.

I would like to believe that most people simply don't recognize that that is a challenge for someone who is disabled. I'd like to believe that most people truly do believe that they're doing the right thing. We need to raise some of that awareness.

One of the things that this bill will do for us is, by forming the committee—having that task force—we have the opportunity then to gather the information, to have the feedback from the people who are impacted by it and to get that message back out. We can't get that message out soon enough.

We know that there are a lot of people who are currently abusing the system. In July of this past year—July 2018—the city of London took it upon themselves to do a blitz, specifically targeting people who were illegally accessing accessible parking spots. In a seven-day period, Mr. Speaker—only seven days in one community—they issued 236 fines of \$375 each for illegally parking in accessible parking spots, and they seized 35 permits that were fraudulent permits. This is one community in Ontario over a seven-day period. It is a rampant problem that we have. The member from Thornhill talked about the challenges in Toronto and the thought that 35% to 50% of the permits that are out there are fraudulent permits.

This is a group of our most vulnerable. This is a group who are disadvantaged in other ways and they are being further disadvantaged because of the inconsiderate group of people who think it is their right to get that parking for free because they want to. It is something that we need to address, and we need to address it very soon.

I'll touch briefly on the towing aspect of it. In my community we have a number of tow truck operators and we have a number of different municipalities. One of the things that has come to me that they've asked me to deal with is the inconsistencies within the municipalities. We have some where they have to be licensed in one municipality but they don't have to be licensed in the other seven around, so they can do the work in the other seven but they can't actually come into that one municipality when they pick the vehicle up.

It's frustrating because the tow truck operator will get out to the disabled vehicle or the damaged vehicle, they go to pick the vehicle up and they can't bring it in to that municipality. Now the person is waiting longer or the tow

truck operator has incurred an expense that they can't recover. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Excuse me. I've got a bit of a cold here.

This private member's bill I think is a good idea in order to be able to look at these particular issues so that we can resolve some of the long-standing problems both with people utilizing disabled parking spots when they shouldn't be and how to deal with that more effectively. I think that's a good goal.

The other one is to deal with some of the problems within the towing industry that exist currently within the province of Ontario and, I would argue, most places across North America.

On the disabled parking issue, I want to say I know that, just anecdotally, what I see as I drive around the city of Timmins is that most people are pretty good. I take note because my granddaughter is disabled, so I watch and see how many people are parked in those places who don't have the stickers. I must say, people are pretty good. There's the odd one, but how do you deal with the odd one? I think that's what the member is saying. Maybe in some communities it's worse; who knows? I think that's a fair point. I think that may be the case.

**1440**

In regard to the towing industry, listen, we've all heard stories brought to us as MPPs where people have been taken advantage of by some of those in the towing industry who are not as reputable as others. But also, we shouldn't throw the baby out with the bathwater. There are a lot of good operators in that industry as well, and I think the member knows that.

I've done quite a bit of work, especially with the industrial towers. Those are the ones who are called to go get the big 18-wheel truck out of the side of the road once it goes off the highway for whatever reason. I can tell you, there are a lot of issues that need to be addressed there that hopefully this committee can look at. For example, one of the big ones is—and a lot of people may not realize this—you'll have an 18-wheel truck fly into a ditch on Highway 11 or somewhere in northern Ontario, and the police will not go there and order a tow truck to pull it out. The truck could be on the side of the road for as much as two or three days.

If you have a pickup that goes into a ditch, the police show up. They stay there and they make sure that everything is okay and that the truck is towed out. But when it comes to a large 18-wheel transport, they don't pull them out right away. The OPP essentially leaves them there, and what that does is it causes all kinds of problems, because the truck may be on its side, and who knows what's in the back of the truck? Hopefully we have systems for detecting that, but you have fuel and other issues as far as what may be spilling and what may be a danger to the motoring public and those around that truck.

We had a case not that long ago, when I still represented the old Timmins-James Bay riding, where an 18-wheel truck spilled in the town of Smooth Rock Falls, because the

Trans-Canada Highway runs through the community. Well, that truck was there for two or three days. The OPP, when I called about it, said, “Oh, well, you know, we don’t have to deal with this right away. The insurance company and the owner of the vehicle are responsible for taking care of this.”

I would argue that the OPP should do what it used to do. Once they get to the scene of an accident, first of all, do all the things we have to do to make sure that public safety and the person who was involved in the accident are well taken care of. But we should call the closest tow truck and get that 18-wheeler out of the ditch and pulled out. We shouldn’t have to wait two or three days for the owner or the insurance company to take action when it comes to towing out the truck.

There are also a number of issues that I’ve heard in regard to some of the fraudulent measures that are carried out by some of the truck owners when it comes to this issue, as well. Maybe those are some of the issues that this committee could take a look at and deal with.

I would only say, though, to the member, that I don’t think it’s a bad idea to create a committee, but a ministerial committee? Why not do a special committee of the House? There are committees that could be created under our standing orders that allow one member from each recognized party to be able to sit on what’s called a special committee, or you can refer the matter to one of our standing committees in order to actually utilize the committee process here within the Legislature to look into this.

I think there’s a real difference between a legislative committee and a ministerial committee. With a legislative committee, there is a transcript, it is official, members are there, you’re shining a light on every moment that that committee sits as far as the public being aware of what it is that’s going on, and there’s a much better ability to make sure that those people who need to come to present to the committee can do so.

But when we hand it off to the minister’s office, the minister may have, she or he, very good intentions—my argument is not to say that our Minister of Transportation or whoever would have bad intentions on this—but you don’t have the same transparency and, I think, the same weight as you would have if this matter were actually dealt with within a standing committee or a special committee. I would have rather that you would have taken that route, because that’s the job of members; that’s what we do. Those who are interested in it could ask to be on that committee, because there are a lot of members here who have dealt with both the disabled parking issue and have dealt with the trucking issue and the towing industry. And it would allow us to do our job, which is to try to come up with solutions to problems that our constituents face. I think that would just be a better way of doing it.

With that, of course, we will be supporting your bill. We think it’s a step in the right direction. We only wish that it would have been a bill that would have sent it into a standing committee of some type or a special committee here at the Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It’s a pleasure to speak to Bill 39, the Accessible Parking and Towing Industry Review Committee Act, 2018. I’m especially proud because I was our critic for a couple of years on the accessibility file and find it’s a very rewarding and interesting file. There’s lots of opportunity there to be able to make our province better for those people who need it. I’m really pleased to hear the House leader from the official opposition—I think my messaging that if we work together we can get things done here is finally sinking in, because he said they were going to actually support this bill. This is wonderful.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague Thornhill MPP Gila Martow for taking on this accessible parking issue and advocating for better consumer protection for Ontarians. She previously introduced a private member’s bill similar to this in 2016 to create a provincial task force to study and recommend a streamlined approach to accessible parking regulations. It got to committee but sadly, the previous Liberal government never, ever brought that back, or maybe we would already have these standards in place for those people who need these special abilities.

Currently, accessible parking is a patchwork of rules and regulations that vary and differ from community to community. For example, Toronto’s rules say the permit means you can park for free where others have to pay, or even park in a no-parking area, so long as you have the accessible parking permit. But that same rule, for example, does not apply once you drive into a riding such as mine, in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, where there are fewer exceptions. For this reason, we need Bill 39.

Bill 39 calls for the creation of an expert panel of municipal, non-profit and non-government agencies, and health care organizations to develop a new approach to regulating accessible parking across Ontario. I think that’s a good approach, to have the stakeholders that are most impacted by this be around the table and put good legislation forward so that we can make it the best that it can be, Mr. Speaker.

This panel would also be given an opportunity to enhance permits and make them more secure in an effort to identify and prevent fraud and abuse. It would give an opportunity to review the guidelines for how we issue these permits.

As members are aware, there’s an ongoing problem with accessible parking permit fraud, as some people continue to misuse the special parking permits issued to those with special needs and disabilities. I can’t fathom—in fact, I find it reprehensible—that anyone who is not needing these permits would actually use them, whether they’re borrowing them, whether they’ve stolen them or whether they’ve taken them. There’s even an example, sadly, that I read in my notes that some people are using the permits of deceased people. Now, Mr. Speaker, if you went out and used a credit card after someone was deceased, everyone would know that that’s a crime and they would want that to be stopped. This, to me, is no different. If someone is using that inappropriately then I believe we should be making larger fines. We should be going after those types

of people and penalizing to the nth degree, because it truly is reprehensible that a person isn't going to be able to use the parking spot as needed.

We need to ensure that those people—many of them, especially, are vulnerable seniors, people who truly need this, who have challenges with mobility. We want to make sure that they're close to wherever they're going, whether that be a hospital, whether that be a dentist's or doctor's appointment, whether it be a pharmacy or a grocery store. We want to make sure that they have that specially designed, close-proximity parking space for those who truly and legitimately need it.

There are about 730,000 accessible parking permits issued in Ontario, but hundreds of them are believed to be used by friends or family members of legitimate permit holders, and usually without permission, which, again, I find inappropriate and unacceptable. It should truly be for that person who has the impairment and needs those special circumstances.

In the city alone, 1,350 illegal permits were seized this year, according to the Toronto Police Service's parking enforcement unit. Some of them, as I just said earlier, were caught using permits that belonged to a deceased person. That's clearly fraud. It's unacceptable. I just can't get it through my head that someone would do that and be able to go home and look in the mirror with a clear conscience, knowing that it might be my good colleague's grandma who needed that parking spot but couldn't get it and has to park a long way away and may not be able to get there; they could fall due to accessibility and mobility problems. I can't fathom that we would even allow that, Mr. Speaker. So there obviously is a clear need for improvements.

In addition, Bill 39 provides a chance to talk about challenges in the towing industry from the perspective of consumer protection and assisting small businesses. We want to make sure that this committee would be able to do two things: It would inquire into and report on the system of accessible parking for persons with a disability, and it would inquire into and report on matters related to the towing industry.

Spinal Cord Injury Ontario—SCIO—a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting those with mobility issues: “For people with disabilities, accessible parking spaces are an integral part of an independent lifestyle. SCIO welcomes Bill 39 because we know how vital it is to have a streamlined, consistent parking permit system across the province,” said Dr. Stuart Howe, CEO of SCIO. “We hope this bill, if implemented, can mark the end of the inappropriate use of parking permits and ensure that permits are available only to those who need them. As a charity, SCIO is working toward that vision of a fully inclusive Ontario, and this bill would be an encouraging move in that direction.”

**1450**

Bill 39 also provides an opportunity to discuss challenges that the towing industry faces in Ontario, from repetitive and redundant costs to inconsistencies between municipalities. I believe we have the support of the CAA, the Canadian Automobile Association. They would like to see the committee focus on issues like provincial towing,

licensing, training and consumer protection. They introduced a program this summer called the Towing Bill of Rights. That was hopefully to educate people about their rights, if they require a tow or roadside assistance.

These challenges, I think, will be addressed. It's great to hear that the opposition is going to help us. I congratulate my colleague from Thornhill, and I hope everyone will vote for this great bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The member from Thornhill now has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I want to thank the member from Humber River–Black Creek. He mentioned David Lepofsky, who I've met with and spoken with. I just want to say that David is involved with the AODA Alliance and is a real advocate for people with all types of either mobility problems or low-vision problems. He himself struggles with his vision. He told me at York University, when they built a new building and moved him into it, he kept smacking his head on these beams that they didn't consider when they built the building. That will be the next topic of discussion here.

I want to thank the member from Peterborough–Kawartha for all of his hard work on behalf of kids with special needs playing hockey.

The member from Timmins mentioned having a special committee here in the Legislature. I would just remind everybody that 15 to 20 years ago, there was a committee that addressed anything to do with our highways, basically, and when the Liberal government got in—I believe when it was Premier McGuinty—they didn't revive that committee. I think it's something that needs to be discussed, whether or not we have to have an ongoing discussion in terms of dealing with accidents on our highways. The lost revenue can sometimes be in the billions of dollars when our highways are closed.

He mentioned also the Minister of Transportation. This bill that we're discussing today really focuses more on consumer services. Of course, sometimes it goes through multiple ministries. I just want to mention that, obviously, we want to create this task force with municipalities, non-profits, non-government agencies, health care organizations and all the other partners to create that streamlined, fair and innovative approach to existing regulations, and to modernize the systems and make better use of technology, as I said. There are thousands—maybe tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, perhaps even more—of Ontarians who struggle with disabilities and, as well, with the lack of a streamlined tow truck industry.

“NOTWITHSTANDING” CLAUSE

CLAUSE « NONOBTANT »

**Mr. John Fraser:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, a select committee of all parties represented in the House should be struck to establish parameters to prevent the routine use of the “notwithstanding” clause in Ontario's governance, and to study the impacts of the use of

the “notwithstanding” clause on the rights and freedoms that protect all Ontarians.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Fraser has moved private member’s notice of motion number 22. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to speak to my motion 22: that, in the opinion of this House, a committee of the Legislative Assembly including all parties should be struck to establish parameters to prevent the routine use of the “notwithstanding” clause in Ontario’s governance; that the irresponsible use of the “notwithstanding” clause threatens the rights and freedoms that have built this province and this country and protect all Ontarians, including religious, ethnic and racialized minorities and marginalized groups; that the rights and freedoms included in the charter have secured safety for us all, particularly for the powerless in the face of the powerful; and that it is of utmost importance to limit the confusion and concern about the “notwithstanding” clause, not solely in the province of Ontario but across the country.

The genesis of this motion was Premier Ford’s introduction of legislation that invoked the “notwithstanding” clause to erase a court decision on the government’s unprecedented intervention in the middle of an election. Instead of respecting the process of the courts and the rule of law, he moved forward to invoke the clause. He did this while a legal process was in place, literally saying to the Court of Appeal, “Your decision will be irrelevant.” More concerning is that Premier Ford has threatened the use of the clause for any court decision he doesn’t like. This is a dangerous and cavalier attitude, and an indication that the Premier deeply misunderstands the purpose of the clause.

The co-author of the charter and former Ontario Premier Bill Davis has said, “The sole purpose of the notwithstanding clause was only for those exceptionally rare circumstances....” Why did he say this? Because the “notwithstanding” clause overrides our Charter of Rights and Freedoms—the charter that affords basic protections of fundamental freedoms for all persons in this country equally. Freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure—these are all rights that can be overridden by the use of the “notwithstanding” clause.

This is the first time in Ontario’s history that a Premier has threatened use of the clause, and he did so unilaterally. This should not be one person’s decision, Mr. Speaker. It requires thoughtful consideration of all of us in this Legislature. It is a measure of last resort and it merits careful consideration of the criteria under which it could be used by the elected representatives of the people, whose rights it could potentially remove.

This clause has been rarely invoked and when it has, it has been mostly in Quebec, early in charter jurisprudence, for example, as a political protest, but most notably to override English-language minority rights in that province. The Supreme Court ruled that Quebec had

enacted unreasonable limitations on the charter’s guarantee of freedom of expression.

Quebec is not the only province to have invoked the clause or attempted to invoke the clause. Former Premier Ralph Klein introduced a bill, the Institutional Confinement and Sexual Sterilization Compensation Act, that included the “notwithstanding” clause. As many of you may or may not know, there was a thing that was called the Alberta Eugenics Board. There was a practice in Alberta at that time of forced sterilization and institutionalization of people who were found to be mentally unfit. It’s not a particularly proud part of our country’s history, and the victims of the government’s forced sterilizations were entitled to due process and to compensation. Alberta’s bill sought to limit that compensation and also would have prevented any further legal challenges to the act by negating sterilization victims’ right to challenge it in court.

So think about that: The government not only violated those people’s rights but also their person and their body, and then the government sought to limit their responsibility in that, to prevent themselves from having to compensate people for the government’s abhorrent actions. Thankfully, public outrage forced Premier Klein to back down.

This should be of concern to everyone in this Legislature; in fact, all Canadians should be concerned about the dangers of invoking the “notwithstanding” clause. It can override the most fundamental human rights.

Currently in the province of Quebec, as many of you may know, Premier François Legault said he will invoke the “notwithstanding” clause so he can ban public servants, teachers, police officers and health care workers from wearing religious garments such as the Muslim hijab or the Jewish kippah.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What about the crucifix?

**Mr. John Fraser:** I’m getting there.

He also threatened to amend their charter of rights to impose the ban. Somehow, as my colleague has pointed out here quite accurately, the crucifix inside the National Assembly is okay. I struggle to understand that. I’m a Roman Catholic and I respect people’s right to expression, to express themselves, to wear symbols of their faith and belief. I think that’s a fundamental right. How some symbols are okay and others are not okay is arbitrary and is an abuse of power.

**1500**

So that’s the risk that comes with the “notwithstanding” clause: the abuse of power. It is a very, very powerful tool, and it requires careful consideration.

As I said, I find that the suggestion that some things are acceptable and that it can be arbitrary is not in keeping with our values as Ontarians, as Canadians, and that’s why I’m concerned about how we are using the “notwithstanding” clause.

These are the risks of a laissez-faire attitude towards our Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I’d like to remind everyone that Premier Ford has said very clearly that he will not hesitate to invoke the clause if he doesn’t like a court decision. So just like a Prime Minister, Premiers across this country and justice ministers of all

political stripes hammered out an agreement, we must work in this Legislature to make sure that we protect the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and that it not be diminished. A committee representative of all political parties giving careful consideration to put forward a framework to limit and define the circumstances of the use of the “notwithstanding” clause will limit the confusion and concern and protect all of us, not only in Ontario but in Canada.

Again, I'd like to quote Premier Bill Davis, one of the builders of this province, one of the builders of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He said, that the “notwithstanding” clause “might now be used regularly to assert the dominance of any government or elected politician over the rule of law or the legitimate jurisdiction of our courts ... was never anticipated or agreed to.”

I'd also like to quote from a recent letter from former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, former Saskatchewan Premier Roy Romanow and the Honourable Roy McMurtry, who we just honoured in this Legislature:

“The clause was designed to be invoked by Legislatures in exceptional situations, and only as a last resort after careful consideration. It was not designed to be used by governments as a convenience or as a means to circumvent proper process....

“We agree with former Ontario Premier Bill Davis ... Doug Ford's use of the ‘notwithstanding’ clause does not meet this criteria.”

Speaker, my concern is that the Premier of the day has, in a very cavalier way, said, “I'm going to use this tool whenever I want, whenever I'm not happy, and I'm going to make the decision to use this tool.” You may remember, I asked the Premier a question in this Legislature about who he consulted before he used it, and we were able to determine that it was nobody.

This is a really important thing. It's important to all of us. It goes beyond this Parliament. It goes to other Parliaments. It goes to other Legislatures. It goes to other governments. I'm asking for the support of my colleagues in this Legislature so that we can come together, all parties, and give careful consideration to when the “notwithstanding” clause should be used, and that we bring those recommendations forward in a way that will help guide us all.

Mr. Speaker, the use of the “notwithstanding” clause is a serious step with serious consequences, and it merits serious consideration by all members in this place, because we represent all the people whose freedoms are protected by the charter.

Speaker, again, the “notwithstanding” clause's use needs to be limited, and we all need to work together to define those limits.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lindsey Park:** Speaker, I'll be sharing my time with the member for Carleton and the member for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte.

To begin, I'd like to thank the member from Ottawa South for raising such an important issue in this motion, and that is the sanctity of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the duty and obligation we have as

members of this House to protect the rights recognized by it. I'm pleased to have the opportunity this afternoon to join the debate on this matter.

Section 33 of the charter, otherwise known as the “notwithstanding” clause, is a critically important feature of our democracy and plays an essential role in the protection of our rights and freedoms. It was thoughtfully and carefully included in the charter by its original authors as a measure that balances the role of the courts with that of the Legislature.

This safety valve ensures that we, as elected members chosen by the people in democratic elections, have the final say on important matters of public policy. This safety valve ensures that the people of Ontario are not beholden to misguided judicial interpretation that's not in accordance with the will of the people—and, as in the case we were recently faced with in this House, interpretation that may not even be supported in the appellate courts.

My colleagues on the other side seek to restrict the use of this clause and to set arbitrary parameters on a right enshrined in this important pillar of our democracy. This motion seeks to prevent the “routine” or non-controversial use of section 33, but what is routine and what is controversial lies in how one feels about the public policy question of the day.

We, as elected officials, were chosen by the people to represent their views and values here in this chamber. That, Mr. Speaker, is the heart of this debate: that in a free and democratic society like ours, there should be matters decided by the people and not by the courts.

Although still new to this House, I continue to reflect every day upon the unique honour and opportunity I have to represent all of my constituents in Durham. I will continue to work today and every day to uphold their democratic right to have me, as their elected representative, stand here and work with my colleagues on both sides of this chamber to see that the will of the people of Durham is done. That includes, in no small measure, standing here today to ensure that all of the freedoms guaranteed under the charter are upheld.

Section 33 is part of the Constitution, and its availability is very much a part of the rule of law in our great province. It plays an essential role as a check and balance between the judiciary and the elected legislators that I am privileged to sit with every day in this House.

That our Premier and this government have the ability to invoke this tool to ensure that the will of the people of this province was defended was not only entirely appropriate but was also a strong and important message in defence of democracy and the freedoms guaranteed under the charter. There was nothing routine in this; rather, it was an extraordinary response to an extraordinary situation that went to the very heart of the jurisdiction of this Legislature and the democratic rights of Ontarians.

It is not for the member for Ottawa South or me or any member of this Legislature to restrict or regulate the intended purpose of the charter and, in particular, section 33. It is our duty as elected representatives to preserve the

rights and freedoms guaranteed to us by the charter, which includes section 33.

This motion not only fails in its pursuit of democratic values, but it is in fact a misguided step backward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I want to begin my remarks by saying that there is never, never a time when taking fundamental human rights away from Canadians is acceptable.

We all know that Premier Ford has said that he will not shy away from using the “notwithstanding” clause again. This is a very slippery slope. It will lead to the abuse of power by the Premier. We can never normalize the suspension of human rights.

1510

The federal government has never used the “notwithstanding” clause, and there is good reason for that. Let me remind the members of the House, as the honourable member from Ottawa South just said, of the rights that can be suspended with the use of the “notwithstanding” clause:

—section 2: freedom of conscience, of religion, of thought and expression, freedom of the press, freedom of peaceful assembly and association;

—section 7: the right to life, liberty and security of the person;

—sections 8 to 10: protections against unreasonable search and seizure, the right not to be arbitrarily imprisoned or detained, the right to counsel and habeas corpus;

—section 11: the right to a fair trial and the presumption of innocence;

—section 12: the right not to be subjected to cruel or unusual punishment;

—sections 13 and 14: protection against self-incrimination, the right to an interpreter at trial;

—section 15: the right to equality under the law without discrimination based on race, nationality or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Again, there is never a time when these rights—our basic rights—should be suspended. As former Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney famously said, with the inclusion of the “notwithstanding” clause, the Charter of Rights is not worth the paper it is printed on. He called it a “grave flaw.” That’s right: a grave flaw. And we are using that to suspend the rights of Ontarians.

The notwithstanding provision has rarely been used because of the primacy of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms for all Canadians, the rights that I just outlined. Even Amnesty International described the invocation of the “notwithstanding” clause as “contempt for human rights.”

I can tell you, regardless of whether people thought that city council size should be 47 or 25—you can have disagreements on that. But one thing that all Ontarians agreed on was that Premier Ford should have never used the “notwithstanding” clause, that the city council size was not a good enough reason to use the “notwithstanding” clause, because there is never a good enough reason to suspend human rights.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** Monsieur le Président, il me fait plaisir de me lever pour poursuivre la discussion amorcée par mon collègue sur la nécessité d’une réflexion non partisane sur l’utilisation de la clause « nonobstant ».

Je veux faire trois points : tout d’abord, l’importance de baliser l’exercice de la clause « nonobstant »; deuxièmement, l’importance des droits qui sont couverts par la Charte et de tous ceux et celles qui en ont bénéficié; et, finalement, la nécessité que l’Ontario reprenne un peu son rôle de leadership, pour une interprétation constitutionnelle responsable, que la province a toujours exercé par le passé.

So I’ll make three points. First, I want to talk about the fact that the “notwithstanding” clause had not been used in many years, because we have achieved a certain level of maturity in our constitutional decision-making that has given governments a level of comfort about the scope of their decision-making—as well as wanting to benefit from the legitimacy that comes from respecting people’s rights.

Now there is an interest in some governments—the Ford government, and now the Legault government in Quebec—to use it more often. It might be important—that’s my point here—that we reflect collectively on what are the “balises” or what is the framework that should guide this new exercise.

When one government decides to use the “notwithstanding” clause, the next one will do it as well. And you may not always be in power. It could be a government that wants to use it in a way that you are not comfortable with. The charter is there to protect us from the tyranny of the majority who could exercise power to deprive minorities of their rights because minorities don’t have sufficient numbers to influence electoral outcomes. But human dignity of all matters. We are a better province because we have respected the charter over the years.

It is important to me that this exercise be non-partisan because any government could be tempted to use the “notwithstanding” clause. Governments can be tempted to use it because it is politically expedient to go after a certain unpopular minority, or they can feel that they are slowed down by the court process, or simply because they want to make a point and show they’re better than the courts.

I’ve received so many emails after this summer about the importance of the charter to the people. It has been there for 46 years. It has wide appeal. I will tell you why: It’s because it has covered and protected so many people.

Let me give you some examples. I’ve listened to many of the maiden speeches made by people here. I can point at—pretty much everyone here, or his or her family, has benefited from the charter. Anyone who has come to Canada, or whose family has come to Canada as refugees, benefited from the Singh decision, which mandated due process. Anyone who is a member of a religious minority—Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Mennonite—has benefited from the charter. People who were schooled at home benefited from charter protection. Any parent with a child with a disability has benefited from the charter. Anyone who has had



parental leave and was not fired from their job has benefited from the charter. Anyone who has adopted a child and has had a leave benefited from the charter. Anyone whose family member may have been accused of a crime has benefited from the charter. Anyone who works past 65 has benefited from the charter. Gays, lesbians and transgendered people have benefited from the charter. Anyone who has protested a policy that they were disagreeing with has benefited from the charter. Anyone who may have said something that was in borderline good taste—and maybe some of us have been guilty of that in the past—has benefited from the protection of freedom of expression. Any professional who has advertised their services has benefited from the charter. Anyone who has been a journalist has benefited from the protection of the charter. We can all become part of a minority that is no longer popular and whose rights could be infringed upon. So we should all stand together in ensuring that this protection is not trivialized and not diminished.

Ontario has had a leadership role in constitutional law-making. It is a good place to be because it has extended its rule of law and its charter rights to everyone. When Lorraine Weinrib represented Ontario in the 1988 case—she's now a constitutional law professor at U of T—the province of Ontario stood up in the Supreme Court to ask for more restriction on the use of the “notwithstanding” clause. That was the position of Ontario as a leader, wanting to ensure that Canadians all across Canada were better protected.

I think we should continue that tradition. What I am suggesting here is a non-partisan—let's not presume the outcome of this non-partisan committee. Let's just work on it. I think it would have an influence, not only for us but for other provinces.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Goldie Ghamari:** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to, first of all, thank the member from Ottawa South for bringing this important issue to debate. I would also like to thank the member from Durham for her very thoughtful and pragmatic comments. I would also like to thank the other members in the House here today, especially the member from Ottawa-Vanier, for her comments, as well, in this regard, having written the book on the charter here in Canada.

At the end of the day, the parameters surrounding the use of section 33, the “notwithstanding” clause of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, are those that are set out in the charter itself. Those requirements were delineated by the Supreme Court of Canada in *Ford v. Quebec* in 1988. This section, essentially, was included as a dispute resolution mechanism between the Legislature and the judiciary. In order to achieve this function, its use must not be limited by newly constructed parameters. It is not for the members of this Legislature nor any other members, past or present or future, to attempt to rewrite or curtail the language of the charter.

1520

Section 33 was intended to be used as a safety valve in order to deal with rogue judges who decide to impose their political activism and mandate on the people of Ontario

and Canada. So section 33 is intended to protect us, to protect the people of Carleton, the people that I have been elected to represent, and the people of Ontario that our party, our government and our Premier for the people have been elected to represent.

When you have a rogue judge who uses his political activism to put forth his own mandate—and we clearly saw, in this case, that he was shut down. Not only was he shut down, he was shut down by a three-member panel of the Court of Appeal, which is incredibly rare. I can't remember the last time that three members of the Ontario Court of Appeal, including the regional assistant member, were gathered to deal with this issue. I think this goes to the importance of the matter.

Again, I want to thank the member for bringing this issue, because it has proved our point. At the end of the day, this is a check and a balance, and it must be respected. Thank you for your time.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Ms. Suze Morrison:** As I rise today, I would like to refresh the memory of this House of the incredible timeline of events that occurred over the past few months as it relates to the use of the “notwithstanding” clause.

On July 27, on the very last day that candidates in the Toronto municipal election were able to file nomination papers, this government decided to change the rules in the middle of the game and slash city council seats in half.

That bill received royal assent on August 14 after being rammed through this Legislature in record time with no consultation, no committee hearings and truncated debate.

Torontonians were so appalled that they took this government to court to challenge the legality of this legislation. On September 10, a judge ruled that the legislation did in fact breach the charter rights of Toronto voters.

Two days later, this government tabled identical legislation with only the addition of the “notwithstanding” clause so that it could override our charter rights.

While this matter is before an appeals court, Bill 31 currently sits on our order paper like a loaded gun, ready to be called up for third reading should the government not like the ruling of the appeals court. Let me be crystal clear: The actions of this government are reckless and lack basic respect for the rights of voters.

Speaker, there is never a good or convenient time to use the “notwithstanding” clause. Frankly, the people who can prevent the routine use of the “notwithstanding” clause are not a select committee that the government can ignore but the members of the government side of the bench. When this government first introduced this clause into the Legislature, media and Ontarians called it a constitutional crisis.

I would like to take a moment to thank the member from Ottawa South for bringing this forward. I understand what your intention here was, but we all know that this subcommittee can be abused by the government benches to come up with new and creative ways to abuse and justify the use of the “notwithstanding” clause and isn't going to achieve what you set out to do here.

When this clause was originally introduced in the Legislature, my office received hundreds—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me. Stop the clock.

I'm having a difficult time; there's a lot of extra conversation going on throughout this Legislature. I would ask, out of respect for the member addressing this situation, that we listen intently. I will now turn it back to the member.

**Ms. Suze Morrison:** Thank you, Speaker.

When the clause was originally introduced in the Legislature, my office received hundreds of emails from constituents concerned about how this clause was being used to trample on their rights. I would like to read one of them. It says, "Please do your best to make it clear to the Premier that this is not how you run a province, just because you technically can."

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Doug Downey:** I'm pleased to rise on this. I was trying to formulate my thoughts before the debate today. You've got to be kidding me. You've got to be kidding me. The member from Ottawa South brings forward a motion to put together a committee to tell the government how they should conduct themselves in relation to the courts? We have a panel that sets guidelines on how section 33 is used. We have a panel. It's called the courts. The courts have spoken, and the courts set parameters. It's very straightforward, Mr. Speaker.

Now, we can go back to 1982, when we started this journey—and I haven't heard any of the members of the opposition even utter the words "living tree doctrine." I know the member from Ottawa-Vanier knows exactly what I'm talking about; she's a scholar on the issue. This is a living tree doctrine for all parts of the charter except section 33? Did we somehow drop it off? It's not allowed to evolve over time? When we hit Meech Lake in 1987, and many of the members here will remember those debates, nobody—nobody—put it back on the table. And when we hit 1992 with the Charlottetown accord, nobody put it back on the table. It was allowed to evolve like the rest of the charter. It was set in there, as my colleagues have said, as a counterbalance to what the courts can do.

Mr. Speaker, if we go back to the "kitchen cabinet" that originally put this together, we've heard how some of the original members of the kitchen cabinet, whether it be Roy Romanow or Minister McMurtry at the time—I was a page when he was minister of justice at the time, the Attorney General. We even heard from Bill Davis and from Chrétien and others about what they meant. Well, Mr. Speaker, it has evolved. We heard from other people who were there at the time, and they don't agree with them. They are allowed to have their opinion, and their opinion is learned and valuable, but it is not the definitive decision. It was put in there to be used as we used it, to create certainty and to create paramountcy for this Legislature.

If the member from Ottawa South is serious about putting together a panel—it's shocking to me. They didn't put together a panel to look at Ornge. They didn't put together

a panel on eHealth. They didn't put together a panel on gas plants. They didn't put together a panel on document review. But he's okay to put together a panel for us. Well, we've put together a panel for the member on the unfair hydro act, and we'll let that committee do its work.

The panel to constrain what the government should do at the will of the people—what the government should do is listen to the will of the people, and that's what this government did. Mr. Speaker, the interim leader of the Liberal Party said the public put them into a penalty box. Well, I think perhaps they should take the time in the penalty box to strike a committee to rebuild the party and listen to the people.

The Premier does not misunderstand the use of the charter. The Premier does not misunderstand section 33. Section 33 was used exactly how it was designed, to not take poor court decisions. This is the first time in the history of Ontario it was used. Well, there's a first time for a lot of things. Sometimes it presents itself as the right time, and we took the right time and ultimately the will of the people was reflected.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you. Please be seated.

Further debate.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to the motion submitted by the member for Ottawa South. I want to begin by making something perfectly clear: Suspending the charter rights of Ontarians to undermine an election that is already under way is simply wrong. Attacking the independence of the judiciary when they check the power of that government is wrong. It is just as wrong now as it was when this government tabled Bill 31.

**1530**

The government's invocation of the "notwithstanding" clause to trample democratic rights and derail Toronto's election is a very dark chapter in the history of this province. There will be lasting impacts, not the least of which being the Premier's threat to use it again anytime the courts try to put a check on his power. These kind of threats are what we have seen from authoritarian leaders around the world, and as Canadians we should never be afraid to call it out.

While I want to thank the member from Ottawa South for keeping this issue on the agenda in the House, I have to say that my constituents would be concerned that such a committee could be used by the majority, the government, to decide when the "notwithstanding" clause should be used. They want us—my constituents, the people of Toronto, the people from across this province—to speak up loud and clear against this government's undemocratic actions. They want us to stand up for their charter rights.

I have received an overwhelming amount of emails and calls from my constituents in Davenport on this matter—constituents who, I might add, woke up Tuesday morning to half the representation they enjoyed before the municipal election, thanks to this government's halving of their city council without any conversation with them.

These constituents are appalled that their rights could be so easily cast aside by the Premier and his government.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of their comments now. Michael says, “The use of the ‘notwithstanding’ clause ... seems to me to be pettiness on behalf of the Premier, based on his childish attitudes towards losing and history with the city. It is also a serious threat to our democratic institutions with no easily perceived reason to do so.”

Anna Jean says, “I am at a complete loss as to what we do now that” the Premier “has taken these steps to override a judge’s ruling that our rights and freedoms were more important than” the Premier’s “vendetta against Toronto. I am stunned that he has exposed the fragility of our democracy and seems content and even pleased to do so.”

Kate says, “I would like to voice my shock and fury over the decision by the Premier of Ontario to invoke the ‘notwithstanding’ clause in order to ignore a judge’s ruling over the constitutionality of reducing the number of city council wards in the middle of an election.”

Jeremy says, “The use of the ‘notwithstanding’ clause ... is a deplorable tactic to stifle debate and burden a populace with legislation they did not consent to, or vote for.”

Aaron says, “This clause is meant to keep the judiciary from striking down laws due to technicalities. It is not meant to override valid decisions made by the court systems; the courts are an important part of our democracy as one of the checks and balances in place to ensure Ontario remains a great place to live.”

There’s more. Tamara says, “The Canadian democratic system is a system of checks and balances: The judicial system checks both the executive and legislative branches of government because this is the purpose of a judicial system. Even though the PC Party was elected with a majority of seats, this does not mean that their decisions are necessarily democratic and the judicial system exists to ensure that decisions undertaken by a political party do not cross the line.”

Peter says, “Instead of accepting the court’s decision, he created a constitutional crisis by threatening to invoke the ‘notwithstanding’ clause to overturn our rights. This is the kind of behaviour we expect from dictators and bullies, not the Premier of Ontario.”

Those are just a few of the comments I have taken directly from the emails and letters I have received on this issue, and I am grateful for a chance to put them on the record. I am concerned that this motion to set up a committee to explore uses for the “notwithstanding” clause would provide the majority—again, of the members opposite—with new tools to legitimize further use of that clause.

As I said, I also want to take a moment to express my disappointment with the weak response we saw from the member’s federal cousins during this unprecedented attack on the rights of Ontarians. It took three full days for Toronto Liberal MPs to come out with a statement expressing concern about this issue. Instead of standing up

for the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Prime Minister kept quiet, which I think was very unfortunate.

As I said, you can count on us, the official opposition, me and my colleagues. We are never going to stand idly by while this Premier tramples the rights of Ontarians.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The member from Ottawa South now has two minutes for reply.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I’d like to thank the members from Durham, Parkdale–High Park, Ottawa–Vanier, Carleton, Toronto Centre, Davenport and Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte.

I just want to say that the bill does not restrict anything. It’s about setting up a committee. If you really wanted to put what it’s all about, it’s having the same kind of debate with more information that we’re having here right now. I don’t think that’s a bad thing, if you listen to the examples that I gave, and maybe some more. It could be used to restrict same-sex marriage rights. It could be used to restrict LGBTQ rights.

Here’s another thing. You could create a law that said, “To sit in this Legislature, you have to have been born here.” You could have that law. You could invoke a clause to have that law—maybe not you; maybe not them; maybe not us, but maybe somebody. I think it’s important for us to have that conversation. It’s not about restricting folks; it’s about having the conversation.

I know that the member from Barrie–Springwater in his comments—and I appreciate the partisan nature of them. But I’d like to remind him that the Charter of Rights is a floor; it’s not a ceiling. It’s a way for us to improve what we’re doing for each other.

I take some umbrage at his remarks. Yes, I did say that we’ve got to spend some time looking at the things that we did as a government and as a party, and I say that right here. But I will also say that the fact that I said that does not restrict my ability to bring forward something that is of concern to all of us, and his suggestion of that is actually kind of proof of what the tyranny of the majority is all about. That’s the thing that we all have to guard against, because one day one of us—some of us, some of our family—may be in a position where this clause can be used to affect them in a way that’s negative and not in the spirit of Canadians’ and Ontarians’ values.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The time provided for private members’ public business has expired.

#### LIABILITY FOR CLIMATE-RELATED HARMS ACT, 2018

#### LOI DE 2018 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ À L'ÉGARD DES DOMMAGES LIÉS AU CLIMAT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** We will deal first with ballot item number 25, standing in the name of Mr. Tabuns.

Mr. Tabuns has moved second reading of Bill 37, An Act respecting civil liability for climate-related harms.

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

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND TOWING  
INDUSTRY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LE COMITÉ D'EXAMEN  
DU STATIONNEMENT ACCESSIBLE  
ET DU SECTEUR DE REMORQUAGE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Ms. Martow has moved second reading of Bill 39, An Act to require the establishment of an Accessible Parking and Towing Industry Review Committee.

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

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I would like to ask Ms. Martow which committee she would refer her bill to.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Social policy, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All in favour? Agreed.

“NOTWITHSTANDING” CLAUSE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Fraser has moved private member’s notice of motion number 22.

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

All those in favour of the motion will please say “aye.”

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

In my opinion, the nays have it.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please. You don’t want to miss out on this next portion.

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

*The division bells rang from 1539 to 1544.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Members, take your seats, please. Order.

LIABILITY FOR CLIMATE-RELATED  
HARMS ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ  
À L'ÉGARD DES DOMMAGES  
LIÉS AU CLIMAT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Tabuns has moved second reading of Bill 37, An Act respecting civil liability for climate-related harms.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

|                    |                       |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Andrew, Jill       | Des Rosiers, Nathalie | Mamakwa, Sol    |
| Begum, Doly        | Fraser, John          | Morrison, Suze  |
| Bell, Jessica      | Hassan, Faisal        | Rakocevic, Tom  |
| Berns-McGown, Rima | Hunter, Mitzie        | Schreiner, Mike |
| Bisson, Gilles     | Karpoche, Bhutla      | Singh, Gurratan |
| Coteau, Michael    | Kernaghan, Terence    | Tabuns, Peter   |

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

|                        |                        |                             |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Anand, Deepak          | Hardeman, Ernie        | Rasheed, Kaleed             |
| Baber, Roman           | Harris, Mike           | Roberts, Jeremy             |
| Babikian, Aris         | Hogarth, Christine     | Romano, Ross                |
| Barrett, Toby          | Jones, Sylvia          | Sabawy, Sheref              |
| Bouma, Will            | Kanapathi, Logan       | Sandhu, Amarjot             |
| Calandra, Paul         | Khanjin, Andrea        | Scott, Laurie               |
| Cho, Raymond Sung Joon | Kramp, Daryl           | Simard, Amanda              |
| Cho, Stan              | MacLeod, Lisa          | Skelly, Donna               |
| Clark, Steve           | Martin, Robin          | Smith, Dave                 |
| Coe, Lorne             | Martow, Gila           | Smith, Todd                 |
| Crawford, Stephen      | McKenna, Jane          | Surma, Kinga                |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy         | Mitas, Christina Maria | Tangri, Nina                |
| Downey, Doug           | Mulroney, Caroline     | Thanigasalam, Vijay         |
| Dunlop, Jill           | Pang, Billy            | Thompson, Lisa M.           |
| Fedeli, Victor         | Park, Lindsey          | Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. |
| Fullerton, Merrilee    | Pettapiece, Randy      | Walker, Bill                |
| Ghamari, Goldie        | Phillips, Rod          | Yakubski, John              |
| Gill, Parm             | Piccini, David         |                             |

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 18; the nays are 53.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I declare the motion lost.

*Second reading negated.*

“NOTWITHSTANDING” CLAUSE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** There will now be a 30-second pause in the event that anyone wishes to vacate and not partake in this next vote. The clock starts now.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please. Perhaps next time, we should make it 45 seconds. All right, here we go.

Mr. Fraser has moved private member’s notice of motion number 22.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Ayes**

|                       |                |                 |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Coteau, Michael       | Fraser, John   | Schreiner, Mike |
| Des Rosiers, Nathalie | Hunter, Mitzie |                 |

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

**Nays**

|                |                    |                 |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Anand, Deepak  | Ghamari, Goldie    | Phillips, Rod   |
| Andrew, Jill   | Gill, Parm         | Piccini, David  |
| Baber, Roman   | Hardeman, Ernie    | Rakocevic, Tom  |
| Babikian, Aris | Harris, Mike       | Rasheed, Kaleed |
| Barrett, Toby  | Hogarth, Christine | Roberts, Jeremy |

|                        |                        |                             |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Begum, Doly            | Jones, Sylvia          | Romano, Ross                |
| Bell, Jessica          | Kanapathi, Logan       | Sabawy, Sheref              |
| Berns-McGown, Rima     | Kernaghan, Terence     | Sandhu, Amarjot             |
| Bisson, Gilles         | Khanjin, Andrea        | Scott, Laurie               |
| Bouma, Will            | Kramp, Daryl           | Simard, Amanda              |
| Calandra, Paul         | MacLeod, Lisa          | Singh, Gurratan             |
| Cho, Raymond Sung Joon | Mamakwa, Sol           | Skelly, Donna               |
| Cho, Stan              | Martin, Robin          | Smith, Dave                 |
| Clark, Steve           | Martow, Gila           | Smith, Todd                 |
| Coe, Lorne             | McKenna, Jane          | Surma, Kinga                |
| Crawford, Stephen      | Mitas, Christina Maria | Tangri, Nina                |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy         | Morrison, Suze         | Thanigasalam, Vijay         |
| Downey, Doug           | Mulroney, Caroline     | Thompson, Lisa M.           |
| Dunlop, Jill           | Pang, Billy            | Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. |
| Fedeli, Victor         | Park, Lindsey          | Walker, Bill                |
| Fullerton, Merrilee    | Pettapiece, Randy      | Yakabuski, John             |

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker):** The eyes are 5; the nays are 63.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negatived.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

**Hon. Todd Smith:** I move adjournment of the House.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

**Hon. John Yakabuski:** On division.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Carried, on division.

Therefore, this House stands adjourned until 10:30 a.m. on Monday, October 29, 2018.

*The House adjourned at 1553.*









**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.  
Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott  
Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

| Member and Party /<br>Député(e) et parti         | Constituency /<br>Circonscription  | Other responsibilities /<br>Autres responsabilités   |
|--|--|--|
| Anand, Deepak (PC)                               | Mississauga—Malton   |  |
| Andrew, Jill (NDP)                               | Toronto—St. Paul's   |  |
| Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)                       | London—Fanshawe  | Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle  |
| <b>Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)</b>            | Wellington—Halton Hills  | Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative   |
| Arthur, Ian (NDP)                                | Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles  |  |
| Baber, Roman (PC)                                | York Centre / York-Centre  |  |
| Babikian, Aris (PC)                              | Scarborough—Agincourt  |  |
| Bailey, Robert (PC)                              | Sarnia—Lambton   |  |
| Barrett, Toby (PC)                               | Haldimand—Norfolk  |  |
| Begum, Doly (NDP)                                | Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest  |  |
| Bell, Jessica (NDP)                              | University—Rosedale  |  |
| Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)                         | Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York  |  |
| <b>Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)</b>    | Pickering—Uxbridge   | President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor   |
| Bisson, Gilles (NDP)                             | Timmins  | Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle  |
| Bouma, Will (PC)                                 | Brantford—Brant  |  |
| Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)                             | Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James   |  |
| Burch, Jeff (NDP)                                | Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre  |  |
| Calandra, Paul (PC)                              | Markham—Stouffville  |  |
| <b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)</b> | Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord   | Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité                                       |
| Cho, Stan (PC)                                   | Willowdale   |  |
| <b>Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)</b>           | Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes | Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement   |
| Coe, Lorne (PC)                                  | Whitby   |  |
| Coteau, Michael (LIB)                            | Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est   |  |
| Crawford, Stephen (PC)                           | Oakville   |  |
| Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)                              | Mississauga—Lakeshore  |  |
| Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)                      | Ottawa—Vanier  |  |
| Downey, Doug (PC)                                | Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte   |  |
| Dunlop, Jill (PC)                                | Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord   |  |
| <b>Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)</b>     | Newmarket—Aurora   | Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre<br>Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée |
| <b>Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)</b>         | Nipissing  | Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres<br>Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances                                 |
| Fee, Amy (PC)                                    | Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler  |  |
| Fife, Catherine (NDP)                            | Waterloo   |  |
| <b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>             | Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord   | Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales<br>Premier / Premier ministre                    |
| Fraser, John (LIB)                               | Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud  |  |
| <b>French, Jennifer K. (NDP)</b>                 | Oshawa   | Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative      |

| <b>Member and Party /<br/>Député(e) et parti</b> | <b>Constituency /<br/>Circonscription</b>                  | <b>Other responsibilities /<br/>Autres responsabilités</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)</b>    | Kanata—Carleton  | Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités  |
| Gates, Wayne (NDP)                               | Niagara Falls  |  |
| Gélinas, France (NDP)                            | Nickel Belt  |  |
| Ghamari, Goldie (PC)                             | Carleton   |  |
| Gill, Parm (PC)                                  | Milton   |  |
| Glover, Chris (NDP)                              | Spadina—Fort York  |  |
| Gravelle, Michael (LIB)                          | Thunder Bay—Superior North /<br>Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord |  |
| <b>Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)</b>                       | Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest                               | First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée   |
| <b>Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)</b>        | Oxford   | Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales   |
| Harden, Joel (NDP)                               | Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre                              |  |
| Harris, Mike (PC)                                | Kitchener—Conestoga  |  |
| Hassan, Faisal (NDP)                             | York South—Weston / York-Sud—<br>Weston                    |  |
| <b>Hatfield, Percy (NDP)</b>                     | Windsor—Tecumseh   | Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House /<br>Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative  |
| Hillier, Randy (PC)                              | Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston                                  |  |
| Hogarth, Christine (PC)                          | Etobicoke—Lakeshore  |  |
| Horwath, Andrea (NDP)                            | Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre                          | Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle  |
| Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)                             | Scarborough—Guildwood                                      |  |
| <b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>          | Dufferin—Caledon   | Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport   |
| Kanapathi, Logan (PC)                            | Markham—Thornhill  |  |
| Karahalios, Belinda (PC)                         | Cambridge  |  |
| Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)                           | Parkdale—High Park   |  |
| Ke, Vincent (PC)                                 | Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord                         |  |
| Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)                         | London North Centre / London-<br>Centre-Nord               |  |
| Khanjin, Andrea (PC)                             | Barrie—Innisfil  |  |
| Kramp, Daryl (PC)                                | Hastings—Lennox and Addington                              |  |
| Kusendova, Natalia (PC)                          | Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-<br>Centre                |  |
| Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)                      | Orléans  |  |
| Lecce, Stephen (PC)                              | King—Vaughan   | Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement  |
| Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)                           | Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre                        |  |
| <b>MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)</b>          | Nepean   | Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires<br>Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine |
| Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)                               | Kiiwetinoong   |  |
| Mantha, Michael (NDP)                            | Algoma—Manitoulin  |  |
| Martin, Robin (PC)                               | Eglinton—Lawrence  |  |
| Martow, Gila (PC)                                | Thornhill  |  |
| McDonell, Jim (PC)                               | Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry                            |  |
| McKenna, Jane (PC)                               | Burlington   |  |
| <b>McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)</b>      | Lambton—Kent—Middlesex                                     | Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure  |
| Miller, Norman (PC)                              | Parry Sound—Muskoka  |  |
| Miller, Paul (NDP)                               | Hamilton East—Stoney Creek /<br>Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek  |  |
| Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)                      | Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-<br>Centre                |  |
| Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)                   | Thunder Bay—Atikokan                                       |  |
| Morrison, Suze (NDP)                             | Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre                            |  |
| <b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>     | York—Simcoe  | Attorney General / Procureure générale<br>Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones   |
| Natyshak, Taras (NDP)                            | Essex  |  |

| Member and Party /<br>Député(e) et parti      | Constituency /<br>Circonscription                                   | Other responsibilities /<br>Autres responsabilités   |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>                    | Chatham-Kent—Leamington   | Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée<br>Deputy Speaker / Vice-président  |
| Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)                          | Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest  |  |
| Pang, Billy (PC)                              | Markham—Unionville  |  |
| Park, Lindsey (PC)                            | Durham  |  |
| Parsa, Michael (PC)                           | Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill                                     |  |
| Pettapiece, Randy (PC)                        | Perth—Wellington  |  |
| <b>Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)</b>       | Ajax  | Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs  |
| Piccini, David (PC)                           | Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud |  |
| Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)                          | Humber River—Black Creek  |  |
| Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)                          | Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville            |  |
| <b>Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)</b>      | Kenora—Rainy River  | Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines<br>Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones  |
| Roberts, Jeremy (PC)                          | Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean                            |  |
| Romano, Ross (PC)                             | Sault Ste. Marie  |  |
| Sabawy, Sheref (PC)                           | Mississauga—Erin Mills  |  |
| Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)                          | Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest                                      |  |
| Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)                 | Brampton South / Brampton-Sud                                       |  |
| Sattler, Peggy (NDP)                          | London West / London-Ouest  |  |
| Schreiner, Mike (GRN)                         | Guelph  |  |
| <b>Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)</b>       | Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock                                     | Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail   |
| Shaw, Sandy (NDP)                             | Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas      |  |
| Simard, Amanda (PC)                           | Glengarry—Prescott—Russell  |  |
| Singh, Gurratan (NDP)                         | Brampton East / Brampton-Est  |  |
| Singh, Sara (NDP)                             | Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre                                   | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle  |
| Skelly, Donna (PC)                            | Flamborough—Glanbrook   |  |
| Smith, Dave (PC)                              | Peterborough—Kawartha   |  |
| <b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)</b>         | Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte                                      | Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs<br>Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement |
| Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)              | St. Catharines  |  |
| Stiles, Marit (NDP)                           | Davenport   |  |
| Surma, Kinga (PC)                             | Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre                                 |  |
| Tabuns, Peter (NDP)                           | Toronto—Danforth  |  |
| Tangri, Nina (PC)                             | Mississauga—Streetsville  |  |
| Taylor, Monique (NDP)                         | Hamilton Mountain   |  |
| Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)                      | Scarborough—Rouge Park  |  |
| <b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>   | Huron—Bruce   | Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation  |
| <b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b> | Vaughan—Woodbridge  | Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels  |
| Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)              | Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington                |  |
| Vanthof, John (NDP)                           | Timiskaming—Cochrane  | Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle   |
| Wai, Daisy (PC)                               | Richmond Hill   |  |
| Walker, Bill (PC)                             | Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound   |  |
| West, Jamie (NDP)                             | Sudbury   |  |
| <b>Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)</b>         | Simcoe—Grey   | Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce   |
| Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)                      | Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest                                  |  |
| <b>Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)</b>     | Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke  | Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports   |
| Yarde, Kevin (NDP)                            | Brampton North / Brampton-Nord                                      |  |
| <b>Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)</b>         | Elgin—Middlesex—London  | Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts   |

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates  
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop  
John Fraser, Wayne Gates  
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow  
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell  
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Président: Stephen Crawford  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts  
Ian Arthur, Stan Cho  
Stephen Crawford, Doug Downey  
Sol Mamakwa, David Piccini  
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw  
Donna Skelly  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Dave Smith  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Natalia Kusendova  
Jessica Bell, Lorne Coe  
Chris Glover, Christine Hogarth  
Logan Kanapathi, Daryl Kramp  
Natalia Kusendova, Amarjot Sandhu  
Mike Schreiner, Dave Smith  
Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Vanthof  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak  
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto  
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke  
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde  
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls  
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles  
John Vanthof  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Parm Gill  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian  
Roman Baber, Aris Babikian  
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jill Dunlop  
Parm Gill, Lindsey Park  
Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor  
Kevin Yarde  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Présidente: Jane McKenna  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam  
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown  
Michael Coteau, Mike Harris  
Faisal Hassan, Jane McKenna  
Christina Maria Mitas, Sam Oosterhoff  
Amanda Simard, Gurratan Singh  
Vijay Thanigasalam  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Peggy Sattler  
Catherine Fife, Goldie Ghamari  
Jim McDonnell, Norman Miller  
Suze Morrison, Michael Parsa  
Peggy Sattler, Kinga Surma  
Daisy Wai  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Randy Hillier  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Kaleed Rasheed  
Toby Barrett, Will Bouma  
Mike Harris, Randy Hillier  
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo  
Paul Miller, Billy Pang  
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu  
Jamie West  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand  
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum  
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee  
Michael Gravelle, Joel Harden  
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin  
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri  
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Select Committee on Financial Transparency / Comité spécial  
de la transparence financière**

Chair / Président: Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Doug Downey  
Roman Baber, Doug Downey  
Catherine Fife, Robin Martin  
Lindsey Park, Ross Romano  
Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, Sandy Shaw  
John Vanthof  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim