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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 1 October 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 1^{er} octobre 2018

The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I wish to acknowledge this territory as a traditional gathering place for many Indigenous nations, most recently the Mississaugas of the New Credit.

This morning, we have with us in the Speaker's gallery the John G. Althouse Choir from the riding of Etobicoke Centre to perform O Canada. Please join them in the singing of our national anthem.

Singing of O Canada.

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

Thank you very, very much. That was wonderful.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today Ms. Takako Ito, consul general of Japan at Toronto.

Members should note that 2018 marks the 90th anniversary of Canadian-Japanese relations. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guest to the Ontario Legislature.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: It's an absolute pleasure today to rise in the House and welcome Chief RoseAnne Archibald and Sydney Oakes to the Legislature this morning.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It's a great pleasure for me to welcome the mom and a friend of our great page from Orléans, Martin Leduc: his mom, Ashley Haugh, and Yvonne Spiczynski—if I pronounced it well. Welcome to our Legislature this morning.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I have a few visitors here with us today. I would like to welcome a group from 3M Canada: Dr. Gayle Schueller and Jason Grouette. Welcome to Queen's Park today.

I would also like to do a quick introduction. Eric Rayson is here with his daughter, page emeritus Annabelle. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I would like to introduce Joe Hill, Judy Dirksen, Eric Schwindt and Brooklin DeForest from the Ontario beef, pork and veal associations. Welcome.

Mr. Norman Miller: I would like to introduce Sarah Litchfield, who is sitting in the members' west gallery, who is a student at Seneca College's Government Relations program. She is volunteering in my office. Welcome, Sarah.

One other announcement, Mr. Speaker, if I may: I would also like to welcome Gord and Shelley Haugh of Gravenhurst, Muskoka, who are here to see their grandson, Martin Leduc, who is serving as a page. Please welcome them.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: This morning I would like to introduce a young man who is here who was instrumental in my campaign. He did a great deal of work with social media and was probably the main reason why I got elected in Vaughan–Woodbridge. He is presently articling at my former law firm and soon to be a lawyer. He is also my son, Michael.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I would like to welcome Andrew Hejnar, Mark Jacob and Lauri Lyford from 3M. They are here today.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce an inspiring and incredible Indigenous leader for our province: Ontario Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald, who was recently elected. We congratulate her and we welcome her to this magnificent place.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome four distinguished guests to Queen's Park today: Mr. Karim Mamdani from Ontario Shores, Ms. Catherine Zahn from CAMH, Ms. Carol Lambie from Waypoint, and Ms. Joanne Bezzubetz from the Royal Ottawa. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Vanthof: On behalf of Andrea Horwath and the NDP caucus, I would also like to welcome the members of the Ontario Agriculture Sustainability Coalition, the people who feed us and keep our province strong.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I would like to introduce a long-time friend of mine, Mr. Harold Wilson.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the 3M sustainability team, which is here led by Dr. Gayle Schueller. I would also like to congratulate them on winning the London Chamber of Commerce environmental leadership award last year. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I believe that concludes our introduction of guests. The government House leader on a point of order.

PRISON TRANSFER

Hon. Todd Smith: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding reversing the prison transfer of the convicted killer of eight-year-old Tori Stafford.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Todd Smith: Speaker, I move that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should call on the federal government to reverse their decision to transfer Terri-Lynne McClintic, who was convicted of the kidnapping, rape and murder of eight-year-old Victoria Stafford, from the maximum-security Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener.

1040

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved that the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should call on the federal government to reverse their decision to transfer Terri-Lynne McClintic, who was convicted of the kidnapping, rape and murder of eight-year-old Victoria Stafford, from the maximum-security Grand Valley Institution for Women in Kitchener.

Are there any members who wish to speak about this?

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

Motion agreed to.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, my first question is to the Premier. Last night, the Canadian government announced they had reached an agreement in a renegotiated NAFTA. Can the Premier share with us details of the briefings that he has received and any concerns that he has raised as Premier of Canada's largest province?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Leader of the Opposition: Our full briefing, as I think everyone knows, is going to happen at 11 o'clock today, with the Deputy Premier and Minister Jim Wilson. We'll be able to update you in the future.

But I will tell you: We are going to stand by the agriculture industry, our farmers. We're going to protect our farmers. We're going to make sure we protect the aluminum and steel industry, along with the automotive industry. That is the backbone of Ontario. We will continue to fight for our farmers, for our auto workers, for aluminum and steel workers. We will make sure that there's going to be a fair deal with the United States of America. We'll make sure that we hold the federal government accountable.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we weren't involved in the trade talks. We're going to have to rely on the federal government to tell us the deal. Once we find out the deal, I'm sure everyone else will know about it, and we'll have further words after that.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Premier joined me at the International Plowing Match this year, promising farm families that he would defend supply management in NAFTA talks. As he knows, supply management has

helped farm families secure decent, reliable incomes, and they're concerned today that the system is going to be undermined by this new agreement. One dairy family particularly called it the "slow death" of supply management.

Perhaps the Premier can tell us exactly what he's planning on saying to the federal government about the challenges facing farm families.

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I think this is the only time we're going to agree on something with the Leader of the Opposition.

We're concerned too. We're very concerned about the farmers. We're concerned about supply management. We're worried about the federal government throwing the farmers underneath the bus. We're concerned, but we're going to stand up for the farmers, along with the automotive industry, the aluminum industry and the steel industry.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Despite last night's agreement, steel and aluminum tariffs are going to remain in place. These tariffs, as we know, have already had a devastating effect on working women and men, not just in the steel industry but across the manufacturing sector.

Perhaps the Premier can share with us what exactly he will be saying to the federal government about ongoing tariffs.

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: That's the case, because we don't know 100% yet, until 11 o'clock. We're calling on the Trudeau Liberals to compensate our farmers, to support our steel and aluminum workers and our auto industry. They need the support of the federal government.

We weren't at the table, or maybe the deal would have been a little different, but it is what it is. We are, again, calling out to the Trudeau government to compensate the agricultural industry—specifically the dairy industry, the farmers—and the automotive, steel and aluminum.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Trade. There's no doubt that while many are breathing a sigh of relief about reaching a deal, there are many others who will be left behind in this new agreement.

My question is this: Not dissimilar to what other provinces have done, particularly Quebec, is the minister bringing forward transition assistance to help the industries and families that will be hit hard by this new agreement?

Hon. Jim Wilson: Thank you for the question. It's a good question. It is the responsibility of the federal government to compensate in international trade deals, and as the Premier just said, we will be pushing them and are pushing them and have been pushing them. That's why we went to Washington: to make it clear that if they did throw the farmers under the bus, they'd better pay the billions of

dollars required to make our farmers whole again. That is a federal responsibility under the Constitution of Canada.

You're darned right, I say to the leader opposite: We're going to hold the federal government's feet to the fire and make sure they don't let our farmers down.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, many farm families will be hit especially hard by any concessions on supply management. My question is, what is this minister planning to do by way of assistance to farm families?

Hon. Jim Wilson: Thank you for the question again. It shouldn't come to that if the federal government lives up to its trade obligations. It's not the Ontario taxpayer who should foot the bill for a federally negotiated agreement. That's not the way our country works; that's not the way our Constitution works; that's not the way nine other trade agreements work.

I say with respect to the honourable member across the way: We intend to stick to the way this country was put together by our Constitution, which puts the onus on the federal government, since they negotiated the deal, to compensate.

They have put forward \$2 billion, and they said that several months ago; but a lot of that money—as far as I'm aware, none of that money has flown. It's nice they put it in a press release; now they've got to walk the talk and look after our farmers, our auto sector and our steel and aluminum sectors.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the US tariffs on steel and aluminum are devastating not just to our steel industry, but across the manufacturing sector. A lot of people rely on those sectors for good jobs, for well-paying jobs.

When the US first imposed tariffs, the government of Quebec stepped up with programs designed to aid small manufacturers in those industries. Ontario still hasn't responded. When will the minister be rolling out assistance, and what form will it take?

Hon. Jim Wilson: Again I say to the honourable member that it is the responsibility of the federal government. We will hold their feet to the fire. You're absolutely right: The 25% tariff on steel has hurt many of our industries and has the potential to affect many jobs, but it has also hurt—Ford US reported last year that that tariff alone and the 10% aluminum tariff cost Ford in the US \$1 billion. Honda in Alliston, which is building a new paint shop, which is a steel frame building with aluminum siding and aluminum venting throughout—it has cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The federal government said that they would look after these industries. We're going to make sure they do. They've set \$2 billion aside so far. We're going to make sure they flow that money. That's part of today's phone call.

OPIOID ABUSE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier—but it's a little bit worrisome that we saw no aid from the province on steel and aluminum, and now we have supply management coming down the pike. I'm just worried that this government is not going to respond to the farm families that need help.

The opioid crisis is killing people on a daily basis, Speaker. Families coping with the addiction of a loved one know that the overdose prevention sites save lives. They were expecting a decision on proceeding with overdose prevention sites last week, a decision that has now been delayed yet again. They want to know what is delaying the decision on the opioid prevention sites.

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Christine Elliott: In fact, the decision has not been delayed. What has happened is, we have applied to the federal government for the extension. The extension has been granted, and right now I'm finalizing my recommendations to the Premier's office. That will be done within the next short while, and there will be another announcement very soon.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, everyone knows the Premier is capable of moving quickly on policy matters, and this is one where he actually needs to do that. People are dying every single day this decision is delayed.

Can the Premier explain to the people who are gathered here today and who were outside this morning how long it will take them to make a decision that could save countless lives?

Hon. Christine Elliott: The leader of the official opposition is correct: We are losing too many people to the opioid crisis. It's something that we take very seriously over here and we want to make sure that we do it right. We want to make sure that if these overdose prevention sites are continued, they serve the purpose of (1) saving lives of course, but (2) getting people into the rehabilitation and treatment that they need, which includes housing and services.

1050

There's a lot to be encompassed in this decision. It's not one thing; it's many things, and we want to make sure that we do it right. That's why I'm continuing to make my recommendations to the Premier. We're finalizing those recommendations, and further comments will be made in the very next short while.

MERCURY POISONING

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs. I know that our government is committed to building strong relationships with our First Nations partners. We want to help our First Nations partners open up new economic opportunities and help their communities thrive. Our government has already

taken steps to help make sure we are building relationships with First Nations communities.

However, we know that there are many historical challenges that impact these communities. I'm confident that Minister Rickford has the experience and knowledge to handle this important file. Can the minister explain to the Legislature what steps this government has taken to address some of these challenges?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for his question and his interest in these matters.

Late last week, I had an opportunity to visit two communities that are quite proximal to where I live in Kiiwetinoong, two communities known to me in my previous professional capacities as both a nurse, a lawyer and serving, as the member of Parliament, those communities on a number of other challenges. We wanted to make sure that these challenges became opportunities.

I was delighted to join with the two chiefs of those communities, Chief Turtle and Chief Paishk, as well as Regional Chief RoseAnne Archibald. We had some great discussions with the community and I reaffirmed our commitment, on behalf of my friend and colleague the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, that we remain committed to the English and Wabigoon Rivers Remediation Trust, that it's fulfilled and the cleanup of the river will go and be finished.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Norman Miller: Again to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs: A government that is truly for the people must work to acknowledge and address the concerns of Ontario's first peoples. I'm proud to be part of a government that is working to help keep that promise.

I know that Minister Rickford's experience and leadership will help us create strong relationships with our First Nations partners. Our government has already taken action to ensure that local communities have the support they need to access services when they are needed. Can the minister tell the members of this House any other actions that the government may be taking to help the people of Grassy Narrows and Wabaseemoong?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Indeed, our journey to Grassy Narrows First Nations included some other activities, one that's very important to a certain number of people in that community and should be important to all of this.

Our government has taken immediate action to ensure that more than 200 people who receive mercury disability payments from these two communities are properly compensated. For far too long, these benefits have been frozen in time, from some 30 years ago today. I announced, as of Friday, that these benefits will be indexed. Not only will they be indexed, but they will be indexed retroactively. It's simply unacceptable that more than 200 of these people who receive these benefits receive such a small amount.

The communities were very appreciative of this. Chief John Paishk: I gave him this medallion and he asked me to wear it in this place to signify and express his appreciation for our government's actions.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Minister of Labour. The recent census showed that one quarter of working-age Londoners have dropped out of the labour market altogether, more than any other city in Canada. Now a new documentary from the London Poverty Research Centre reveals that fully half of Londoners who are working are in non-standard, unstable jobs. This includes Frances Hinna, a father of four with two Western University degrees. Frances is doing everything possible to find work in his field, but is barely surviving on his minimum-wage job.

An increase to \$15 would have made a huge difference to Frances and his family while he struggles to find work. Why is the minister turning her back on Frances and the thousands of Ontarians like him?

Hon. Laurie Scott: I appreciate the member's question. We do want to help people like Frances and his family. We made a commitment to keep the minimum wage at \$14 an hour because it increased 20% this year. We want businesses to be the job creators so there are more job opportunities. We want good-paying jobs in the province of Ontario. We are creating a climate so that businesses can succeed and create jobs for Frances and his family.

We know that we were elected to make life more affordable for people in the province of Ontario. By helping businesses create jobs, making life more affordable to the people in Ontario, decreasing our hydro rates, decreasing the price of gasoline and cancelling the cap-and-trade carbon tax, we're reducing the burden not only on individual people but on businesses so they can succeed and create—

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Again to the minister: Stuart Clark is 50 years old and was laid off from his IT job about five years ago, working contract-to-contract ever since. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in London is \$980, which means that Stuart is spending more than half his monthly income on housing.

Since 2005, London has lost 5,400 good-paying full-time jobs while our population has grown by 7%. Food bank usage in our city is up 30% over the past decade. Can the minister explain how rolling back workplace benefits and protections will help contract workers like Stuart to make ends meet?

Hon. Laurie Scott: Mr. Speaker, the opposition party supported the previous Liberal government that made life more unaffordable and that made the use of food banks go up. You supported life being unaffordable and hurting businesses throughout the province of Ontario. It is time for a change.

We were elected to make that change. Yes, we are going to make Ontario open for businesses. We're going to help businesses succeed, and we're going to bring in good-paying jobs to the province of Ontario so fewer families are struggling. That is what we're doing.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Mr. Stephen Crawford: My question is for the Minister of Finance. Last evening, the federal government and the United States reached a last-minute trade deal. The new agreement, called the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA, comes after months of uncertainty—uncertainty that left many business owners and workers concerned about the future.

Could the minister outline what steps this government took to defend the interests of workers and businesses in this province?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you to the member from Oakville. From day one our government, under the leadership of Premier Doug Ford, has offered our full support to the federal partners throughout trade negotiations. Our number one priority was making sure that a deal got done that protected Ontario workers and industries.

Premier Ford and Minister Wilson travelled to Washington a few short weeks ago to meet face to face with members of the Canadian negotiating team, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Canadian and American ambassadors. They reiterated that any deal must protect Ontario workers and industries, including steel, aluminum, agricultural and auto.

Our government knows that in order to create jobs and protect jobs, Ontario must be open for business. This is dependent on open and fair trade with our largest trading partner. Our government will be speaking directly with industry representatives from Ontario's steel, aluminum, auto and agricultural sectors to determine the impacts. We've been standing up for the people, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Thank you to the honourable member for outlining what steps this government took to get a deal done. Many businesses and workers in Ontario depend on free and open trade with the United States. It is great to hear the work our government did to protect jobs in Ontario.

Our government has heard from businesses that it is hard for them to remain competitive in today's business climate. Could the minister please provide the current status of the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement?

1100

Hon. Victor Fedeli: As mentioned before, our government has been standing up for the people since day one, and will continue to do so. It is more important than ever to open Ontario for business and create and protect good jobs for the people. We are pleased to hear that an agreement in principle has been reached. It has always been our position that a renegotiated trade deal is in the best interest of all parties. It's critical to hundreds of thousands of jobs in Ontario.

Speaker, our team right now has gone to receive the full text of the deal and will speak directly with industry representatives from the Ontario steel, aluminum, auto and agricultural sectors to determine the impacts of this deal. We are calling for assurances from the federal government

that any sectors in the province that are negatively affected by federal negotiating decisions will be provided financial assistance and transitional support. We need that to protect our economy.

OPIOID ABUSE

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My question is for the Acting Premier. The government is putting the health of Ontarians in jeopardy. While we ask for even more time to receive evidence, we already have overdose prevention sites. These sites work. These sites save lives. This is exactly why we unanimously voted in favour of bringing a safe injection site to St. Catharines while I was on city council.

Will the minister admit that the evidence is already clear? Overdose prevention sites work, and we need one to tackle the growing opioid epidemic in St. Catharines.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: As was outlined by the Minister of Health a few moments ago, the extension that has been granted was paused for three sites. The Toronto Overdose Prevention Society was holding a vigil this morning. The announcement on Friday was that we received an extension from the federal government for the three paused sites.

The government is committed to get people struggling with addiction the help that they need. We are reviewing the latest data, evidence and current drug injection sites. Our health minister continues to speak and consult with experts, health care workers, police services, community leaders, business owners and stakeholders, reviewing the reports to ensure that people struggling with addiction get the help they need.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear "St. Catharines" in there, and I think that's what the question was about.

Niagara saw a 335% increase in opioid overdoses between 2016 and 2017. There were 76 overdose deaths in St. Catharines last year, up from 40 deaths the year before. While these deaths are tragic, they are also preventable. Just one of these lives could have been saved by administering naloxone or testing for fentanyl. The overdose prevention sites would have been worth it.

When will the minister do the right thing and approve the overdose prevention site in St. Catharines that was already promised?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, let me just tell you a little bit about fentanyl and what we have done in the past. We have brought in our patch-for-patch program, which has done more to save more lives with fentanyl than you can imagine. In my city of North Bay, we had 15 deaths—15 deaths in my city of North Bay alone before we brought patch-for-patch in. The minister of—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for St. Catharines, come to order.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: The minister of many things also brought a private member's bill in that was to strengthen

education. We also brought a bill in to ban illegal pill presses. These are the various processes that are all part of a bigger program. Incrementally they're all important, but collectively they are part of a bigger picture to tackle the opioid crisis that we know needs so much work.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Ma question est pour le ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs. The Environmental Bill of Rights was adopted in 1993 and is a primary tool for all Ontarians to be consulted on environmental matters. It's premised on the right of all Ontarians to have a say on their environment and its future.

Initially, the ministry had decided not to post Bill 4 on the Environmental Registry for the reason that the government had won the election and that that was sufficient consultation. Obviously this interpretation would gut the Environmental Bill of Rights since any future government could always do any development or any change without ever posting on the EBR. I'm glad that I understand that after a lawsuit initiated by Ecojustice, the government has finally decided to comply with the EBR.

Can the minister assure us that his government intends to continue to comply fully with the letter and the spirit of the Environmental Bill of Rights and does not intend to water down its requirements?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member—and thank you for the question—the member is right on two counts. This government was elected with a clear mandate: to get rid of the cap-and-trade program of her government, to return affordability to Ontarians, and to have a more balanced approach to a healthy economy and a healthy environment. The member is also right that the Environmental Bill of Rights is an important piece of legislation, a piece of legislation that this government and this minister will respect, and—as we have posted Bill 4—will continue to use it and other vehicles to consult with Ontarians when it relates to important environmental matters.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: I'm reassured that there is a commitment to the rule of law in environmental matters, but I'd like you to continue, to explain, then, why the \$1-billion proceeds from the cap-and-trade that was obtained in the auction before the election is not being used for the legal purposes for which they were obtained. Indeed, they were in trust for the reduction of emissions.

So I am asking the minister: Why doesn't he dispose of these auctions in the way in which they were collected: to help people, as in my riding, that need to have social housing refurbished to protect the environment and reduce emissions?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: Let me assure the member and the Legislature that the funds that were collected under the previous cap-and-trade program are being used for the orderly wind-

down and, in some cases, the completion of some programs that were contracted with. Responsibly, the government—after it ceased to collect cap-and-trade revenues, as we promised to people—has no longer extended the costs and expenditures associated with that program. But the revenues that were collected for that program will be used for that. That is specified in the legislation, Bill 4, that is in front of the Legislature, and that is how we will proceed.

GOVERNMENT FISCAL POLICIES

Mrs. Robin Martin: My question is for the Minister of Finance. Over the past few months, our government has taken action to reverse the damage caused by the reckless spending of the previous government. It's clear that the Liberals ignored the reality of Ontario's finances, giving us higher taxes and higher spending and higher debt. In order to protect our core services and our future generations from an ever-rising debt load, we must act, and we must act now.

The reality, Mr. Speaker—and experts are in agreement—is that the Liberals' out-of-control spending cannot continue. In fact, last week the Parliamentary Budget Officer's Fiscal Sustainability Report 2018 painted a dire picture of Ontario's finances. Can the minister please inform this House as to what the report said and what we are doing to take the Parliamentary Budget Officer's conclusions seriously?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: To the member from Eglinton—Lawrence: I can tell you exactly what the Parliamentary Budget Officer said. He warned us that the “fiscal policy is not sustainable over the long term.”

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For years, the Liberal government ignored warnings from experts about Ontario's unsustainable spending. The Independent Financial Commission of Inquiry, the line-by-line and now the Parliamentary Budget Officer's sobering report all point to one conclusion: We need to take action. That is why we're working to restore accountability and trust in our province's finances. That's why we're putting more money in people's pockets. And that's why we're sending a message to the world that Ontario is open for business.

The people of Ontario finally have a government working for them, and not a moment too soon, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the minister for his response. It's truly shocking that instead of talking about Ontario's soaring debt and how it threatens core public services, the NDP continue to ignore all the warnings. The NDP stood by and watched happily as the Liberals recklessly increased spending. In fact, even though the Parliamentary Budget Officer just last week said that our fiscal policies were not sustainable, as the minister said, the NDP were in this House that same day asking that more money be spent.

Just last year, the Financial Accountability Officer warned that if nothing is done, “the burden of stabilizing Ontario's public finances would be increasingly shifted

from the baby boom generation to younger Ontarians.” Can the minister please inform this House how reckless it is to ignore the warnings about the province’s debt level and how we must respond?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: I’d like to thank the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for the question. There have been endless warnings from experts, including myself in 2009, about the provincial debt and out-of-control spending. The most recent report from the Parliamentary Budget Officer reaffirms that our provincial debt is out of control.

We have reported to the public through, as the minister mentioned, our line-by-line review, our public accounts and the commission of inquiry. In all of these, we’ve told the public and this Legislature that current spending and debt trends are unsustainable. The PBO agrees with us. The Financial Accountability Officer agrees with us. The AG agrees with us. This isn’t ideology, Mr. Speaker; this is about simple mathematics. We will fight to reduce the debt so that we leave a legacy of financial sustainability to this and future generations. It’s too bad that the NDP won’t work with us.

OPIOID ABUSE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Acting Premier. Today on the west lawn, a vigil was held by faith and community leaders, health care professionals, harm reduction workers and the family and friends of the 1,265 Ontarians who lost their lives due to the opioid crisis. They are looking to the government for answers, but this government has established a pattern of ignoring the facts. That has to stop now. When confronted with the evidence that there are opioids leaking into the streets from Ontario’s pharmacies, the Minister of Health shrugged off her responsibility to prevent these crimes.

Speaker, how many more lives have to be lost before this government steps up to the plate and starts fighting for the people of Ontario affected by the opioid crisis?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Well, Speaker, first of all, we absolutely disagree with any part of that question, the premise of that question and the accusations that are made. This government is absolutely committed to getting people struggling with addictions the help that they need, Speaker. We’re reviewing the latest data. We’re reviewing the latest evidence. We’re reviewing the current drug injection sites, the supervised injection sites and the over-dose injection site models.

Our minister is speaking and consulting with experts, as I said, with health care workers, police services, dealing with experts and community leaders, business owners, stakeholders, and reviewing the reports to ensure that people struggling with addictions can actually get the help they need.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Back to the Acting Premier: We know most pharmacists are law-abiding caretakers who work hard to improve the lives of their patients. But

the unfortunate reality is that a few pharmacies were the source of great harm, flooding our streets and contributing to this ongoing public health emergency.

Despite a freedom-of-information request showing that last year 17 pharmacists distributed more than 10,000 maximum-strength oxycodone pills each, there is no indication that the province looked into why this happened. Speaker, is the Minister of Health going to get to work making sure these crimes never happen again, or will she continue her pattern of sitting back and letting communities, families and individuals struggle to save lives on their own?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Premier Ford was very clear during the election campaign that we will listen to the experts, and he committed again—over and over—to the \$3.8 billion in mental health addictions and housing supports over the next 10 years. That includes \$1.9 billion from the federal government and \$1.9 billion from the provincial government.

Speaker, we have been consulting with groups right across Ontario. I know in my hometown I have been asking them, “Please help us identify the way that this money can be best spent and best put to use.”

I know that our Minister of Health is actively leading this process. She has toured multiple sites and heard from people with lived experiences. She has been continuing to meet with health care workers and police workers, and we will continue to hear from the people.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: My question is for the Minister of Finance. Last night, the federal government and the United States reached a free trade deal, now referred to as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement. The USMCA comes after months of uncertainty and tariffs, tariffs that have placed an enormous strain on Ontario’s businesses. While the agreement is a step in the right direction, I understand that it does not remove the remaining steel and aluminum tariffs.

Could the minister please discuss what is being done to address these tariffs?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you to the member from Carleton. From day one our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has offered our full support to the federal partners throughout the trade negotiations. Our number one priority was making sure a deal got done that protected Ontario workers and Ontario industries.

While we are cautiously optimistic that the USMCA will create continued opportunities, we remain concerned about the remaining steel and aluminum tariffs. These tariffs have cost business thousands. Take Honda Canada as one example: These tariffs have cost them hundreds of thousands of dollars to date. We need to create and protect good jobs here in Ontario. Our government, at the moment, will be speaking directly with industry representatives from Ontario’s steel, aluminum, auto and agricultural sectors to determine the impacts of this deal.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Thank you to the minister for outlining the steps this government took to get a deal done. Many businesses and workers in Ontario depend on free and open trade with the US. It is great to hear of the work our government did to protect Ontario's jobs.

Our government has heard from businesses that it is hard for them to remain competitive in today's business climate. Could the minister please inform the Legislature of the next steps regarding the implementation of the USMCA?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thanks to the member. Our government has been standing up for the people since day one, and we will continue to do so. It is more important than ever to open Ontario for business and create and protect good jobs for the people.

Once again, we are cautiously optimistic that the USMCA will create continued opportunities, and we remain concerned about the remaining steel and aluminum tariffs. Both Ontario and our partners to the south succeed when we can create trade easily. Ontario does \$389 billion worth of trade with the US.

So while we wait to receive the full text of the deal, we're calling for assurances from the federal government that any sectors in the province that are negatively affected by federal negotiating decisions will be provided with financial assistance and transitional support. Our government will continue to vigorously defend and advance our interests.

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PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Minister of Finance. During the election, the Premier said he would "leave no stone unturned" when it comes to selling off Ontario's public assets. Following the election, the Premier commissioned a quickie report from a private consultant that recommended monetizing public assets. That's the same code for privatization that the previous Liberal government used just before they sold off Hydro One.

Instead of speaking in Liberal code, will the minister come clean with Ontarians and just tell them whether he is considering the sale of public assets like OPG, OLG or the LCBO?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member, thank you for that question. Our government is working day and night to restore trust and accountability to Ontario's finances. While the NDP believes that the government can rack up unlimited amounts of debt without consequences, the reality is, it cannot.

In fact, the report, in its 48 pages, does not refer to the OLG or to the OPG or the LCBO, so OMG.

We know the Liberals left us a mess and, unlike the NDP, we are working to fix it for the people. We have fixed the public accounts. We have fixed it with the Auditor General, with the first clean opinion in three years.

Our government's priority is to ensure financial stability for future generations in this province.

Interjections.

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

Restart the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Catherine Fife: The Conservatives were all for hydro privatization for over a decade. In fact, they started this entire fiasco. Then the Liberals did what the Conservatives had wanted to do, and when the public pushed back, the Conservatives pretended that they were opposed to privatization all along.

But as recently as four years ago, under one of their many previous leaders, the Conservatives were touting a white paper that proposed to "monetize Ontario Power Generation and Hydro One." The paper was crystal clear that this meant sell-offs and the privatization of Ontario's public services. The white paper was signed by the then energy critic, who is now the finance minister.

I think it is incumbent on this minister to be very clear with the people of this province. Is OPG and the sell-off of OLG and LCBO on the table? Tell the people of this province.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Our government has been working hard for the people of Ontario and has been restoring trust and accountability to government. EY had a mandate to consider all options and present those to government. They did an excellent job and left no stone unturned.

While the opposition has been breathlessly fear-mongering, we have been looking for solutions. The line-by-line audit presented some solutions to government. Just because an option was presented to the government doesn't mean it will happen. What I can say, Mr. Speaker, is this: We are not pro-privatization; we are pro the people. Every choice we make will be to modernize and transform government for the people so that they can continue to receive high-quality public services now and into the future.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Miss Kinga Surma: My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Five years ago, the Auditor General released a report concluding that the Drive Clean program had outlived its usefulness. Almost 15 years ago, the minister who founded the Drive Clean program called for it to be phased out.

On Friday, in Etobicoke, the Premier and the Minister of the Environment announced that our government is cancelling this program. It is about time. Families don't want to subsidize a redundant program that ultimately results in longer lines, more paperwork when renewing their licence plate or purchasing a new vehicle, and costly, unnecessary car repairs.

To the minister: What other benefits can Ontarians expect from this announcement?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member from Etobicoke Centre, thank you for the question. She's quite right. Last Friday, Premier Ford announced the cancellation of Drive Clean. This was a program that was costing two million Ontarians' time—two million Ontarians who had to do unnecessary tests and paperwork—and over \$40 million of taxpayers' dollars.

This is something that the PC caucus in opposition was very clear in its opposition to, at least five years ago. It took that long, Mr. Speaker. It took this government to act on Drive Clean, a program that was effective at reducing emissions in the 1990s but lost that effectiveness with standards for cars and cleaner gasoline and when older cars came off the road. As the Auditor General stated and as the founder of Drive Clean talked about, it was time for the program to be phased out, and it has been.

Mr. Speaker, this government will always be looking at programs, looking to balance a healthy economy and a healthy environment. Where the programs are not supporting either of those objectives, they will be phased out, and programs that do work—

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

Interjections.

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

Miss Kinga Surma: Thank you to the minister. I know my constituents in Etobicoke Centre and all over the province will be more than happy with this development.

The Toronto Star has polled over 20,000 readers, and 66% of participants believe that Drive Clean is an outdated program and cars are built differently now. Cancelling this outdated, inefficient program is going to save \$40 million per year. I know my constituents approve of getting rid of waste. I know it is important to my constituents that Ontario continues to be a leader, to care for our environment and do so in an effective manner.

Can the minister tell us what the future of Drive Clean looks like and how our government plans to continue to reduce emissions and protect the environment?

Hon. Rod Phillips: As Toronto Star readers and Ontarians said very clearly, the time for Drive Clean was over. But that does not mean the end to important on-road testing.

In the place of this program that I've noted has been ineffective for a long time, we will, be first of all, winding down the program in an orderly way over the next six months, and then a program that will be focusing on the big emitters today—heavy trucks and the people who are using diesel fuel in those heavy vehicles—will be put into place. These are the emitters that the University of Toronto engineering school and other experts say should be the focus today. I can share with the House that I spoke to the head of the Ontario Trucking Association today, who agrees. Good trucking-industry participants don't want to pollute, but there are some that do.

That program will come into place. Once again, we will be taking programs that are ineffective out of play, putting programs that are effective into play, protecting the environment and protecting the economy.

LEGAL CLINIC FUNDING

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: My question is for the Attorney General. Lesbian and gay Canadians are twice as likely to experience violence when compared to heterosexual Canadians. That number jumps to four times for bisexual Canadians and is even higher for trans and two-spirited community members. That's why the LGBTQ community eagerly welcomed Canada's first LGBTQ community legal clinic, set to open this fall. But under this new government, funding for the Egale clinic is no longer there.

Will the Attorney General let our community know if the clinic is going to be more collateral damage as a result of this government's cuts?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I thank the member opposite for the question. Ontarians deserve to live free from the threat of violence and abuse. Our government for the people is committed to continuing to invest in programs that provide the supports to survivors and to those at risk of violence, such as emergency shelters, counselling, sexual assault centres, and court-based victim and witness assistance.

The government is currently looking at all programs and funding commitments, as you know, and more information on this will be available at a later date.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Back to the Attorney General: Last week, the Toronto Star asked the Attorney General's office if this clinic will receive the funding that was promised. The response from the office failed to confirm if this clinic is still on the agenda, and today's answer is no better. They say they're going to look at the evidence, and then we wait and we are delayed.

After the third year of rising hate crimes against the trans community, we have a Premier who has refused to march in the Pride Parade and who has removed the critical sex ed curriculum. And now, this government is taking away my community's legal supports.

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What will it take for this government to stand up for the LGBTQ community?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I reject the premise of the question. The previous Liberal government left our province saddled with a \$15-billion deficit and over \$340 billion of debt. The people of this province have services, programs and supports that they expect and deserve, and it is the mandate of our government, as we have been saying very clearly for the past few weeks in this House, that we are reviewing every program, because we know that it has an impact on people's lives. Therefore, we are going to take the time and consideration to make these decisions.

As I said to the member opposite, we are reviewing the programs and we will report back in due time.

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Doug Downey: My question is for the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines. Mr. Speaker, northern Ontario has a lot to offer the provincial economy, and I know that our government is going to make sure that we unlock more of its potential. I also know that Minister Rickford is extremely qualified to lead this important file. He has already shown how strong his commitment to northern Ontario and Indigenous communities across the province is, and I'd like to thank him for all the important work he has done already.

Mr. Speaker, I know our government has been taking steps to open Ontario for business, so I'd like to ask Minister Rickford if he can explain some of the initiatives our government has undertaken to deliver on our promises to the people to show that Ontario is open for business for northern residents and Indigenous communities.

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte for his question and his interest in this opportunity. It's true, Mr. Speaker: Whether it's First Peoples, for the people, this government is committed to ensuring economic opportunities span this great province. We know what northern Ontario can contribute, and in particular we know the contribution our Indigenous communities can make.

That's why I visited Ochiichagwe'Babigo'Ining, otherwise known as Dalles First Nation. Regional Chief Rose-Anne Archibald joined me, and we celebrated a \$1-million investment from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, in addition to half a million dollars from Indigenous Affairs Ontario to invest in a business centre of excellence in this dynamic community. They already have a great footprint in Kenora, involved in integrated resource management, but now they have a business development centre with anchor tenants paying rent, a training area and a conference centre, as well as space dedicated to the development officers who work for Treaty 3 to generate business. Chief Lorraine Cobiness said it best, Mr. Speaker: Dalles First Nation is open for business.

Interjections.

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

Restart the clock. Supplementary.

Mr. Doug Downey: Thank you, Minister, for answering the question and your response.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our government is keeping promises to the people of Ontario, and I am proud that we and you have already delivered so much. I know that, through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., our government is making even more important investments to support northern communities. I'm happy to hear that this weekend's announcement will have such a positive impact on creating opportunities for Indigenous communities in this province.

I know that additional investments through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. are ensuring that Ontario is open for business. Can the minister please tell

the members of this House about another way our government is helping the people of northern Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Again, another busy latter part of the week in Kenora–Rainy River. I travel a lot—I know many of my colleagues do—but I had a unique opportunity on Saturday. I sat on the other side of the gate at this brand new airport in Kenora and I said, “Kenora passengers, destination for the world. Flight number 1 is about to take off.”

That's because we have a brand new airport there. Full credit to the federal government for their contributions, but it was a difficult road there. That was formerly a two-room house as an airport. It needed several upgrades over the course of time. We're investing in perimeter fences to prevent deer and moose from coming on the site; a state-of-the-art runway; and various other equipment to keep that place safe.

Yesterday, I was pleased to celebrate half a million dollars by NOHFC and some money to invest in making sure that that airport authority has a strategic response and that Kenora will be open for business.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Mr. Jamie West: My question is for the finance minister. Speaker, when the Premier was a Toronto councillor, he said, “We're going to be outsourcing everything that is not nailed down.” One of his first acts as Premier was to commission a quickie report from a private consultant that recommended privatization and outsourcing.

Thanks to privatization, Ontario is already locked into a 22-year contract with a private company that's embroiled in a massive money-laundering scandal in British Columbia. Is the minister considering taking us even further down this risky and costly road by privatizing the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp.?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member opposite: Thank you for that question. The EY report was commissioned so that we could do a deep dive into the previous Liberal government's spending. They went through 500,000 lines of data, which is a very deep review. In that review, which they completed on time and below budget—there are lots of great ideas within that report. I'd encourage that the members opposite read that report because, within that report, it very clearly says that we should leave no stone unturned, that we will look at all elements of how to save the public money. There has been duplication and waste for a number of years, and we are very encouraged that we have a blueprint and a path forward.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Jamie West: In 2014 the Conservatives were touting a white paper. It said that in addition to selling off Hydro One and OPG, the government should “move to wind down” the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. “and privatize its lotteries, casino assets and slots operations.” That's the full quote.

Do the Conservatives still believe that Ontario's lottery should still be privatized, or can the minister assure us that this is a bad idea and is completely off the table?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Again, Mr. Speaker, through you to the member: As was noted last week, there was no mention of any privatization of any crown corporation within the report.

What I would say is this, with regard to any privatization: What it did say was that if there is a good business case—and in my experience, if you get one-time savings but forgo lots of future revenues and prices go up, just like Hydro One, maybe that's not such a good business case that we should be looking at.

The number one thing that we have to do is that we have to take care of the people. We have to make sure that our fiscal house is in order. The Parliamentary Budget Officer last week said that Ontario's fiscal situation is not sustainable. How are we going to protect core services—hospitals, education, infrastructure and transit—if we don't make sure we have sustainable funding?

Mr. Speaker, we are not pro-privatization; we are pro the people.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Mr. Jim McDonell: My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. On August 23, a letter to the editor was sent to the Ottawa Sun, advocating for the end of the pointless Drive Clean program.

In 2015, Drive Clean cost Ontario taxpayers \$89 million. But did anyone bother to check that the program was actually working? Certainly not the previous Liberal government.

The Premier and the Minister of the Environment announced last Friday that they're planning to scrap the Drive Clean program and save taxpayers money. Can the minister explain to the House why this government decided to cancel the Drive Clean program?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, our caucus has been calling for the elimination of the Drive Clean program for over six years. Norm Sterling, the former PC Minister of the Environment and the founder of the Drive Clean program in 1999, has also, for almost 10 years, been calling for the elimination of this program.

In fact, the previous Minister of the Environment, the Liberal Minister of the Environment, lauded our decision on Friday. He said in a tweet, "Drive Clean has little impact." So even the previous Liberal environment minister was calling for the elimination of this program.

It was only under the leadership of our Premier, however, that this program was finally eliminated, saving Ontario taxpayers \$40 million, saving two million Ontarians from the added hassle from a program that didn't work. We cancelled Drive Clean because it wasn't working. We will always balance a healthy environment and a healthy economy, and eliminate programs that do not support either.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: Thank you to the minister for his answer and for standing up for the Ontario taxpayer. It is clear that this government respects the taxpayers by eliminating an ineffective and obsolete program. During the election, our plan for the people promised to put more money back in people's pockets, and we are doing just that.

However, my constituents also care deeply about the well-being of our environment for future generations. Can the Minister of the Environment explain how we will ensure that the biggest polluters on our roads will continue to be penalized for polluting the environment?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, who I know is an effective advocate on this issue and other issues: As we've been clear, one of the focuses of our government is going to be cracking down on the biggest polluters, cracking down on the areas where we can make a difference. While we're balancing a healthy economy with a healthy environment, we'll be focusing on those who are polluting the most.

As the University of Toronto engineering department study showed just this summer, it's the big trucks—diesel trucks—that are currently contributing the most to the harmful emissions—nitrous oxide and others—that are really affecting our environment.

So, while our government is getting rid of the inefficient, ineffective and outdated Drive Clean program that the previous government sustained for so long, our government will be focusing on those significant polluters, making sure that they get value for money. We protect the environment while supporting the economy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our time for question period this morning. I want to compliment all the members. I could actually hear every question that was put and every response that was given for the first time since the 12th of July. Thank you very, very much.

PETER ADAMS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Peterborough–Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: I regret to inform the chamber that Peter Adams, who served in the 34th Legislature, passed away on Friday. There will be a memorial service held in Peterborough on October 13 at 2 p.m. at St. John's Anglican church.

I'd like to have the thoughts and prayers of all of the members thinking of Peter's wife, Jill. Thank you.

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Scarborough–Guildwood.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity. I've been getting notes on the colour of my

jacket today. I just wanted to say that I'm wearing orange today because yesterday was Orange Shirt Day. It's an opportunity for us to reflect on the effects of residential schools and the reconciliation effort that is still ahead.

FLAG-RAISING CEREMONY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Richmond Hill.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Today is the national day for celebrating the 69th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

There will be a flag-raising ceremony on the south lawn. I'd like to invite all the members to join us at noontime on the south lawn.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on the amendment to government notice of motion number 8 regarding allocation of time on the appointment of a Select Committee on Financial Transparency.

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

The division bells rang from 1144 to 1149.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I hate to interrupt these friendly cross-party discussions, but we do have to vote. Members, please take your seats.

On September 27, 2018, Mr. Vanthof moved that government notice of motion number 8 be amended as follows: In the first paragraph, the words "there shall be one hour of additional debate with 30 minutes apportioned to the government, 20 minutes to the official opposition, seven minutes to the independent Liberal Party members and three minutes to the independent Green Party member. At the end of this time" shall be inserted following the number "6"; and

In the second paragraph, delete the words "9(c) or".

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

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Gélinas, France	Sattler, Peggy
Arthur, Ian	Glover, Chris	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Hassan, Faisal	Shaw, Sandy
Bell, Jessica	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bourgooin, Guy	Hunter, Mitzie	Stiles, Marit
Burch, Jeff	Karpoche, Bhutla	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Kernaghan, Terence	Taylor, Monique
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Lalonde, Marie-France	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Mamakwa, Sol	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Mantha, Michael	Wynne, Kathleen O.
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Rakocevic, Tom	

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 38; the nays are 67.

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

Motion negatived.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Are the members now ready to vote on the main motion? I heard some noes.

This matter will be placed on the Orders and Notices paper for further debate.

This House stands in recess until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1154 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I rise in the House today to speak about this government's treatment of the LGBTQ community. From the throne speech, where the word "lifestyle" was used, to the removal of LGBTQ families and voices from the health and physical education curriculum, we seem to be going backwards.

Human rights are travelling back in time as well. Egale, a national LGBTQ-rights organization, were set to open a legal clinic to provide inclusivity training to 70-some legal clinics in Ontario, a worldwide first. But under this government, that funding now may be cut. Legal clinics in Ontario freely admit that they are not equipped to respond to the needs of their equity-seeking clients.

The legal system has always presented significant challenges for the gay community. In 1965, gay men were incarcerated as "dangerous sex offenders." While, in 1969, homosexuality was decriminalized, it wasn't until 1996 that sexual orientation became a protected ground. Until that time—and even to this day—my community endured harassment, discrimination, violence, physical abuse,

psychological oppression and hate propaganda. Gays received the right to marry in 2005, but not surprisingly provincial and federal Conservatives have tried to revoke that right—note Alberta's attempt to use the “notwithstanding” clause.

Simply put, now that LGBTQ individuals finally enjoy rights that heterosexual cisgender individuals have always enjoyed, they're still being excluded from the legal system.

While this government proudly parrots their slogan, “For the People,” they certainly don't include LGBTQ people.

HERBERT'S BOOTS AND WESTERN WEAR

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: This weekend, I was very excited to visit Herbert's Boots and Western Wear in Innisfil to congratulate them on their 60th year of business. They had lots of activities and draws for their loyal customers and a great tent sale.

Herbert's has been open since 1958, when Mr. and Mrs. Elsner opened in Alliston, Ontario, where they began selling boots; they then opened up a second location in my riding of Barrie—Innisfil. They used to sell clothing to local farmers and folks from Toronto, but people from all around Ontario were quick to discover that Herbert's was the place to go to find the right pair of western boots. They now have the two locations, one just off Highway 400 and Innisfil Beach Road.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you're wondering if I was able to find myself a pair of boots. I am excited to let you know that I bought a great pair of brown leather cowboy boots.

I encourage everyone to stop by Herbert's to support our local business.

MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Mr. Faisal Hassan: October is the month we celebrate Islamic heritage in Ontario. The Muslim community has been present in Ontario and in Canada since the country's founding in 1867. We celebrate together to inform, to educate and to share with our fellow Canadians the rich Muslim heritage and contributions to society. These are contributions in science, humanities, medicine, astronomy, architecture, history and other disciplines that have greatly benefited human progress. It is the month we recognize the important contributions that Muslims make in Ontario as part of the vibrant social, economic, political and cultural fabric of our province.

Islamic Heritage Month brings people from all backgrounds together and provides positive vibes, especially since there are so many misconceptions in society about Islam. Muslims have been contributing to all aspects of Ontario's prosperity and diverse heritage for generations. Islamic Heritage Month is about creating positive understanding for the Muslim community and sharing this with our neighbours. I encourage every member to take part in the events in your area.

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Mr. Billy Pang: I would like to bring forward a celebration that is the second-most important one for the Chinese, after Chinese New Year. The Mid-Autumn Festival 2018 was last Monday, September 24. The Mid-Autumn Festival, to the Chinese, is celebrated when the moon is full. Chinese people believe a full moon is a symbol of reunion, harmony and happiness.

Also called the Moon Festival or Mooncake Festival, it is celebrated when the moon is believed to be the biggest and fullest of the year. That's why mooncakes are the must-eat mid-autumn food in China. They are a traditional Chinese pastry, and Chinese people see in the roundness of the mooncake a symbol of reunion and happiness.

This past weekend, I had the chance to attend a few Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations and participate with friends, families and colleagues in the festivities and games. There was good food and lots of laughs.

Our government encourages family time as such, by putting money back into the taxpayers' pockets in order to spend it, along with their time amongst family.

SOCIAL ISSUES IN WINDSOR AND ESSEX COUNTY

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Last Friday, I joined the member from Essex and the member from Windsor West at a round-table discussion regarding social issues in the Windsor and Essex county region. It lasted more than three hours because of the number of the people who came to present to us.

Hiatus House, for example, is a shelter for abused women. They handled more than 3,000 crisis calls last year. Their occupancy rate averages 95%. They've housed 309 women with 222 children. When they've been full, they've turned away 146 women and 118 children. To save money, they've already turned full-time positions into part-time contract jobs.

The Downtown Mission is ground zero for a growing homeless population. Their average stay is 53 nights and they house an average of 80 people a night.

The Unemployed Help Centre is busier than ever. Their food bank is seeing more people than in past years. We heard of a senior on a limited budget who came to the food bank for the first time a couple of weeks ago. Why? Because she had a dental emergency, which left her with little or no money to put food on the table that week.

Rents are going up. People are paying 70% and more of their income to remain housed.

The greatest fear we heard over and over again is that the new government will be making further cuts to social agencies and programs. This isn't fear-mongering. This is the reality of what we're hearing from the people on the margins of society.

Speaker, I agree with them: They need more help, not more cuts.

WAVES OF CHANGES FOR AUTISM

Mr. Stephen Lecce: As we mark the beginning of Autism Awareness Month in this country, I want to reaffirm our government's commitment to restoring human dignity and respect to Ontarians with autism. They deserve to have a government that will give them hope, invest in their children's future and enable them to achieve their full potential.

Last Thursday, I joined my colleague Minister Tibollo in Vaughan to raise critical funds for families with children with autism at the Waves of Changes for Autism fundraising gala. This organization raises funds to give a hand up to those families who need our support, to ensure that their kids can receive the therapy and the treatment they need for their loved ones.

Over \$250,000 has been raised to date from this value-based charity, assisting over 70 families in need. Our community in King–Vaughan is blessed with deeply generous people who care about the most vulnerable in our society.

On behalf of our Premier and government, we express our heartfelt gratitude to the incredible volunteer team of Waves of Changes for Autism, including their founders, Ellen Contardi and Loredana Di Iacovo, and their entire dedicated committee for making a difference and leaving a legacy for these children. I'm eternally grateful for their compassion and generosity. Your government is grateful and everyone in this House says thank you.

1310

MINIMUM WAGE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Today, October 1, 2018, the NDP government in Alberta makes history with their minimum wage of \$15 per hour coming into effect. Here in Ontario, our \$15 minimum wage is set to take effect on January 1, 2019. Over 1.7 million Ontario workers are counting on this government to honour the commitment. An overwhelming majority of Ontarians support a \$15 minimum wage and better laws to protect workers. However, Premier Ford and the Minister of Labour are now saying they will cancel the minimum wage increase.

The Ford government is defending corporate interests over people's interests. They are representing the interests of the 1%, not the millions of Ontarians who want fair and decent wages and to be able to live with dignity. It's no surprise that the government is listening to big businesses like Loblaws, who, let's not forget, recently admitted to being part of a 14-year scheme fixing bread prices, and others like the billionaires of Tim Hortons, who are all predicting doom and gloom. You know, we've heard this spin before—a decade ago, when minimum wage increased to \$10 an hour. As expected, a minimum wage increase was actually good for Ontario's economy.

Speaker, no one in Ontario should be working full-time and still live in poverty. At a time when big businesses and corporations are making record-breaking profits, we simply cannot ask hard-working Ontarians to accept a wage freeze. It's time this government put people over profit.

DIPAK BHATT

Mr. Deepak Anand: Good afternoon, Speaker. Today I'd like to take this time to recognize one of my good friends, Dipak Bhatt, a Guinness world record holder and Limca Book record holder.

Dipak has a special trait: On a single grain of rice, Dipak can craft an image of many dignitaries. He has written as many as 389 letters on a single grain of rice and 148 letters on a single sesame seed.

Mr. Speaker, all this is completed with bare eyes and zero—and I say zero—use of technology. I applaud Dipak's creativity and skill. Being a talented artist with a steady hand is an accomplishment, but to be able to execute his craft on such a small scale without the use of a magnifying aid is truly remarkable.

Today, through this statement, I'd like to take the opportunity to recognize all the artists who, of course, I believe, with the grace of God—and some people call it luck—have all this extraordinary talent. I truly believe that these artists, with their hard work, discipline and persistence, are creating memories for the generations to relish.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to congratulate Dipak, who will be here soon and is currently stuck in traffic.

MENTAL HEALTH
AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I rise today to recognize the Knights of Columbus Council 9612 from the St. Maximilian Kolbe Polish parish for their donation made to the Trillium Health Partners' Credit Valley Hospital in my riding of Mississauga–Erin Mills last Saturday. Their donation was made towards the mental health care zone. Generous donations such as this help improve the experience of patients in Mississauga.

On behalf of the PC caucus and my colleague the MPP from Mississauga Centre, who worked closely with the Polish community and all Mississauga MPPs, I would like to thank the Knights of Columbus Council, Grand Knight Marek Ruta, the Polish community and all reverend fathers for their spiritual guidance, morals and support to Mississauga and Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, we made a promise during the election to make mental health a priority. That's why this government and the Minister of Health have committed \$1.9 billion in mental health, addictions and supportive housing, matching the federal government's funding. That's \$3.8 billion, Mr. Speaker. This is the biggest provincial commitment to mental health in Canadian history. We will develop a comprehensive, system-wide strategy for mental health and addiction that provides services Ontarians need and deserve.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

LIABILITY FOR CLIMATE-RELATED HARMS ACT, 2018

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

Mr. Tabuns moved first 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 Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member for Toronto—Danforth wish to explain his bill?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: The people of Ontario face tens of billions of dollars' worth of costs coming over the next few decades from climate-related damage. This bill provides businesses, individuals and governments a legal framework to sue the fossil fuel companies that have caused this damage through their products.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Todd Smith: I move that the schedule of the House for Tuesday, October 2, 2018, as set out in standing order 8(a), be revised by substituting "1 p.m." and "1:05 p.m." for "3 p.m." and "3:05 p.m.," respectively.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, is moving that the schedule of the House for Tuesday, October 2, 2018, as set out in standing order 8(a), be revised by substituting "1 p.m." and "1:05 p.m." for "3 p.m." and "3:05 p.m.," respectively.

I understand that the member for Timmins would like to speak to this motion.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I just can't believe the government and the way that they're running this House. If I was a small business person, or if I was Placer Dome or Kidd Creek or a paper mill—

Mr. John Vanthof: A dairy farm.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —a dairy farm or the mill up in Kapuskasing, and I was to run my business the way these guys run the House, I would lose all my employees and have to close my doors.

First of all, I want to say for the record that New Democrats don't mind sitting in the House. We will be here every time that you call the House. If you want to have the House sit whenever, we will be here.

But, literally, to be given a motion two minutes before—I guess we got it sometime around—I don't know. I bet you I got this—

Interjection: Where's your sense of humour?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Where's my sense of humour? That's a good question.

We got this 15 minutes ago. The government is changing, yet again, when the House is going to sit tomorrow. So now, rather than sitting at 3 o'clock, and all of us, as caucuses, going to our weekly caucus meetings, we're now going to cancel the weekly caucus meetings at the last minute in order for the government to get more time to debate a particular bill that they want to be able to call.

Hello? The Legislature has been running by the same rules for long enough, and everybody else managed to get their agenda through the House by planning what you want to do in a very good way, where you say, "Here's a calendar. When do I want to have my bill passed? This is the amount of time I need at second reading," and if you do time allocation, for time allocation, and committee at the third reading. You plan it out and you get it done.

These guys would be like my friend John Vanthof, a dairy farmer of great success for many years, the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane, saying, "Well, I think I may milk my cows at a different time today." You're supposed to milk cows at a certain time every day, and it has to be done repetitively. How many times a day? Three times a day? Twice, depending?

Interjections: Twice.

Mr. John Vanthof: Three times, sometimes.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It's three in some, two in others. I know that because I talk dairy a lot with my good friend.

Imagine a dairy farmer saying, "Well, you know what? We're just going to change the way that we milk the cows today." Well, it won't be very long until your cows won't be much good to you—

Mr. John Vanthof: And we don't tell the cows or the employees.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: "We don't tell the cows or the employees." Good one.

1320

You can't run the House this way. You have a parliamentary calendar. You should follow the parliamentary calendar. If you have a problem with time to put legislation through the House—I want to explain something to the government side of the bench: There's a House leaders' meeting every Thursday, if you haven't noticed, and that's a meeting where—

Hon. Todd Smith: I was there last week. Where were you?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I was having my Remicade infusion. I have psoriatic arthritis.

Hon. Todd Smith: So do I.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, you do too? We've got something in common. Oh my God.

Interjection: You guys should talk about that at House leaders'—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: We're going to have to talk about that at House—are you a four-week or a five-week infuser? But anyways, that's a whole other story.

My point is that the government could have come to the House leaders' meeting last week and said, "You know, we have certain bills that we want to be able to pass. We're

going to be ordering up the agenda of the House in the following way,” and we have a discussion about how long we’re going to be at second reading and what we’re going to do at committee etc. The government, like every other kind of government since the creation of this House—work your parliamentary calendar, work your agenda by way of the parliamentary calendar.

Instead, you come to us literally minutes before and you say, “Oh, well, I guess we’re going to change everything.” So now all of your caucus members, all of my caucus members and all of the caucus members of the other parties now have to change all of their schedules tomorrow. No more caucus meeting. It probably means to say our Wednesday is also muffed because we’re going to have to move our caucus meetings to Wednesday or do something.

We’ve all got things to do. It’s not as if members have other things that they can’t be doing. All my argument to the government is: You’re proving yourselves to be very bad managers of this House.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Inept.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Inept. You cannot pretend to be a party of the business class who knows how to run businesses when you can’t even run the House. So I just say to you guys across the way: You’ve got to get your act together. At one point, you’ve got to get your own house in order—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you. That was a good line.

You’ve got to get your own house in order and you’ve got to run—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Through the Chair.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I will go through the Chair but, Mr. Speaker, it was a very good line from my colleague so I had to use it. I do borrow from other people every now and then. I’m not going to debate this for the full 20 minutes, because that’s not the intent of slowing things down here. But I want to say to the government that this is not the way to do things. You know very well what your legislative agenda is. You know what bills you want to pass through the House.

Every government since this Parliament has started has figured out ways of being able to get their agenda through within the time allotted by way of the standing orders. For you guys to come in and change your mind literally minutes before and give us yet another motion—this is, what, the third time we get such a motion? I think it’s two or three times.

Hon. Todd Smith: Four times.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Four times? The government House leader is telling me four times. I’ve lost count somewhere. It is just not the way to do things. And I say to the government across the way that New Democrats will always be here when the Legislature is sitting to debate, yes, to oppose when necessary; and to propose, as well, what we think should be done to make bills better. That’s our job; all of us in this House, not just the official opposition.

But you’re not proving yourselves to be good managers. You’re not living up to the mantra, “Conservatives know how to run government because we’re really good

at running things.” Well, you couldn’t run a dairy farm the way that you run this House. You couldn’t run a paper mill and you certainly couldn’t run a mine in the way that you’re running this House because—it would be like you couldn’t get your employees to come in.

Can you imagine? You, my good friend from Nickel Belt, as I do in Timmins and as my friend does in Timiskaming–Cochrane—we have a lot of shift workers that live in our communities who work in the mines or the paper mills or the sawmills. Can you imagine—my good friend from Algoma–Manitoulin who worked in sawmills and knows this quite well; worked shift, I would imagine—all of sudden your employer calls and says, “Oh, you’re supposed to be in at 6 o’clock tonight but it’s 5 o’clock so you should come in at 12 o’clock tonight instead.” Well, you’ve arranged your babysitting, your parenting responsibilities, you’ve made all kinds—you can’t do that to people. People have lives. People have to be able to know and to plan what they’re going to do during their workday.

This Legislature is the same thing. Members have to be able to plan their workday. We’re meeting with community groups, as you do—the stakeholders who come in and meet with us all the time. We have things that we need to do internally. When you change the schedule of the House, it proves you to be terrible managers and you’re not living up to your mantra of being Conservatives who know how to run anything, because so far I don’t think you’d be able to run anything by the way we see you running this particular House.

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

Mr. Michael Coteau: It’s not often we’re given an opportunity to speak on issues, so I want to take advantage of this opportunity. I share the position of the House leader for the NDP. I think that if this House wants to elevate itself to a place where we’re taking on concerns and voicing the opinions of Ontarians, there has to be some type of planning put in place.

I understand, maybe, for the first time, if the House leader comes in here from the government and says to this body, “We’ve made a mistake in our schedules. We haven’t put a lot of time into planning.” Maybe in the first few weeks I’d understand this. But this is the third time now that the government has come into this House and changed the schedule last minute. When you think about the collective here, over 100 members, and when you take two hours of misused time or rescheduled time, we’re talking about hundreds of hours being reallocated in one day on personal time. That’s not fair to members in this House.

I’d also remind the NDP that we did receive a million votes as Ontario Liberals—over a million votes, 1.14 million votes here in Ontario. We do represent a large group of people in the province, and we are limited to what we say in this Legislature. And I’d just remind all members that the spirit of co-operation should take place on behalf of Ontarians and the way they cast their votes to support different political parties. We’re here representing those voices, over a million people in Ontario who supported us, and I’d ask the House leader to work with us as well to

make sure that, at the end of the day, those voices are captured and that all Ontarians are represented in this Legislature.

Again, to the House leader on the government side: We would welcome those conversations. We would meet any time to look at ways to better schedule so it accommodates all people. And I'd like to put that request in not only to the government but also to the NDP.

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

Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved that the schedule for the House for Tuesday, October 2, 2018, as set out in standing order 8(a), be revised by substituting "1 p.m." and "1:05 p.m." for "3 p.m." and "3:05 p.m.," respectively. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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. Carried.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On division.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnett): On division.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

SENIORS

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Before I start my little speech here, I'd like to introduce very important people to Queen's Park: Sue Hesjedahl, executive director of Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario; Cathy Barrick, CEO, Alzheimer Society of Toronto; Lilian Wells, president, Ontario Association of Councils on Aging; Elizabeth Macnab, Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations; Graham Webb, Advocacy Centre for the Elderly; Cathy Hecimovich, CEO, ORCA; Kari Cuss, director of communications and public affairs, ORCA; Gilles Fontaine, executive director, FARFO; Gail Thompson, Care Watch; Dr. John Puxty, Ontario Interdisciplinary Council for Aging and Health; Lesley Brown, Ontario Public Service Quarter Century Club; and Sue Graham-Nutter, AdvantAge Ontario. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'm honoured and privileged to rise today to recognize the United Nations International Day of Older Persons. We are proud in Ontario to pay tribute to the women and men who helped to build our province and our country, and we are proud of the many valuable contributions that seniors continue to make in our society. They enrich our families and our communities. They enrich our workplaces. And they enrich our lives.

1330

Madam Speaker, one of my top priorities as Minister for Seniors and Accessibility is to build more respect for seniors. I'm happy to take on this work and I am very thankful to the Premier for entrusting me with this very important responsibility.

Being treated as valuable members of society tells seniors their wisdom and experience matter. Treating seniors with respect will be at the heart of everything we do as a government. But there is so much to do, and success will only be possible as a result of the continued efforts of many of our stakeholders.

Thank you, stakeholders.

Their outstanding leadership and tireless work have greatly contributed to making this province safer, more age-friendly and more respectful for older persons in Ontario.

Right now, there are more than two million seniors in Ontario. In 25 years, there will be about four million. There are now more Ontarians over the age of 65 than there are children in Ontario under the age of 15.

Our goal is to keep seniors safe, connected, active and engaged members of our society.

This year's United Nations International Day of Older Persons celebrates, in particular, seniors who champion human rights. This is a cause close to my heart. Not only am I a senior; I also consider myself a human rights advocate. I was a social worker for many years. During that time, I began advocating for human rights in North Korea. I found that work very gratifying.

Allow me at this time, Madam Speaker, to also acknowledge the sacrifices made by the Canadians who served in the Korean War. They fought for democracy in the country of my birth—516 Canadians made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives. I do not think I would be here today if it were not for them. Those veterans still with us are now seniors, and to them I offer my heartfelt gratitude and my sincere thanks.

Applause.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Thank you.

Today, let us honour, respect and celebrate Ontario's more than two million seniors. In fact, let us do this every day. It is our collective responsibility, as elected members of this Legislature, to work harder for an Ontario where older persons are proud, respected, live with dignity and are able to contribute to society.

Let's continue to work together to make this beautiful province a great place for seniors today and every day. It is the least we can do and should do.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Responses?

Mr. Joel Harden: Speaker, it's an honour to rise today, given what the minister had mentioned. This is National Seniors Day, and I appreciated the words the minister just spoke.

I also appreciate being the critic for a minister who considers himself a human rights advocate in the work you named that you did. Minister, it's impressive. Thank you for sharing that information with us.

I also want to acknowledge that I wouldn't be here today, personally, without seniors in my life. I think of people like Erma Davison, my grandmother, a fearless—and people in my grandparents' church would say at times a ruthless—parishioner who made sure that our church was engaged in building our community and helping the most vulnerable.

I think of my grandfather Walter Russell Davison, who served in the Second World War, in Normandy, and taught me every day the value of fighting for freedom and the need to speak up against hate and intolerance. He told me about his comrades who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

I think of my mother, who is now a senior, Rosemary Harden. Soon we're going to be celebrating her 70th birthday. All of my siblings and I are going to get together and remember mom, an arts teacher, a chorister, a private piano teacher who, as the previous speaker had indicated, builds our community up through the arts; my father, Reg Harden, who had a successful small business in Hawkesbury, Ontario, in jewellery retail, who sent me to school and gave me a successful lot in life.

I celebrate all of these seniors who made my life special.

When I think about the legacy seniors gave us—particularly the class of 1946, the veterans who came back from the Second World War—I think about the Canada they wanted to build, a Canada with public health care for all, a Canada where everybody who was able and willing could find themselves decent employment, a Canada that made sure we looked after people with disabilities and people who are marginalized through no fault of their own. When I think about that legacy, I can't help but reflect on things I've seen in this House in the last three months.

Specifically, Speaker, I arrived in this building late today because I spent the morning in a courtroom in Ottawa. I was in a courtroom in Ottawa bearing witness and friendship to Norman Traversy. Norman Traversy was a firefighter in the city of Mississauga who, for 12 years, has been fighting for WSIB coverage for five diagnoses of post-traumatic stress. We've had a lot of platitudes expressed in this place about respect for police, firefighters, paramedics and crisis workers. But my friend Norm was in a courtroom today—a personal civil suit he's had to launch against the city of Mississauga—because his post-traumatic stress has not been diagnosed. Next month, Norm will be 63. Most firefighters retire at the age of 60. It's a difficult job that bears considerable mental and physical duress.

I think it's high time for us to celebrate what the minister has said, to celebrate seniors every single day, but into the record today I want to acknowledge that we're dealing with a government right now, in this place, which has lowered safety and insurance premiums for employers by 30% in January.

Mr. Will Bouma: Hear, hear.

Mr. Joel Harden: I want to ask you, as you cheer yourselves on, are you happy lowering premiums for some of the wealthiest employers in this province while people like Norm can't get benefits? How do you sleep at night? How do you sleep at night while people who we thank for their courageous work, in Ottawa for the tornadoes, or here in Toronto when the subways flood, or when shootings happen and people rush to the scene, when people get hurt in the line of duty—people who are seniors, in this case. It shouldn't be the job of government to figure out ways to pad profits for some of the wealthiest employers in this

province. It should be the job of government to stand by people who stand by us. That's what Norman Traversy did every day of his life, and for the last 12 years he has been through hell. He's a senior. He has my undying respect.

1340

I know the Speaker, Mr. Arnott, supported him when he was a constituent of his. I've asked the Premier, I've asked the Minister of Labour, I've asked every single official I can find in this government to help out Mr. Traversy. That is my personal pitch to you, my friends. This is a man who, right now, finds himself in a very dire health situation. He is not alone. Many other first responders are suffering from mental health right now because the way in which we've changed presumptive diagnoses of mental health injuries is not ambitious enough.

On seniors' day, I rise to thank the elders who have helped me in my life, but I also rise to call our attention to Norman Traversy and every single senior suffering like him.

PETITIONS

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Percy Hatfield: To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

I fully agree, and I'm going to sign it and give it to Justine to bring 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;

“Protect workers’ employment status, pay and benefits when contracts are flipped or businesses are sold in the building services sector;

“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 fully support this petition and will be affixing my signature to it as well.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Faisal Hassan: The residents of York South-Weston have asked me to table this petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

“Don’t Take Away Our \$15 Minimum Wage and Fairer Labour Laws.

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

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

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

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

“Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it to 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 fully support this petition, add my signature to it and give it to page Deven.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Kevin Yarde: “Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Don’t Take Away Our \$15 Minimum Wage and Fairer Labour Laws.

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

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

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

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

“Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it to 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 fully endorse this petition, and I will be signing it and handing it to page Molly.

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to say a special thank you to Jody O’Daisley, who is from Hanmer in my riding, for this petition. It reads as follows:

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

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

1350

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

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

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

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

I support this petition and will affix my name to it. Je vais demander à Simon de l’amener à la table des greffiers. Merci, Simon.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to thank the good people of Batchewana First Nation of the Ojibways for the following petition:

“Stop the Cuts to Indigenous Reconciliation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

“—reinstate the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation;

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

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

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

I wholeheartedly support this petition, endorse it and present it to page Derek to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Doly Begum: I’d like to thank the good people of Scarborough for bringing this petition, and especially Mr. David Harris for bringing it to me.

This petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly 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;

“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 this petition, will put my signature to it, and give it to page Simon.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Suze Morrison: I'd like to present a petition entitled "Reverse Doug Ford's Cuts to Low-Income Families." It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Doug Ford eliminated the Basic Income Pilot project and slashed the new social assistance rates by 1.5%, and did so without warning;

"Whereas cuts to already-meagre social assistance rates will disproportionately impact children, those with mental health challenges, persons with disabilities, and people struggling in poverty;

"Whereas the decision to cancel the Basic Income Pilot project was made without any evidence, and leaves thousands of Ontarians without details about whether they will be able to access other forms of income assistance;

"Whereas the independently authored Income Security: A Roadmap for Change report, presented to the government last fall, recommends both increases to rates and the continuation of the Basic Income Pilot project as key steps towards income adequacy and poverty reduction;

"Whereas the failure to address poverty—and the homelessness, hunger, health crises, and desperation that can result from poverty—hurts people, families and Ontario's communities;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately reverse Doug Ford's callous decision to slash increases to social assistance rates by 50%, and reverse his decision to cancel the Basic Income Pilot project, decisions that will undoubtedly hurt thousands of vulnerable people and drag Ontario backwards when it comes to homelessness reduction and anti-poverty efforts."

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

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I just want to remind the House again that when reading petitions we cannot use members' names, only titles and ridings. Even if the petition comes worded with someone's name, please adjust it so that it's a riding or title. Thank you.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Kanapathi assumes ballot item number 94 and Mr. Harris assumes ballot item number 36.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Resuming the debate on the motion for allocation of time on government order number 6 regarding the appointment of a Select Committee on Financial Transparency.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Let me, first of all, start off the top of this debate to say, as I was saying earlier in the motion dealing with the House sitting tomorrow at 1, I could move an amendment right now. I said to the government, no. But my God, you keep on doing this kind of stuff and it just throws this whole place into a tizzy.

I'm going to use my time in order to outline what I think the government should do with this committee, but I've just got to say off the top, as I said earlier, the government can't keep on running the House the way that it is. No business in Ontario would run their business the way that you guys are running this House. To change when this House meets at the last minute in the way that you've been doing is just disrespectful of the process and it says to me that the government is not able to plan its agenda, as every other government in the history of Ontario was able to do. The Legislature has been here for over 160 years and—is it 160 years? I'm looking at the Clerks. It would be pretty close to that, 160 years, the Ontario Legislature. Yes, we're close to that.

We've been running essentially by the rules of Westminster since that time. There is a thing called a parliamentary calendar, and a government plans backwards. They say, "By when do we need the bill done?" and then they call the bill in time to be able to get their agenda through. To come into this House and to change things at the last minute constantly in the way that you're doing tells us that you're lurching from crisis to crisis. You can't do House management any better than—you're probably the worst government I've seen for House management, and I've been here for a long—

Hon. Steve Clark: Oh, come on now.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, you have. I'm telling you I have never seen a government of any stripe run the House as badly as you are. You make it up as you go along. They can't plan when they're going to get their legislation through the House, so all of a sudden, they figure out there's something that they need to do. Is it a "notwithstanding" clause last minute? Is it changing the seats in the city of Toronto last minute? Is it cannabis? "Oh, my God, we did it too late. We should have done that earlier."

You're the government. You have all of the people behind you when it comes to being able to plan what you're going to do. So I just say to the government that you're proving to be very, very bad House managers, and I think that reflects badly on what the government is doing overall.

1400

As for the select committee the government is trying to create, we generally support anything that brings transparency. We understand that. There are a lot of decisions that the government made previously that were quite questionable. We spoke to that earlier, that the government did things and then tried to make it look as if they didn't cost as much as they did.

I remember, for example, sitting on the committee struck by this House in regard to the prima facie case of contempt that was found against the government in the

case of the closure of the gas plants. The Minister of Energy of the day, Mr. Bentley, decided that, when requested by the committee to provide documents—which he had to do by law, because as we all know in this place, the Legislature has the authority to call for persons and things and documents, and if you say no, you're in contempt of that committee and, by extension, of the House. The government tried to say up front, "Oh, it's only a \$50-million problem." Then it was some 100-million-odd dollars. Then we did this committee and we found out it was actually over a billion dollars that the government wasted on the cancellation of those two gas plants.

We saw the previous government deal with air Ornge. There was real inefficiency in the way that the place was being run. Not that air Ornge is a bad idea; I think the government was right. I think the government decided that it wanted to move all its air ambulance service under one roof, and they wanted to not only dispatch but deal with having the planes and helicopters to deal with what is our air transport system—our air ambulance system, as we call it. So the government did what wasn't, I think, a bad idea: They tried to put everything under one roof. Well, the person running it, my God, couldn't have done any worse if they had tried. We ended up wasting all kinds of money on procurement of things, and the way that they did it ended up costing us far more money than it should have.

We looked at eHealth. It was a boondoggle. I agree with the government. Is eHealth a bad idea? It's a great idea, a wonderful initiative. I have no problem, and I don't think members on any side of this House have a problem, with the government having in place an electronic system of medical records. That just makes sense in this day and age. Why wouldn't the government, when you go to your emergency or your doctor's office or the lab, have everything done electronically? Nobody argues that. But my, my, my, Madam Speaker: The government, in order to help their friends out, who had all kinds of contracts—if that's what the motivation was; I don't know, but maybe—in order to do whatever they did, ended up wasting all kinds of money.

So is there a need to shed a light on what happened in the past? I would agree. I hope we don't make this a witch hunt. I hope it doesn't become just an exercise of going after the previous government and scoring political points. We'll see. I would be very much surprised if the Conservatives went that way. But on the basic question, "Should we have transparency?" I don't think anybody on this side of the House, including the independent Liberals and Green, would have a problem with shedding a light and being transparent about what we do.

The problem with what you're doing is, you're saying all of these decisions, which you now have to live with as a government—because let's remember, all of the decisions that were made by the previous administration fit into what you are doing now. You're having to manage all of those things, and how you adjust on those things that you think were bad in the previous government also has to be subject to what the committee looks at.

We have an amendment as New Democrats that was put forward by Andrea Horwath, our leader—in my name, but it's nonetheless from our leader and our caucus—that says, "You can't just look backwards. You have to be able to look at today." So if you disagree that the government's policy on X is wrong and it cost us a whole bunch of money and that was a waste of dollars, fine; let's look at that. But how are you adjusting? What is the government doing in order to be able to adjust on that particular issue? Are you doing things that are going to make it better, or is this just a political witch hunt? I really worry that that's where this is going to end up. But you can't not want this motion to go forward, because it is about transparency, and I get that. Our leader and our caucus understand that.

The other thing that we put forward as the second part of the amendment is the ability to call witnesses. We all understand how the rules of this House work. Normally in committee you have a committee sit and you do a rotation by which you call witnesses. That's what we normally agree to. Sometimes it's, "You pick one and I pick one." Sometimes you get an entire list and you divide the list in half and you say, in this case, because there are two official parties, "You get half of the witnesses and I get half of the witnesses."

So if you want to call a witness or I want to call a witness—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: What's that, to the whip?

Mr. Bill Walker: No, no.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, okay. I thought that the whip was agreeing with me, saying that he was going to support our amendment.

Mr. Bill Walker: No.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Oh, I thought that's what you were about to say. I was glad that we were finally getting somewhere. The government says they want to co-operate; this is a great way to co-operate.

We all know that normally the opposition party or parties have an ability to be able to call witnesses, but I very much suspect that this government will utilize its majority in order to be able to block certain witnesses from coming before the committee. So we said, "To be safe, let's put an amendment forward that says that members individually are able to call witnesses. In other words, you put yours up and everybody puts up their witnesses." In the end, that would have been a fair way of ensuring that the government doesn't control all of the witnesses that come before us, because I'm sure there's going to be conflict on some of the witnesses. The government is going to want particular witnesses, the official opposition is going to want particular witnesses, and if the government feels somewhat embarrassed by our pick, I worry that the government will use its majority in order to shut down the selection of witnesses, and I think that's wrong.

That's why New Democrats—our leader, Andrea Horwath, and the party—put forward as the official opposition what are constructive amendments. The government says, "Why don't you work with us?" so we're saying, "Okay, let's work together on this. Let's make sure that you don't

use your majority in order to block the selection of witnesses, and let's make sure that we don't just look at the past but that we look at the future and we look at today."

For example, the government made a big thing around cap-and-trade, and fair enough. They campaigned on it and said that if they formed government, they would get rid of cap-and-trade. The people have spoken. You've got to respect that in a democracy. I didn't like the result of the election, but I understand that the government has a majority and 40%—not a majority of Ontarians, but 40% of the population of Ontario—you had a bigger share of votes than we had, at 34% or whatever we had, and as a result you ended up with a majority. Fair enough. I don't like the result, but fair enough; you have it.

But here you are making all kinds of decisions around cap-and-trade. You've cancelled programs that helped a lot of businesses and a lot of individuals in all of our ridings. You tried to do away with the program that would help you buy an electric car, the Tesla car. That was taken to court, and the government finally decided, after losing that ruling, that maybe that was a bad idea.

But the point is that all of the decisions you're making today—by and large, a whole bunch of them—are related to what the government did that you criticized. So how can you have a committee only look at yesterday and not look at what's going on today? I just think the government is sort of telegraphing what it is that they really want to do with this committee, and I hope that's not the case. I hope this is going to be a process by which we look at what happened in the past, we inform ourselves about what they did and we shed some light on it, because I think that's fair. I hope it's not about going out to punish people and all that kind of thing. I think they lived the punishment; they're down here with seven seats. That's pretty hard to take, Madam Speaker. I've lived that twice, so I understand personally how hard that is to take.

The public is never wrong. As we heard from the interim leader of the Liberal Party, he thinks that it was right for the people to throw them out of office, because they deserved to be thrown out. So says the interim leader of the Liberal Party. I'm sure there are some people in his party who might have had problems with those comments—I thought they were a bit odd—but there's some recognition that they've already paid a price.

I think that it is incumbent on the government to make sure that this committee looks at the entire picture of what's going on with all of these decisions. For example, the government has the fair hydro plan, which they accepted and are now running, that was made by the Liberal Party. It started with the Conservatives, where they started the deregulation and privatization of hydro. Then it ended up with Mr. McGuinty and eventually Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario: They decided that they were going to privatize a whole bunch on the generation side by having private power contracts with private firms buying electricity that we could have produced ourselves in the public utilities, which is far less expensive. It jacked up the price of hydro through the roof. The people got really upset. Then they decided, without a mandate during an election, because they

never ran on it, to privatize half of hydro—well, it was more than half; it was 51% of hydro.

1410

The thing is that the hydro plan that led to all of the high prices that we paid for electricity had to be adjusted, so the previous government developed what they called their "fair hydro plan." Their fair hydro plan was, essentially, to take out the credit card, off-book the cost so that, in the end, we can reduce hydro bills for individuals and businesses in this province. For the average person who is looking at their hydro bill, did their bill go down? Absolutely, there was a reduction in hydro bills. But it was all on the credit card. It wasn't about restructuring the bad decisions they made; it was all about the credit card.

So the Tories in opposition—now in government—said, "We're opposed to what you did at hydro because it drove up the hydro price." But you've adopted their plan. You're using the exact same program that was developed by the Liberals on the hydro side. You didn't change what the government is doing in regard to the fair energy program; you adopted it. You became Liberals in a hurry. We talk about Liberals being Tories in a hurry; you guys are Liberals in a hurry. You adopted the Liberal plan. We're now stuck with—they're saying about \$35 billion, it's expected, will end up on the credit card.

In the end, who are you helping here? At the end of the day, you rail—I listened to the Minister of Finance talk about it: "Oh, we're worried about our grandchildren and their grandchildren having debt thrown on them." I agree. We don't want to have high debt. Trying to balance a budget in a responsible way is the right thing to do. But you don't throw out the baby with the bathwater. Further, by adopting the Liberal hydro plan, you are throwing \$35 billion onto your own grandchildren. That's what you've done.

You stand here and you say you're the responsible government, and this committee is going to look at past decisions by the Liberal administration that you didn't agree with. Listen, we didn't agree either. If you look at the voting record of the House, you voted 49% of the time in favour of the government; we voted 53% of the time in favour of the government. This 97% that you make up is hogwash. If you go look at the numbers in regard to—

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It's Tory math.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It's Tory math, exactly. Tories like to make up numbers. It's like a certain President south of the border that I won't mention. If you don't have the facts, create it and say it.

But my point is, the government decided to keep the fair hydro plan, and now all of us are going to be paying for it. So why shouldn't this select committee take a look at the fair hydro plan? Why don't we look at what we could be doing differently by way of policy that allows us to recoup some of the losses that we got through the fair hydro plan put in place by the previous Liberal administration? Why don't we look at how we can save ratepayers' money and eventually taxpayers' money by doing what's right by way of policy by shining a light on this both for what happened in the past and what's happening today and what's going

to affect us in the future? That's just the responsible thing to do.

I suspect that the government will vote against both of our amendments. I think that's rather sad, because our amendments are not meant to be dilatory; they're not meant to try to embarrass the government. They are to say, "Listen, we agree with you. There's a problem." But it's like saying, "I have a problem, and I will only look at what happened in the past and I'm not going to look at the future." It's like saying, "I'm going to look at the other guy, but I'm not going to look at myself."

Madam Speaker, it's time allocation yet again on yet another bill. The government has decided that it's going to try to rush this select committee thing through by way of time allocation. I would have thought, if the government had been halfway respectful to democracy, they could have come to House leaders' meetings and they could have said, "Listen, we would like to get this motion passed. How can we do it?" Who knows? The opposition might have agreed to have less debate, so that we have more debate on something else that we're more interested in.

For example, I would love to debate at more length their cancellation of the cap-and-trade program. I think that's a mistake. Were there problems in the cap-and-trade program? Absolutely. We both agree on that. But to cancel it outright sets us back. It sets us back a long way. It's the only government in the industrial world that's running backwards when it comes to protecting our environment, rather than doing those things that are positive toward making this environment a better place for humans to live in.

With that, Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for this time to debate and I look forward to other debates that we will have in this House as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 8, relating to the allocation of time on government order number 6.

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

Interjections: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

Motion agreed to.

CANNABIS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE CANNABIS

Ms. Mulroney moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 36, An Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to various other Acts respecting the use and sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario / Projet de loi 36, Loi édictant une nouvelle loi et modifiant diverses autres lois en ce qui concerne l'utilisation et la vente de cannabis et de produits de vapotage en Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): We turn to the Attorney General.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: It is my pleasure to stand today in the House for the second reading of the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018. I will be sharing my time with the Minister of Finance today.

As you know, the federal government's legalization of cannabis is now less than three weeks away, and I want to assure all Ontarians that this government will be ready on October 17. As part of this preparedness, last week, I introduced Bill 36, the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018. Our legislation was designed with key principles in mind:

- to protect youth and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that cannabis remains out of the hands of people under the age of 19;

- to protect our roads and ensure that our police are ready to enforce a strict prohibition against drug-impaired driving; and

- to combat the illegal market through strict enforcement against those operating outside the legal regime, and by providing consumers with a compelling private retail alternative.

This legislation was drafted after much consultation with stakeholders and citizens across Ontario. We wanted to ensure we got this legislation right. I am pleased to share some feedback from stakeholders across the province regarding our proposed legislation.

Ryan Mallough, senior policy analyst of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, stated:

"We applaud the government for clearing the way for independent small business access to Ontario's cannabis retail market. We are also pleased that eliminating the illicit market remains the top priority and that government will not treat legalization as a cash grab. This will better position legitimate retailers to combat the illicit market.

"We look forward to further details around the rules and regulations on the licensing process for retail participation, and continuing to work with Ministers Fedeli and Mulroney as we approach April 1, 2019."

Please be assured that we will continue to work with our mental health and addictions experts to ensure that the public is informed about the very serious health risks of recreational drug use.

Nous poursuivrons notre collaboration avec nos experts en santé mentale et dépendances pour nous assurer que le public est sensibilisé aux graves dangers pour la santé de la consommation de drogues à des fins récréatives.

We will act decisively to undermine organized crime and the illicit cannabis market—concerns shared by Mr. Rocco Rossi, president and CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, who had this to say about our bill:

The "bill is welcome news for businesses of all sizes across the province. We support the government's commitment to a strict licensing regime that will protect young people and combat illicit crime. Safety and social responsibility must be the priority of any distribution system."

He said, "The OCC has advocated for a private sector, licensing-based, and locally oriented approach for the

distribution of recreational cannabis since commitments for legalization were made by the federal government in 2016. We look forward to continuing our work with the government of Ontario during their consultation process.”

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The legalization of cannabis by the federal government is one of the biggest changes since the repeal of the prohibition of alcohol. As such, the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act affects many different ministries, including my ministry, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and the Ministry of Transportation. I am happy to speak about a few aspects of this bill, and I will also call upon my colleague the honourable Minister of Finance to speak.

As you know, in August our government released details of a two-phased regulatory approach that ensures that the principles of the safety of our children and our roads are protected following the federal legalization of cannabis. Starting on October 17, Ontario will move to an online-only retail model run by the OCS. This would be followed by a licensed, private retail system for cannabis that will commence on April 1.

Madam Speaker, we believe that moving to a private recreational cannabis retail model would achieve the following objectives:

- (1) It would foster healthy competition in the legal market, to better combat the illegal market.
- (2) It would ensure a level playing field that is fair for retailers and suppliers, large and small.
- (3) It would support a sustainable market that limits the amount of government intervention.
- (4) It would build a safe, reliable retail system where public safety is paramount.

Madam Speaker, the implementation of this two-phased approach requires new legislation and a series of legislative and regulatory changes to the current cannabis act that was passed by the previous government, along with amendments to other pieces of legislation. If passed, this legislation would provide additional certainty and stability about the specific regulatory framework that will follow the federal government's October 17 legalization date.

It would introduce a robust licensing framework that would be overseen by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, or AGCO. This licensing framework would not be capped, and would be driven by a formal application process administered by the AGCO.

Ce cadre de délivrance de licences ne sera pas plafonné et reposera sur un processus formel de demandes de licence administré par la CAJO.

Si le projet de loi est adopté, les personnes souhaitant exploiter un magasin de vente au détail de cannabis auraient à présenter une demande de licence d'exploitation pour vente au détail et une demande de licence de gérant de magasin de vente au détail pour chaque magasin qu'elles souhaitent exploiter.

Potential cannabis store operators would be required to apply for both a retail operator licence in addition to a retail store authorization for each location they want to operate. The number of licences for cannabis retail stores

would not be capped and would be issued based on market demand. However, the legislation would also include regulation-making authority to set concentration limits for how many retail store licences a single operator can hold.

L'attribution d'autorisations de magasins de vente au détail de cannabis serait établie en fonction de la demande du marché et ne serait pas soumise à un plafond préétabli. Cependant, la loi proposée accorderait le pouvoir de réglementation requis pour limiter le nombre d'autorisations de magasins de vente au détail qu'un exploitant peut détenir.

In particular, the legislation would limit the ability of federally licensed producers to own and operate retail locations. Any licensed producer will be permitted to hold a single retail licence at a single production site located in Ontario.

Des producteurs autorisés titulaires d'une licence fédérale pourraient exploiter un seul magasin dans un seul lieu de production en Ontario.

As stated earlier, Madam Speaker, ensuring the safety of our children is one of the guiding principles of this legislation. This is why the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act would also enable the province to set a distance buffer between cannabis retail store locations and schools.

La loi autorisera aussi la province à prescrire une distance minimale entre le lieu d'un magasin de vente de cannabis et des écoles.

Madam Speaker, we are still consulting on the distance, which will be set in regulation if the legislation is passed.

There has been much speculation over the past months as to how the retail licensing process would be managed, so I would like to walk my colleagues briefly through the proposed process.

First, as we shared last month, municipalities would have a one-time window to opt out of permitting physical cannabis retail within their municipal boundaries. The deadline for such opt-outs would be January 22, which is three months after the municipal elections.

The legislation would also ensure that First Nations communities are provided with a similar opportunity to prohibit cannabis retail within their communities.

La loi proposée assurera que la possibilité soit offerte aux Premières Nations de refuser la délivrance d'autorisations de magasins de vente au détail ou d'interdire l'ouverture de magasins de vente au détail privés.

J'aimerais souligner le fait que grâce à sa riche expérience en tant qu'organe de réglementation du secteur des jeux et des alcools la CAJO est l'organisme parfait pour servir également d'autorité de réglementation du cannabis.

As I stated earlier, the legislation proposes that the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, or AGCO, would be established as the provincial regulator. I want to highlight that the AGCO's 20 years of experience as an alcohol and gaming regulator makes it perfectly suited to be the province's cannabis regulatory authority as well.

AGCO staff possess a deep understanding of compliance enforcement in sectors that share the similar risks as what we expect from the cannabis market.

The AGCO would leverage its existing experience, expertise and infrastructure to regulate cannabis retail stores, building on its mandate to regulate in the public interest.

And, Madam Speaker, municipalities and police stakeholders are familiar with the AGCO and have indicated strong support for them being identified as the provincial regulator for private cannabis retail stores in Ontario.

To become an authorized retailer, first, an individual or company would apply to obtain a retail operator's licence. We anticipate that should Bill 36 pass, the AGCO would begin accepting applications in December of this year.

The AGCO would conduct a comprehensive review of an applicant's background and suitability for operating a cannabis retail store in Ontario, including criminal background checks.

On this point I would like to be clear. While being charged or convicted of prescribed offences under the federal Controlled Drugs and Substances Act prior to October 17, 2018, would not automatically preclude the issuance of a licence, contravening certain provincial or federal laws after that date will bar someone from obtaining a licence. Further, any association with organized crime would also prevent an applicant from receiving a retail operator's licence.

This legislation would require people operating in this industry to behave with integrity, honesty and in the public interest. As I said earlier, to facilitate diversity in the marketplace, each federally licensed producer of cannabis will only be permitted to operate one retail location, and it must be located at its production site. Let me be clear: Under the proposed act, the government would have zero tolerance for anyone who sells retail cannabis outside of the province's licensing framework.

Penalties would include the immediate closure of storefronts that are being used for the illegal sale or distribution of cannabis and a maximum fine of up to \$250,000 and up to two years in prison for individuals, as well as up to \$1 million in fines for corporations that sell or distribute illegal cannabis.

If an applicant is granted a retail operator's licence, they may then be granted a retail store authorization for the operation of a specified retail store after a local public process administered by the AGCO. This process would include a sign placed at the proposed retail location, as well as notification being posted on the AGCO website.

Under the proposed legislation, the AGCO would also be required to issue a public notice upon receipt of any retail authorization application within a 15-day period to receive public and municipal input about a particular store location.

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La CAJO devra donner un avis public de toute demande de licence, prévoyant une période d'au moins 15 jours pour recevoir les commentaires du public sur le lieu pressenti pour l'ouverture d'un magasin donné.

The AGCO would then assess any objection and determine whether or not to grant a retail store authorization. We anticipate that these public notices for retail store authorizations would begin in the month of February 2019.

To ensure we combat the illegal market effectively, the total number of retail store authorizations will be limited only by market demand. We believe this is the right approach. So too does David Clement, North American affairs manager for the Consumer Choice Center, who said, "Not having a cap on cannabis retail outlets will mean that the cannabis market will be able to accurately respond to market pressures and demand for the product... More importantly, it is a huge step in the right direction in terms of combating the black market and ensuring that consumers make the transition from purchasing cannabis illegally to purchasing it legally."

However, each retail operator will be subject to a cap on the total number of stores it can operate. That cap will be established through regulation after further consultation and market analysis, if the legislation is passed. Again, this policy is proposed to ensure fairness and diversity in the marketplace.

Once these retail store authorizations are granted, the AGCO would then be responsible for compliance and audit activities related to the retail operations. These activities would include a store inspection prior to opening; ensuring compliance with rules regarding product display; on-site inspections, including mystery shopping to test age and ID requirements; and audits of cannabis order, inventory and sales records.

The AGCO will also proactively work with authorized cannabis retailers to educate them about their regulatory obligations under the law.

Madam Speaker, we are also proposing to streamline enforcement by bringing the permitted places of use for recreational cannabis in line with the rules for tobacco under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. I've said it before but I cannot say it enough: We and the AGCO will have zero tolerance for anyone who provides recreational cannabis to kids and youth. We are confident that this licensing model overseen by the AGCO will help ensure that our kids and communities are safe, while doing everything we can to eliminate the illegal market.

I will take a brief moment to touch upon the places of use for recreational cannabis that would be permitted under the proposed legislation. If passed, the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act would modify the rules around the public consumption of cannabis to align it with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. This would include amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act to prohibit smoking and vaping of cannabis in areas where the smoking of tobacco is also prohibited, such as playgrounds, child care facilities, schools, hospitals, and other enclosed public places and enclosed workplaces. Further, municipalities have the ability to enact bylaws restricting smoking in other outdoor spaces, including parks.

Si la loi est adoptée, les règles seront harmonisées avec la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée qui interdit de fumer dans plusieurs lieux, y compris les terrains de jeu,

les garderies, les écoles et les hôpitaux. De plus, les municipalités peuvent adopter des règlements limitant le tabagisme dans les espaces extérieurs, y compris les parcs.

Once again, these proposed amendments have been crafted after consultations across the province. Toronto Mayor John Tory said that the previous rules “disproportionately impacted low-income consumers” by barring them from consuming cannabis outdoors and potentially in their home if it was banned by a landlord or condo board.”

He said, “If you prohibit that public consumption, you have this divide between homeowners and renters and we would essentially create a scenario where it would be legalization for middle-class or upper-middle-class consumers and prohibition for low-income consumers.”

Let me be clear, Madam Speaker: The legislation would prohibit the consumption of cannabis in vehicles and boats that are being driven or under a person’s care or control, recognizing that in these circumstances, cannabis poses similar risks to alcohol.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, we are confident that our proposed legislation will help our government to achieve our objectives, which I’ve stated many times today, of protecting our youth and eliminating the illegal cannabis market. We are also confident that the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, an independent provincial regulator with 20 years of experience in a sector very similar to cannabis, will provide the highest level of oversight.

I am now looking forward to hearing from the Minister of Finance on the further benefits of the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Minister Mulroney. You have put together a comprehensive plan that puts our children first, and the safety of our roads and combatting the illegal elements. You have done a wonderful job, and it has been great to get to know you through this process as we have worked together. So I thank you very, very much.

I also want to say thank you to your staff. They have done a remarkable job in consulting with municipalities, First Nations, law enforcement officials, public health officials and all the stakeholders. They have done real, hard, heavy lifting to pull this package together. We know that certainly if the original date of July 1 was to have happened, there truly was nothing ready. You have started from scratch and built a truly excellent program, and I thank your staff for that.

I also want to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and his staff as well for their tremendous efforts in putting together such a comprehensive package that relies so heavily on our municipal and First Nations partners. Thank you very much, Minister Clark, for your work and for the work of your staff as well.

And I want to say thank you to our team at finance for getting us up to speed so very quickly and being able to assist in putting together such a detailed plan to bring

cannabis to market in the most respectable and professional way. I want to say thank you before I start.

I want to add a few fine points to what Minister Mulroney has said. Certainly, Ontarians can expect a retail cannabis system that will be second to none throughout our country. As part of the new AGCO regulatory framework shared by the Attorney General, contravening the province’s cannabis licensing or control regimes will bar an applicant from ever receiving a licence in the future. We’ve said this together many, many times, that zero tolerance means just that: zero tolerance. Any engagement with organized crime, any record of providing cannabis to our youth—any of that—would bar you from ever participating in the private cannabis market. To be clear, if you are still operating an illegal retail operation after October 17, you would not be eligible to get a licence in the province of Ontario.

If passed, our legislation would also change the governance of the Ontario Cannabis Store to reflect its new role as an online retailer and exclusive wholesaler to the private retail marketplace. The OCS, as we will call the Ontario Cannabis Store, would operate with a completely separate board and senior management structure that will report directly to the Minister of Finance.

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We also see two important functions as part of the expansion of private retailing on October 1: (1) the OCS would remain the exclusive online retailer for recreational cannabis; and (2) the OCS would serve as the exclusive wholesaler for private cannabis retailers. If passed, the legislation would clarify the governance structure of the OCS.

Back in August, both the Attorney General and I confirmed that we would provide \$40 million in funding over two years to all municipalities to help with the cost of legalization, with each municipality receiving at least \$10,000 in total. I’ll be talking a little bit more about that breakdown later on this afternoon.

The rules and processes around licensing and regulation of private cannabis retail and the regulations around how we protect public health as it relates to the public consumption of cannabis will provide certainty to the marketplace. As a lifelong entrepreneur and business person, I can tell you that the one thing our business community will want is certainty.

Let’s talk a little bit about cannabis and how all this will roll out and what this means to you at home.

With the federal government’s decision to legalize recreational cannabis, we are entering uncharted waters. We’ve had so many media scrums, both the Attorney General and I, and they ask a lot of really good and important questions. The real issue is, the only data that we have today on cannabis all comes from an illegal market, so those data are in question. They are reported to us—or turned over to us or discovered by us—but they’re all from illegal sources and illegal resources. So there are many, many, many unanswered questions and plenty of concerns that we have. The Attorney General and I are always here

to alleviate the concerns that we have and answer the questions in the best way that we can—again, basing everything on illegal data.

We're asked constantly: "How much money are you going to make off this? How much money is the province going to make?" Both our answers have always been the same: It's not about the money. The prime motivation in all of this is the protection of our youth. The second is the protection of our roads—our road safety. And the third is to combat the illegal market.

Unlike tobacco or alcohol, where, come budget time, these things are taxed and more tax and we tax them higher—this isn't going to be the same with cannabis. It isn't about a revenue stream for the people of Ontario. It's about protection, our safety—our safety from the criminal element as well as the safety of our kids. So we really, truly are entering uncharted waters.

The legislation we have introduced, if passed, would place a plan which has at its foundation a non-negotiable commitment to social responsibility. You will hear that from us over and over and over. It's not a money thing. This is about social responsibility, making sure our kids are safe, making sure our roads are safe and fighting the criminal element to the fullest possible extent.

Through our consultations with municipalities, First Nations, police services, businesses, public health officials, all of this, every single discussion from every group has always been about protecting our youth and combating the illegal market. That's at the core of every single discussion we have and every decision that we make.

The legislation—again, if passed—will create a framework, and in this framework we've got private retailers who will be licensed by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. I will refer to them as the AGCO from this point on.

The Ontario Cannabis Retail Corp., the Ontario Cannabis Store, would be the exclusive wholesaler and online retailer of cannabis in the province. On October 17, when the federal government legislates that cannabis is legal across our country, the only legal way you can purchase cannabis will be online, and that will remain until April 1, when we will see the opening of private retail stores throughout the province.

Municipalities would be able to pass a council resolution by January 22, 2019, to opt out of retail stores. So each municipality has a choice to make three months after the election: "Do you want to opt out? Do you want your municipality not to participate?" That's a decision they have to make.

First Nations communities would be able to opt out of cannabis deliveries and retail stores as well. Their elections are on a bit of a different timetable, so that is a more flexible opportunity for First Nations communities. Again, they can also opt out of not only the option of having a bricks-and-mortar facility; they can also opt out of having cannabis delivered onto their reserves or territories.

We have also, as part of the act, if passed, decided to align the opportunity of smoking cannabis everywhere that lines up with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. That's what we

have decided as the place of use. Again, the federal government has made the decision to legalize cannabis in Canada. As a government, we have made the decision to introduce legislation that, if passed, would align the rules on cannabis usage with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. You heard quite succinctly from the Attorney General as to why, but I'm going to talk a little bit more in detail about the where.

There is an outright ban on smoking in playgrounds, child care facilities, schools and hospitals, but I'm going to get into the detailed list.

I know in my hometown, as part of Ontario's Smoke-Free Ontario Act, our public health officials have banned smoking in many of our places. Certainly Steve Omischl field, one of the large recreational facilities—the signage about no smoking on that property is larger at least by three times than the signage that announces you're on Omischl field. It's very clear where you can and cannot smoke.

There are many parks and recreational areas in our community where the municipality decided, in conjunction with the health unit, that you cannot smoke there as well. So, to answer the question we have been asked, municipalities do indeed have the ability to enact bylaws restricting smoking in outdoor spaces, including parks.

The list of banned areas under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act: You heard a few of them—child care facilities, hospitals, playgrounds, those types. Let me get into specifically what we mean and specifically where it's illegal to smoke.

In addition to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, you cannot smoke in a vehicle and you cannot smoke in a boat. Those are additions to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. You cannot smoke in an outdoor patio. That means that bar and restaurant outdoor patios, whether covered or uncovered, must be smoke-free. There are the bars and restaurants that have to meet the rules, and after Smoke-Free Ontario has been an act for a significant amount of time, the bars and restaurants know those rules.

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You cannot smoke in child care facilities. A lot of this is going to sound like common sense. At the end, I'll probably use my lines that talk about human decency kicking in. I hope that it's not necessary, but I may have to do that. You cannot smoke in a child care facility, and what that means is any child care centre that is licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. You cannot smoke there.

Motor vehicles with children inside: That is in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act of today. Motor vehicles, period, will be where you cannot consume cannabis.

You can't smoke in an enclosed workplace. The law protects employees from exposure to second-hand smoke in an enclosed workplace. The ban on smoking in these places applies at all times, even when the facility is not open for business. An enclosed workplace means the inside of a building, a structure or a vehicle that an employee "works in or frequents during the course of their employment whether or not they are acting in the course

of their employment at the time.” This includes the inside of a trailer office on a construction site, the inside of a loading dock or the inside of a delivery truck. Common areas such as washrooms, lobbies and parking garages are also included. You can’t smoke there today; you can’t consume cannabis there either. An employer may not dismiss, threaten to dismiss, discipline, suspend, penalize, intimidate or coerce an employee who follows the act or seeks compliance with it.

Smoking shelters: You cannot smoke in an outdoor smoking shelter that has more than two walls and a roof. Again, most smokers are well familiar with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, and that is one of the reasons why we have looked at mirroring the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. It is something that most people in our society today are familiar with and understand. It was bumpy at the beginning. I know that as the mayor of the city of North Bay we put in a smoking ban years before the province put in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Our municipality was smoke-free in 2003, quite some time ago, and we understood the bumps that went along the way. But society has understood where you can and where you can’t smoke, and common decency has taken over most of these places. Every once in a while, people need to be reminded about where you can and can’t smoke.

You cannot smoke in areas where home health care workers work. A home health care worker is a person who provides health care or support services in private homes, provided or arranged by either the local health integration network, your local LHIN, or an entity that is funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care or—now it’s the LHIN; it was formerly the CCAC. These workers have the right to ask clients not to smoke in their presence. If the person refuses to comply, the worker can leave and they do not have to provide the services. That is the current Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Hospitals, including public, private and psychiatric facilities: You must not smoke or hold lighted tobacco on the outdoor grounds of a hospital, except where a designated smoking area is available. You must also not smoke within a nine-metre radius of any entrance or exit of a hospital.

These are all the areas that I’m going to continue talking about here.

The common areas of hotels, motels and inns: Again, the Attorney General talked about how you’re creating two different structures. If you have smoking only within your home and you’ve got renters who cannot smoke in a rented facility, you’ve created two distinct groups, one that can and one that can’t. By following the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, this gives everybody an equal opportunity, because you cannot smoke in common areas of hotels, motels and inns, so tourists coming here would not have a place to smoke. The only place you may smoke in hotels, motels and inns are guestrooms designated as smoking rooms. I don’t know the last time anybody has been in a hotel that has found a smoking room in a hotel, but I’m sure they still exist. Designated smoking rooms must be fully enclosed. Only registered guests and their invited

guests can smoke in designated guestrooms. I suppose that, again, for the few that are left, once the alignment of cannabis and the Smoke-Free Ontario Act meet, that too may change within motels.

Multi-unit residences: You must not smoke in any common areas of condos, apartment buildings, and college and university residences. Examples of common areas include elevators, stairwells, laundry facilities, lobbies, exercise rooms, and party or entertainment rooms.

You can’t smoke in residential care facilities. They’re considered both an enclosed public space and an enclosed workplace.

Schools: Quite simply put, schools and private school property are off-limits for smoking cigarettes and smoking cannabis.

Children’s playgrounds and publicly owned sports fields: It’s illegal to smoke on and within 20 metres of children’s playgrounds and publicly owned sports fields.

Again, Speaker, it’s a little bit detailed, but these are the kinds of questions that we’ve been asked by people—very specific questions: “Can I smoke in X?” I hope that this gives some clarity and some guidelines to all of us here in the Legislature and those of us who are at home to have a bit of an understanding of where you can and cannot consume cannabis and some of the reasons why. Again, I think the Attorney General nailed it when she said that you develop two different groups: those who can and those who can’t. The middle- and upper-income have more of an opportunity, then. Those who are in an apartment where the apartment is deemed non-smoking don’t have that opportunity. They won’t have any opportunity, shy of visiting a friend, perhaps.

Mirroring the Smoke-Free Ontario Act is the result of much, much detailed consultation. The rest of the consultations that we’ve had and the rest of the details surrounding the roll-out of cannabis also come as a result of extensive conversations and extensive consultations with municipalities, First Nations, police services and public health officials.

I can tell you, in the round table that I held in my own hometown of North Bay, we invited—now, I have 11 mayors and councils in my riding. Many ridings have one mayor; in fact, one mayor has 20, 30, 40, 50 MPPs. In my riding, I have 11 mayors and 11 individual councils. I invited every mayor and every sitting councillor, as well as every person who was a registered candidate to run in all of those 11 areas of my riding, to come. We invited public health officials; First Nations chiefs and their CAOs; police; emergency—all groups. We had a massive, massive turnout. We went through the questions and answers one by one by one. It was a very deep consultation. I know that my parliamentary assistant from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte travelled Ontario and held these types of very similar consultations, and I know many MPPs had very similar consultations all across Ontario. And that was able to inform us on making the rules for the federally legalized cannabis on October 17.

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As a result of our last bill—I think the Attorney General touched on this as well—on September 26, just a few days ago, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business issued a statement. They applauded our government “for clearing the way for independent small business access to Ontario’s cannabis retail market.” They went on to say they “are also pleased that eliminating the illicit market remains the top priority and that government will not treat legalization as a cash grab. This will better position legitimate retailers to combat the illicit market.”

We know that. This is not about the money; this is all about providing safety for our kids, safety on our roads and combatting the illegal market. It will not be about raising the price and raising revenue. It’s about putting the criminals out of business.

On September 27, a day later, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce issued a statement, saying they “support the government’s commitment to a strict licensing regime that will protect young people and combat illicit crime.”

Speaker, it’s very, very clear that our consultations have indeed yielded positive results.

Let me chat for a moment about municipalities. Our legislation, if passed, will provide municipalities with the ability to opt out of allowing private recreational cannabis stores in their communities. This is a bit tricky and a bit complicated. They can opt out. If they opt out, if they want to take a wait-and-see approach, they will be allowed to opt in in the future. They may want to wait and see.

Other jurisdictions around the country will have retail cannabis available on October 17. We don’t. We’re going online only on October 17. April 1 is when our retail bricks-and-mortar stores will open. So other municipalities may want to look across the country and just learn from the experience. They’ve got three months to do this. The election is October 22. By January 22, 2019, they need to make their decision. So they’ve got three months to think about, “Do we want to opt out?” If they opt out, they can always come back in later. However, if the decision is not to opt out, they’re in. They cannot opt out later. We will not let them do that because millions will have been spent by private businesses in creating their bricks-and-mortar opportunity. So they can’t opt out after the deadline of January 22.

The province has agreed to provide \$40 million over two years to help municipalities with the cost of recreational cannabis legalization, including for law enforcement. Again, a little tricky: Every municipality is going to get \$10,000. That’s no matter how large or how small. Everybody gets \$10,000. The rest of the money is divided based on households. There’s a bit of a formula. Municipalities will receive money now, and municipalities will receive a second and last tranche after January 22, when they’ve made their decision to opt in or not. There’s a bit of a formula whether they opt in or not. There’s a bit of a formula based on how much money they get based on per household. But everybody receives \$10,000—every community, all 444 communities.

We’re keeping a small amount of the \$40 million in reserve for lessons we’re going to learn along the way. We’re going to see, again, from other provinces that are going to go right to retail immediately, and we may learn a thing or two that will help change our opinion.

The beauty of the legislation written by the Attorney General and their team and by municipal affairs and housing and by the Ministry of Finance is the flexibility that has been built into this. The legislation itself will be firm but have flexible areas where the actual numbers can be decided in regulation in plenty of time: in time for October 17, in time for April 1, as these numbers are needed. So that’s the beauty of the flexibility of the legislation. If we learn a few things along the way from other municipalities in other jurisdictions, we have that flexibility, a little bit of money built into the reserve.

I want to talk again about these existing dispensaries, because this ties into what else the municipalities are going to have. First of all, we’ve also agreed to a share of the federal excise tax if and when it achieves a certain threshold. Once a certain threshold is reached, if we reach the threshold, we will then share more money with the municipalities on a 50-50 basis, so we’ll be looking at that.

But the real opportunity here, the real opportunity for municipalities to clean up their municipality and make some money along the way, is the existing dispensaries. Look, it is illegal today to dispense cannabis in a retail facility or on a street anywhere. It’s illegal. It is illegal today to do this. On October 17, the law will change. It gives municipalities and the police forces, our law enforcement officers, huge clout over shutting down the illegal dispensaries. Today it’s like whack-a-mole: You shut one down and two open; you shut two down and four open. It is a little bit like that. But the teeth come on October 17, and it’s under the Provincial Offences Act, so this means the money goes to the municipality. Again, this is not about the province looking for money. The municipality, after October 17, will have the opportunity now to go into an existing illegal dispensary and shut them down immediately with a fine of up to \$250,000 that the municipality keeps.

Now, sometimes you can’t get blood from a stone. I know when I was mayor of the city of North Bay, when I left the city, we had \$11 million in outstanding POA, Provincial Offences Act; \$8 million of it was from one lawsuit that the province won. We’re never going to see the money. It was from a rather large motorcycle gang. We’re never going to see the \$8-million fine. But the second part of this is that the municipality may also fine the landlord who knowingly has a cannabis retail facility in their building up to \$250,000 for the first offence, and has the power to seize the building. If the building is owned by a corporation, the fine is up to \$1 million. So now there are some teeth for the law enforcement officials and financial incentive for the municipality. I know, if I were mayor of a municipality that had illegal dispensaries, I’d be looking at 12:01 on October 17, and I would tell you, I would make it rain that night; the hammer would come down, because you can. You can immediately shut

these down. You can fine the landowner. You can fine the corporation.

The second offences are unbelievably horrendous. We're talking about \$100,000 a day in fines. And all of this money is backed up by the asset, the building. So I'm saying to you landlords, get out of this business; get out of this today. And to the illegal dispensaries, you heard me in my opening comments—it was so important it was in the opening comments—if you are in this business on October 17, you can never be in the legal retail business in Ontario and we're coming after you. So if you're in this business, get out today. Get out today. We are not going to be doing business with anybody selling illegal products, and if they continue to sell illegal products after October 17, they will never be in this business. They will not get a licence.

1510

I've talked a little bit about some of the structure, but let me just talk about it in a bit looser terms. So October 17 comes—online only. The government has a role in this as well. The federal government licenses the producers, the LPs, the people who grow the legal cannabis. There's only one place in Ontario they can sell that and that's to us, the Ontario Cannabis Store. We are their sole customer.

We are also the sole wholesaler, so we have a wholesale facility where we accept cannabis from—I think it's 24—around two dozen or more LPs, licensed producers, that we announced a few weeks ago; we announced the list. I know that we announced it publicly because some stocks went up and some stocks went down and we heard from both loudly and clearly. We're the only place that they can sell in Ontario the cannabis that is grown legally. We are the wholesaler; we take it in. We are also the sole distributor. You cannot buy cannabis retail from anybody else other than the Ontario Cannabis Store. So licensed producers: We wholesale it; we distribute it.

The group right now—it's online on October 17. April 1, a hopefully large and vast group of businesses will open up. We are not going to put a cap on that number today. We want to encourage small business to make a go of this. We will look for, hopefully, stores right across Ontario in municipalities that have not opted out. We will have a group of retailers, private retailers. We, the government of Ontario, the province of Ontario, will not be in the retail business. We will be in the online business. We will continue to run online, wholesale and distribution.

Just in the closing minutes, a little bit about the stores: These are stand-alone stores. These are not going to be able to sell anything other than cannabis and cannabis-related items. Every licensed retailer selling recreational cannabis must clearly display the Ontario Cannabis Store seal. So these buildings—you won't be able to see inside them. Nobody under the age of 19 can enter the building. You need security at them. These are going to be regulated facilities that retail cannabis, only with the seal. That seal provides a guarantee. People will come to know what that seal means. It provides a guarantee that the illegal market will never be able to match.

Each retail store will have to follow a strict set of regulations set out by Health Canada as well as a very strict set of guidelines in order to get a licence from the AGCO, as I said earlier. It will be a lot like selling tobacco in a store today. You won't see the product. You won't be able to see the product through the window. You won't be able to enter a store if you're under the age of 19.

In a nutshell—you know, it took me almost 40 minutes to run through this. I repeated myself a couple of times on the points that I thought really needed to sink in.

I hope that between our announcement last August, the announcement of the Attorney General and I last week, between the Attorney General's comments today and the time that I have taken to describe to you some very detailed particulars about where we see this going and how we see us getting there—I hope that helps. I hope that helps everybody in this Legislature have a better understanding of how we want to do this and why.

I hope that people who are watching, or are reading the Hansard record, will have a much better idea of why we're doing the things that we're doing, proposing to do the things we're doing; that, if passed, this legislation will be enacted that will, again, let the federal government—because it is their law. They also take care of the licensed producers. We will be the wholesaler. We will be the distributor. We will be the online retailer. Many, many, many, many stores will open right across Ontario in communities that have not opted out, and this is how we intend to proceed.

We look forward to a healthy debate on this issue. It's a very important issue and it's coming at us very, very soon.

Speaker, I thank you very much for the opportunity to have shared this information with our Legislature today.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am pleased to be able to have a few moments hopefully to give some thoughtful questions and comments to the hour speech that we have just heard from the government.

We live in interesting times, Madam Speaker, certainly. It has been very interesting in the last week or so, since the government has made announcements on this file about this piece of legislation, which is An Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to various other Acts respecting the use and sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario. I'm sure that the members opposite would say the same thing: Our inboxes are being flooded with questions and concerns because this is an entirely new framework. We are in uncharted territory here.

I appreciate what I'm hearing from the government in terms of some of the goals: the protection of our youth, the protection of our streets—and waterways, frankly—and protection against organized crime. It's going to come down to how we ensure that those goals can be achieved.

I'll read just a piece of a letter that came in from an older gentleman in my community, who said: "I am a concerned taxpayer and long-time resident of Ontario.... You can't walk down the street with open ... alcohol but people will be able to do this with pot. Also the coming of

thousands of pot stores in April 2019. Is there going to be any regulations regarding pot smoking?"

As we've heard, there are regulations, but our folks want to know what that will look like.

Here is another question from the same gentleman: "What is to stop children from picking up unsmoked remains of pot like butts of tobacco if it is smoked everywhere?"

That is a fair question. We don't have that answer right now.

We want to talk about what the safety and precautions will look like. What are the tools that our police will have to ensure that it's not just their discretion they use but an actual tool? Lots to discuss.

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

Mr. Doug Downey: I just want to start by commending the Attorney General and the Minister of Finance for coordinating such a large task in such a short period of time. It involved some 14 ministries trying to pull information from different areas. As the Minister of Finance indicated, the data that was coming forward is coming from the illegal market, so it's very difficult to know whether you can rely on some of that information until we actually get out there and have some experience with it. That's part of the reason for the transition of October 17 and then into April 1.

I just want to touch on one thing that the Minister of Finance indicated about the fines and the seriousness of dealing with the illegal trade. Some people say, "In my community we have health dispensaries. We have cannabis-for-medical-use dispensaries." Well, I can tell you that if you're looking at a storefront, if there's a door and you go in that door and you buy cannabis, it is a fiction. That is not a retail location that has been authorized by this government, and it will be illegal and will be subject to those same penalties that the Minister of Finance indicated.

1520

I think we're in for a very structured and a very cogent way forward, a measured way forward that has come on the heels of tons of consultation. I just want to commend again the Ministry of Finance for all the work they've done reaching out to different groups, whether it be health units, police, community groups, universities and colleges—all of these things that came together to make such a wonderful plan. I have great confidence in it, and I have great confidence in the leadership of the Attorney General in bringing this forward.

I look forward to potentially having more to say on this in a little bit. Thank you, Madam Speaker, and congratulations to the two ministers for such a fantastic job.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'm pleased to jump into this very, very serious matter. I think it deserves close scrutiny. I'm a little bit light-headed after hearing the minister so far today. I think we need a little bit of humour as we approach this because I believe it's high time we get down into the

weeds on this bill. It's an issue that has been budding for quite a while. I mean, I've been rolling it over in my mind ever since the Premier turned over a new leaf and chose not to sell cannabis products in stores modelled on the LCBO model. That took my breath away; it really did. I had to inhale deeply to get back on track after that one.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Don't inhale; that's the key.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Well, yes.

Allow me to be blunt, Speaker. I was speaking to a constituent outside a five-and-dime store the other day. I think her name was Mary Jane, if I recall. She told me that she was worried that the private sale model will turn into a real bong show.

I think we have to weigh the pros and cons of this cannabis legislation, line by line, ounce by ounce. I accept the government's token approach until April Fool's Day next year to have the green, green grass of home delivery until we go head to head into the private sale model.

Speaker, before I make a hash of this debate, in the little time I have left, and we all get the munchies—because I know the munchies will happen—just let me say that it's very, very serious legislation, and I hope we all can enjoy it as we go forward together on this great journey.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Madam Speaker, it's impossible to follow that. But I'd like to thank the Attorney General, the Minister of Finance and the members for Oshawa, Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte and Windsor–Tecumseh for their comments, although I will not achieve that.

A few of the things I've been reading over the last week, Madam Speaker, apply to this, with Chris Selley in the National Post saying that this legislation is entirely sensible. Today, in the Star editorial, I read—and this is paraphrasing to not be unparliamentary for the names—that the Attorney General and the Minister of Finance got it right last week when they introduced the Premier's framework for cannabis retailing.

I think that speaks to what we're trying to do here, the two key things in this legislation being (1) that we focus on the safety of our communities and our children; and (2) that we have a stated goal of trying to undermine the illegal and underground market in cannabis. And then just the fact that, through this legislative process, we are actively listening to these things, because that's an excellent point that was made: What do we do about this? We're going into a great uncharted unknown.

I'd really like to thank the members for all the points on this also, because this is something that's been placed on us by the federal government and we're entering this grand experiment. Mistakes will be made. I'm so pleased to hear that all members' minds and ears are open as we work through this so that we can make reasoned judgments on what's the best way forward.

Finally, just that the municipalities still have the option to opt out or to opt in later: to be given that choice is very important.

Thank you, everyone, and thank you, Madam Speaker, for your attention.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I want to thank the members from Oshawa, Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, Windsor–Tecumseh and Brantford–Brant.

With the federal government's legalization of cannabis now less than three weeks away, it was important to provide everyone here with an update on the legislative and regulatory framework our government introduced to ensure that Ontario is ready for legal cannabis following October 17.

The plan has as its foundation a non-negotiable commitment to social responsibility. I cannot stress this enough: It's not about the money, if any. We will protect youth and take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that cannabis remains out of the hands of people under the age of 19. We will protect our roads and ensure that our police are ready to enforce a strict prohibition against drug-impaired driving. We will continue to work with our mental health and addictions experts to ensure the public are informed of the serious health risks of recreational drug use. And we will act decisively to undermine organized crime and the illicit cannabis market.

We released details of the two-phase regulatory approach that ensures these public trusts are protected following the legalization of cannabis. Starting October 17, online cannabis will be available, run by the Ontario Cannabis Store, followed by April 1 bricks-and-mortar retail licences.

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

Ms. Sara Singh: I'm going to ask for some indulgence from the House today, as I'm going to be starting us off with my inaugural speech, and then I will be speaking to this wonderful bill that we have in front of us.

It is an honour to rise here today as a member of the 42nd Parliament of Ontario. I would like to thank the community of Brampton Centre for the opportunity to represent my hometown here in our Legislature. Inspired by a vision of hope, unity and action, we knocked on doors in the Knightsbridge community, where my parents rented their first apartment together, and then on Drake Boulevard, the same street where they bought their first home 35 years ago. I would like to thank the countless volunteers, campaign team members and random strangers who put their faith in me and believed that we could create change in Brampton and across this province. I would also like to give a very special thank you to my family. To my grandparents, my siblings and my parents: Thank you.

Mom and Dad, thank you for the sacrifices you made to ensure that all six of us could have the best of everything. There is nothing I can do that will ever repay you for your hard work, your love and your constant encouragement. As parents you always taught us to fight for what was right, no matter what obstacle we faced. You inspired us to overcome and lift others up along the way.

To my grandparents: Thank you for teaching us the importance of our history and our culture, and for helping us understand the nuances of an identity that was built here in the north but stems from all corners of our world. One

set of you is from the Caribbean seas, the West Indies, calling the shores of Guyana home, and the other from the subcontinent of India, the land of five rivers and some of the most fertile land in this world, in Punjab, India.

1530

To my grandmother specifically: I want to thank you for being the first feminist I've ever known and for helping to cultivate new sunflowers on foreign land.

To my siblings, some of the best friends I have ever known: Thank you for putting up with me; I know it's not always easy. But thank you for supporting this dream all along.

To my brother Mark: Thank you for shining your light on us. I know you're here with us in your own special way. But that doesn't change the fact that we still miss you every single day. Thank you for working your magic up in the heavens to make sure that we got here no matter what, and I know that you had something to do with those 89 votes.

Applause.

Ms. Sara Singh: Thank you.

Prior to June 7, I spent my time working in the not-for-profit sector, developing grassroots community initiatives with young people and creating platforms for artists in Brampton. I co-founded Broadening Horizons, a not-for-profit organization to engage young people in social justice through the arts. One of my greatest passions was volunteering as a board director at Community Living Ontario and serving as vice-president at Brampton Caledon Community Living. My desire to create inclusive communities and spaces where everyone has access to the same opportunities drives the work that I do every single day.

I had the pleasure of being a teaching assistant at Ryerson University and working with some of the greatest academic minds in the field of public policy. I still hope to complete that PhD at Ryerson, and perhaps one day in the future to return to teaching there, as well, but for now I'll enjoy every moment of this journey.

Through my work in Brampton and in my community, I've heard from countless young people their frustration with inaction in government and concerns about the lack of representation and the lack of transparency. Many felt disenfranchised by our institutions, and they explained their lack of interest and apathy wasn't because they didn't care; it's just they felt no one was listening. But now, many of them are finding new ways to make sure that their voices are heard, using social media and art as a way to define their message and to encourage their peers and our communities to exercise their civic duties. I look to those young leaders of our day, and I know that truly hope is on the way.

Growing up in Brampton, we've transformed from a town of about 2,000 people when I was born in 1985 to a booming city, with well over 650,000 and counting now calling Canada's ninth-largest city home. The city that was once known as the Flower Town of Canada was home to the largest greenhouse industries, once filled with sprawling farms, apple orchards and horse stables, and the parks, which I was once a camp counsellor in, are now filled with

million-dollar homes that many in my millennial generation are aspiring to own. Flower Town, Flower City, B-town or Brampton: Today, we've transformed into a major economic hub in this province, with booming advanced manufacturing, retail, administration, logistics, information and communication technologies, food and beverage, life sciences and business services sectors all operating in our great city.

But despite our impressive growth, our city needs more, and frankly, we deserve better. For example, it's no surprise to many of us here in the House that health care across this province is in crisis. With the city of Brampton in dire need of additional health care services, I take great responsibility in ensuring that we continue to advocate for improvements to our health care sector.

As an example, I was born, as I said earlier, in 1985 at the one and only hospital in Brampton, Peel Memorial Hospital. Thirty-three years ago, that was the one hospital that we had. Fast forward 33 years later, Brampton still has only one hospital and an urgent care centre that closes at 10 p.m. Our city deserves better.

A few weeks ago, unfortunately, my dad had a heart attack. As I left the house and went over to Brampton Civic Hospital, I met my dad in the hallway, on a stretcher, along with other patients at Brampton Civic Hospital. Hallway medicine is a reality that people in Brampton face every single day.

Unfortunately, my dad, in addition to having his heart attack, required quadruple bypass surgery. He needed to receive care here at Toronto General Hospital because, unfortunately, we do not have the services available for him to be treated in Brampton. This is a concern for many of our citizens who are leaving the town that we call home to access health care services, driving 45-plus minutes to neighbouring towns or cities in order to access life-saving services. This is not okay, and we need to do better for cities like Brampton.

As I shared earlier in the House, my brother passed away, and we, as well, faced significant challenges in accessing health services in our own community. We needed to sit idly on the highway for two hours a day in order for him to receive life-saving palliative care treatment—transfusions, chemotherapy. We needed to leave our city to access those services. Those are real concerns that the people in Brampton, my family and myself personally are very worried about. We'll continue to press this government and find ways that we can work together to ensure that we can have appropriate access to health care services across the province.

Another major issue in the community of Brampton is affordability. As our hydro rates increase, insurance rates skyrocket and the costs of living mount, people in my riding are finding it harder and harder to get by. I meet with families on a regular basis who struggle to pay the bills because the costs keep increasing. They struggle and have to choose between paying a hydro bill or putting food on their table. This is not okay in 2018.

I met with business owners who were deciding between paying their hydro bills or hiring additional employees. I

understand what that feels like. My parents are actually small business owners. I get what it feels like to be a part of a working-class family and pay some of the highest insurance rates in this province and across North America, all because we live in a city called Brampton. People in our community are being discriminated against based on their postal code.

I understand what it feels like to be a young, single, new graduate who is saddled with student debt and struggling to pay it off, and looking at whether or not I'm going to be able to afford to purchase a new home or put a down payment on a car. This is the reality for many new graduates. Many in our community are facing these battles every single day, and I know that, collectively, we can do better.

As an advocate for persons with disabilities, as a sister and an ally, diversity and inclusion in all its forms are guiding principles that inform the work that I do. I know I will continue to advocate for changes to our institutions that will make them more accessible for all members of our society. In fact, this is what my PhD research seeks to understand: how we can create more opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities to live their best life and pursue their own hopes and dreams. This is work that I hope to continue within this Legislature to ensure that all Ontarians are given equal access and opportunity to making sure that they can have their hopes and dreams realized in our province.

As a result of my work, I know first-hand what those wait-lists for Passport funding through the Ministry of Community and Social Services look like and feel like for individuals with a disability. I know first-hand the horrifying situation that many of those individuals face when their services stop. Frankly, for them, there is no pause button on life. I hope to work with this government to ensure that all Ontarians can live their best life with dignity and filled with opportunity.

1540

As members, we all have different life experiences that will inform how we understand the world around us and, ultimately, how we inform our public policy perspectives. Despite those different experiences, we are all here collectively to learn from each other and to work together. There is value in the differences that we bring to the conversation. We are here to work together and in the best interests of all Ontarians, and to do that in a constructive manner. To do that, it is essential that we respect each other and find ways to collaborate.

The role of the official opposition: As a member so proud to be a part of the official opposition, I know that my job is to be a critical voice in this Legislature and to hold this government to account. I am proud to be a part of the largest official opposition, and I will continue to work to ensure that the voices of my community and others are heard loud and clear. Economic and social justice should be the guiding principle that informs the work of all members here.

I do believe that we can work together and create a more vibrant and prosperous province, but working together is going to require us to listen, to understand each other and

to value the experiences and the perspectives that are being shared. We will need to work across the aisle and build bridges to ensure that we have effective communication. We are here to raise critical concerns and create a dialogue with our government to ensure that the interests of all Ontarians are being taken into consideration. Our intention is not to prevent the work of this government, but to ensure that all voices are represented and that the perspectives of all Ontarians are considered.

I would encourage members of our government to listen, and to listen actively, to the thoughts that we share and the perspectives that members of the official opposition bring. Again, we are here to work together for all of Ontario.

With that, I am very proud today to stand here and speak as we usher in this new legislation, Bill 36. I think this is an opportunity for us to work across the aisle and usher in some historic changes to the province of Ontario and, frankly, our country. I would like to thank the Attorney General, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, as well as our Minister of Finance and their teams for their hard work in putting together Bill 36.

I think that there are some very hopeful aspects of this bill. However, as many have alluded to, there are some concerns as we move through this process of legalization here in our province. There are some serious concerns we need to consider in looking at Bill 36. I can appreciate that the October 17 deadline is just around the corner. Therefore, we need to act swiftly in order to move this legislation forward, but I don't think that that should prevent us from engaging in effective dialogue and giving real critical analysis to a bill that is going to change the landscape of how cannabis is consumed in our province.

At first read, the bill does appear to be a bit rushed. I can understand that time is of the essence, but we do need to ensure that all aspects are considered; for example, impacts to municipalities, aspects of public education, as well as criminality and impacts for young people who may be criminalized as a result of accessing cannabis. While this bill presents some really positive aspects in terms of the process, creating opportunities for retailers to enter the market, again, I feel as though there are more questions than answers at this point. But I understand this is why we are having a debate today on the matter. I'll offer some suggestions, as this was just unveiled to us last week and we may need some more time. As all the ministers and staff have also indicated, there are still a few unknowns. The Premier himself is also still kind of working through some of the ins and outs of this legislation, as we have seen in the media, so we'd just ask for some indulgence as the opposition and members of the public also try to digest aspects of this bill.

By choosing to treat cannabis like tobacco and not like alcohol, it's really opening up a lot of questions for the public. I note that the Minister of Finance helped to clarify some of those concerns that are coming from his own constituents, as well as members of the community, around where cannabis could be consumed. At this point there are a lot of grey areas for folks in terms of how and

where appropriate use can take place. I know there were a lot of questions around consuming within your private residence, consuming on a public walkway. Could you consume within your apartment building, for example, and how would other tenants deal with this? There are a lot of concerns around (1) protecting a person consuming cannabis, but (2) protecting the general population who may not want to engage in that consumption but as a by-product may be inhaling some of that second-hand smoke just walking down the street. Those are real concerns.

I think the government's intention with aligning this to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act is to try to deal with some of those concerns. To say that cannabis should be consumed in the same sorts of spaces and within the same parameters as tobacco, I think, places a lot of concern in the community around safety and consumption in public spaces, particularly for families, for example. I understand we cannot consume cannabis within a park; however, that does not limit somebody from walking down the sidewalk, as we've seen with cigarettes, and consuming just outside of that barrier that has been created. Whether that's nine metres or 25 metres, they can still consume cannabis just outside that perimeter, and people would still be exposed to cannabis smoke. That is a real concern.

How big would that buffer zone be around those public spaces? And how would this be enforced to ensure that a user of recreational cannabis could safely consume without being stigmatized and facing criminal repercussions for their consumption, while also protecting, let's say, someone attending a sports game at the soccer field? There are some real concerns about how this will actually play out in reality.

Then there's this concern around social responsibility. For example, with alcohol we have the Smart Serve program in place that allows servers to identify if someone has had one too many, and if they're intoxicated and should be cut off. Will the government be considering a program similar to this for cannabis to ensure that users are protected and that institutions and establishments have some leeway with respect to appropriate use within their institution or establishment? Those are just some concerns and thoughts around that. At the moment, there is nothing in the legislation that indicates that that would be the case. It also does not indicate that there would be a limit to what someone could consume if provided at a cannabis bar. We know there are several of those, and I'm sure they will set up legally now, after the 17th; that is the hope. But nothing is in place to protect those users and those establishments from the misuse of this recreational substance.

1550

The other concern that comes up is: How is this government going to ensure equal access to recreational cannabis? If a municipality decides to opt out, will residents of that municipality be able to access cannabis in the way of a municipality that is participating, and what will happen to those users? Yes, they'll be able to order online, but will they be further stigmatized in their community for engaging in recreational cannabis use, or will there be some

protections that will allow this government to ensure that there is equal access?

I know that the Minister of Finance spoke about folks living in high-rise apartment buildings and about bylaws preventing use for them versus those in suburbs in, let's say, the million-dollar homes in Brampton who would be able to access cannabis more easily. There would be an unequal distribution of access for those who are looking to consume recreational cannabis.

These are real concerns. These are things we do need to think through. We do need to ensure that if we are providing access, it is equitable and that those that would like to access recreational cannabis have a safe and non-stigmatizing way to do so. By allowing some municipalities to opt in and some to opt out, it's not entirely clear what the repercussions for those municipalities are going to be. Those are parts of the dialogue we need to work through with this government, as well as the municipalities, to ensure that as the rollout of this legislation happens, as it inevitably will, it is being done in a fair and equitable manner.

The other big concern is around education for young people in our communities, frankly. Coming from a harm reduction perspective, I strongly believe that we need to have public education—a strong public education program—in place around cannabis use that tackles the issue within our schools but also within our communities. As the Minister of Education is alluding to, it is a part of the consultation, but I just want to point out—and I mean this with all due respect—that if there are parents who do not believe that our children should be learning about consent, I do not know if they will be supportive of our children learning about cannabis. I just want to point that out, Minister, with all due respect.

I completely understand that we have consultations, but I think we do need to open up those consultations to experts in the field to ensure that they have their voice heard at the table. We'll continue to ensure that we share that information with the public, because education for young people around cannabis use is a very big concern for people in our communities. Many are not aware that they can use the health and education curriculum consultation as a way to also voice their concerns around cannabis, so thank you for sharing that with me. Perhaps you can share with us any additional details that will follow from your ministry around consultation specifically on the cannabis file. I'd appreciate that; thank you.

This is a real concern for parents, as we legalize a substance that was once criminalized. Many were actually punished as a result of that criminalization. There are concerns about how we're going to be educating our next generation—and, frankly, everyone, now—on the use of what is now considered a recreational substance.

So how will the consumption of recreational cannabis be dealt with in a classroom? Yes, I understand the public education piece, and this is really wonderful, but how are teachers going to be prepared to deal with students who may come into their classrooms who have been able to access recreational cannabis, and what tools will be given

to them to help educate young people, not punish them? I think that if we are allowing adults to access recreational cannabis, we need to be using a harm reduction approach with young people, not to punish them if they are engaging in the recreational market, but to help educate them on the harms of doing so, to prevent them from accessing cannabis in the first place.

Oftentimes in my community, what we have actually seen is that young people who are racialized have been criminalized as a result of possession. So I specifically have some concerns around how that risk will be mitigated within this legislation and how young people, specifically those in racialized communities, will not be further criminalized for their possession of cannabis.

We need to have a strong curriculum in place that is going to support students as they grow up in a society that has now legalized cannabis. This needs to be in the same way that we are educating young people around, for example, alcohol consumption. But again, this needs to be not from an abstinence-based approach, because we've all seen what that has done, but a harm reduction approach.

Again, I think that if we're educating young people about the harms of using a legal substance, it is to prevent use—not to encourage use, as some critics of a harm reduction approach would suggest. We want to ensure that those young people have access to information so that they can make safe and informed decisions when they do turn 19 and choose to access cannabis recreationally and legally.

This government needs to make a commitment to ensure that Ontario's teachers have the tools to engage students on the risks associated with cannabis use. They should be having these tools prior to October 17. I'm not entirely sure what has come from the Ministry of Education with respect to education for not only students but teachers as well, but I would hope that something would be coming out prior to our October 17 deadline.

Again, Minister, if there are any documents or news briefings that you can share with us to bring us up to speed on what teachers will be learning, we would greatly appreciate that, because we are very concerned about how they will be educating young people. I just want to make sure that we see what those documents look like. Teachers are also sending us emails and correspondence with respect to what tools they're going to be given to ensure that they're appropriately educating young people on cannabis consumption.

The other big aspect of this for a lot of people in our communities is education around addiction and mental health for young people. As many studies have shown, young people consuming cannabis prior to the age of 21 face higher risks of developing mental health disorders, such as schizophrenia. We need to have a comprehensive program in place that will deal with addictions counselling and offer appropriate supports to young people if they are facing addiction—again, not to further criminalize and stigmatize those young people who may access recreational cannabis, but to ensure that they have the appropriate supports needed to address underlying concerns, such as

mental health. We haven't quite seen anything just yet in the bill that speaks directly to that, so that is a point where I would like to ensure that this government does its due diligence to ensure that as we legalize recreational cannabis we also ensure that all ministries, including the Ministry of Health, are prepared to address some of the concerns that are going to stem out of this legalization process.

Another concern that has come up time and time again is, will individuals who have records from cannabis-related offences prior to the legalization date of October 17 have their record wiped clean, those criminal records expunged, for example, as we have now legalized what was an illegal substance? Will those individuals continue to face criminalization and face the impacts of that criminalization as we move forward into this new world of legalization?

There are many, let's say, for example, young people who have been found guilty of possession of cannabis and have had their entire lives destroyed as a result of that, not able to seek employment. But now that we are legalizing, it is no longer an offence to carry less than 30 grams of marijuana, I believe it is—cannabis, sorry. So for those who were convicted prior to October 17, will we be looking at a system that will expunge those criminal records and allow those individuals to have some aspects of their life back?

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Also, Bill 36 doesn't specify how cannabis consumption within a vehicle will be regulated. I know that the Minister of Finance said this would not be permitted. However, there's some clarity that might be needed in the legislation around, for example, a passenger consuming cannabis in a vehicle. Or if someone was to be picking up their medicinal cannabis and they are stopped by police, what will happen if they are over the 30-gram limit because their prescription allows it? Will they be subject to a penalty? Will the law enforcement officer know the difference? This also raises some questions around training for our front-line police officers in order for them to ensure that those who are legally medicinal cannabis users have a differentiating set of laws and regulations that they fall under versus someone using cannabis recreationally. There are different sets of circumstances, and so there are definitely some concerns around that.

Will it be similar to how alcohol is transported? When we purchase alcohol from the LCBO the bottle cannot be open and be in the vehicle. Will someone be required to make sure that if they've just purchased recreational cannabis, that cannabis is in its sealed container, for example, with the seal unbroken, in the trunk? There is no clarification around that, and I think this opens us up to quite a lot of grey areas with respect to transporting the cannabis that you have just legally purchased, which could result in someone engaging in criminal activity unbeknownst to themselves because they may have placed that cannabis on the front seat in their purse, for example, versus placing that in the trunk where it's safely supposed to be.

There needs to be some clarification in the enforcement of cannabis in the vehicle or on the boat, for example. We

have a beautiful cottage country here in Ontario and many of us enjoy a good time out on the boat, whether you're fishing or just enjoying some rays and taking some time off on the deck. But what in this legislation prevents somebody from engaging in or consuming some recreational cannabis on their boat? There isn't a lot of clarity.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It's a bad idea.

Ms. Sara Singh: It is a bad idea, and I would hope, again, to use our minister's language, that people would make rational and reasoned decisions and common sense would kick in. But we see every single holiday DUIs. This is why our RIDE programs are so successful: Common sense doesn't always kick in for folks. And unfortunately, some folks like to engage in some risky behaviour. What will be the enforcement mechanism in those spaces to ensure people are not illegally consuming a legal substance on, let's say, their boat? The driver may not consume it, but what prevents passengers on the boat from enjoying a toke while they're on the boat?

We've just got to think some of those things through, and that's what we're trying to help the government do—to realize there's the letter of the law and then there's the spirit of it. As this is uncharted territory for us all, there are going to be a lot of unknowns. We just need to go that extra step and think some of those scenarios through in how they will play out in reality.

The other big question is: How are we going to regulate users who are driving under the influence? This, despite many best efforts, is still a big grey area for not only law enforcement and municipalities, but also consumers of cannabis. Right now, there is no clear path to determining how someone is impaired. For example, do red eyes constitute being impaired?

Interjection: It's exhaustion.

Ms. Sara Singh: Or, as the member behind me points out, is that simply exhaustion? For someone consuming cannabis three or four hours before they start to operate their vehicle, are they still considered impaired once they've now started to drive? There are still a lot of concerns around the enforcement of impairment. It puts people in our province at risk, specifically—and I'm going to raise this point because I think it's important—racialized communities, where oftentimes very little is needed for a member of a racialized community to be stopped by police. This does not spell out a black and white "impaired" or "not impaired" criterion, so this could be very loosely applied to someone during a traffic stop because we currently do not have legislation that outlines exactly what constitutes impairment, nor do we have the tools—and our front-line officers do not have the tools—to be able to detect impairment right off the bat. This is a huge concern and something that I think this government needs to seriously delve into a little bit deeper to understand how the enforcement of this will play out in reality and how this is going to have, I think, some very unintended consequences for communities that have already faced significant marginalization.

Does this government have a plan to work against the stigma for users? This is a really important one, because

we are now legalizing a substance that was, under schedule II, considered to be illegal and is now legal. This does not, however, remove the stigma for users who would like to access recreational cannabis now in the legal marketplace. There are rules and regulations that may prevent the location of a retail shop; however, that actually helps to further stigmatize users, as they now may be asked to go out into far industrial corners of their city in order to access, again, what is a legal substance. So I would be curious to understand with this government how it plans to destigmatize cannabis use to ensure that those who are accessing cannabis legally are not stigmatized when doing so. It's not as though there are folks outside of the LCBO pointing the finger at you when you go to get your beautiful bottle of pinot, right? So we want to make sure that folks who are accessing cannabis legally are not punished or stigmatized when they access their substance.

Going back to the issue around the municipalities, many municipalities have raised concerns. Many have said that they aren't sure why they aren't being given more latitude to determine whether they would like to have retail shops or not. Municipalities are being put into quite a difficult position, frankly, with the urgent deadline of January 22, 2019, to either opt in or opt out. This is a bit concerning. If you opt out, users in your municipality will not have access to recreational cannabis, and if you opt in, you are going to be essentially given additional incentives of some kind or another by this government for doing so. This is creating, again, as I alluded to earlier, unequal access to recreational cannabis.

It's also creating a bit of an operational black hole. As this government, I think, is proactively trying to roll this out—again, I understand that time is of the essence—we have October 17 as our date for legalization. We will have sales happening through our online retail store, but this is going to create a black hole for those who wanted to enter the market on October 17, as now they are going to be undercut by the government, who will be the online retailer at that point. Those folks will only be able to access recreational cannabis through the online marketplace that has been established by this government and not a private retailer. So for entrepreneurs who might have wanted to get into the market, they're actually being undercut right now by the government and that's limiting their ability to bring in that business.

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The other concern, as our Minister of Finance spoke to earlier, was those who are operating illegal dispensaries at the moment. There is no clear direction from this government on when those businesses should cease and desist operations. Will they be penalized if they do this on, let's say, October 16? As we move to online sales from the government, are those businesses supposed to sit idly until this government figures out their licensing scheme on April 1? This is an operational black hole. How, where and what do you expect those businesses to do while this government issues legal recreational cannabis through its online marketplace?

This is a huge concern for business owners who want to enter the market. It creates an unequal playing field. If we wanted to ensure that we were really creating a free enterprise, market-driven model, we would have had licensing take place on, let's say, October 18, so that those private retailers could enter the market and not be undercut by the Ontario cannabis retail store, which will be in operation for six months prior to any private retailer being given the opportunity to enter the market. This is a real concern for business owners.

I understand that the intention behind this is to curb out the black market, but within those six months, I think we're going to actually spur the black market rather than cut it out. I personally feel many will still continue to use illegal dispensaries as a way to obtain their—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: And pushers.

Ms. Sara Singh: And pushers—as a way to be able to access what they feel is a recreational substance. They will continue to operate in that grey area.

I think there needs to be further clarification, and I think we need to work with those business communities to understand what their needs are and how we can best have them transition into the legal marketplace in a way that they aren't being punished by this government within that six-month window.

Municipalities across Ontario differ vastly in size, structure and needs. What is outlined in Bill 36 is currently not quite as sensitive as we'd like it to be to the changing needs of our diverse municipalities and forcing them to make what might be an abrupt and almost irreversible decision. If someone decides to opt in because they feel it might be the best, they don't have an option later to opt out. But if they'd like to opt out, they can always opt back in.

I think what we need to do is create a system that's going to be a little bit more fair for those municipalities, as we are entering uncharted territories right now. It is important that we work with those municipalities to ensure that even if they do decide to opt in—should there be concerns—that there are mechanisms that will allow them to opt out or to seek additional assistance from our province in dealing with the increased costs that they're going to be facing, for example.

We know that the municipalities are the ones that are going to be bearing the direct burden of this legislation, so I think there needs to be more clarity. Also, they need to be brought to the table as an equal partner in this process. I know many mayors and councillors have expressed a great deal of concern with this process. For example, Hamilton Mayor Fred Eisenberger said that the government “ought to provide more latitude to municipalities,” adding, “Given the potential impacts, additional costs in terms of enforcement, policing issues, public health issues, I think they ought to allow for municipalities to level significant licensing fees for those who want to set up shop.”

It's allowing them a little bit bigger of a piece of that pie. It's only fair. It is their police services that will be dealing with the brunt of enforcement. It will be those municipalities that are going to be dealing with the brunt of where those shops should be set up and where they

shouldn't. Therefore, they should have, I think, a bigger say in this process and more autonomy, frankly, in their own municipalities and the affairs of their cities.

Another big concern for many of us is public safety. As all ministers on this file have alluded to, this is of paramount concern. Much of this legislation is to ensure public safety, to stomp out the illegal market and to protect young people. But under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, in the same way as lighted tobacco, removing all distinctions between medicinal and recreational cannabis use except for usage in vehicles and boats means that people can use cannabis wherever—pretty much, with some limitations—they'd like to. This raises, as I spoke to earlier, serious concerns for families and for people who are walking down the street who may not want to participate in recreational cannabis use to have to be exposed to second-hand smoke. This creates serious concerns.

We all hope that common sense will prevail. However, what is to stop somebody from consuming cannabis within a 25-metre distance from a school and citing that they're within the law because they can consume cannabis 25 metres away from the school? What about those parents that might be coming in, dropping their kids off at school? What about those children who are going to be entering their classrooms? Will they be exposed to the second-hand smoke? These are aspects of the bill that need to be fleshed out so we can all ensure that, again, users are not stigmatized but our public is kept safe and healthy.

The government also seems to be relying a little too heavily on social norms to regulate the way cannabis will be consumed. Rather than engaging with consumers, municipalities and stakeholders to acquire a more nuanced understanding, we and, frankly, our Premier are still struggling with how to ensure that inappropriate use is not going to take place. Perhaps this government can focus a little more time and energy on the public safety piece to just provide the clarity that people in our province need to ensure that, again, those users of recreational cannabis are not stigmatized, but those who do not want to participate and indulge are not exposed to unnecessary smoke.

This plan, the bill, fails to address the kind of nuanced clarity that the legalization of recreational cannabis demands. Like the Liberals' plan, Bill 36 seems to leave Ontarians with more questions than answers. We need to try to figure out some of those concerns that I've brought up here today around appropriate use, ensuring that young people are protected, that they get the resources they need to make well-informed decisions, but also that our municipalities have the autonomy to enact bylaws to protect their communities in a way that doesn't prevent the use but, again, helps bolster this new market.

We need clarity around where recreational cannabis can be consumed. Most in the public are still trying to figure that out, and this bill as it sits right now does not entirely lay out what those parameters should be. I understand that we're trying to align this with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act; however, that still raises significant public safety concerns.

There's also a concern around how monies generated, revenues generated through this legalization process will be divided and split between our municipal governments. There is some mention of reaching a \$100-million mark and then splitting those revenues with our municipalities, I believe, 50-50. Some municipalities would argue they require a lot more than what would be \$50 million in order to address the ongoing public safety concerns, to address the increase in their police services, to address the increase in front-line officers that are going to be needed in order to enforce this bill, yet nothing is quite being made clear to those municipalities in terms of what additional support they'll be receiving from the province to help with the implementation of this bill and also to help with the legalization.

1620

Another concern that's been brought up is for our First Nations communities. I understand that there is an opt-out process, but again, this will create—as it will for the municipalities that opt out—unequal and unfair access to and distribution of recreational cannabis.

For many who want to access recreational cannabis, concerns around stigmatization of use, concerns around criminality, concerns around where they can use a substance that is now legal have yet to be answered adequately by this bill. I encourage further consultation from this government with stakeholders, with municipalities and with users to better understand where some of those grey areas can be made more clear, to ensure that we're putting forward a very historic piece of legislation that is well thought out, that is well-intentioned and that gives equal access to all of those members of our province who want to access the retail market.

Right now, as this legislation sits, our government will be the wholesaler to those private retail stores, which will allow for oversight and regulation. However, we need to ensure that the labels that are created and the products that are being consumed are safe, that they are very strictly regulated and that we create spaces where those who would like to consume recreational cannabis have an opportunity to do so in a safe manner. Right now, that isn't entirely clear. We are not sure what the labelling of the packages will look like. We aren't sure how the industry will be regulated.

There are also concerns about by-products that can be generated from cannabis, which this legislation also does not adequately address. One can purchase recreational cannabis and produce additional products from that, and there is no clear regulation around the use of those products and appropriate purchasing and use of recreational cannabis. This is extremely concerning for members who are looking to this government to set an example as we implement, again, this new piece of legislation and head toward some pretty uncharted territory.

There are probably going to be significant bumps along the road. I hope that some of the concerns that I have raised today can be considered. I am happy to sit down with ministers and share additional thoughts and concerns on this bill. As the October 17 deadline looms, there are some

real concerns and considerations that still need to be given to Bill 36. While I do commend members of our government for putting this through, as we know, this is coming from our federal government, and so we are working in cooperation with the province and our federal counterparts to ensure that the legalization process is as smooth as it can be.

There are a number of things, as I've alluded to in my last 40 minutes, that we still need to consider. I strongly urge this government to reach out to those stakeholders, as they can provide additional insights on some of those grey areas and how we might be able to make them a little bit more black and white. There are going to be a number of grey areas with legalization, and there are going to be a lot of unknowns until we know.

We do need to work together to ensure that we're protecting users and consumers, but we also need to work together to ensure we're protecting those who want to enter the market to sell recreational cannabis—that they have a fair opportunity to do so, and that we also work together to curb any illegal sales that are happening, and the black market. This is a way to do so; however, a completely public model would have allowed us to have full control. But this is the model that we are working with and there are still considerations that need to be given.

Entrepreneurs, for example, that will be entering the market need to be protected to ensure that they are able to operate in a safe manner. There isn't enough in this bill to ensure their needs are being taken into consideration and that, as entrepreneurs, their business needs are being met through this legislation.

I would also argue that we need to focus a little bit more, as I've said earlier, on the public safety piece. As we all know, we're facing an opioid crisis here. We are seeing regular drugs being laced with things like fentanyl. So we just need to ensure that the cannabis that is being purchased from those private retailers is being consumed and is regulated to prevent those types of instances in our communities of death or unwanted interactions with other illegal drugs.

I think if we can just take things a step further—some more education to make sure that young people are properly equipped to handle the changing world that we live in with respect to the use of cannabis; to ensure that our municipalities have a fair voice, that they are at the table and making those decisions for their own communities; and to ensure that as we legalize and usher in a new day here with legal recreational cannabis, those who are going to be consuming are protected and given a fair opportunity to consume this new substance.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: I'd like to begin by thanking the member from Brampton Centre for her wonderful maiden speech. It was truly nice to listen to it, to hear a bit about her back story and what got her interested in running in the first place.

It's really struck me in my three short months here in this House how much these maiden speeches enlighten

and liven up the discourse here in this chamber, and I think it's because of two things, Mr. Speaker. It's because they bring a sense of genuineness here, and it's because they demonstrate a shared value that all of us have here, and that's the spirit of public service. I really appreciated hearing a little bit about the member's family and how they were an inspiration for her to get involved. I appreciated her sharing some of the challenges and difficulties her family has gone through with her brother's loss. I also wish her father the best of health in his recovery over the next little while.

I also can certainly appreciate close election results. Myself having only won by 175 votes, slightly more than the 89, certainly I can appreciate, on election night, thanking those angels who were watching out.

1630

Finally, I just would like to say, I look forward at some point to speaking with the member from Brampton Centre about some of her PhD research. I, myself, did my master's thesis on how we can get more individuals with developmental disabilities into the workforce. I imagine that there is certainly some shared ground between her research and mine. Once again, thank you for being here, thank you for sharing, and best wishes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Miss Monique Taylor: I just want to say how proud I am of the new member from Brampton Centre. To be able to stand in this House and to talk for an hour as eloquently as she did is absolutely fantastic—great work, to that member—and sharing our personal stories in our maiden speeches and, as the member before me said, what that does to the tone of the Legislature, to the humanity of us all, as we enter into this life and what it means to our families and to our communities. She raises some really valid points when she talks about Scarborough and the lack of health services that are available, and how hard that is on a family to have to travel hours to be able to take care of their loved ones.

So congratulations on your maiden speech. It really was fantastic, and then just flowed perfectly into the cannabis bill that we're speaking of today, which we haven't had a lot of time to absorb. Yet she has taken the time and she has really broken it down, for me, in a good light and raised a lot of great questions that I hope the government was listening to—points about how our teachers are going to be given tools to ensure that our students are on the right path and that it's part of the health curriculum. How are we going to ensure that we keep our young people healthy and safe from recreational cannabis? We know it's not safe for them at young ages as they're growing and their brains are growing. So great points with that—and about the municipalities and the pressures that they will feel if the government doesn't ensure that they have proper tools. These are all valid points. She had many, but my time is out.

Great job on this hour, member. You did a wonderful job, and I look forward to the rest of the debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'd like to thank the members from Brampton Centre, Ottawa West–Nepean and Hamilton Mountain for their comments and to say to the member for Brampton Centre that I really enjoyed, as my colleague from Ottawa West–Nepean said, hearing your comments and hearing a little bit about where you come from. I, like my colleague from Ottawa West–Nepean, find that that allows us to realize that we share a lot of interests, values and commonalities that sometimes we lose in the heat of debate. But it's good to hear what those are.

I certainly feel for you with respect to the loss of your brother and having to travel great distances for palliative care and chemotherapy. I agree with you: It's not good enough; we have to do something to make these services more accessible. We're trying to work on those things as much as possible to make sure those services are there.

I've also dealt with constituents waiting for Passport funding, and I know how much of an impact it has on their lives. Like my friend from Ottawa West–Nepean, I take a particular interest in this area as well, as you do. I have a daughter with autism. I understand the struggles that parents go through trying to make sure that every person, as they deserve, can reach their fullest potential. I certainly would like to see us able to help them do that. So maybe we can all work together on that laudable goal.

There are so many things that you said that I agreed with, but I think the most important thing, from my point of view, was the idea of having to listen to each other, which I keep trying to emphasize here. It's inscribed on the walls. Somewhere around here it says “audi alteram partem,” which are Latin words meaning “listen to the other side.” It's very important because I honestly believe we don't find truth without listening to all the voices. Truth is multi-vocal, not uni-vocal. So I look forward to hearing more.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Jamie West: I also want to echo the members from Ottawa West–Nepean, Hamilton Mountain and Eglinton–Lawrence in congratulating the member from Brampton Centre on her inaugural speech. It was very interesting. I echo the comments they had about getting to know each other better and having a human face to us all sitting around in suits and speaking to just points in debate.

I would just like to make a quick comment. If you haven't noticed, my nails are pink, and that's because the Canadian Cancer Society of Sudbury is kicking off Breast Cancer Awareness Month for October with pink nails—just to bring some clarity to that.

One of the things the member from Brampton Centre brought up was safety and impairment detection and impairment knowledge, and that speaks to me. My background is in health and safety. I spent almost two decades working in health and safety. There really is a concern that not just workers have, but employers and supervisors have as well.

If you think about, say, blood alcohol levels, we all have a rough idea of how much alcohol you can have without being impaired or how long after you have a drink

before you would be considered not impaired again. If you're watching hockey, for example, and you have a beer or two, you can do the math in your head for how soon before you can drive or if you need a cab or, if you're called into work, if you're safe to come into work. But with cannabis, we don't have those levels. Right now, what we can detect is use, but we can't detect impairment.

When it comes to safety, this becomes a concern. The first one is obvious: If you're impaired, we don't want people working impaired. The second one isn't as obvious: the fear of reporting. Workers have a duty to report unsafe conditions and near misses, but if they don't know if they can be detected as impaired and you have a drug-use policy in place, they can fear losing their job and won't report near misses and close calls, which could lead to future incidents.

It's something that, as a government, we need to look at and figure out how we handle this properly and successfully.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Brampton Centre for final comments.

Ms. Sara Singh: Thank you all for the indulgence here today. It has really, truly been an honour to be here, and it's very humbling to be able to stand and to work with you all. I know, as the member from Eglinton–Lawrence pointed out, sometimes it can be a bit difficult here, but I think, at the end of the day, we need to recognize that we are all human beings, we are all here because we deserve to be here, and we can find ways to work together. I think, as we humanize each other, learn more about each other and learn more about what has inspired us to be here, we will find ways to collaborate. We will find things that we have mutual interests in, and I think this is where we're going to see the real work happen. I'm really looking forward to being able to work with many of you over the next four years and, hopefully, much longer than that.

I think that each of us has a purpose to play here, and we should consider that. Every time we stand up, every time we speak, every time we heckle, we need to consider the impact of what we're saying and what we're doing, and consider all those who are watching at home who sent us here and the expectations they have of each of us, as members, to represent our communities and to do what is right for not just one person but all Ontarians. That is a great responsibility and a privilege that each and every one of us has here in this 42nd Parliament.

I would really like to thank the members who spoke today, and thank you all for the opportunity to speak today.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? I recognize the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte.

Mr. Doug Downey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is the perfect riding name for your talent, and I appreciate it. It's great. It just rolls off your tongue.

I do want to stand up and address the issue at hand. It is one of these opportunities that we have to work with the members on the opposite side in trying to make sure that things are rolling out just the way that we expected and that we want them to.

1640

Mr. Speaker, I have the benefit of having travelled across the province on this issue and meeting with stakeholders and those that are concerned. Following the meeting at AMO in Ottawa with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, where Minister Clark, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, led us through some 550 delegations—which is a record, I believe, in the history of AMO—it was really a great time for us to engage with municipalities on several issues, but cannabis and the retail side of cannabis was something that was talked about a lot. There were sessions on it—there were information sessions, there were information-gathering sessions—and it was really, I think, the chance for us to first engage with all the municipalities on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, following AMO, after we heard from several municipalities and told them loud and clear—we were very clear. The Minister of Finance was clear, the Attorney General was clear and the Minister of Municipal Affairs was clear. We were all very clear with the municipalities that they would be expected to opt out or not as a first order of business of a new council. We didn't think it was fair to put it on an existing council in the closing days of those administrations when there were elections coming up. We thought it was more balanced to have the new councils do it. But we put them on notice right away that they're going to have to make that decision early on.

January 22 is the opt-out date. As the Minister of Finance said earlier, that's a three-month window. Well, I must admit, Mr. Speaker, it's actually a five-month window, because we told them in August. I know the senior management of many municipalities were asking good questions. They were digging into it. They were looking at other jurisdictions. They were already well-engaged in it, so this is more than a three-month exercise. This is a five-month, at minimum.

Mr. Speaker, the opt-in/opt-out question is really interesting. After I left AMO, after I left Ottawa and those municipal meetings, I started in Kingston meeting with local stakeholders, the local stakeholders being health units and police and bylaw and school boards—a whole variety of interests; downtown management boards, chambers of commerce. Everybody has a stake in this because it is going to affect our entire society. Let's be clear: This is something the federal government has said we are doing and so we will make the best of it and we will build the best system possible within that framework.

I think of it in terms of the justice system, where the federal government sets criminal law but the province is responsible for the administration of it. We've worked together before to make an excellent system and this is another opportunity to do that. After I left Kingston and I went on to Hamilton and Niagara Falls and London and Guelph, and met with others—I went to Durham with the member from Durham and we met with the local police and we met with Durham College—we were just gathering insight in as many places as we can.

I don't know which municipalities are going to opt in and which ones are going to not opt in—or rather opt out

and not opt out. The default position is you're in unless you take yourself out. The legislation as drafted is pretty clear. It just needs a resolution of council to say they want to opt out. If they want to opt out, that's fine; they can always come back later. It's just that we need business certainty so we know people are investing spending time and money and resources into setting up cannabis retail for April 1.

By January 22, we'll know what the ground game is and which municipalities. I talked to some of the major cities like London and they expect maybe they'll be a hub for the surrounding areas; that maybe some of the more rural municipalities may opt out, relying on the more urban areas. It will be interesting to see what the pattern is. I know, on record in the newspapers, there's been talk of Richmond Hill maybe opting out. The new councils are going to have to make that decision. I think the timing is fantastic because it's an issue now going into the municipal election—people are talking about it—and the new council will have a mandate to follow through on what they think they should be doing.

I won't presume to guess who's in and out. We'll deal with what is when we get there. But we've given the option. We've said because we're doing mail order, because that's October 17—and that's going to happen regardless, with some exceptions that I'll talk about later—because that's going to happen, we want to make sure that there's funding to help deal with that implementation. We've indicated that there will be a \$10,000 minimum payment per municipality for all 444 municipalities. That will help with some of the transition costs. If the municipalities then opt out, they're still going to get the \$10,000. They are going to get \$5,000 as soon as possible this year, and then we'll give the other \$5,000 after the January 22 date if we know that they have opted out. If they don't opt out, they will get a per-household basis now, they'll get the \$5,000, and then after January 22 we'll flow more money. We are going to keep some reserve because we're moving into uncharted territory. Just as if you were launching a new business, there will be unforeseen circumstances, and we want resources to be able to pass on to those who need those resources.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance has been clear: This is not about the money for us. This is about protecting children. This is about dealing with illegal trade. In the spirit of that, we have also made a commitment—more than a commitment. It's black and white; it's in the act. We've been very clear that we will forward monies beyond \$100 million in the first two years of the Ontario portion of any tax revenue that comes in. We will share that with those municipalities—again, those that don't opt out—to help them deal with costs, some unforeseen costs. We know there will be policing, bylaw and the health unit.

The education of children is just so important, Mr. Speaker. I know that of the 14 ministries in our government that are working on this file in all different aspects, it's not just about the cannabis retail. It's about making sure that children are protected and educated, making sure that our youth know that even though you can purchase

cannabis at 19, it may not be a good life decision for medical reasons or for other reasons. They need to be educated as we go through this, just as we would educate our children about many other things.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that parents are engaged on this issue because there is really a third timeline that's coming. We have October 17 for the online sale of cannabis and April 1 for the retail sale of cannabis. But the federal government has put us on notice that approximately a year from October 17, we'll be dealing with—or not dealing with, depending on what the federal Liberals choose to do—edibles. So we need to get this right in the first instance. It's going to get much more complicated in the second instance when we hit a year from now.

So we're putting a lot of energy, a lot of time and a lot of resources into talking to stakeholders, and we didn't just talk to them once, put together a plan and then deploy it to see what happens. This is an ongoing conversation. This is the start of a conversation with stakeholders, and we're bringing money to the table to make that conversation effective. We're hopeful that our stakeholders will continue to dialogue with us on the challenges that they have.

I mentioned 19 years of age a few minutes ago. That's a choice that this government has made. We could say 18; that's within the federal guidelines of what they would allow us. But we've chosen to make it 19. That lines up with alcohol sales, Mr. Speaker. It makes it easier for the education. It's a little bit of a buffer. But there is an interesting wrinkle in this that I heard about when I was doing some of the consultations. We're going to be very, very serious about following up on the protection of children, and part of that is making sure that these locations that are selling are following the rules. One of the ways that they may breach the rules is to sell to somebody under age. There are some tools within this legislation that will allow us to enable an 18-year-old to enter an establishment for the purposes of checking to see if they're following the rules. We thought this through. This is a very-well-thought-through piece of legislation. We're so focused on the enforcement and so focused on a rules base that this kind of stuff is already in here. And there are a ton more things that we can talk about, but that's a very important piece.

The online, when it comes up on the 17th of October, will give us an opportunity to do some messaging in there as well so that we can educate people. When you go online for any kind of product, you end up cross-marketing a little bit. We can cross-market education. We can send some information and some education to people who are there for the first time.

1650

I've had the opportunity to talk to some companies who have experience in this that are not in the Canadian market. They're an unbiased opinion, in my estimation. They tell me this: They say that for the new recreational cannabis user, that they will use a store retail front about three or four times before they'll go to the online, which is interesting.

When you think about the demographics and you think about some of the older population, why would they do

that? Well, it's because they want education. It's a new world for them too, in many senses, and they want to know what the strains of product are. They want to know what the effects of the product are. They want to know about how to use the product. So there's an education component to this.

We're going to have the online first. We all have friends that we grew up with who will tell you that they're experts on this topic. Most of them are not. They may have a lot of experience with the topic, but it doesn't mean that they're experts on the topic. It's important that the information and the education gets out there, because it really is about the protection of our youth and making sure the product is being used responsibly and the way that it's envisioned by the federal government.

So here we are with a system that we didn't ask for. We're going to do it as a top-notch operation. It's going to be secure. It's going to be something that people can rely on. That's going to help us deal with the illegal market, because people want consistency in whatever the product is. That's why when you go into a new town and you have kids and you're just not sure where you're going to stop for lunch, you often stop at a chain. You stop at a McDonald's, an A&W, a Burger King, because you're going to get what you expect to get. That's the kind of thing that's going to happen in the retail with our product that we're wholesaling.

It's important that people can trust what they get. It's important to deal with the illegal market on price point, and so it has to be sold at certain price points. That's another important consistency piece, because we don't want to have a situation where we have different prices and competing prices in stores across town. We heard this from stakeholders. We heard from stakeholders that they want us to deal with the illegal market and have a credible product. But they also want it to not be overly attractive, in terms of drawing in children and making it too attractive for them.

You have to be 19 to go into the store, unless you fall in the one exception for the 18-year-old. It's going to be behind paywalls, like you see with cigarettes. It's going to be in packages with bar codes and a seal. It's not like you see on TV, where you go in and there are glass jars and they just take a scoop. That's not what it is. I know you'll be shocked, Madam Speaker, to think that things aren't like they are on TV. I think we'd all be shocked by that. Just think of it as a brown package, where you can't see the product. It's sealed; it's bar-coded; it's tracked all the way through the supply line. There's integrity in the system, and that helps us deal with the illegal market as well. It's pretty important that we do this and that we keep tight, tight controls on it, for the safety of everybody, quite frankly.

Different experiences in different communities: Some communities, I was told—I won't name names. One community has 53 illegal storefronts—53 illegal storefronts—right now. They have been shutting them down as fast as they can. It's been in the papers. They're doing what they can and they need extra tools. Those extra tools are built into here.

I'm going to tell you about one tool in particular. The Minister of Finance talked about the penalties, significant penalties, if you operate an illegal storefront. So at 12:01 on October 17, if you're running a storefront—you can call yourself medical marijuana or you can call yourself recreational; it doesn't matter. It's illegal if it's not authorized by us—and it can't be authorized by us because we won't be doing it until April 1. If you're running one of those, you're up for a ton of hurt in terms of financial penalties.

But I thought: How would I do it? How would I set it up if I wanted to skirt the law? Well, I'd set up a company with nothing in it, right? I'd just set up a shell company, have that be the holder, and then you've got the corporate veil.

I'm going to take you, Madam Speaker, to subsection 39(2) of this legislation. It says, "A director or officer of a corporation"—so that's the individual, "director or officer"; a president, secretary or director—"who causes, authorizes, permits or participates in an offence under this act by the corporation is guilty of an offence." So, on notice to those who would set up a corporation and try and hide behind it: That's not going to work.

Again, it's a well-crafted piece of legislation because we drew from experiences of individuals in the field and we drew from experiences that we all had, whether it be as lawyers or very successful business people. We have such a diverse caucus that we've managed to pull together so many experiences for exactly this kind of thing. This is going to work.

And municipalities—the money doesn't come to us. When they levy that provincial offence for \$250,000 or \$1 million, or whatever the number is, we don't get any of that; that's zero to this government. Because it's not about money. It's not about the money for us. It's about shutting down the illegal trade and giving the resources back to the municipalities so they can continue to keep the illegal trade shut, working in co-operation with us, and making sure that things are happening that should be happening.

Madam Speaker, the other piece of this puzzle is that the co-operation among different groups is going to be important. We have the bylaw enforcement of municipalities or of regions, depending on how they've set themselves up. There are significant tools that they need. They have, in the legislation that's on the table now, closure orders, which is a particular tool they need when they go in to shut down some of these illegal storefronts. I don't want to leave the impression that all municipalities have 53 illegal storefronts. They don't all have that. Some municipalities have two, some actually have none, and some rely on the traditional guy in his truck who knows when the kids are coming to the park. It's the whole broad spectrum. We're going to tackle that.

The data tell us and the experience of other jurisdictions that we've looked at in parts of the US tells us that the illegal trade does get shut down. because people want to rely on a system. They want the consistency; they want to know what they're getting when they're purchasing their product. They want to make sure that there's integrity to it

and that there are not other things in it. I've heard the other members talk about opioids. We have challenges in all of our communities. It's serious, serious business. This is one way that we can have a product available for purchase. And it won't just be in leaf form for smoking. That is most of the talk. You can purchase seeds and you'll be able to purchase spray—I forget the technical term for it but it's like a spray.

I've taken the opportunity to tour several—for lack of a better word—bong shops, vape lounges. I've talked to people who are in the current field to find out what is happening so that we can make sure that this rolls out exactly the way we want it to. This is a very exciting time. This is a time for change. It's a time for opportunity. It's something that I believe we have right.

Before I finish, Madam Speaker, I just want to give a shout out to the professional bureaucracy, who have helped us, who have really pivoted on this issue when we said this is the direction we're going. They have really been professional about it and they've really given us insights into what they've learned about the market, so that we get this right all the way through. I can't say enough about the expertise and goodwill from people throughout the House, throughout the bureaucracy and out in the field. We know there are challenges. We're going to continue the dialogue. We're going to do everything we can to make sure this happens properly. We look for further feedback as we go forward.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks to the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte for weighing in on this piece of legislation that we just got today, An Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to various other Acts respecting the use and sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario. It's quite the title.

It's such an important issue. We sat through the summer, six weeks in the summer. We came back two weeks early. We did some weekends and some midnight sessions. This is such an important issue that this should have been on the agenda sooner, Madam Speaker, because we're talking about a significant culture shift in the distribution of cannabis, marijuana, in the province of Ontario, with an October 17 deadline which is coming very quickly.

1700

I have to tell you: There are a couple of gaps right now as the legislation is crafted, which I want to raise awareness around, because obviously it's a work in motion. Last year at OREA, the Ontario Real Estate Association, I was on a panel with the former member from Beaches–East York, and the whole discussion came from how if there are no public spaces for marijuana to be consumed, that means it will all be happening inside. So real estate agents across the province have genuine concerns about second-hand marijuana smoke.

The member at the time for Beaches–East York said, "Listen, there's no difference between a marijuana plant and an avocado plant." Seriously, you can't make it up. It

actually happened. But there's a huge difference, obviously, because the actual growing of marijuana also has second-hand smells—odours, if you will—and it's not very pleasant.

But I just want to leave you with this: Concern about exposure to second-hand marijuana smoke is an emerging issue. The Smoking and Health Action Foundation has noted a steady increase in inquiries and complaints over the past number of years, especially from multi-unit housing residents. If you look outside here, it's all multi-unit housing. This will be a fallout of smoking in your condo unit or your apartment.

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

Ms. Lindsey Park: I want to thank the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte for speaking today on this important issue. But he also mentioned in his remarks the trip he made out to Durham and the chance we had to consult directly with the Durham regional police, as well as Durham College. I think the consultations that day highlighted two important issues that we've taken into consideration in our consultation process, which are (1) public safety and (2) education.

The number one concern and objective that the Durham regional police shared with us was this objective that we keep children and communities safe, and that we also undermine the underground illegal market. In fact, when we were speaking with the police, they really shared the position that we're in as the provincial government responding to a decision made by the federal government. We could all stand here talking for days about whether the federal government made the right decision; the reality is that we're faced with a decision that was made and we have an obligation to respond to it at the provincial level.

I want to thank the members opposite, as well as the stakeholders who have engaged with us in responding to this federal government decision. We really need all hands on deck. We're responding to something that is unfamiliar to most of us. None of us have a crystal ball to see exactly how this is going to go, and really, by us teaming up and working together, we can make sure that we get this right and that the right consultations continue to take place as the regulations develop and, additionally, as edibles become legal, potentially a year from now. Thank you, everyone, for your work.

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

Mr. Jamie West: I'd also like to thank the member for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte for his comments, especially the ones about safety. I want to echo his comments. One of the things I've been thinking about lately is underage consumption. I know it has been brought up earlier today, but the importance of thinking about it—I don't think I was the only one who noticed that the member from Brampton Centre was speaking about cannabis use in Ontario at 4:20. If your high school was like mine, there would be several people snickering about that.

We do know that it takes place already, legal or illegal. Underage consumption takes place, and our effectiveness

in stopping it is important, because our effectiveness in stopping teenage smoking and underage drinking hasn't been that effective, so we have to be very pragmatic about how we tackle this and move forward.

Just making something illegal doesn't make it stop. We talk about illegal storefronts and dispensaries. The war on drugs has been going on since the mid-1980s and we still have drugs happening, so we have to figure out how we make this effective as we move forward.

One of the things the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte said was—he talked about the director or officer of a corporation. He talked about dispensaries. I know that there are many people out there who don't have storefronts but who would be pleased to be known as a director or officer of a corporation who also makes cannabis available to people.

I think the key to that, like the member has said, is about reliability. Keyed in with that is also affordability. If you go back to the days of Napster and illegal file sharing, basically what brought that down was, it was illegal, but different areas would pop up again and again. At the same time, the other part was that there were legal alternatives that were affordable, easy and reliable. If that's what we can do as a government—find ways that make it safe, legal, affordable and reliable—then we can be very, very successful.

I think one of the things that it is important to point out as well is how we seem to be aligned on so many things in this conversation about listening to each other and finding good solutions together. I just want to echo that feedback because I think it's shared across the House.

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

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: I wanted to thank the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte for his comments. I also wanted to thank all members who have spoken to this issue today.

As a government, we made the decision that, if the legislation passes for Bill 36, we are going to align the rules with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which contains an outright ban on smoking on playgrounds, in child care facilities, schools and hospitals, to name a few. This is important because this goes to the concerns that people have about people smoking near children and how this could impact and influence children.

This past weekend, throughout my riding, a lot of concerned residents of Carleton came up to me and wanted to know what else the government is doing to possibly control or limit this. I just wanted to let them know and let my colleagues on the opposite side know that municipalities do in fact have the ability to enact bylaws restricting smoking in other outdoor spaces, including parks. So even though there might be a particular area that is not necessarily in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, as a government we have given the option to municipalities to enact further bylaws. We're hoping that through this partnership between the provincial government and the municipalities, we can do what's best for our children and for the citizens

of Ontario. I think this is important because each municipality is different and each municipality will have its own concerns and its own needs. It should be up to them to determine what's best for their citizens and for their residents.

Madam Speaker, I again just wanted to thank everyone. I look forward to moving forward on this and working with all stakeholders to make the most responsible decision possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte for a two-minute response.

Mr. Doug Downey: Safe, affordable, legal and reliable: Good touchstones for exactly what we need to do to be competitive with the illegal market. I think we've struck a good balance. I think we've struck the right balance.

I want to thank the members from Waterloo, Durham, Sudbury and Carleton. I think, added together, they have as many letters as Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte.

This is a serious topic, so I don't want to make light of it. We have just begun. We have done many consultations and we have talked to many stakeholders. The Minister of Municipal Affairs started the consultations at AMO, where we had hundreds and hundreds of consultations and information sessions and real engagement. Our municipal partners know where we are headed with this. Again, we are putting money on the table.

Part of the conversation: We're helping to protect those First Nations that don't want product coming into their communities. We are making that possible so that it will not be delivered by mail if they choose not to have it. That was a conversation we had with some First Nations leaders. We are trying to be respectful of all the players in this system and, at the same time, protect the children and deal with the illegal trade.

We need to be realistic about what we're doing so that it is effective. I think we are being realistic, but we want further feedback from people as we move forward. We are not just launching this and then moving on to the next thing. We are going to go through this process of launching the online, which has great integrity—the way that system works. I wish I had more time to explain it. It's similar to ordering liquor online. The product will not be left at the doors, ID will be required—all sorts of safeguards.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to the evolution of this discussion.

1710

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I thought it was interesting today because, as everybody might not know at home but we certainly know here, you're assigned a day to come and speak. Today I was looking forward to doing the Select Committee on Financial Transparency, the cancellation of cap-and-trade or access to natural gas, and then we find out, at 1:15 today, that they're going to bring a bill forward called Bill 36. And this is it, and one of my colleagues already said this: An Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to various other Acts respecting the use and

sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario. So it's an act to enact an act.

This is an important issue, and I'd like my PC friends to listen to this. It's a very, very important issue, and one that really touches my heart for a number of reasons. Before I get into the formal part of my speech: My wife, 10 years ago, coming home from school as a vice-principal, driving down a main street at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, gets hit head-on by a drunk driver. Think about that: doing nothing wrong; drunk driver. He came out of a local strip bar hammered, crossed the line and hit her head-on. He didn't kill her, but he certainly destroyed the quality of life that she was enjoying at that time and the quality of life that her daughter Jacqueline and her husband and the grandkids would have—hit by a drunk driver.

So now what we're going to do—and there are a lot of people who like this—is that we are going to allow people to buy cannabis. What dialogue have we had with a lot of the police officers? How are we going to staff them, by the way? Talk to the people in Toronto here: How are we going to staff them? Talk to the people in Toronto here, who are going through a terrible, terrible crisis now, with people being murdered on the street on a daily basis, people having car accidents on the streets here in Toronto and not having enough EMS or police officers to get there.

I want to say, when you're looking at cannabis, you have to look at the big picture. Drinking and smoking dope—or whatever you guys want to call it, cannabis—the reality is, that's going to impair people even more in most cases. So we have to make sure that the testing is going to be okay so that when they get behind the wheel of a car, they're going to make sure that they're not doing what they did to my wife and to my family and to our grandkids by having somebody get hit. I think that's an important issue, to have that dialogue as we go through this.

I would like to say to the member from Brampton Centre, who did her inaugural speech, that I want to congratulate her. She did an incredible job. Do you know how hard it is—and it's actually even harder for a man when you get older—to stand up here and talk for an hour—the first time you come out of the gate and you're up here an hour? For guys like the member here who's in front of me and myself, the hardest part for us is: What do we for an hour without going to the washroom? But a young person for the first time doing an hour—I want to say congratulations to the member from Brampton Centre.

I want to talk about—I already did that. I'm going to start my speech. If they give me 20 minutes, I'm going to use the whole 20 minutes.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I thought you were done.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I know the member for municipalities; he has been up almost all the time, every day, talking about all these wonderful things he wants to see happen in Toronto. I'm not so sure I agree with you, but at least you're talking about it, so I congratulate you for that.

Let's get on to the bill. Thank you for allowing me to rise and speak to this bill today. Obviously, this is one of the issues that's going to draw the most attention over the next little while. There is a lot going on with this exciting new

proposal. As with any new proposal, we need to make sure we take the time to think it through properly. Madam Speaker—down here it's "Mr. Speaker," but I've changed that; it's Madam Speaker—I think a lot of public health professionals have spoken and made their opinions clear. I also think that many residents have spoken and made their opinions clear. It's time for cannabis to be made legal.

I know the federal Liberals believe that this is an idea that they came up with overnight. Magically, during the campaign, Justin Trudeau said, "Hey, we need to have cannabis right across the country." But the reality is, the NDP has a long history of talking about this, and of course we wanted to approach this in a few different ways.

Firstly, we wanted to start with decriminalization. That means we wanted people to stop going to jail if they were caught with small amounts of cannabis for personal use or were growing plants for personal use. How many remember that?

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I know my colleagues do; they're all putting their hands up.

If you think about it, this would have been a logical first step. It would have meant that kids wouldn't be charged criminally and we would have had time to adjust. All you have to do is go to our jails anywhere in the province of Ontario and see the number of young people who are behind bars.

I think one of the worst things about the way Trudeau introduced this was the fact that he didn't move to immediately decriminalize it. That meant that even though people voted for the Liberal Party believing that cannabis would be legal right away—how many thought that? Put your hands up. Remember that? When we had the election a few years ago, didn't we think it was going to happen overnight? Well, guess what? People are still being arrested some three years after the Liberals won that election—three years. Is that fair, or is that even honest? As far as I know, they have yet to comment on what will happen to the criminal records of those who were charged with cannabis possession for personal use. So there are issues around how people perceive this legislation coming into force and how it will actually roll out.

We could have had a smarter approach, Madam Speaker—I know you could probably help me with that—that began with decriminalization, something we were talking about long before the Liberals were talking about legalization; the NDP talked about this. I know that some of the members opposite oppose making cannabis use legal in any way. They've changed their minds now, but honestly, this is an issue that matters to voters.

Some people's health depends on their ability to access cannabis—some every day, sometimes more than once a day. Their medication is cannabis-based, and that medication provides them with some relief from their diseases. If we are a compassionate society, then we need to recognize that and recognize that the framework needs to exist for people to be able to access it. Trust me, I hear it all the time.

There is one constituent, who I won't name—though I'm sure he's watching right now—who calls my office every single day about this and gives me some great ideas around it. I'm not so sure I agree with all of his ideas, but he's a really good guy. He pays attention to the issue and he always calls me with an opinion. We don't always agree, but at least he lets me know how these regulations and laws affect him. He's not the only one. We get a lot of calls from people who have varying views on this issue and what we should do. Some people call about concerns with road safety. I just raised that. Put your hands up if you're concerned with road safety. Be honest; put your hands up.

Interjections.

Mr. Wayne Gates: There's only three. There's, what, 12, 14 over there. Get your hands up. We should all be concerned with road safety—all of us—and we need to have answers for them.

Madam Speaker, just last week, we heard that some Canadians may not be allowed to cross the border if they use cannabis. Did you hear about that? It was just last week. Whether or not that's true remains to be seen, but in a riding that has a number of border crossings like mine, in Niagara Falls, Fort Erie and Niagara-on-the-Lake, this matters in this House. We've got a deadline coming up, but it's important to ensure that our residents have their say on this.

1720

I'd like to talk about another trend that I see with the cannabis bill that is an example of where this government is going, and that's the privatization of public services. We need to make sure we have an open and full discussion. This board, like the LCBO, would take those funds and reinvest them into our community. We understand that. The cannabis control board of Ontario would take it and invest it back in our community, much like the LCBO. We all have used the LCBO, I would think—put your hands up if you haven't. It was a trick question; you guys are paying attention, it's good to see. My colleagues are all paying attention; it's good.

The LCBO takes those funds and reinvests them back in our community. Obviously, the Ford government has decided to open that up and offer those sales to private retailers down the road. There was a lot of debate about this in the community, about smaller retailers, online retailers and the government—and, of course, a mix of all three. But it concerns me because it's part of a larger trend, that this government is starting to privatize public services.

We heard just this week that the Premier may—and I'm saying "may"—turn his attention to the LCBO. Opening up cannabis sales is one thing, because the framework hasn't come into effect yet. But the LCBO is another beast entirely.

Selling off the LCBO would cut tens of thousands of jobs from virtually every community in this province. Do you guys all know that? We have an LCBO almost everywhere. Over the course of my last five years, we've had two open up right in my riding. They're growing; that means more jobs. We're not talking about bad jobs or

precarious jobs, but jobs that have the opportunity to make a decent wage and get benefits with it. That's important in the province of Ontario, particularly the benefits, if you're raising a family.

How is this sort of policy for the people? I'll repeat that again so my colleagues hear it: How is that sort of policy for the people?

Then, of course—and this is the important part; this is the part that I'd really like you to listen to—there is the issue of revenue, because that's all I heard from you guys: “We're \$15 billion in debt from the Liberals.” Here's where we talk about the LCBO, which brings revenue. This is probably information for the newer members on that side of the House: The LCBO provides billions, with a B—not millions, billions—of dollars of revenue back into the system that we use, revenue—we've had these conversations in question period—for things like hospitals. My new colleague, who stood up for an hour today, talked about the fact—I guess I can say your age; you already said it. She said that she's 33 years old, and when she was born, there was one hospital. We all know how big Brampton has gotten; it still has one hospital. So we need that revenue to build hospitals in our communities.

We need a new hospital down in Niagara; I might as well say that now. We've been waiting five years for our new Niagara south hospital, our Niagara Falls hospital. How are you going to build new hospitals if you're giving the revenue away? It makes no sense.

Roads, our schools—we've heard so much about our schools. I know the Minister of Education is here today. We've heard lots of people talking about our schools falling apart and not being fixed, and cutting \$100 million out of getting their schools fixed. But how do we pay for schools? No matter what you're doing, whether you're cutting or not, how do you pay for that? Through the LCBO. Am I right on that? It's publicly funded and publicly run. The revenue—they're making lots of money. Where does it go? It comes back into the province, and then the province puts it into hospitals, puts it into our roads and puts it into our schools.

The system allows us to ensure that the residents can get alcohol, but also those alcohol sales are returned to the community and provide for future generations, like our young pages down here. Once the revenue is gone—and listen to this, because we've seen this with hydro, by the way. You all talk about hydro. You're seeing that with hydro. Once that revenue is gone, it's gone forever. You don't get it back. You get that one-time hit of a couple of billion dollars, and then it's gone forever. That is how we go down that spiral of Tory cuts that we're so used to.

We've seen this playbook before. In the last session, we saw the Liberals take up a long-held PC belief, the sale of Hydro One. We all know—they don't admit it—that the PCs started the privatization of hydro, and look where it got us. The Liberals finished it, but it was started by the PCs.

I don't want to even touch on—maybe I will touch on it; I've got some time left. What have I got over here? Four and a half minutes? Yes, I think I'm all right.

Just like the nonsense with the sale of the 407—they argued at that time, by the way, that it was efficient or proper for the province to have those assets and then sold them off to a private interest. I might be wrong because I'm going off the top of my head, and you guys didn't give me a lot of time to prepare for this. I'm just saying. I'm just putting it out there, guys. I didn't have a lot of time.

I believe the 407 was sold for \$2 billion. I think something like that. Do you know what it's worth now? I believe \$100 billion.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: It was leased.

Mrs. Robin Martin: It's not sold—

Mr. Wayne Gates: No, I'm asking you a question now: Is that a good deal? I don't think it is. But imagine what we could do with that \$100 billion for our schools and hospitals. Suddenly—

Mrs. Robin Martin: It's leased.

Interjection: For 99 years.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's a 99-year lease that was signed by you guys, just for the record. In fairness, the Liberals tried to get out of it and they couldn't get out of it. They couldn't get out of that lease. It was a 99-year lease. But it has cost us billions of dollars that could have gone back into hospitals—a new hospital in Brampton, a new hospital in Niagara—and new schools. We could have done a lot of things with \$98 billion. I might have even been able to afford a Leafs ticket with that kind of money.

Suddenly, billions of dollars that were going into our public services were lost and lost forever. What did we gain from it? We gained—and this is true; I know the PCs are chirping at me a little bit, but that's fair—a one-time payout of money that is already long, long gone.

Madam Speaker, if their actions on the cannabis control board of Ontario and their past actions say anything, it's that our LCBO may be in trouble as well. I'm saying to all you guys, don't touch the LCBO. Don't touch it. Don't sell it. Don't privatize it. The question becomes, if they sell it off, why don't they care about the jobs in our communities? Where will they get the money and what will they do with the one-time sell-off of our assets?

Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: They're fair questions. I really think they are. One of you guys can answer when you stand up and do your two-minute hit on it.

These questions should all be pointed to one common denominator and do you know what that is? I want my colleagues to listen to this: that this sell-off would be wrong. The sell-off of the LCBO would be wrong.

Madam Speaker, returning to the issue of cannabis legislation—

Interjection.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Because I don't want somebody standing up and saying I'm violating section 23(b)(c) of something—I think we can all say it's time and we're ready. But how do we make sure that our communities are as ready as the general public? How do we ensure that there are standards in place to ensure that there are no impaired drivers on our roads? I have heard young people

say that driving high makes them better and more cautious. This is false, and it's absolutely dangerous.

This is where I put a note down to let everybody know, because nobody will believe me, I've never smoked marijuana or cannabis in my life, and I will tell you why—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You never exhaled.

Mr. Wayne Gates: No, I've got to tell you this, because this is true. I always thought that if I smoked a cigarette, it would stunt your growth.

Laughter.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I just thought that I'd let you know that. That's why I didn't get into anything else. I never smoked a cigarette either.

Returning to the issue of cannabis legalization: I think we can all say it's time and we're ready, but how do we make sure our communities are as ready as the general public, and how do we ensure there are standards in place? We have to be responsible enough to legalize cannabis, and that requires an honest discussion about the increased likelihood of impaired driving.

Madam Speaker, I think I've only got 30 seconds left; I won't go through it all. There's also an issue of affordability here. We need to ensure that cannabis, whether for medical use or recreational use, is affordable enough to be used by residents. Because if it isn't—if either the private retailers or even the government are gouging people on the price—it won't stop the black market. People won't use regulated cannabis if it's out of their ability to pay. I'm seeing this in my office. Companies that deal with medical marijuana suddenly increase their costs and, all of a sudden, someone that badly needs medication can't afford it.

1730

I'd like to thank you, Madam Speaker, for allowing me to say a few words.

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

Mr. Billy Pang: I am so honoured to have this opportunity to engage in this discussion regarding Bill 36, Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018. I can speak on behalf of all of my constituents. None of them, not even one, support the legalization of recreational cannabis by the Liberal government. None of them support it.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Of course there are some—

Mr. Billy Pang: None of them that I heard. Thank you very much.

The best news they share with me is that this government allowed municipalities to opt out from points of sale. My constituents believe the PC government is trying their best to do damage control. Aligning with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act with places to consume, our government focuses on continuing to keep the safety of our children and our communities. This is very important to me because I have two very young children, 15 and 10. I want them to stay away from any area where people will consume cannabis. Our legislation's goal, if passed, is to continue to undermine the underground illegal market, which is also very important. We don't want any underground illegal market anywhere in Ontario.

The best thing I can think of is, this government is open for consultation. They consult and bring with them from other stakeholders—

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, I wasn't going to bite, but I'm going to bite: Never say, "All of my constituents believe this, that or the other thing," because constituents—we all have them—have differences of opinion. I don't care what riding you come from.

But I do want to say two things in regard to what the government is doing and what the member spoke to. One is, I find it a little bit passing strange that the government didn't—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, yes, it's a good old saying. It's been in the language for a long time.

But it is a bit passing strange that we didn't try to mirror the Liquor Control Act. We are going to be able to allow people to smoke pot where you can smoke a cigarette—a park, a street, wherever it might be—but you can't do that when it comes to a glass of wine or a bottle of beer. It's kind of odd, and I think the government should have thought, "Maybe this is something we should look at in committee."

I don't know the answer. Maybe there is another way of doing this that I haven't thought of, but it seems to me that we should at least be trying to do the same as we do with the liquor act and say, "If you want to smoke up, that's your business. It's legal. Here are the places that you can do it. You can't do it in public places and you have to follow the same sort of rules as the Liquor Control Act." Now, I just thought that was something that we should at least look at.

I think the other thing is that the decision of the government to change the model from what was originally proposed, where an LCBO-type organization was going to sell rather than it going off to individual entrepreneurs—I think it's short-sighted. I think we would have been better off to continue down that path and utilize the expertise of the LCBO as they did with alcohol.

The last point is, and nobody has thought about this, but a lot of communities are dry reserves in the northern part of Ontario—a dry reserve where alcohol is not allowed. But are you going to allow people to order marijuana on-reserve when it might actually be a dry reserve? These are all issues that we need to look at once we get this thing into committee.

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

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Today we are discussing the Cannabis Statute Law Amendment Act. Let's not lose our focus of what the goal is, originally, of allowing cannabis: We are trying to undermine the underground market; we are trying to undermine the illegal sale of cannabis. While we are doing that, while achieving that goal, we have to keep an eye on and keep protecting our children and our community.

Thanks to the teams from the Attorney General and Minister of Finance—they put together the legislation—

we are trying to protect the community and trying to protect our children from the side effects of having that easy access to cannabis. Again, this is our duty: to put legislation that will allow and help the local municipality and police forces to be able to enforce it. It's important to give them funding; it's important to give them support. But, more importantly, we need to give them the tools, the legal tools, to enforce that and all the power of law to make it difficult for anybody to breach that or break the law.

We need to be very tough on this, and I think the legislation, as it stands now—the proposed legislation we are discussing today—is giving enough direction. We will continue to consult with stakeholders to see what we can do to fine-tune it as we move to achieve the main goal, which is safety for our community and safety for our children while we're achieving undermining of the underground illegal market.

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

Mr. Jamie West: One of the things that I find interesting today—and I have to comment; I think it's one of the first times since I've been to the Legislative Building—is this theme of us consulting and listening to each other and having a dialogue, where previously it seemed like we were just talking at each other and saying, "Join us," without actually looking at consultation, real consultation where we talk to each other. The theme I've heard all afternoon today is, "We need to get this right." It doesn't matter what side of the House you're on or what party you belong to; it's, "Let's get this right."

The other theme is about safety and education and our children. I think we're all aligned on this. As they say, the devil is in the details. Let's get it right. Let's work together. Let's figure it out properly.

One of the things the member from Niagara Falls said that I really want to echo is when he was talking about the LCBO model—the fact that it's a public resource that brings money in, and then we use that money to build our province, and how important that is. But, as well, what's important about that model is—he said "jobs," but I prefer the term "careers." If we're looking at how we're going to distribute cannabis and what we are going to have in here, let's not create "jobs" for people, because our province doesn't have a crisis with jobs. We know many people have two or three jobs and still can't make ends meet. What we have a crisis with is careers. Careers are what drive the economy. It's extra money in the pockets at the end of the day. It's retirement. It's affordability. It's going to the grocery store and not having to carry a calculator with you, because you just buy the things your family needs to eat. That's a focus we have to include in this. We have to make it affordable, and we have to create careers for people and show that light at the end of the tunnel for people who are in precarious work.

A final point I want to talk about—and it's been mentioned a couple of times, but I'm not sure how well it has been highlighted—is the concern around apartment and multi-use dwellings. I have heard this in my riding from tenants, landlords and realtors. It's not quite clear what the

legislation is going to stand for, who is responsible for it, how you enforce it and how you get along together when you're trying to enforce it.

Those are the topics I wanted to highlight.

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

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): We will have to wait until after questions and comments.

Back to the member from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I can stand up for sure now? I'm okay?

First of all, one of the things around the privatization of cannabis: If you are looking at jobs, I'm not so sure how long they would last as a career, because they will be privatized, and they are usually not open to higher wages and benefits and pensions. But I guess we could see. We can always hope for that.

To everybody who said a few words, I want to say thank you very much. To my colleagues: I think it's great that you participated in the debate.

1740

I'm going to say a couple of things here that—I didn't get to all the pages. We are ready as a society for this, but we need to be ready as a government. Our regulations need to be clear and they need to take into account the input from our communities, mainly the municipalities.

And because I don't get a chance to talk a lot, I want to say as clear as I can to my brothers and sisters in this room today, stop the privatization of our public services and utilize the money that we have in places like the LCBO for our hospitals, our schools and our infrastructure.

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

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: I just wanted to correct the record. The member from Timmins had said that we needed clarification as to whether or not—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Sorry. Members can only correct their own records, not those of other members in the House.

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: Okay. I just wanted to note for the record, then, that the sale of cannabis can be prevented on reserves—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Members can only correct their own records. Had you said it then you would be able to correct it, but you cannot correct the record on what another member has said.

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: Apologies, Madam Speaker.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: It's been really good to be in the House this afternoon, Madam Speaker, and to hear so many people. I'm just going to list them because it's quite a list: the Attorney General, the Minister of Finance, the members for Oshawa, Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, Windsor–Tecumseh, Brampton Centre, Ottawa West–Nepean, Hamilton Mountain, Sudbury, Waterloo, Durham, Markham–Unionville, Niagara Falls and Timmins.

To the member from Niagara Falls: I understand what he means. When I started drinking coffee at the age of 13, my mother warned me that it would stunt my growth. I always wonder how difficult it would be for me to find clothes if I hadn't started drinking coffee when I did.

The great thing about being in the House this afternoon is that I think this is one of the best debates that I have had the opportunity to be a part of. We're all trying to do what's best for our province in this legislation. What I'm hearing this afternoon is that we can argue about some of the finer points of this, and this legislation may need some tweaking. What I heard from the Attorney General was that we're still consulting. We're still listening to see how this will all roll out.

I've heard the concerns about what will happen to the butts. I've watched children across the street from my old house, which was also my office, picking up cigarette butts that were left there by other people and smoking them for their own use.

I worry about the stigma of what this will mean. We worry about that with people who are using this for medical reasons, like PTSD, and what it means to say, "I'm a medical marijuana user" or "I'm just a user, period." I've seen that in my practice, also.

I wonder about the workers. What level is safe to be building cars? What level is allowed? I'm a volunteer firefighter. We now have a zero-tolerance policy for alcohol, and I believe it will be zero tolerance for cannabis also. How does that impact us in our social lives when we're ready to respond 24/7, 365? I have lots of questions in regard to that.

Second-hand smoke: I think the member from Timmins made an excellent point when he said that you're allowed to walk down the street and smoke a cigarette, and now we're going to be using the same thing, so should we be also then contemplating allowing open alcohol to be walking down the street, in which there are no second-hand effects from drinking that? All these thoughts are running through my mind.

We have the fallback of being able to say that this is a federal decision that was foisted on us, but on the other hand, as we've heard this afternoon, you know it's time. These are all things going through my mind.

How do we keep it out of the hands of youth? I forget when I read that, but we've heard that the first thing that most of our young people will smoke is not made out of tobacco and it will probably be something with cannabis in it.

I got home yesterday evening and we right away went out for a fire call and two people in a very bad car accident; both of them had to be cut out of their car. Someone said they smelled alcohol—I'm not sure—but now we are adding something else that can cause those problems too. How are we going to deal with road safety? Do we now have adequate measures in place? I think we're getting close. In speaking to police officers, they still have some questions. Most of them have now gone through the training.

As far as privatization goes, our commitment through this whole process has been, how do we keep our kids safe

and how do we eliminate the illegal market? I think the privatization of this—the LCBO is another whole conversation. To the member from Niagara Falls, I don't know where that's going to settle out now as we move towards having beer and wine in stores and where that's going. But in this instance, I think the model that we have to go with in order to combat what we are dealing with on the street is to allow those multiple stores to open up. The Attorney General, or maybe it was the Minister of Finance, estimated somewhere between 500 and 1,000. We don't know, but that also means that we let the market take care of itself on that. I wonder sometimes if we'll be dealing with a little bit of a dot-com bubble with the cannabis industry. Who will be the big winners and who will be the big losers? But like those things also, we let the market decide. So I'm very excited about that.

The question about apartments, about condominiums: That's been a big one in my riding. How do we keep it legal for people to do what they have to do, and yet have respect for the future renters or owners of that condominium? That's just out there. I think we'll have to wait and see how this settles out.

I wanted to quickly just go through this, not just for everyone here in the House but also for myself. Excuse me for reading but I love the name: An Act to enact a new Act and make amendments to various other Acts respecting the use and sale of cannabis and vapour products in Ontario. That shows you the other attempts that have been made at this legislation. I think what we're going for is something that's a little bit more simple but, again, with the primary goal of reducing the illegal market and keeping our children and communities safe.

We'll have new controls. There are basically four different aspects of this legislation. We're going to be moving to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario to be responsible for licensing the dispensaries. Therefore, the OCRC will cease to operate as a subsidiary of the LCBO. I think they have the experience in order to do that. The legislation would allow for regulation-making authority to set concentration limits for how many retail licences a single operator can hold. We're trying to limit someone having a monopoly in this business. We'll allow for federally licensed producers to operate one licensed dispensary. Then, of course, we're moving into aligning with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act with the places to consume. Again, there are still lots of questions with that, but our primary focus has been and will continue to be the safety of our children and our communities.

Our legislation's goal, if passed, is to continue to undermine the underground illegal market. We are consulting and will continue to consult with all stakeholders impacted by this legislation, and we look forward to the legislative process in committees to begin. I think that's what's important here too. Everyone's voice is important. Everyone has a stake in this. Everyone has children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews who will be impacted by this legislation.

As was said earlier from the member in the opposition, we're all trying to get this right. And you know what? I've

been alive long enough; we know we will get this legislation wrong. In my time on county council, and even here, it seems so much of what we deal with is the unintended consequences of well-intentioned legislation and trying to correct those things. But what I have heard this afternoon is that we're all here on this one for the right reasons, and I haven't seen that partisanship on this. So I look forward to working with the other members as we move forward on this.

1750

As a government, we made the decision, should the legislation pass, to align the rules of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, which contains an outright ban from smoking on playgrounds, child care facilities, schools and hospitals, to name a few. Furthermore, municipalities have the ability to enact bylaws restricting smoking in other outdoor spaces, including parks.

We're going to this model where we'll have—and again, I'm reading this for myself as well as for everyone else. It “would be amended to permit the Ontario Cannabis Retail Corp. (OCRC) and stores authorized under the proposed Cannabis Licence Act, 2018, if passed, to sell recreational cannabis privately in Ontario.” That's our goal. “It would be made an offence for an unlicensed store to claim it as authorized to sell recreational cannabis, including misusing the cannabis retail seal.” That's going to move us into this.

I really appreciate the break that we're going to see between October 17 and April 1. For those stores that are selling illegally, they're going to—well, the municipalities are going to have a few months there in order to clean this stuff up. Again, if you're caught selling, you're automatically not going to be able to be a seller under the legislation, and I really appreciate that.

“The Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, and the Cannabis Act, 2017, would be amended to clarify where the smoking and vaping medical and recreational cannabis is permitted as well as where it is prohibited, such as in enclosed public places and enclosed workplaces, vehicles and boats.

“The maximum fine for using cannabis in a prohibited place would be \$1,000 for a first offence, and \$5,000 for a subsequent offence, the same fines that apply to smoking tobacco or using an electronic cigarette in a prohibited place.”

I still wonder what that means on the street or in those places where it's legal and you walk through these clouds. I remember going to the Western Fair in London, Ontario, and you'd walk through the clouds of cannabis smoke back then, too.

“The proposed Cannabis Licence Act, 2018, would set out a licensing and regulatory regime for private cannabis retail stores administered by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). This new statute would establish eligibility criteria for the issuance of licences and authorizations.

“Those interested would be able to apply for two types of licences—” necessary, one for “a retail operator licence (ROL) and a cannabis retail manager licence—and a retail

store authorization (RSA)...” You'd need to have both and you'd need have the ROL first.

“The proposed legislation would make it clear that persons operating in contravention of prescribed provisions of that act, the Cannabis Act, 2017, or the Cannabis Act (Canada) would not be eligible” to get the ROL or the retail operator's licence. So we're cutting off that illegal part.

“The AGCO would be required to give public notice of an application for an RSA before issuing one. The notice would include a request for the municipality and its residents to make written submissions to the registrar in respect of whether the RSA is in the public interest.” So there's an open opportunity for people to comment on this.

“Licensed producers under the Cannabis Act (Canada) would only be allowed to establish one store only, on-site at a production facility.”

And then how would the sales work? “The proposed Cannabis Licence Act, 2018, would establish requirements for the sale of cannabis in cannabis retail stores and the operation of cannabis retail stores.”

Enforcement would be through the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, through regulatory measures, such as licence sanctions, suspensions and revocations, and monetary penalties, as the member from Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte said so eloquently. I think to get around that shell company, to be able to go after the owners of the property gives this legislation the teeth in order to really take it to the illegal market. Fines of \$250,000 to \$1 million, I think, would also take a good bite out of that.

The municipalities have the option to opt out. I've been wondering how that would work out in Brantford–Brant. We have two municipalities and two nations in my riding; how would that all work out? On the municipal side, they have the option to opt out, but again only until January 22, just because of business reasons, and then they could opt in later if they wanted to.

Municipal funding: The province will provide \$40 million over two years. We know that—\$10,000 in total. As soon as possible this year, the province would make the first payment to all municipalities on a per-household basis, with at least \$5,000 provided to each municipality, just to help with the implementation. The province would then distribute a second payment following the proposed deadline for the municipalities to opt out, which would be January 22.

I really appreciated, having been a county councillor, hearing the input. Our election is coming up. It's the 1st today, so in three weeks we will be having the October 22 municipal election. Not to dump this on a municipality that might be somewhat lame-duck or on its way out, but to allow municipalities to take a look at this with a fresh face and give them until that January 22 deadline in order to phase this in, whether they want to be in or out: I really appreciate that part of it. The funding would just be to support the initial costs related to hosting the retail storefronts.

The province is still considering setting aside a certain portion of the municipal funding and giving each of the

2018–19 and 2019–20—for unforeseen circumstances. Priority would be given to municipalities that have not opted out. Do you know what? Let's face it: There will be unforeseen circumstances.

Finally, if Ontario's portion of the federal excise duty on recreational cannabis over the first two years of legalization exceeds \$100 million, the province will put 50% of the surplus only to municipalities that have not opted out as of January 22. So we have a carrot there, too, depending on how this goes.

First Nations, getting back to what the member from Ottawa West–Nepean stated, or tried to state: They can opt out. The proposed Cannabis Licence Act, 2018, would permit a First Nation's band council to request that the registrar not issue retail store authorizations for cannabis retail stores to be located in their communities. The registrar would be required to comply with such a request, as well as with any future request to amend or rescind the original request. I don't know—that's a question that I have yet. Does that mean they can opt in or out depending on how it goes? We'll have to see.

The AGCO would be required to publish a list of First Nations communities which prohibit cannabis retail stores on its website, and the First Nation's band council would need to approve the location of a proposed store before the registrar could issue an authorization for that store. I appreciate that we're treating First Nations as we are the municipalities, in being able to opt out. I think there are a lot more questions that need to be answered with that. I see the proliferation of a lot of illegal tobacco in my riding, and I wonder how this legislation legalizing cannabis will impact the First Nations in my riding.

I have some big questions about that. It was said earlier that some of us might be against the legalization of cannabis at all; I'm not coming at it at all from that. I'm wondering what the sociological and economic impact will be in our First Nations communities, especially with what we see with the contraband tobacco problem that we have there also. It's a big worry for me, and I look forward to working with my Six Nations communities as we go forward from this.

The governance of the Ontario Cannabis Retail Corp. will be amended to provide the OCRC with the exclusive right to sell cannabis in Ontario online and by any means other than by operating physical stores. The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario will be responsible for licensing dispensaries, therefore the OCRC will cease to operate as a subsidiary of the LCBO, again moving away from that. The legislation will allow for regulation-making authority to set concentration limits for how many store licences a single operator may hold, will allow federally licensed producers to operate one licensed dispensary—these are just the main talking points; I guess I've gone through all that.

What I'd like to end with is, and I want to read in its entirety—I'm sure that the editorial board of the Toronto Star was not planning on having this read into Hansard this

afternoon. I apologize in advance, Madam Speaker, and please correct me if I am not referring to the proper names. But I'd like to just read this: "Ontario Is On the Right Track to Pot Legalization." This is by the Star editorial board, October 1, 2018.

"Regardless of whether you're for or against making cannabis legal in Canada, it's going to happen on Oct. 17.

"So it bears repeating that provincial governments must create clear, sensible, enforceable legislation that gives consumers access to pot while curbing the black market and keeping it out of the hands of underage kids.

"For the most part, Ontario Attorney General Caroline Mulroney and Finance Minister Vic Fedeli got it right last week when they introduced the Ford government's framework for cannabis retailing."

Interjection.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'm getting to the bad part. Hold on.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I just want to remind the member to use—

Mr. Will Bouma: "As it stands, the legislation sensibly treats the smoking of cannabis like tobacco"—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I just want to remind members: We refer to other members by their titles or their ridings, not by their names.

Mr. Will Bouma: I apologize, and that's what I was apologizing in advance for. Yes, so the AG and the finance minister—I knew I would do that.

"That means people won't be allowed to toke up in indoor public spaces, but will be permitted to smoke pot outdoors in places where tobacco smoking is permitted.

"That means, for example, that smoking in parks will be okay. But smoking near children's playgrounds—where tobacco smoking is already banned—will not."

I am quickly running out of time.

That's the good part. I wanted to quickly talk about some of their concerns.

"Still, the legislation has some shortcomings that the Progressive Conservative government should rethink.

"One is allowing municipalities to decide whether they can ban legal cannabis stores within their borders entirely. The legislation gives them until Jan. 22 to decide whether to do that.

"The legislation also allows the government to set regulations on 'buffer zones' near schools." I've seen those numbers. It may not be legal.

In short, there's a lot of good in our legislation. There are a lot of questions to be answered. I appreciate your time.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, I just want to welcome Anne Boucher, who is the president of the student union of the University of Toronto. She is here with us today.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1802.

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Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	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	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	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	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Downey, Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	
Dunlop, Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Hon. / L'hon. Jim (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakubski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS 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