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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 2 August 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 2 août 2018

The House met at 0900.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CAP AND TRADE
CANCELLATION ACT, 2018

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on August 1, 2018, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When the House last debated Bill 4, it's my understanding that the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound still had some time on the clock.

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to finish my discussion on Bill 4, An Act respecting the preparation of a climate change plan, providing for the wind down of the cap and trade program and repealing the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016.

Mr. Speaker, just a few short weeks ago, our government was given a clear mandate to put people first and make life more affordable for Ontario families. Equally clear was our commitment to scrap the cap-and-trade carbon tax that was imposed by the previous Liberal government. Promise made, promise kept. That's why it is an honour to stand here today and announce that, as one of our earliest acts, we have gone down that path.

If passed, this legislation will officially remove the cap-and-trade carbon tax from Ontario's books. In doing so, we hope to fulfill our promise to the people of Ontario. Ontario's carbon tax era is over. A cap-and-trade carbon tax increased the price of everything. That's why we know that the winding down of the cap-and-trade carbon tax will benefit all Ontarians.

The conclusion of the cap-and-trade is a key step towards fulfilling the government's commitment to reduce gas prices by 10 cents per litre, but the benefits don't stop

there: cheaper gas prices, lower energy bills and money in people's pockets. Eliminating the cap-and-trade carbon tax will save the average family \$260 per year.

In addition to saving families money, the elimination of the cap-and-trade carbon tax will remove a cost burden from Ontario businesses, allowing them to grow, create jobs and compete in other jurisdictions. It is anticipated that through the cancellation of cap-and-trade and reducing the fuel tax, Ontario will create an estimated 14,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to applaud the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the member from Ajax. He has only been a cabinet minister for three and a half or four weeks on the job, and getting up to speed with the work that they have been doing, and yet he brought this legislation in to show people that we were true to our word and we were going to take action.

The orderly and transparent wind-down of the cap-and-trade carbon tax will benefit all Ontarians while offering some support for eligible registered participants in the previous program.

We are ensuring that no additional cap-and-trade carbon tax costs will be imposed on suppliers to avoid passing these costs down to consumers. Again, that will allow them more money in their pockets and the ability to choose where they spend their money.

If passed, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act will repeal the cap-and-trade legislation, extinguish allowances, protect taxpayers from further costs, and set a regulation-making authority for a compensation framework. Our government looks forward to moving past the previous government's obsession with raising taxes, and instead focusing on an environmental plan that works.

While we understand the challenges that climate change presents, we do not believe that the solution is found in a regressive tax. That is why our plan for the people made it clear that we will deliver real action on providing clean air and water, a focus on conservation and reducing emissions, while cleaning up litter, garbage and waste.

If passed, the legislation we're tabling would help us put in place a better plan for addressing real environmental goals, including fighting climate change. It is our commitment to put in place a more effective plan, a made-in-Ontario solution to address the environmental challenges we face while respecting the taxpayers of Ontario and, in my case, the great people of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday—or Madam Speaker, sorry. I didn't see the change happen. I didn't see you take the

chair, perhaps I should say, Madam Speaker—just to put a little levity in our morning when we're talking about such a serious issue.

Madam Speaker, when I spoke yesterday, I talked a fair bit about a couple of things, one being our commitment to nuclear, the low-cost, stable, emissions-free, baseload generation of our nuclear plants, and that we are fully supportive of Pickering, Darlington and, in my backyard, Bruce. That's in the riding of the honourable member Lisa Thompson from Huron–Bruce and the Minister of Education.

We stand here knowing that, in the case of nuclear, our grid is 98% carbon-free. A big reason for that is the Candu technology—Canadian technology—in our resilient nuclear fleet. We want to make sure that we continue to go down that path. I encourage all of the members, both the opposition and the independents—especially our friend the member from Guelph, the independent Green. I often want to take the opportunity, when he's here debating with us, to ensure that someone who is so passionate about the environment will actually support what we're trying to do, that we're actually going to do real change for the environment.

One of the biggest concerns we've had, and one we debated here for months and months and months on the old legislation, was that there was actually nothing that the Liberal government would guarantee that was actually going to limit or reduce pollution. What they were allowing was for people to continue to pay to pollute. I can't understand that, for all the people that suggest that they're so environmentally concerned, that they would actually accept legislation that would allow people to continue to pay to pollute. But there was nothing with reductions coming down or emissions actually reducing. We wanted to do that. We tried to amend that through the bills, and in the past Parliament, we did not get there. So I'm truly pleased that we were able to get to this point.

I mentioned yesterday that they talked a fair bit—particularly the NDP, the official opposition—about California. They seemed to be really keen on California. We were going to spend billions and billions and billions of dollars, send that to California, which was going to prop up their economy, make them doubly competitive against our businesses here in Ontario. I can't fathom, for the life of me, why anyone would actually think sending billions of dollars to California was something that was good for Ontarians, and particularly the people that they represent in their respective ridings.

I'm hopeful that as we introduce this legislation, rather than some of the things that we've been hearing and the derogatory remarks by many people and the ability to try to stir things up, we can actually settle that down, we can actually work collaboratively for the benefit of all Ontarians. Regardless of what riding or what party we belong to, I think we always have to make sure that we're looking at what the opportunity is to be able to help our environment, to help the people of Ontario.

By doing this, taking those costs out—the cost of gasoline. Ten cents per litre is going to come back, which

is going to allow a lot of people, particularly those in a riding like Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound—we don't have public transit except in the city of Owen Sound. Everywhere else, you have to drive. So that gas tax decrease is going to actually have a huge impact, a positive impact. That will allow people to have money to spend where they choose, which will build the economy up and create more jobs in our own ridings.

I think we want to ensure that we're doing that. That \$260—to be able to put it back in the pockets of people is absolutely critical. That's going to help, again, drive the economy. I think we've been talking in here a fair bit about people, and the best way to give people that sense of self is to actually have a good-paying job, to be able to support their families and their loved ones. By tackling this piece of legislation, ensuring that we're doing it in a pragmatic, practical sense, so there's going to be more money in the pockets of everyday Ontarians, that's actually going to help drive our economy. That's actually going to create more jobs—14,000 more jobs as a result.

I again applaud the minister for his efforts that are going to ensure that there are more jobs, that we're actually more competitive. Our businesses are going to be more competitive. I think I talked yesterday about the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters association, which was very concerned that our biggest trading partner in the south doesn't have a carbon tax. That allows them to be way more competitive than we are here in Ontario. So we, again, have to stand firm to make sure that there isn't a regressive tax that puts the cost of goods and services in our province higher than those of our competitors and makes it very, very challenging.

0910

I want to just quote the minister, because I think it's worth quoting again: "Ontario's carbon tax era is over." Cancelling the cap-and-trade carbon tax is "the right thing to do, it's a good thing to do, and it's one more example of promises made; promises kept." That is from Rod Phillips, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Again, he's bringing out a piece of legislation that's practical. It's going to have targets. It's going to make sure that it's actually changing the curve of emissions. It's not just going to pretend and feel good and get highlights in the newspaper and across the media, saying, "We're environmentalists and we're standing for this." We're truly going to put action in place that will provide clean air and water, with a focus on conservation and reducing emissions, because at the end of the day, if we're not reducing emissions, we're not changing the environment; we're not changing the health of Ontarians; we're not changing what people continue to say they want to do.

So I hope and I encourage all members of this House who have been elected democratically in their own ridings to come to the table, to work with us on this legislation. It's always good. We were on that side not too long ago, and we know that there's a job to be done by the opposition. I know many of my friends across the aisle; they are the type of people who want to work with

us. So I open our arms to them. I say: Join with us. Come to the table with good thoughts and solutions. Come with positive thoughts. Come with the ability to say, “How can we work with you to make sure that we do truly protect the environment and improve what’s going to happen, particularly for our kids and grandkids?”

Always when I’m speaking here, I look reverently at all of our pages and the great work they’ve done. Thank you for coming back and sharing some of your summer with us. When I got elected, the whole reason I got elected was the next generation. I don’t have grandchildren yet. I have two sons, Zach and Ben. Zach just turned 24 yesterday, so happy belated birthday to my son Zach. I have a ton of nieces and nephews and other family members. It’s all about you. It’s all about the future. The environment absolutely has to be critical, but we have to do that in balance with a thriving economy so we have the ability to pay for all those goods and services and front-line programs that we all deserve.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: I want to thank the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound, and the minister, for his comments. I actually want to try to begin this morning on a collegial note. I want to speak to my friends on the other side of the aisle in language that I think they can identify with. I want to try to put a cost on climate change for you, because you don’t have to listen to socialists like me to get it; you’ve mentioned that you get it. I’m glad to hear that.

The insurers of this country are estimating that the cost of floods, forest fires and other extreme weather events right now runs at \$1 billion. That’s up from \$400 million six years ago. What we know right now is that other countries—including the United States, headed by a President with whom I have very little in common—actually have seen some pretty seismic changes in their economy.

Do you know, Madam Speaker, that over half the energy jobs in the United States are renewable energy jobs? The energy sector: Over half the jobs in the United States are renewable energy jobs. Germany, a country I spoke about last afternoon in this House: Half of its energy is coming from renewable energy. We see cities like Copenhagen that are generating 10% to 20% of their country’s electricity on their own through renewable energy strategies.

This province is abundantly rich in natural resources. What we are not abundantly rich in, Madam Speaker, to be honest, is urgency with respect to climate change.

The cap-and-trade plan brought forward under the previous government had flaws. I don’t think anybody on this side of the aisle would disagree with that. But what is deeply troubling for me is the notion that we will get rid of cap-and-trade without having a substantial plan in place. So I welcome seeing the plan that our friends are going to be bringing forward, but it had better have ambitious targets to deal with the numbers that I see that I think are incontrovertible: the fact that we need to hit

1.5 degrees of total global warming if we want to have a planet to live on.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: I’m pleased to rise today to respond to my friend and also the comments across. I think this is a very important bill for Ontario’s future. As our Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has said, we believe that climate change is important to address, and we plan to have a plan to address that. That’s what the member is asking for. We realize that it’s important to address these issues, but this plan was not addressing these issues. It was not actually doing anything to protect the environment. It’s costing Ontario a lot of money. It’s going to cost us in competitiveness. That’s why we don’t think we should be proceeding with the current cap-and-trade plan, and that’s why we’ve brought forward this bill for an orderly wind-down of that.

Our objective is to have that orderly wind-down and to protect taxpayers from the cost. So I think the plan is a sound plan to do that. We’re heading in the right direction. It’s a matter of balancing priorities. We’re looking forward to working on an environmental plan, as my friend said, hopefully with the input of a lot of people in this House, because I’m sure there are a lot of good ideas here. But we want to have a plan that is not just a tax grab, that is not just taking money out of the pockets of Ontarians and sending it to other jurisdictions, making our businesses less competitive. That is not a plan that will help Ontario in any way.

We realize that some members feel that there is something urgent that needs to be addressed urgently, but we must make sure that we are doing things that actually address the problem as opposed to things that are just for headlines.

The member opposite mentioned Copenhagen, which gets 20% of its electricity from renewable energy, but I would point out that Copenhagen is on an island in the middle of the ocean. It’s much easier when you’re on an island in the middle of the ocean to rely—

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

Questions and comments?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: People in London are reeling from the short-sighted cancellation of cap-and-trade. On this issue, we need to distinguish between words and actions. I’d like to focus on the actions, not the slogans, of this Conservative government. Each action in isolation might not be noticeable, but together they form a disturbing and troubling pattern.

In my riding of London, our social housing was built in the 1960s and 1970s. The heating, cooling and lighting are in dire need of replacement and would have seen upgrades until this government came into power. The Conservative government barrelled in, cancelling cap-and-trade. As a result, funding for the Social Housing Apartment Improvement Program and GreenON Social Housing program were gone. Over \$8 million for vital upgrades in London is now lost.

Last week, I told this House that London's family shelters are at 219% capacity, but this government is content to point fingers at the federal government and single out refugees instead of dealing with the problem by opening provincially and federally owned properties.

As if that weren't enough, now Ontarians on social assistance will see a 50% cut from their scheduled increase.

My constituents are asking: Why is this government targeting the most vulnerable in Ontario?

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

Ms. Donna Skelly: The cap-and-trade program that was put forward by the previous government really does nothing to impact climate change. Climate change is real. Our government has recognized that. What it does is it is an onerous tax on the lives of hard-working Ontarians right across this province.

I was very honoured, after being elected, to accept the position of parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Our mandate is to foster a strong, innovative economy that can provide jobs, opportunities and prosperity for all Ontarians. This includes delivering programs, services and tools to help businesses innovate and compete in today's fast-changing global economy. It also means finding innovative ways to cut red tape and to improve regulations to better support business.

The cancellation of cap-and-trade is a critical component of carrying out our mandate. The end of cap-and-trade means the average Ontario household will now save about \$260 a year on energy and fuel costs and indirect costs on increased goods and services. It will also remove a cost from Ontario businesses, a burden. That will allow them to compete around the world, to grow and to create jobs.

The Liberal government's expensive cap-and-trade tax made Ontario simply unaffordable and uncompetitive. It added 4.3 cents per litre to the cost of gasoline for Ontario families, and it increased the cost of heating a home. It lined government coffers with \$1.9 billion a year that was wasted on political self-interest and scandal. The orderly winding down of the cap-and-trade is a key step towards fulfilling this government's commitment to making Ontario open for business once again.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I return to the member for Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: Thank you to all the speakers.

To the member from Ottawa Centre, a self-described socialist, I think that's just wonderful, but I like to hear that collegial thought, and I want to thank his colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin, because he stood up in the House the other day and again tried to foster that thought that we can work here together. I'm really, really thinking we're having some impact here, because yesterday when I was speaking, the member from Timmins actually started off by saying "Promise made, promise kept." So I think we're actually moving the meter, Madam Speaker;

I think we're actually doing that. What I am hopeful with this is that we're actually going to get more of that collegiality, we're going to get people working together collaboratively so that we have true change. If I can get that member from the Green Party to say "Promise made, promise kept," I know we're really going to be going there.

The member from Ottawa Centre talked about renewable energy. What I want to ask him is, nuclear is actually baseload power. It's stable, well-paying jobs. It's low-cost, emissions-free, baseload generation, as opposed to intermittent energy that's going to cost us \$133 billion over the next 20 years, for 5% of the grid at the best of times. So I want to ensure that what he is talking about—that we are actually looking at it from a pragmatic, reality baseload.

The member from Eglinton–Lawrence talked about the plan for climate change as very important. It was one of our first pieces of legislation. I think that just goes to show, again, that we want it to be realistic and pragmatic, not a regressive tax and not feel-good slogans.

To the member from London North Centre, I think all I'm going to say is thanks for your opinion. I want to ask you to ask the people in your riding, why are you so intent on sending billions of dollars to California when that money could be going to the social housing you suggest you're so concerned about?

And to the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook, she referenced a regressive, onerous tax. I want to congratulate her on becoming the PA to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. You and Minister Wilson are going to do a great job because I know you are inherently wanting to make our province better. You're going to make it competitive for our businesses and all of the people. That's where the money comes from to pay for our programs and services.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: Good morning, Speaker. It's always wonderful waking up, coming in for 9 a.m. in the morning and seeing you in the chair. It's going to become a routine.

Seeing my friend from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound across the way, it looks like we're going to be scheduled regularly together inside the House, so I'll be hearing a lot from him. He's going to be hearing a lot from me.

Speaker, it's always a great privilege and honour to stand on behalf of the good people of Algoma–Manitoulin when I take my seat. As a matter of fact, this morning I'm pretty sure that Mrs. Trepanier out of Gore Bay—Mrs. Trepanier, good morning—is joining us, and also Marlene Turner out of Manitowadge. Good morning, Marlene. These are two individuals who have been watching and helping me since I've been elected. As you can tell, I have a French accent. Sometimes my pronunciation isn't the best, and they are always there to help me out. I always enjoy, when I meet up with them at constituency clinics or when I go have tea with them, just to sit down and talk, because I value their views. They

are respected individuals from their communities and they certainly bring many of the issues to me when we do sit down.

Speaker, what can I say? The Cap and Trade Cancellation Act is probably one of the worst things this government is going to do or has done. You know what? It's going to be taking us backwards and there's no doubt about it.

Conservatives shamelessly confused people during the election, deliberately mixing up the federal carbon tax with the cap-and-trade program we share with Quebec and California. What is truly shameful is that the Conservatives didn't want to explain what the cap-and-trade program was, what it was doing and how it was working. They knowingly omitted to explain that people wouldn't be paying tax on carbon when actually all our big polluters were in a common market with Quebec and California, and the more they polluted, the more they paid through allowances.

You know what, Speaker? All that money they paid was going to help us transition to a greener economy. That was going to help us retrofit our homes, our schools and our businesses. That was going to help us invest in greener alternatives for energy, transportation and much, much more.

But this Conservative government is refusing to protect the environment for Ontarians today and for future generations. This is nothing but the act of climate change deniers. I call that CCD. That's going to be a theme throughout my comments that I have on this bill this morning. That's shameful. If this Conservative government thinks cap-and-trade is not the way to go and that it is too costly to Ontarians, what are they proposing to replace it? Nothing—they propose nothing to protect the environment. That's CCD.

Nothing in this bill aims at reducing greenhouse gas emissions or fighting climate change. They just don't think it's important to preserve the planet we live on. They even got rid of the mention of the words "climate change" in the name of the Ministry of the Environment. Now, that's CCD.

Words matter, and this Conservative government clearly had no intention of working to preserve a healthy planet for our children. The cancellation of cap-and-trade will only help the rich—and the rich will get richer—like every single decision this government is making.

Do you know what's funny, Mr. Speaker? Nobody in Quebec or California is talking about cancelling their cap-and-trade. That's because cap-and-trade is not bad for the economy; it's good for the economy. Quebec's economy is booming and it is still considered one of the most proactive jurisdictions in North America regarding the environment. California's economy is booming, as well. Even better, California met its greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets early. That is pretty darn good.

Meanwhile, our new Premier is ripping up contracts and undermining investor confidence in doing business in the biggest province in this country. And who knows

how much we will end up paying in compensation for the breach of those contracts—the instability that it's sending, the signal that it's giving to a lot of businesses that are looking at Ontario and coming to invest here? That's going to be a lot of money. Does gas plant 2.0 come to mind, or does Ford plan 2.0 come to mind? These are some of the things that we're going to be paying for for a very, very, very long time.

This province is big and has very different perspectives as to where we should be heading. This government is literally going against the wishes of 60% of the population, and I brought that up in some of my comments earlier this week. New Democrats, Liberals and the Greens were all in favour of continuing with the cap-and-trade program. It was not a perfect system, as my colleague brought up earlier, and there were some flaws in it, but we had something to work with.

We had proposed modifications to the cap-and-trade program. New Democrats recognized that northern and rural communities as well as lower-income people were going to end up paying more—yes, more, because we are definitely impacted at a greater cost throughout northern Ontario. So it was only fair to redistribute 25% of the cap-and-trade revenues to them directly, to mitigate those impacts so that they could use it in their economies, so that they could move towards greener sustainable options that were there, so that they could invest in their homes. That was part of our plan.

Now this government is offering nothing—zero—to the millions of people in this province who wanted to see Ontario be a leader in the fight against climate change. A true government for the people wouldn't look for quick, cheap wins that will end up costing Ontarians way more in the long run. This government has decided to go down a path of ideology and backroom deals.

An NDP government would absolutely do the opposite of what this Conservative government is doing right now.

Conservatives claim that they are all about creating and protecting jobs. I'll get to that a little bit later, in regard to creating and protecting jobs, because they are hurting and they are cancelling jobs in my riding of Algoma-Manitoulin. This government hasn't created or protected any jobs so far—quite to the contrary.

0930

Again, in my riding, the cancellation of the cap-and-trade program and the cancellation of the Green Ontario Fund has created a climate of uncertainty. I talked about this earlier this week: What about a small contractor? He has roughly about 12 to 15 employees. Dubois Construction, in Elliot Lake: They did all the training that was required. They went through all the processes. They sent their employees in order to get the proper certification. They invested. They paid into the rooms. They paid the bills. They did the mileage. They did what was expected of them. They went out, they inspected homes and they took the time to listen to some of the investments that needed to be done in many of the communities, particularly in Elliot Lake and the surrounding area. What happens to them?

What happens to the individuals that have ordered the windows, ordered the doors, ordered the shingles, ordered the insulation? Who's stuck with that bill? Because the contractor is ready to do the work, but the individuals that looked at the program in order to secure that, in order for them to participate, in order for them to become greener to take their footprint off of the environment—they won't be able to recoup any of these losses.

I've approached the minister on a couple of occasions. The minister has indicated that no final decision has been done other than the cancellation of the program. Those individuals that are in queue to getting that service—and again, one of the bigger challenges that we have in northern Ontario is the availability of these individuals to do that work. There's no time, because we have very few individuals that are certified to do the work. So are you going to be extending it for those that applied, rightfully so, by the deadlines and put themselves in the process? Because we have limited access to the individuals to deliver these services, will you give them a grace period to make sure that they can participate in this program and recoup some of the benefits that they had?

In Wawa and Sioux Lookout, they were looking at a wood pilot project where they were going to be introducing new heating sources for their homes; 30 applicants in Wawa applied for this program. Again, those are jobs that we're putting at stake, because they were looking at new ways, new manufacturers—a small business was going to develop an opportunity for eight to 12 jobs.

It doesn't sound like much, but if you live in northern Ontario, those are many clusters. That's something that I hope this government is listening to, that clusters create more jobs. A cluster identifies a need, creates eight to 10 jobs, but from those eight or 10 jobs, there are four or five more, two or three more. At the end of the day, you're looking at 25 jobs that are dependent on a cluster that was initiated.

That's what was happening in Wawa, because construction on new woodstoves was going to happen, supplies were going to happen, salesmen were going to be out there. Those are all at risk now. Those are all gone. In the stroke of a pen, they're wiped out. Those 30 people—again, that doesn't sound like much to this government, but to me, it's a lot. Those are 30 families who are looking to invest into their homes, and that option is taken away from them.

Again, I've approached the minister. I asked him: "Are you going to be extending that period?" Because we have limited contractors that can perform that work based on the program that was there before, because it comes at a cost. Those individuals also invested into their employees and their businesses in order to provide those services. I guess that's the cost of business under this Conservative government. I don't know; it's shameful.

Wikwemikong First Nation on Manitoulin Island were part of this wood-heating program. They were looking at several jobs. They were actually going to look at investing into an industrial pelletization plant, where they were not only going to supply their community but an entire

region. They were looking big-scale. If this Conservative government is about jobs, that's 30 to 40 jobs, if not more, plus salesmen, plus travel. It's a cluster and it moves on. More jobs are created when you create jobs. But in the stroke of a pen, you've eliminated those options. They're gone. You've taken them away. I don't know. I would look closely at the decisions that you're making, because taking away jobs is what you're doing. People are hurting.

Again, Wikwemikong was looking at large-scale. They were looking not only—and I touched on this already—at just Manitoulin Island, which is, by the way, the largest freshwater island in the world. I have many environmentally knowledgeable individuals who are there. There are individuals who are extremely crafty, who are looking as far as changing the channel, taking their footprint off of the environment, being responsible.

I have to say that Chief Duke Peltier is one of those community leaders who is putting his foot forward on behalf of his community, encouraging people to participate in this. But those options have now been taken away, with the stroke of a pen.

The Premier continues to be blind to the innovative and creative communities that were benefitting from the green Ontario program. Every job that we are losing or not creating in northern Ontario is a missed opportunity for the revitalization and growth of northern Ontario. People in northern Ontario are creative and ambitious, and I refuse to see this government taking away those opportunities. A government for the people should care a lot more about what's going on in the other three quarters of this province. When you look at northern Ontario, it's vast, and there are lots of opportunities and resources that are there. People are not going to accept anything less than what they are rightfully entitled to.

Speaker, I would like to touch on hydro now, because that's another topic that we think this government is failing on.

Hydro: We're in a crisis. People are hurting. It's nice that this government has actually acknowledged that we're under a crisis right now in this province. But really, a 12% reduction is your answer to handling this crisis? Compare that to what we had in our plan. We put it out there. It's 30%—

Mr. Stephen Lecce: What does it cost?

Mr. Michael Mantha: What is your cost going to be on the 12%? How many jobs are going to be lost?

They are continuing with a boondoggle plan that came from the Liberal Party—a boondoggle plan. Now it's no longer their plan; it's the Ford plan. It's their plan. They're the ones who are putting these finances on the credit card. Your kids, my kids, the pages who are here, my grandchildren, their grandchildren—all of them are going to be paying for this boondoggle plan. They can't blame the Liberals anymore because this is their plan.

It's quite disappointing to see that this government has no intention of helping people get more affordable electricity. We had a very comprehensive plan—we put it out there—that would fix issues. We let people look at it and

get a sense of it. We actually had a plan. We actually had a platform, which was put out there—not just ideas, quotes and rants. We had something that was put out there, dealing with the issues, being honest with Ontarians that there is no quick fix on fixing our hydro issues—none. It was going to take a lot of hard work and rolling up our sleeves.

However, you should be telling the truth to Ontarians and admit that firing the CEO is not going to save Ontarians any money. Cancelling energy projects is not going to save any money on your hydro. Getting rid of the cap-and-trade program is not going to save any money on your hydro.

I'm going to continue hearing from people in my riding. Winter is going to come, hydro bills are going to go up and people are going to be hurting. People are going to be asking, "What's going on? I thought something was going to happen."

It's inevitable that business is going to hurt, because when we drop down, and it's going to get cold pretty soon—I know we're still here in summer, and hopefully we're going to have a summer. I don't know. I actually enjoy being here, so if you guys want to keep me here, I am here. I don't mind being here. I like working.

0940

Applause.

Mr. Michael Mantha: Yes, let's do this.

But it's difficult. I hear some of the messaging that comes from the government: "We've done this; we've done that." You look at certain things where promises were made. Well, what about the promise in regard to the guaranteed income supplement? What about the promise of funding for our schools? What about the promise about making sure that there are investments being done in the schools? There are a lot of broken promises there.

However, again, on hydro prices, I just want to finish off because it's amazing how time flies. We had a plan put forward. I still believe, Speaker, that if we were to tackle the issues in regard to time of use—regardless of when you cook your bread, do your laundry or bake your foods during the day, it should be equal.

When you look at putting a flat rate on delivery charges, regardless of where you live in this province—we all live in this one province. Whether in northern Ontario, eastern Ontario or southern Ontario, you're in Ontario. A flat rate would really bring down the costs for a lot of Ontarians, particularly in northern Ontario. That's our plan; you can use it. You can use our plan. It's actually going to help Ontarians. Part of that plan is a change for the better. It is going to help people in this province. Use it; take it. Take the entire platform. If you don't have it, I'll bring it to you.

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Mantha: It is a good plan.

I'm just going to wrap it up. I wish I had more time. This bill is actually going to hurt Ontarians. It is going to hurt northern Ontarians particularly, and I always come with a lens from a northern perspective. Things are tough for us in northern Ontario but the one thing I can always

count on is northern Ontarians are resilient. We won't give up. We will be heard in this Legislature, and we will not accept anything less than what we're rightfully entitled to.

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

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: The member from Ottawa Centre talks about the costs of natural disasters.

The member from Algoma-Manitoulin says what we are doing is shameful. You know what's shameful? The belief that punishing families and businesses with an additional tax, with a regressive tax, is going to fix the environment. How? Please tell me how imposing a tax is going to change weather patterns because I would love to know. And what dollar amount is enough? How much do you want to impose? What dollar value will make a difference?

You say we're doing nothing. I'll tell you what we're doing: We're listening carefully to the people we represent. We are supporting our businesses by not adding an unnecessary tax which takes away from their ability to invest in green technologies.

We respect people to do what they need to do with their money. We're putting money back in people's pockets.

You talk about creating more jobs. You want to create more jobs? Let's create an environment where businesses can flourish. That is going to happen; do you know why? Because of this government, and because of changes that we're going to make because we listened. Ontario is open for business, and this cap-and-trade is gone.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, it's indeed a pleasure to stand in the House this morning, and to recognize you, as I believe you are the first woman from southwestern Ontario to become the First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House. Congratulations.

I have listened intently to the member from Algoma-Manitoulin and the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. And I've heard the Conservative caucus give me a headache again with that "promise made, promise kept." I don't know if you remember the cola wars back in the 1970s and 1980s, where Pepsi and Coke went at each other, and then Seven-Up came up and said, "We're the uncola." So every time the poorest of the poor people in Ontario hear you guys and ladies say, "Promise made, promise kept," they get stabbed in the heart again because of the promise broken, not kept, about the basic income project, about cutting back a 3% wage increase to the poorest of the poor down to 1.5%. The poorest of the poor have been stabbed in the heart by you people.

It's the same with Toronto and the number of seats on Toronto city council. Not one of the people over there, not one of them, campaigned and was upfront with the people in Toronto and said, "By the way, when we get in, we're going to cut your municipal representation in half"—not a promise kept, because it was never a promise made. It was campaign by stealth, and yet you like to stand up and say, "Promise made, promise kept."

There are people across this province who no longer believe you. They know that there are going to be more broken promises coming, because you have stabbed in the heart the poorest of the poor in this province, people who looked up to you and thought you were going to do right by them when you promised you weren't going to take away their income. You turned around and did it. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

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

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I just want to talk to the member opposite, the member from Algoma–Manitoulin, and talk about our government. It was elected on a simple promise: to be for the people. The member opposite is saying we are not doing anything for the people. What we're doing is we are listening to the people. We are listening to the people that we all represent.

You speak about northern Ontario. I'm surprised that—the member is so concerned about people with low income. Some of our lower-income people are from northern Ontario, and they're going to save \$260 with our plan, so I'm surprised. They have the highest heating bills across this province in northern Ontario. Wawa, Elliot Lake, Thunder Bay—they're all high heating bills. We need to get that under control, and we're going to do that by having savings for our people. That's \$260 in savings for everyone.

The member opposite talked about jobs. Well, we're the government that's going to create jobs. You're talking about the loss of jobs—30 jobs in Wawa. Well, because of our government being open for business, we are going to be able to create new jobs. We're going to create an environment where business will be welcome, business will stay open. If you've noticed, over the last couple of years businesses are closing because of high hydro rates. With our plan, we're going to lower those hydro rates so that businesses will flourish and create jobs, good-paying jobs, in northern Ontario.

You say northern Ontarians are resilient. Yes, they are, and they will find jobs. They will find jobs to create, and they will flourish in their own communities.

I respect the people from the north. I was born and raised in the north. I understand what they go through. I understand jobs are hard to come by. But I tell you, I agree with the member opposite. They are resilient. They will create jobs. They will find a great living. This government will help them. We will make sure that they have lower hydro rates so they don't have to choose between buying food and heating their homes.

That's probably about all I need to say about it.

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

Mr. Jamie West: The first comment that I want to make has to do with a comment that a couple of members have made, but most recently the member from Eto-bicoke–Lakeshore: the “open for business,” which we hear again and again. I think it's an excellent idea to be open for business and flourish business, but at the same time there seems to be a theme with this government where they stop things without a plan in place.

When you look at the physical and health education curriculum, for example, they refer to it as 2014, but we know it's 20 years old. What they're saying is, “We'll rip that out and we'll start from scratch,” instead of continuing and having continuous improvement.

When it comes to climate change, the plan is to scrap what we have and start from the beginning again. That isn't a business plan. That isn't open for business. There's not a business in this province that would invest in anything that had no business plan. You need a plan to move forward and continuously improve.

Earlier, my colleague from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound was talking about the money that's going to be saved on it, \$260 a year. Any money is excellent, but it's actually 70 cents a day. We all spend more than that on a coffee. It's not a ton.

What concerns me more is the conversation: “Why would we ask people to pay to pollute? Why would we ask for rebates to pollute less?” That's Economics 101, Madam Speaker. What you want to do when you pay to pollute is you disincentivize people to pollute, and they find ways to control it. When you give incentives to people through rebates, what they do is they move towards greener energy.

0950

My own family has an example of this, where my son—if you think I'm a big guy, you should meet my son—went shopping for a car. He started looking at F-150s. Then he looked at the price of gas, travel and insurance, and ultimately, he bought a Prius. What tipped him towards the Prius was that there was a rebate that made it more affordable and in his scope. So now you have somebody who's driving a more energy-efficient car, and it's affordable, and it's better for the environment.

That's what “open for business” is. That's what economics is about. And that's what the government needs to understand.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: I want to thank the members from Cambridge, Windsor–Tecumseh, Etobicoke–Lakeshore and Sudbury. Your comments were bang on. I enjoyed hearing the debate. That lifts up my spirits somewhat, that people are engaged and we're listening to each other. You might not like what we're saying, and that's fine, but we're listening. We're engaging in a discussion, and that's fair.

You will notice often, from my seat, I don't heckle; I listen. And we should be doing more of that, listening—

Interjection.

Mr. Michael Mantha: My friend, you're going to have to pay a little bit more attention.

Anyway, what I so want to tell this government is that in this province, these 76 seats—a Conservative government was elected by 40% of the province. I hear often this government saying, “We are doing what people sent us here to do.” But there are 60% of the people left in this province that feel this government isn't speaking for

them. That's a fact. Listen to your notes. When you are standing and you're saying, "We are doing what we are supposed to do, with the people that elected us," you're not. This is a big province, and there's a lot of diversity in this province.

Listen to the opposition. Use that information. I invite you to look at our platform. Use some of that information; I welcome you. We can hand it over to you. There are good ideas that are in there.

I will continue listening to some of the things that you bring forward. I'm not going to agree with all of it. Of course not; my job is to oppose you. I respect and look up at that eagle, just as you should look be looking up at that owl. Remember that.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'd like to recognize a guest in the gallery. We have Rev. Cheri DiNovo, who was the member of provincial Parliament for Parkdale–High Park in the 38th, 39th, 40th and 41st Parliaments. Welcome back.

Further debate?

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Il me fait plaisir de participer au débat ce matin sur l'élimination du régime de plafonnement et d'échange, le projet de loi 4.

I view my role in this Parliament, as a member of the opposition, as trying to help the government produce the best legislative product that is possible. Personally, I am convinced that a cap-and-trade program was a good idea, but I know you're committed to eliminating it. My suggestion today is to do it in an orderly fashion.

I have five recommendations for this government to improve the bill. I won't be using my time to discuss whether cap-and-trade should be abolished—I know you're committed to it—but how it should be done.

We know that Ontario now has the lowest unemployment rate in 20 years. It is the best-performing economy in the G7. Some of its cities, like Toronto, and Ottawa as well—where I come from—are surpassing many of the US cities in terms of tech industries. It has been a place that topped other jurisdictions in terms of foreign investment.

Let's keep it this way.

To do that, we have to remove, as much as possible, uncertainty and prevent chaos. Predictability is a key ingredient to a stable economic climate, and I think it is the obligation of this government to, as much as possible, prevent and minimize uncertainty, particularly at a crucial time like this time, where we have uncertainty because of the trade disputes and the imposition of tariffs, which could wreak havoc in Ontario.

The government wants to implement its platform. Fair enough—but it must do so responsibly. It must respect the rule of law, respect investors, and respect the people who have relied on existing laws to make investments in programs to upgrade their homes. That was a little bit of what my friend and colleague from Algoma–Manitoulin talked about, the impact that this has had.

My five suggestions for the government:

(1) Lay out and present your climate change plan right now, or at least before September 1. September 1 is the

deadline that the federal government has imposed. You should be clear to investors and to Ontarians about what is the climate change plan of the province of Ontario now, so do it now.

(2) Use the funds generated by the latest auction, which was held in May, before the election, for the legal purposes for which they were obtained.

(3) Amend the provisions of the act to be more transparent about how you will limit compensation. Don't do it in a regulation, or at least publish your regulation now. Be honest with the investors about exactly how you want to limit compensation.

(4) Obey the Environmental Bill of Rights.

(5) Extend the deadline on the GreenON contracts. Too many people relied on this and made good-faith investments. They need to be protected for a few more months, so that at least they don't lose money.

Let me explain a little bit why I believe that these five measures would actually ensure an orderly transition.

(1) First is the necessity of a climate change plan. We've been discussing for the last two days how much climate change is the challenge of our generation. It's all of our responsibility. We know that the cost of doing nothing on climate change is far greater than the cost of doing something. Doing nothing means incurring greater expenses when extreme weather affects the people of our province and our economy: floods, fire, excessive heat, intense storms.

The human costs of climate change are also extreme. People have to flee their homes. Many predict that there will be a lot of environmental migrants, people whose communities will be submerged and who will have to relocate. It is certainly our moral duty to confront climate change, but it's also our economic duty to do so.

When President Trump decided that he was backing out of the Paris accord, that did not change the commitment of many of the governors. Why? Because we know that the economy of the future will aim to be carbon neutral. To be competitive internationally, our economy needs to take on and be technologically savvy, but also have low carbon emissions. Because in the future—it's already starting—many companies, many provinces, many countries, states in the US, and certainly countries in Europe will want to buy a product with low carbon emissions. That will be valued as a product.

The point of GreenON and the point of the investments was to lead us progressively to greening the economy, to a low-carbon economy, to progressively incentivize all corporations to move in that direction. I caution the government in abandoning this support for a greening of the economy. Do it for moral reasons, but do it for economic reasons. We want Ontario to continue to be productive and to be competitive on the international scale by having the right incentives to have that type of investment and contributing in the new type of economy, where we will all be in 10 years.

I know that the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks indicated that he's not a climate change denier. I believe him, since, like many of the others, he

signed the People's Guarantee, the previous Conservative plan that supported a carbon tax.

Here we are today: If the plan is not cap-and-trade, if it's not a carbon tax, what is it? When you talk about targets, we have no information about the process to get to the target. We have no information about the enforcement of these targets. I think Ontarians need to know and businesses need to know exactly what will be the plan. The bill in front of us says that there's an obligation to put forward a plan. It doesn't give a time frame and it does not give some reality to that plan.

1000

(2) Use the money that was collected in the last auction for the purpose for which it was collected. Section 11 of the bill in front of us proposes to move the money from the May auction before the election to a cap-and-trade wind-down account and pay the cost of the wind-down: the limited compensation that is offered. I urge the minister to reconsider. By law, the money from the May auction should be distributed for GreenON initiatives and fund school investments, social housing investments and the hospital green initiatives. It's just wrong to distort this money and repurpose it. In my view, this money was held in trust for the GreenON initiatives, which included support for the energy conservation initiatives of schools, hospitals and social housing.

(3) Section 8 of the bill provides for a similar mechanism as we have seen in the cancellation of the White Pines project: that is, a formula for compensation that excludes certain heads of damages and then further reserves the right to the government to limit its liability or the compensation by regulation. Further, the government is trying to immunize themselves from any lawsuit. This obviously will be litigated.

Fundamentally, I think that's my point here. It leaves investors with a bad taste in their mouth. The government is using its legislative power to limit the money to which they would be normally entitled. Corporations who participated in good faith in a cap-and-trade program and made an investment based on the law of the time should not be later prejudiced by a change of government. This is scary for the rule of law, but it's also scary for the business climate of this province because it raises the issue: What other contracts and what other changes will affect businesses? When is the government going to next limit the compensation to which they are entitled?

My suggestion here is that the government publish right now the regulation that they intend to implement so that people know what the limit is on compensation that the government is envisaging. Tell businesses right now. If they want to invest in Ontario, they need certainty. I think it's just fair for the government to be up front about the way it wants to conduct business.

(4) Obey the Environmental Bill of Rights. The government did not post a regulation that cancelled the allowance under the cap-and-trade on July 3. It does not deny that the regulation had an impact on environmental policy, so it should have been published on the Environmental Registry. Rather, it responded to the Environ-

mental Commissioner in the following way. It said that it did not have to consult in accordance with the Environmental Bill of Rights because "the election was a process of public participation equivalent to the Environmental Bill of Rights."

That's not correct. The Environmental Registry allows people to comment specifically on a proposal like the cancellation of the allowances. For a government that wants to listen to the people and wants to consult, I think it's really difficult to accept the way in which they interpreted the Environmental Bill of Rights. Again, we need clarity. Either you believe in the Environmental Bill of Rights or you don't. If you do, then you cannot put forth an interpretation that guts it of any meaning. If we follow your meaning, the one that you put forward there, that means that anything that's in the platform—for example, the commitment to the Ring of Fire. All that this promise would mean is that there would not be any publication under the Environmental Bill of Rights of the implementation of the Ring of Fire.

That's wrong. The Environmental Bill of Rights is part of the legislative armature of this province and it should be respected. I would like to have confirmation on the part of the government that they are committed to upholding the Environmental Bill of Rights and will continue to do so and not gut it of its meaning.

(5) Like my colleague from Algoma-Manitoulin, I urge the government to extend the deadline on the GreenON contracts. Many people in my riding and throughout Ontario are cut short. They have made contracts to buy new windows or to install a new furnace. We have installers who want to do the work, but they just can't do it within the deadlines. All these people are being cut short for no reason. Installers hired extra help to do these contracts. Now it cannot be done in time, and it's all cancelled. I beg the minister to extend the deadline by a few months. The money is there in the account. Don't let these poor folks who relied on the existing laws to make investments now be cut short. That's just unfair. That doesn't make sense.

I want to say, madame la Présidente, that I continue to think that environmental protection is really important for Ontarians. It's the challenge of our day, and we need to continue to support that.

In my view, the government also has an obligation to be clear about its next plan. It's good for all of us if we know what the future looks like. It's good for investors and it's good for Ontarians to know what's ahead of them. That's what I urge the government to do.

En conclusion—je vais parler un peu en français pour quelques minutes—il est important que le démantèlement du programme de plafonnement et d'échange que le gouvernement Ford propose n'envenime pas les choses, qu'il ne fasse pas de victimes innocentes. Le gouvernement devrait respecter les contrats déjà entrés de bonne foi et ne pas utiliser son pouvoir législatif ou exécutif pour limiter l'application ou l'indemnisation de personnes ou de compagnies.

My five suggestions that I'm presenting today aim to make a better legislative product. I think the purpose of

being in the opposition is not only to be a naysayer, but it's to help the government take their responsibility and rise to the challenge. You on the other side don't have to just be yes-men and yes-women. You have to take your responsibility seriously and ask good questions. We all have the ability here to critically assess what is in front of us and make suggestions for improvement. We should not diminish the ability and the importance of debate and deliberation for a better product.

My suggestions here are that we carefully evaluate this bill, not only for what it seeks to do, which is to respond to the platform of the Conservatives, but for its long-term impact.

I'll repeat my five suggestions:

First, be clear about what exactly the climate change plan is. If you're going to put targets, what is the process to achieve these targets? What will the enforcement be for these targets? Be clear, as well, as to the necessity and what the impact is on the greening of our economy—how important it is not only to support climate change, not only to protect the environment, but also to position Ontario's businesses competitively in the world.

Second, I think the proceeds of the May auction ought to be regulated and ought to be used for the purpose for which they were claimed. They were in trust for green initiatives. They should not be repurposed to pay for the wind-down of cap-and-trade. I understand that this will create havoc on the other side. But I ask for a response to this: Why not continue with the way in which—in my view, it was held in trust—for the purposes for which it was collected?

Third, I urge the government to be transparent about the way it wants to limit compensation. I think it's important for all businesses and the business climate in Ontario to have that.

Fourth, I think the Environmental Bill of Rights is important for all Ontarians, and we need clarity: Either you believe in it or you don't. If you don't, and if part of your unspoken platform is to get rid of the Environmental Bill of Rights, then say it right now. If not, then I think you have to obey not only the spirit but the provisions of the Environmental Bill of Rights all the time and not get it of its interpretation.

And finally, as we've said around this House, don't have these poor people who made good-faith investments lose their money because there has been a change of government.

On this note, merci beaucoup, madame la Présidente.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1010 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Today the Speaker is going to lead off the introduction of visitors. With us in

the gallery is one of my constituents, who is also a former member of this Legislature and cabinet minister in Mike Harris's government. John Snobelen is here. Welcome.

We also have a former member of provincial Parliament for Parkdale–High Park in the 38th, 39th, 40th and 41st Parliaments. Cheri DiNovo is here.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to introduce Thomas Mete and his friend Allan Buri, who are both former pages who have given up a day here to come back to Queen's Park to see us all as MPPs. I'd like to welcome them to Queen's Park. Let's give them a nice round of applause for being here.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Speaker, I'd like to introduce you to Matthew Ray, who is my new executive assistant.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd like to introduce some friends from British Columbia who are visiting us today: Erik Kaye, a long-time member of the federal NDP executive; Nancy Singh; and Ravi Kaye. Thank you very much for being here.

Ms. Donna Skelly: I'm proud to introduce my sister-in-law, Katie Veschakit—she works in the US embassy in Ottawa in the protocol department—and her friend Bow.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I would like to congratulate somebody from the assembly who I want to shout out to, and that is Katch Koch, one of our Clerks, who is going to be retiring here tomorrow. On behalf of all the members, I just want to thank him for all the work he has done as a Clerk and pour l'association parlementaire.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Indeed.

Introduction of visitors?

Mr. Randy Hillier: I'd like to welcome and introduce to the House today Michael McSweeney and Martha Murray from the cement association.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I'd like to welcome John Parent from my riding of Windsor–Tecumseh. He is up here because his stepdaughter, Tamsyn King, has volunteered to come back and help us this week. John, welcome back to Queen's Park, and, Tamsyn, thank you for volunteering to help us out this week, as well.

Mr. Michael Coteau: I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce Chris Moise. As a former school board trustee, I'd like to welcome him to the Legislature on behalf of all of us here.

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I'd like to introduce my partner, Patrick Power, who is here and was a great sport throughout the election.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I want to introduce the hundreds of people who are with us today in the galleries and outside. They are here to let Doug Ford know that people do not agree with the undemocratic plan to rip up Toronto—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member will take her seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I have to caution the member it's not appropriate to make a political statement while you're introducing guests, first of all, and we

refer to our colleagues in the House, even across the aisle, not by their first name but by their parliamentary title or by their riding name. I've made that clear on a number of occasions and I'll say it again and again if need be.

Mr. Will Bouma: I would like to introduce my campaign co-chair, Larry Brock, his wife, Angela, and their daughters Jenny and Emma, who are joining us today from Brantford—Brant.

Ms. Jill Andrew: I would like to introduce Chana Weinstein, one of my campaign volunteers, and the students from Seneca College's government relations program. I would also like to introduce city councillor, ward 27, Kristyn Wong-Tam, a municipal candidate for ward 22.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I would like to introduce Becky Coles, a Newstalk 1010 producer, who is here at Queen's Park today. I would also like to recognize the government relations class from Seneca College, Laila, Connor, Alexia, Chana, Robina, Julian and Rita, to Queen's Park.

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: I'm delighted to welcome one of my constituents here today, Jo-Anne Polak. Jo-Anne has a long history of public service, including in the Bill Davis government and the Brian Mulroney government. We're delighted to have her here today.

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I would like to welcome to Queen's Park Chiara Padovani, who is running for ward 11; Jennifer Hollett, who is also a candidate for city councillor; and also Bruno Dobrusin. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Fraser: I'm doubling up, but I would be remiss if I did not recognize the presence of Michael McSweeney, another lifelong resident of Ottawa South. Welcome again to the Legislature.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I would like to introduce and welcome a constituent from my riding, Mr. Jason Pearson, who is the father of one of our pages who came back, Sullivan—welcome back, Sullivan—and his extremely proud grandmother, Jeanett, who is here from South Carolina to cheer her grandson on. Welcome.

Ms. Suze Morrison: I'd like to recognize a number of folks who are here in the gallery from my riding including some folks who worked on my campaign: Jeff Slater, Tyler Johnson, Nadine Tkatchevskaia—sorry, Nadine, I can never pronounce your name—Brian Chang, Shay Sanders and Lester Brown. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I want to recognize Connor Fisher from the great riding of King—Vaughan, who is here with some students from Seneca College, from the government relations program. Welcome to the people's House.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I would like to introduce my constituency assistant and one of the important members in my campaign team: Sukhdeep Bhinder. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. Chris Glover: I'd like to recognize four constituents from my area: Carolyn Johnson, Bob Kennedy, Shelley McBride and Sylvie Gradey. Thank you very much for coming, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I have the great honour of being able to introduce Ishmael Van Der Rassel, who is here today and who is an active member of the OPCYA and I know has campaigned on a lot of different campaigns here on this side of the House.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd also like to welcome some members of my campaign and volunteers from my riding: Molly Kraft, Rory Ditchburn and Krista Mihevc; and also long-time NDP and Steelworkers director of research Charles Campbell. Thank you so much for being here.

Hon. Greg Rickford: I'd like to introduce and welcome one of my former colleagues from the House of Commons: Susan Truppe. She's joining our team, I understand, and we're very pleased to have her.

1040

Mr. Michael Coteau: I'd like to introduce Mary Hynes, who is a constituent in Don Valley East. She's sitting in the west gallery today. Welcome, Mary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would also draw attention to the fact that we are visited by a former member of this House, who represented Toronto Centre—Rosedale in the 37th and 38th Parliament and the riding of Toronto Centre in the 39th Parliament. In the Speaker's gallery: Mr. George Smitherman, who is here with us today. Welcome.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, I want to welcome the people from across Toronto who've come here today to oppose the Premier's plot to silence this city. Thank you for being here.

My question is for the Premier. When people in Toronto need help to fix their housing, create safer streets, protect local parks and support development that makes our city livable for everyone, people turn to their city councillor. Why is this Premier making it harder for citizens to access their councillors, harder for the people of Toronto to have their voices heard?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Toronto—Danforth: We ran on reducing the size and cost of government. We ran on streamlining government.

The NDP ran on increasing government. I don't know of anyone out there who wants 20 extra politicians versus \$25 million. I know that the NDP wants more politicians. They want Toronto to still run dysfunctionally. What we want is, we want smaller government. We want to decrease the size of government. We want to lower hydro rates.

We have a great announcement today. We have a great announcement on the carbon tax. We are getting rid of the carbon tax. We're challenging the carbon tax in court. That's taking care of people. That's reducing the burden of taxation on the backs of people and small businesses.

Interjections.

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

I'm going to remind, again, all members to make their comments through the Chair.

Start the clock. Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Premier: The Premier is making it harder for ordinary Torontonians to influence their government, to have an impact at city hall. As a former deputy mayor of Toronto, I can tell you that the Premier's plot will not streamline decision-making; it will steamroll the residents of Toronto, who deserve to have their voices heard.

This is a plot the Premier never campaigned on—not one day; not one sentence. He never consulted anyone on this, and he has now no mandate to impose his will on the city of Toronto. Why is the Premier undermining democracy to silence the voices of the people of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member for Toronto–Danforth: We consulted with thousands of people in Toronto. The ironic thing is, did anyone in the chamber get consulted about increasing more politicians? I never got consulted; neither did anyone else. They want to ram down more politicians. They want to increase the size of government. They want to increase taxes. We're going to lower taxes and lower hydro rates. We're going to get rid of the carbon tax, and we're going to streamline government to put more money back into the taxpayer's pocket instead of the government's pocket.

I know that the member for Toronto–Danforth loves big government and loves wasting money. We don't believe in that. We believe in reducing the size and cost of government, putting money back into the people's pockets instead of a bunch of politicians who could—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member will take his seat.

Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Premier: It was the Premier's brother who started the consultation on this change in ward sizes. He did start the consultation. The size of Toronto city council is a decision that belongs to the people of Toronto, not to this Premier. Strong local representation is how citizens have a real say in how this city grows, how our neighbourhoods develop and how we make this vibrant city more livable and more affordable for everyone. But this Premier is ripping up Toronto's wards and showing he couldn't care less how it hurts the people of this city.

Why is the Premier abusing the powers of his office and taking control of city hall away from the people of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I know the member from Toronto–Danforth wants to protect a bunch of downtown politicians. They create their little fiefdom—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Toronto–Danforth, come to order.

Hon. Doug Ford: —to protect all his political cronies. They increase taxes.

My friend, we aren't going to protect your political cronies. We aren't going to protect more politicians. We're going to make sure that we take that \$25 million and put it into priorities that people want. People don't want more politicians. We have 25 MPs and 25 MPPs. Why shouldn't we have 25 councillors?

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Marit Stiles: Mr. Speaker, through you, my question is to the Premier. Respect for the rights of voters is something that unites Ontarians, no matter which party you support. We believe in local democracy, and we care deeply about protecting the right of all voters to decide how we are governed. But this Premier is bullying his way into municipal elections, ripping up Toronto wards and denying people the voice that they deserve. Why is this Premier showing nothing but contempt for the people of Toronto?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member: My friend, it's not ironic that everyone who is opposed are a bunch of downtown politicians, and everyone who is in favour, Mr. Speaker—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Doug Ford: —everyone who is in favour—there are 17 brave, brave people who actually stood up, 17 councillors who said, "City hall is dysfunctional. Nothing gets done under 47 councillors." They want to streamline the government. They've been down there for years. Even the members who are for big government—I've talked to them; I worked with them for four years. Every one of them has told me personally that it's the most dysfunctional political arena in Canada. Nothing gets done but wasting money and increasing taxes.

We're going to focus on reducing taxes. We're going to make sure we get rid of the carbon tax—

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

Interjections.

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

Restart the clock. Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Supersized wards and fewer councillors mean less opportunity for residents to meet with their city councillor and to shape the decisions that this city makes. Imposing an August 14 deadline on Toronto's school boards to change trustee boundaries is another outrageous intrusion on the independence of locally elected school boards.

The Premier's assault on local democracy has absolutely nothing to do with helping people. It's all about helping the Premier take control of city hall through the back door. Why did the Premier never have the courage to look people in the eye and tell them exactly what he was going to do?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the member from Davenport: The member for Davenport has never been down to city hall. She's never been on council. The member from Davenport has never sat

through 10 hours of debate about one issue, about getting Mrs. Jones's cat out of the tree, and then they all vote together.

I've been down there for years watching how dysfunctional this government is. People of Toronto want to streamline it.

Now, do you know what's amazing, Mr. Speaker? What was amazing was when I read the poll. The poll in the Toronto Star—I repeat, the poll in the Toronto Star—showed 68% of the people are in favour of reducing the size and cost of government.

Interjections.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The government side will please come to order. The opposition side will please come to order. Start the clock.

Final supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I would gather I think I've probably spent more time down at city hall than the Premier has. The Premier is trying to silence the people of Toronto and make it harder for people to get action on their priorities, from affordable housing, to public transit, to development. He's making it harder for residents to access our local councillors.

He's trying to take control of city hall and put power in his own hands. Worst of all, he's trying to punish the people of Toronto, who have voted against him over and over and over again.

When did this Premier decide to bully the people of Toronto instead of respecting democracy like a real leader would?

Hon. Doug Ford: Member from Davenport, I can tell you, if we went into Davenport—and I'll go into Davenport; as a matter of fact, I might even go tomorrow. We'll door-knock and I'll ask the people: "Your MPP wants bigger government. Do you want more transit with the \$25 million, do you want more housing, or do you want 22 overpaid politicians from downtown?" It's very simple. They will be very clear. They want less politicians. They want more transit. They want more housing. But guess what? They wouldn't be able to get it, because no decision ever gets made down at city hall with 47 politicians.

Interjections.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Somebody give Doug a hug.

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

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Doly Begum: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The minister should be ashamed of himself, he should be ashamed of his government and he should be ashamed of his Conservative Party. The vindictive actions taken

by Premier Ford towards the voters of Toronto are astonishing.

Will the minister apologize to the people of Toronto for throwing their election into chaos in a callous attempt to interfere in this city's elections?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Scarborough Southwest for the question. During the campaign, we received a very strong message from Ontarians. They wanted us to respect taxpayers' dollars. On June 7, with all due respect, it was clear that they wanted a government that got things done. That's exactly what we're doing.

The Better Local Government Act would reduce the number of Toronto city councillors to 25. We all know, and I'm sure that the member opposite knows, the critical, important services that municipal councils provide across the province. But we have to have those services provided in the most effective and the most efficient manner.

I know the NDP will always stand up for bigger government, but what the Better Local Government Act will do for this city and that council, it will make it streamlined. It will make better decisions—

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

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, through you, I would like to remind the minister that no one on that side of the House campaigned on a promise to interfere in local elections. This government has no mandate to throw Toronto municipal elections into chaos. These anti-democratic actions will leave my community of Scarborough worse off. Our representation on council will be cut nearly in half in Scarborough—this after years of fighting for a strong Scarborough voice at the table.

Will the minister apologize to Scarborough voters for throwing their representation into chaos in order to settle old political scores?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, again through you to the member: We made it very clear during the election that our government was for a smaller government that put the interests of taxpayers first. It doesn't matter what level of government you serve at, whether it's the municipal, provincial or federal government; we all have one boss: the taxpayer.

It should be very clear to this member and members of the opposition that we ran on a platform for smaller government, one that respected the taxpayer at all costs. The Better Local Government Act is going to allow, on October 22, the people of Toronto to vote for a streamlined council that will be ready to make quick decisions in the best interests of the people of Toronto. That's what the bill will do and that's what the bill is going to do, if passed.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Stephen Lecce: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Under the Premier's leadership, our Progressive Conservative government is

taking decisive action to deliver on our mandate: lower taxes, better jobs and, yes, Mr. Speaker, the restoration of trust back in government.

Today we will debate a motion brought forward by the Leader of the Opposition, a motion that only underscores how out of touch the NDP is with residents across the GTA who demand government to be on their side and accountable and that they do more with less. The NDP leader will have to explain why she is prepared to put the jobs of politicians over the interests of working people. Once again, the NDP is putting their own self-interest ahead of the public interest. This is not leadership; this is an abdication of leadership.

Mr. Speaker, since the member will not fight for her constituents, will the minister tell this House why and what this government is doing to advance the priorities of working people?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you, I'd like to thank the member for King–Vaughan for the question. After 15 years of Liberal mismanagement, there are serious issues facing our province, but clearly the Leader of the Opposition doesn't care about any of these issues; she only cares about keeping government big.

During the campaign, our party made a commitment to the people of Ontario. We committed to putting more money into their pockets by scrapping the carbon tax, by reducing gas prices and giving real tax relief to families. We committed to cleaning up the hydro mess and lowering hydro bills. We campaigned on restoring accountability and trust in government and doing a line-by-line audit to put an end to the culture of waste, scandal and mismanagement that plagued the previous government for 15 years. These are the things that will make life better for the people not just of Ontario but the people of Hamilton.

Listen, Speaker: not spending \$25 million on more politicians. That's—

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

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Back to the minister: Thank you to the minister for focusing on the priorities of working people in this province. In 14 short sitting days in this House, our government and this Premier have taken decisive action to improve the lives of all Ontarians: immediate action to lower taxes, to reduce hydro rates, to bring an end to the York U strike, and efforts to help create the conditions for private sector growth. This is service to the people, quite the contrast from the NDP, who are more focused on protecting jobs for their politicians over the pocketbooks of working people.

Speaker, through you, can the minister explain how the Better Local Government Act will create the conditions for better jobs, hope and opportunity in every region of this province?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, again through you to the member from King–Vaughan: First I want to congratulate you on your recent appointment as parliamentary assistant to the Premier.

Our priority, Speaker, is very clear: to reduce the size and cost of government. We're going to ensure that

Toronto council can act on those important issues like transit and like housing. Those are the issues that real people are so very concerned about.

1100

But day after day, Speaker, the NDP stand up for bigger government, and it will only make life harder and more expensive. I can't wait to hear what the Leader of the Opposition has to say to explain to Ontarians this afternoon why her party put saving politicians' jobs ahead of saving taxpayers \$25 million by giving them better local—

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

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Faisal Hassan: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. There are over 100,000 people in my riding, covering two city wards, ward 11 and ward 12. But this government is cutting our city council representation in half. That means fewer voices from my community at the decision-making table, and poorer services for our residents.

Will the government explain how my constituents will be better served by less representation and poorer services?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the member for York South–Weston: I want to thank you for the question. I disagree with the premise of the question. I believe very strongly that the Better Local Government Act will provide some clarity for voters in the city of Toronto.

Again, what we're doing with this bill is taking the provincial and federal electoral districts and applying them to the Toronto council. I think it's very clear. You have 25 federal MPs representing a constituency, you have 25 MPPs with that same constituency, and now, under this bill, if passed, it will provide 25 councillors.

It will provide a more streamlined government that will be able to make those important decisions that, quite frankly, the people of York South–Weston would want their council to make. They don't want their council mired in dysfunction. They don't want those decisions to take days and days to make.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Mr. Speaker, through you: The people of York South–Weston and Scarborough aren't going to see more service, but the Premier's big developer friends might. Fewer checks and balances and busier councillors would mean less scrutiny over developer plans. We know the Premier promised big developers easy access to the greenbelt, so what has he and this government promised big developers about doing business in the city of Toronto?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again to the member: I'm very concerned with the tone of the question.

Speaker, I believe there is no one who has a better pulse on what goes on in this city or the province than Premier Doug Ford. He spoke, and our party spoke, to

thousands of people in this city and across this province. He made it very clear during the election that not only are we for more accountability and trust in government, but the fact that smaller government—government that's more effective and more efficient—is top of mind with this government. That's the essence of what we're trying to do with the Better Local Government Act.

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: The members opposite can continue to howl on the opposition benches about wanting bigger government. They're always going to stand up for more politicians. We're always going to stand up for respect for the taxpayer. That's the difference.

Interjection.

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

Next question.

TAXATION

Mrs. Amy Fee: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. For years, the people of Ontario have been seeking a new course. We have heard the voices of those who cannot afford another tax and simply cannot extend themselves any further.

Our government was elected on a clear mandate to put the people first and make life more affordable for Ontario families. That included our plan to bring an end to the Liberal cap-and-trade carbon tax.

We have already introduced legislation to this effect, but my constituents in Kitchener South–Hespeler are concerned that the federal government is just going to replace this cap-and-trade with another Trudeau tax. Will the Minister of the Environment advise us what the government is doing to ensure that the tax we are fighting so hard to get rid of will not be replaced with another one?

Hon. Rod Phillips: I'd like to thank the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler for her question.

As the House knows, we began the debate on Bill 4 in this Legislature, the Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, which will finally put an end to the cap-and-trade here in Ontario. We did not do that to see it replaced by a federal Liberal tax.

This morning, I was pleased to join my colleague, the Attorney General, to announce the next steps the government is taking: taking to the courts to stop the federal government. Today we announced we'll be taking the feds to court to challenge their carbon tax. It will be a great day for Ontario when we win that court challenge, and we will win that court challenge.

We promised that we would make use of every tool in our toolkit to make sure that we stopped a federal tax—

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

Supplementary?

Mrs. Amy Fee: Back to the minister: I would like to thank you for your response, and I completely support what you are doing to respect our taxpayers.

We understand that carbon taxes are not effective and that the people of Ontario understand that carbon taxes will not be revenue neutral. Today, with uncertainty in the global economy and turmoil in our trade relationships, the people and businesses of Ontario simply cannot afford another job-killing tax.

Now it seems that Prime Minister Trudeau is admitting it. After closed-door meetings with businesses, they're softening their tone. No doubt, they heard the same things that we are hearing from average Canadians every day: A carbon tax is simply unaffordable.

Minister, will you continue to fight for those who cannot afford the cost of a Trudeau carbon tax?

Hon. Rod Phillips: I thank the member for her supplementary question.

As the member noted yesterday, the federal Liberals started their climb-down on carbon tax after meetings with business, where those businesses were clear that they could not compete globally with a carbon tax hanging over their heads.

In effect, the Trudeau Liberals are now acknowledging that they are inviting economic catastrophe with their carbon tax. The federal government is now acknowledging that their carbon tax is bad for jobs and bad for business. If the Prime Minister is willing to make deals with business on the carbon tax, it's time for him to do the right thing and scrap his carbon tax for all of the people.

Mr. Speaker, our message to the Prime Minister is clear: It's never too late to do the right thing. Cancel your carbon tax.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Kevin Yarde: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Cancelling the direct election of Peel regional chairs saves no money, but appointing regional chairs allows insiders to continue holding on to power. Appointments hinder diverse views from sitting at the decision-making table. For my highly diverse constituents of Brampton North, the impact will be crushing. This decision takes away the voting power and vibrant voice of the Brampton community.

Will this government apologize to the people of Brampton for its complete disrespect?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you, thank you to the member for the question.

As the member knows, the Better Local Government Act, in addition to some of the Toronto council changes, also presses the pause button on those four regions that include Peel, York, Muskoka and Niagara and puts those four municipalities, those four regions, back to what they did in terms of selection of a chair in 2014. It's in response to the 2016 bill that the previous government put forward without any consultation.

I think I made myself very clear that it's just pressing pause on those four regions. We are, in the interim, going to take a closer look at some of the components of

regional government. We're going to start at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference. I'll talk more about it in the supplement.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

1110

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Unilateral decision-making is undemocratic and a misuse of power. Community voices matter, and community voices must be heard. However, with this government's completely self-serving decisions, they were not.

My question is, will this government give community members an opportunity to chime in on city politics or will this government continue to silence their voices and speak on their behalf?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for the question. One of the things that I think he needs to realize—and some of his colleagues—is that every politician at every level in every region needs to remember that we only have one boss: the taxpayer. That's one of the things we heard very strongly during the election.

As I said, we're putting a pause on those four regions, but in response to the member's comment about consultation, we are going to begin consultation on regional government, on things that have worked and maybe things that haven't worked. We're going to do it very informally at the upcoming Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in Ottawa. The conference is from August 19 to 22 at the Shaw Centre. I invite the member to encourage his members of municipalities to reach out to the office. We're engaging with many municipalities. Our cabinet and our caucus will be there looking to begin that informal conversation. I'll have more—

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

Next question.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, my question is for the Premier. Two days ago, your Minister of Community and Social Services cancelled the Basic Income Pilot. Yesterday, your minister conceded breaking a promise and said that it was a "tough decision." Respectfully, Premier, the only people this decision is tough on are the people who had the rug pulled out from underneath them, people like Jodi from Hamilton, a single mom with three kids, or Andrew Shaver in Thunder Bay, who voted for you. Premier, they believed you. Premier, you made a promise to the people—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I have to ask the member to address his comments through the Chair. Please put the question.

Mr. John Fraser: Premier, can you stand in this House and explain to the people why you—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): No, no, no. The member for Ottawa South needs to put his question through the Chair.

Mr. John Fraser: Sorry. Premier, through the Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Premier?

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

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much to the member, and thank you, Mr. Premier, for allowing me to address this. We did not break a promise. That fake news that was in the news today totally mischaracterizes what we're doing.

Let me tell you what we've done. We have said we are going to put a 1.5% across-the-board increase on Ontario Works and Ontario disability supports. We said we are going to wind down the basic income research project. I would like to inform the member that that project, if it were to proceed, would be \$17 billion and would require a 6% increase in the HST, making life far more unaffordable for Ontario families.

What we have said is that we are going to hit the pause button for one year. The best social assistance program, as even the head of the Wellesley Institute agreed on CBC Ontario Today, is a job, and this government is working to ensure that there are more jobs for more Ontario families.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Once again, I feel compelled to remind members that when you're speaking in the House, you make your comments through the Chair. It would help if you would look at the Chair.

Supplementary.

Mr. John Fraser: I will make that promise to you, Speaker, and I will really try not to break it.

It would be very nice to hear from the Premier. People are devastated by this: single moms who have gone back to school, families with young children, and senior citizens. You've taken their hope, Premier; you've taken their dignity.

Premier, there are many people who are upset about this. One of those people is Hugh Segal, a former Conservative senator and principal secretary to Premier Bill Davis. He called it "horrific." He said, "I am embarrassed" to be "a Progressive Conservative."

Premier, do you have the courage to stand in this House—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): No. You have to phrase the question to the Chair, not to the Premier.

Mr. John Fraser: Through you, Speaker: Premier—

Interjection: Could the Premier.

Mr. John Fraser: Could the Premier—thank you very much—have the courage to stand in this House and tell the people why he broke his promise?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Again, I thank the honourable member for his question.

What he's really asking for is a 6% increase in the HST, and that makes life more unaffordable for the people of this province. The system, everyone agrees, including those who rely upon it, isn't working.

We are going to continue to help those in need, but we need to do that in a sustainable way for all of us and that is meaningful and helpful to them. We have made a commitment that we will have a long, lengthy, compassionate runway in order to transition people. They will continue to receive their payments from now into the next few months, and we will start to transition them. But let me be perfectly clear, and listen to what I say: I will not, and I never will, abandon the people of this province.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Don Valley East will come to order.

The reason we ask you to make your remarks through the Chair is because it to some degree depersonalizes the debate and keeps it focused on actual public policy as opposed to a personal disagreement. Once again, I would ask the members to make their comments through the Chair.

Next question.

TAXATION

M^{me} Amanda Simard: Ma question s'adresse à la procureure générale.

Pendant la campagne électorale, le premier ministre et notre équipe PC avons promis à la population de l'Ontario d'utiliser toutes les ressources à notre disposition pour lutter contre le projet du gouvernement fédéral d'imposer une taxe sur le carbone aux gens, aux familles et aux entreprises de notre province.

Conformément à cette promesse, notre premier ministre et Scott Moe, le premier ministre de la Saskatchewan, ont annoncé il y a deux semaines que l'Ontario appuierait la Saskatchewan dans sa contestation à sa Cour d'appel.

La ministre pourrait-elle partager avec les députés ici présents toute autre mesure que le gouvernement de l'Ontario compte prendre pour contester la taxe sur le carbone imposée à notre province par le gouvernement libéral de Justin Trudeau?

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Merci à la députée de Glengarry–Prescott–Russell pour sa question.

Le gouvernement de l'Ontario s'est vu confier par notre population le mandat clair de s'opposer à la taxe fédérale sur le carbone. Comme la députée l'a souligné, nous nous sommes engagés à utiliser toutes les ressources à notre disposition pour y parvenir. C'est pourquoi le ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs et moi-même étions fiers d'annoncer ce matin que notre gouvernement contestera lui aussi devant la Cour d'appel de l'Ontario la taxe fédérale sur le carbone. Monsieur le Président, nous avons toute confiance que nous allons gagner.

Nous avons écouté les Ontariens et les Ontariennes qui ne peuvent simplement pas se permettre de payer plus d'impôts, et prenons les mesures juridiques nécessaires pour défendre les intérêts des contribuables ontariens.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M^{me} Amanda Simard: Je remercie la ministre d'avoir partagé cette bonne nouvelle.

Je sais que mes électeurs, et tous les Ontariens, seront ravis d'apprendre que leur gouvernement défend leurs intérêts et travaille fort pour mettre plus d'argent dans leurs poches.

La ministre peut-elle nous fournir des renseignements supplémentaires quant aux raisons pour lesquelles notre gouvernement procède devant la Cour d'appel à une contestation, et en quoi ça consiste?

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je suis heureuse de fournir à la députée plus de renseignements.

Notre gouvernement demandera à la Cour d'appel de déterminer si la Loi sur la tarification de la pollution causée par les gaz à effet de serre, du gouvernement fédéral, viole en tout ou en partie la Constitution. La position de l'Ontario est que cette loi impose une taxe anticonstitutionnelle. C'est pourquoi notre gouvernement travaille fort et emploie toutes les ressources à sa disposition pour contester la taxe fédérale sur le carbone.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say we announced today that we're taking the feds to court and challenging their carbon tax. I can tell you that it will be a great day in Ontario when we win that case, and we will win that case.

1120

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Wayne Gates: Mr. Speaker, through the Chair, my question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The people of the Niagara region want to have a say in who will represent them for the next four years. The government would have known that, if they had bothered to consult anyone before they decided they know what's best for Niagara. Well, I have news for this government. Only the people of Niagara know what's best for Niagara, not a government that keeps cooking up secret backroom deals.

When exactly and with whom did the government consult on their decision to cancel the Niagara regional chair election?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, Speaker, through you to the honourable member, we consulted with tens of thousands of people during the election, and we made it very clear—

Hon. John Yakabuski: Crystal clear.

Hon. Steve Clark:—crystal clear that one of the things we would do is reduce the size and cost of government. As I said, the Liberals imposed a piece of legislation on us in 2016 that affected those four regions. All we're doing in this proposed bill is pressing the pause button in terms of the member's region in Niagara and also Muskoka, Peel and York.

We're going to have a conversation at the upcoming convention. I say to the honourable member opposite and his colleagues who are sitting on either side of him, if you have feedback on what you feel has worked in regional government, what you feel may not have worked as well, we can have this conversation, along with our municipal partners, at the upcoming AMO conference. I look forward —

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

If this side of the House is having trouble hearing one of the ministers, I would suggest they diminish the volume of their heckling.

Supplementary?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Back to the minister: I want to be clear, I'm not from downtown Toronto. The anti-democratic action of this government is disrespectful to the people of Niagara. We deserve to have our say on who is going to represent us. We will not go unheard.

Will this government allow municipalities in the Niagara region to pose a referendum question to their constituents regarding the future election or appointment of their regional chair?

Interjection.

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

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: response.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. Through you to the member: I think we just came through a referendum where it was very clear that Ontarians embraced our words of trying to reduce the size and cost of government. Again, I think it serves taxpayers very well, where we're providing a level of government, whether it be federal, provincial or municipal, in the most effective and most efficient manner.

Again, I want to refer to the bill, Speaker, the Better Local Government Act. All it does is press the pause button on those four regions and allows them to select their regional chair the same way they did in 2014.

Moving forward, if the bill is passed, we're going to have that dialogue at the upcoming AMO conference in a couple of weeks in Ottawa. We want very dearly to talk about what has worked in regional government and perhaps what hasn't worked. We want to try to figure out the best, effective and efficient way to operate. I invite the member and his—

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

Next question?

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, is a serious, potentially debilitating condition that can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed a traumatic incident. PTSD can seriously affect all aspects of a sufferer's life, including their job and career, and can often lead to other mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, substance abuse and risk of suicide.

PTSD has become a global health issue and the prevalence of it is gaining awareness. In Canada, between 1.1% to 3.5% of the general population is thought to have PTSD. In 2016, Ontario amended the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 to presume that PTSD is a workplace injury among first responders if

it arises out of and in the course of the worker's employment.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I ask the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care what initiatives her ministry is taking to address PTSD.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I want to start by thanking the great member from Brantford—Brant for this very important and timely question. PTSD is a significant risk to the health and well-being of people who regularly face or are affected by traumatic situations. My ministry will work closely with the Ministry of Labour to ensure Ontario's first responders have access to the care and services that they need. Research shows that first responders are at least twice as likely as the general population to suffer from this disorder.

We have been very clear on this issue throughout the election campaign and now as a government. We will support Ontario's public health system by adding \$3.8 billion in new support for mental health and addictions and housing. Developing and implementing a thorough, comprehensive and connected mental health strategy once and for all is a priority for us. As we all know, mental health is health.

With important increases to mental health funding, families especially with children and youth with mental health issues—

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

Supplementary.

Mr. Will Bouma: Supplemental back to the minister: On Tuesday of this week, I tabled my first private member's bill, entitled PTSD Awareness Day Act, 2018. June 27 was first officially recognized as PTSD Awareness Day in the United States in 2010. Since then, many organizations have followed suit. However, despite Canada—in particular, Ontario—having one of the highest rates of PTSD sufferers in the world, approximately one in 10, only the province of Alberta has legislation acknowledging June 27 as PTSD Awareness Day.

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

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister tell this House if she intends to support my legislation this afternoon, later today?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I do applaud the member for bringing forward this issue and bringing forward his private member's bill later this afternoon. Yes, to answer your question, I absolutely will vote in favour of it.

As Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, I look forward to working with our front-line care workers in mental health, organizations like Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, CAMH, Children's Mental Health Ontario and the Canadian Mental Health Association.

This government will supply the front-line workers with the supports and resources they need to serve On-

tario's patients and families, so we can finally move forward with a comprehensive mental health strategy for all Ontarians. As the Premier has said in the past, this Ontario PC government will provide faster access to care by enhancing access to primary care providers, by reducing unnecessary emergency room visits and bringing down wait times. Promise made, promise kept.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. My riding of Beaches–East York has over 107,000 constituents. Not a single one of them voted to have their municipal representation slashed. There were zero mentions of this plan during the provincial election. My community is extremely diverse, and we deserve to have more than one voice representing us.

Will this government stop bulldozing the people of Toronto and let us finish the election that many have already started?

Hon. Steve Clark: Through you, Speaker, to the member for Beaches–East York: I want to thank you again for the question. However, I think our government and our Premier were very clear during the election that we were going to reduce the size and cost of government. During the campaign, we made a commitment to the people. We made a commitment to the people that we would respect their taxpayers' dollars, that we would clean up the hydro mess and reduce rates, that we would create good jobs, that we would bring accountability and trust back into government and that we would end halfway health care.

Again, if the NDP, either in question period or today in private members' business, wants to—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I say to those of us who are visiting in the members' gallery or the public gallery, you're not allowed to participate in the debate. If you continue, we'll have to ask that you be removed.

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): You're not allowed to applaud, either. If you continue to persist, we will have to clear the galleries.

1130

Interjections.

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

The minister had the floor. We'll let the minister finish his response.

Hon. Steve Clark: It's better for Ontarians not spending \$25 million on more municipal politicians.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: Speaker, it's simple: The people of Toronto voted to stop the Premier from becoming mayor in the last municipal election, and overwhelmingly voted against him in the last provincial election. Now the Premier is threatening to take away Toronto's representative democracy. One would expect this behav-

our from a spoiled child who takes his ball away after striking out. Democracy—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to caution the member again on the use of intemperate language and personal insults. It doesn't add anything to the debate, and it causes discord in the House.

I'd ask the member to put her question.

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: Speaker, democracy isn't a game, and Toronto has done nothing wrong. Will this government stop treating the people of Toronto like they are spoiled children themselves, and will this government treat them like adults and with respect?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the member for Beaches–East York: What we're proposing in the Better Local Government Act is nothing new. For two decades, cutting the size of Toronto council has been discussed. The Premier talked earlier today about the Toronto Star poll. There was another poll that I quoted yesterday from 2014 that found 56% in favour of reducing council then from 44 to 22 seats, but it never got anywhere because councillors always vote to save themselves.

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

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Stan Cho: My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The death of any child is tragic, but it's especially sad when a child is killed by an entirely preventable accident. In May 2017, a 15-year-old boy named Garrett Mills from Napanee, Ontario, was killed when a 200-pound movable soccer goal toppled over and crushed him because it wasn't secured properly to the ground.

In the last 40 years, there have been more than 50 deaths and hundreds of injuries from these movable soccer goals collapsing on children. Can the minister please explain how the recently reintroduced Garrett's Legacy Act ensures that movable soccer goals in Ontario are secured safely?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: To the government House leader.

Hon. Todd Smith: I'm really pleased to answer this question. I'm really pleased that the member from Willowdale has introduced Garrett's Legacy Act into the House to be debated this afternoon. Garrett was a very special young guy. His dad called him an old soul, and his mom and dad, Dave and Gwen Mills, will be joining us this afternoon for the debate.

Garrett wanted to change the world for the better, and Garrett's Legacy Act does exactly that. Movable soccer nets are becoming more and more prevalent, but they can be dangerous when they're not properly secured. Garrett's Legacy Act, which was originally introduced in the last Parliament by me, was reintroduced on Tuesday by the member from Willowdale, and I couldn't be happier about that.

This bill would establish the requirement for organizations who own these soccer goals to make sure that they're properly secured, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. This simple piece of legislation will help protect Ontario children, not just the ones who are playing soccer on our fields, but those who are hanging out in our playing fields with their friends, as Garrett was in this case.

I hope all members will support this very important piece of legislation today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Stan Cho: Speaker, I'd like to thank the House leader, through you, for his response. I know this is a bill that he has personally championed and worked very hard on over the last year. We're hoping to get this very important piece of legislation passed very quickly. It's something that we need to do to take steps to make sure that our children are playing in a safe environment.

Physical activity is incredibly important and parents shouldn't have to worry about the potential dangers this common piece of equipment can pose on our sports fields, at our community centres and in our parks. Can the minister please explain to the parents of Ontario and to the members of this House how Garrett's Legacy Act will help protect children from injury and death in our communities?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks again to the member for Willowdale for picking up the torch on this important piece of legislation.

These movable soccer goals can be a great piece of equipment for multi-use sports fields because they are movable and they can be adapted to suit the field for various different activities. However, these movable soccer goals, as the member talked about—in this case, it weighed 200 pounds. In many cases, they can weigh 400 pounds. They can often fall over with the simple push of a finger or a gust of wind. They're unstable, and they're prone to collapsing.

We want to give the parents out there peace of mind that when kids are out playing on the fields, whether they're on the soccer pitch or, as in Garrett's case, just hanging out with their girlfriend, they are safe and they're protected from these things.

Garrett's Legacy Act would ensure our community organizations are taking this very simple life-saving precaution of anchoring soccer goals, but with minimal burden of added regulation or cost. We hope that all members will support this very, very important piece of legislation in honour of Garrett Mills this afternoon.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

When it comes to protecting our environment, this Conservative government cried foul against one level of government imposing terms on another. But when it comes to Toronto city council and their own self-governance, this government is perfectly content to

impose the will of the Premier on whoever stands in his way.

So, Minister, why the hypocrisy?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would ask the member to withdraw his unparliamentary remark.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Withdrawn.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response?

Hon. Steve Clark: Through you, Speaker, to the member for Humber River–Black Creek: I want to thank you for the question. We believe in better local government. We're going to reduce the size of Toronto city hall so that decisions can be made quicker, while services can be delivered more efficiently and more effectively. An oversized council makes it almost impossible to build meaningful consensus and get things done. As a result, infrastructure crumbles, housing backlogs increase and transit isn't built. An oversized council is not what the city of Toronto needs. Toronto has 25 federal MPs, they have 25 provincial MPPs, and because of this bill, if passed, they will have 25 Toronto city councillors.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Back to the minister: The government's response shows that they have no respect for democracy, and it denigrates elected officials everywhere—even themselves.

Across Canada, virtually every municipality has three, four or five times more councillors than MPs, because they are the front-line representatives for their local communities. But we know that this Conservative government's unilateral, undemocratic decision is not about the people; it's about silencing those who disagree with them. Will the minister admit that this is what the motive is behind this cynical and manipulative move?

1140

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Take your seats.

Minister, response?

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. Again, through you to the member, our proposed legislation will not only solve a problem in this council that completely can't make decisions. To the other very important issue of voter parity, I want to quote Councillor Justin Di Ciano, who made some remarks at a press conference here last Friday with a number of other Toronto city councillors who are supporting our bill. Here's Councillor Di Ciano's quote: "The ridings do not belong to the councillors; they belong to Torontonians. There is a massive improvement—over a million Torontonians who will now have a fairer vote because of the decision made this morning."

Again, Speaker, if the opposition would stop the drive-by smear attacks—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Timmins, again, will come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark:—democracy and actually look into this bill, actually look at the details and what we're trying to accomplish about making a more efficient and a more effective council, I think he would change his tune.

FIREFIGHTING IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Ross Romano: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. The forest fires burning in northern Ontario have caused great concern for the people in that area regarding the safety of their homes, their belongings, their loved ones and themselves. Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the reports in my local media in Sault Ste. Marie suggested that Parry Sound fire 33 was only five kilometres west of Highway 69, one kilometre from the Pickerel River and had grown to nearly 10,000 hectares in size.

Will the minister please provide us with a status update as to what our government is doing to try to stop these fires and prevent their further growth?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thank you to the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, we are actively fighting these fires, attacking by air and on the ground to protect the public and critical infrastructure. We have dedicated many resources needed to fight this fire and this includes crews and aircraft from across Canada, the United States and Mexico, as well as seeking the help of highly skilled wildfire response support personnel who have retired.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I visited the command centre a few days ago with the Premier and MPP Norm Miller. We saw first-hand the dedication and the hard work in the efforts of these front-line personnel. They are working to keep us safe day in and day out. Efforts are extensive and we are committed to protecting the community.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Ross Romano: Thank you, Minister, and again, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: With news reports showing a great deal of smoke from the fires, driving conditions on Ontario highways could potentially become an issue. In fact, Mr. Speaker, my wife and children were just in Toronto this past weekend and while driving home to Sault Ste. Marie a few days ago my wife called me from Parry Sound and expressed concerns, saying that there were areas where the smoke was coming across the highway and actually was affecting visibility.

Given the potential the fires could reach our highways, can the minister let us know what measures are being taken to ensure that motorists will be able to safely travel across the highway both north and south of Parry Sound?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thanks again for that supplemental. Mr. Speaker, my ministry is working closely with the communities affected by the smoke and fire. We really appreciate the support communities are showing during this time, and we encourage people to stay alert and cooperate with emergency personnel, especially if evacuations are taking place.

My ministry is working closely with the Ontario Provincial Police and the Ministry of Transportation to monitor smoke and fire along Highway 69, and I've been in recent communication with area mayors and leaders to offer our support and dedication to their communities.

Highway 69 remains open at this time but travel restrictions are in place in areas north of the French River and west of the highway. Maps of restricted travel areas can be found at ontario.ca, and we encourage everyone to stay safe and follow direction by the OPP and local officials during this long weekend.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): What a great way to end question period.

The member for King–Vaughan on a point of order.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a very brief point of order: Yesterday in this House, I remarked that the member from Ottawa Centre—a person I'm getting to know—suggested that he wants to raise the carbon tax by 35 cents a litre. I suggested, Mr. Speaker, that that was on socialist.ca. I want to provide a more credible and accurate answer: It is in fact on joel-harden.org.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That was not a point of order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Just a second. Just for the benefit of all the members, that was absolutely not a point of order. It's not appreciated either. It's not helpful.

This House stands in recess until 1 o'clock.

The House recessed from 1145 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Sara Singh: I'd like to introduce, in the gallery here today, some fantastic members of my campaign team. I have Matthew Nurse, who is a Unifor Local 1285 member, and Jasdeep Grewal, who was instrumental in our voter-contact strategy. I wanted to welcome them to the House today.

Mr. Parm Gill: I want to welcome and recognize my friend and brother from another mother, Amandeep Singh, here in the members' gallery. We also have Alysia Agarwal from Brampton. I'd like to welcome both of them to the House.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce my good friends Dave Schultz and Michelle Dreyer, who were integral volunteers on my campaign. If I sound good in here at all, you can thank Dave, and for the fact that I'm here at all, you can thank Michelle.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Ian Arthur: On April 24, when asked if a Conservative government would kill the Ontario Basic Income Pilot, party officials said, "Nope ... we look forward to seeing the results." Well, it took only a few short weeks before the Conservatives got used to breaking their promises to the people.

At its core, basic income is the right to self-determination beyond circumstance, and that is a powerful idea. Ontarians who participated in the pilot have said that it was life-changing. Dave Cherkewski of Hamilton lived in poverty for 10 years before this pilot. Now he's able to afford fresh, healthy food, and his anxiety has been curbed. Another recipient, named Jodi, said, "Basic income has given me the security I needed to help relieve some of the stress of our everyday life."

But I can see why this government of the few is for only the few. If they were to truly empower the many, including those families partaking in this pilot, their mandate would be short indeed. I would remind the members opposite that the last Premier to cancel a Basic Income Pilot was defeated shortly thereafter. When you slash income and resources for the impoverished and the vulnerable while also pledging to cut taxes for the rich and the powerful, it is obvious who this government actually stands for.

I urge this government to show some compassion, to live up to all of your promises and reverse this callous decision.

LAKESHORE MARDI GRAS

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Etobicoke–Lakeshore's version of Mardi Gras, which was inspired by New Orleans's famous Mardi Gras, kicks off this Friday, August 3, and runs throughout the weekend. Lakeshore Mardi Gras will be celebrating their 15th year in the community, and we're expecting this year to be bigger and better than ever before.

Visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy great live music, which will include bands like—and hopefully you all remember—54-40, Rik Emmett and Resolution 9. The festival will also have great food vendors with an amazing assortment of delicious carnival-style treats that children will love and adults who are children at heart will love even more. And, of course, no carnival or summertime event would be complete without a beer garden. In addition to great music, there will be dazzling displays of entertainment such as buskers, clown shows and much, much more.

The open atmosphere, natural park setting, beautiful Lake Ontario shoreline and beautiful sunny skies are what make Etobicoke–Lakeshore such an inviting community to spend time in during the summer months.

Of course, great events are only made possible with organizations and community involvement. I would like to sincerely thank the organizations, the volunteer committees and the generous community sponsors who are supporting Lakeshore Mardi Gras.

Come out to Colonel Samuel Smith Park in Etobicoke–Lakeshore this weekend. It's for everyone—younger people, older people, singles, couples and families. The food is great, the music is great and we're expecting some great Etobicoke–Lakeshore summer weather. Hope to see you there.

ROAD SAFETY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Today, I want to talk about a safety issue in the community of Dowling in my riding of Nickel Belt. In Dowling, the Larchwood Public School, the library, the community centre, the ball field and the ice rink—you get the idea—are on one side of Highway 144. The houses where the people live are on the other side of the highway.

For many years, parents and residents have been worried about children having to cross Highway 144 to get to school or to go play. We contacted the Ministry of Transportation, who did a traffic study. The study showed clearly that this situation was too dangerous, and they agreed to build a crosswalk to make things safer. Two long years have now passed, school will start in a few weeks, and there is no sign of a crosswalk being built.

My constituents are running out of patience. They have decided to take things into their own hands. They are planning a blockade of Highway 144, a major northern highway, on the first day of school. Why do we have to come to that? The Ministry of Transportation agreed. What are they waiting for? The death of a child is too high of a price to pay for inaction. Those delays would never be tolerated anywhere else. I will never accept being treated as a second-class citizen because I choose to live in northern Ontario.

Minister, the safety of these children is in your hands. Please do the right thing: Build a crosswalk in Dowling before our kids go back to school and before tragedy strikes.

MIKE BOUGHTON

Mr. Parm Gill: It is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to Milton councillor Mike Boughton, who passed away on Monday after a long battle with cancer.

I know Councillor Boughton represented ward 2 proudly and helped make life better for many Miltonians. He was a very, very proud Miltonian and watched not only our town grow, but many of those that he helped—work towards, in terms of making their lives better, right across Milton. He was the owner of a barbershop and very proudly served Miltonians for many, many years.

There is a very large void left in Milton town council. I know he will be greatly missed. On behalf of all of my colleagues in this House, I want to take this opportunity to send our condolences to his family, friends and fellow council members.

CARIBANA

Ms. Sara Singh: It's a pleasure to rise here today in the House and acknowledge that, as the first Indo-Caribbean woman elected to this Parliament, this weekend we'll actually be celebrating Caribbean heritage in all its forms at Caribana. People from around the world—over two million are expected—come to the city to cele-

brate, dance, jump up and wave to soca music, reggae music and dance hall, which is really, really exciting.

But let us not forget that this week, we also celebrated Emancipation Day. Caribana is a reflection of slavery—which many folks in the Caribbean experienced—and the emancipation from that. Caribana stems as a celebration to acknowledge our Caribbean heritage and the diverse cultures we have. We will have people from Trinidad, Tobago, Jamaica, St. Kitts, Grenada and Guyana—as I am from—celebrating and waving their flags with pride. I hope that on this long weekend we can all take an opportunity and participate in celebrating Caribbean heritage and the diverse cultures that we have here in our communities.

Unfortunately, due to a wedding—which I'm really also very excited to announce; my cousin is getting married to her long-term fiancé—I won't be able to jump and wave with my flag, but I'll be doing that at our reception. So, I wanted to also congratulate them on their auspicious wedding.

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SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Today, I would like to stand for the 4,000 people living in Thunder Bay, Lindsay, Hamilton, Brantford and Brant county and the thousands of families in Scarborough and throughout Ontario receiving income supports from Ontario Works and ODSP and who are going to be severely affected by the Premier's latest decision to scrap the Basic Income Pilot project and the planned increase of 3% to the people on Ontario Works and ODSP. Cancelling the Basic Income Pilot project and reducing the planned increase by 1.5% to people on Ontario Works and ODSP is not being compassionate, nor is it for the people.

Let me be clear, Mr. Speaker: The Conservative government is breaking their promises by cancelling the program they said they would keep. The Conservative government is now, instead, dragging Ontario backwards by breaking their promises, crushing the hopes of people living with no basic income and those living on low income.

Reducing poverty in Ontario does not work by decreasing the rates for Ontario's most disadvantaged and marginalized people, income that they depend on. Even Conservative Senator Hugh Segal said that this is a "horrific" mistake and that he is "embarrassed as a Progressive Conservative."

The pilot project was Ontario's way to gather our own evidence, and the Premier has destroyed that opportunity. Research suggests that this won't save any money. In fact, it would further deteriorate people's health and well-being, leaving them in poorer—

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

TOM WILSON

Mrs. Robin Martin: Just steps away from the bustling intersection of Yonge and Eglinton is a hockey

arena that has seen generations of aspiring athletes take to the ice. It is perhaps most well known as the home rink of Hockey Hall of Famer Eric Lindros. I'm speaking of course of the North Toronto Memorial Arena, which is located in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence.

These days, another professional hockey player is at the centre of attention in North Toronto. If you call the arena now, you will be greeted by a voicemail message that says, "Thank you for calling North Toronto arena, home rink of Stanley Cup champion Tom Wilson."

Our community is rightfully proud of Tom Wilson, who, long before winning the Stanley Cup as a member of the Washington Capitals, cut his teeth playing hockey at North Toronto arena. In fact, my son Eric actually played with Tom Wilson on the North Toronto double-A team.

Speaker, I'm very happy to report that Tom Wilson is bringing the Stanley Cup home to Toronto this weekend, and I would like to invite all members of this House to join me in congratulating Tom Wilson and the Stanley Cup champions, the Washington Capitals.

GREENBELT

Mr. Gilles Bisson: We all remember in the last election, as we led up to it, the then leader of the official opposition, Mr. Ford, said he was going to cancel the greenbelt. Do you remember that? He had a cozy little meeting with developers, and he says, "Don't worry, everybody. Put your confidence in me. We'll just get rid of the greenbelt."

Then, all of a sudden, the public started to push away. As the public pushed away and said that this was a bad idea, and because there was an election coming and he knew that this was not very popular and people want to protect the greenbelt, he says, "No, no. I'm listening to the people. Oh, I'm not going to do that; absolutely not." So what's the government's response, what's the Premier's response? "Let's get rid of city council." If you can reduce the amount of councillors at city hall, it's the developers who are going to control what goes on in that city hall. It's not going to be the people. This will be all about redeveloping the greenbelt according to what Doug Ford and developers want to do, and it's a really sinister way, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'd ask the member to refer to the Premier by his parliamentary title.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: "Premier"? Isn't that what I used? Anyway, I apologize.

I say again: The Premier is pretty clear what he's up to. This is all about attacking the greenbelt and doing development in a way that takes people out of the decision of what should be developed.

Mr. Speaker, it's our land; it's our city. The people have to be at the centre of all of the decisions. For the Premier to say, "No, I want to put my friends there so we can redevelop the greenbelt and do what we want" is wrong, and we're not a bunch of fishes.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Vincent Ke: This is my first time speaking in this Legislature as the MPP for Don Valley North.

It is an honour and a privilege that the residents of Don Valley North have placed their trust in me. I want to thank all the volunteers on my campaign. I also want to thank my wife, Changhong, and my son, Han, for their love and support as I begin my new position.

My constituents are happy to see our government for the people has kept its promises. We have legislation to cancel the cap-and-trade program. We have passed legislation to end the longest post-secondary education strike at York University. The board of Hydro One has resigned. And we are going to undertake the largest public consultation regarding the sex education curriculum starting in the fall.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to serving the residents of Don Valley North as their member of provincial Parliament. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before the House today.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: July 31 marked the beginning of the 2018 Special Olympics in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Hundreds of athletes are competing to qualify for the 2019 Special Olympics world games in Abu Dhabi. With over 260 athletes competing, Team Ontario is the largest team by far at the games.

I was pleased to receive a letter from Mr. Glenn MacDonell, president and CEO of Special Olympics Ontario, highlighting two of Team Ontario's athletes who just happen to live in my riding of Carleton.

Emily Byrne will be competing in the sport of rhythmic gymnastics and Christian Schofield will be competing in the sport of swimming. I'm always pleased to hear about the accomplishments of the people I have the privilege of representing here at the Legislature. Emily Byrne and Christian Schofield are an inspiration to our community and I'm proud to have them represent us as part of Team Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I want to wish them, as well as all the athletes across Ontario, all the best during this competition. No matter the outcome, they are already winners and champions here at home. I look forward to meeting Emily and Christian upon their return, congratulating them in person and sharing in the celebration that recognizes their efforts.

PETITIONS

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Jill Andrew: I am proud to present this petition on behalf of Dave Koppes and Jeff Farrell, members of our Toronto–St. Paul's riding.

"Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Ford government has announced, without any public consultation, plans to cut the size of Toronto city council down to 25 councillors; and

"Whereas this decrease in the number of city councillors will mean that each person in Toronto will be represented by a city councillor that will be expected to have time and resources available to serve and represent the interests of over 100,000 people for a large array of municipal issues; and

"Whereas the vast majority of Ontario municipal governments elect significantly more city councillors per person, such as Brockville, Ontario, which elects approximately one city councillor for every 3,750 people; and

"Whereas a nearly four-year independent review process concluded that a Toronto city council with 47 councillors is essential for effective representation;

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

"(1) Do not decrease the number of Toronto city council seats;

"(2) Do not increase the disparity between the number of city councillors elected per person in Toronto and the rest of Ontario."

I proudly sign this petition in support and I hand it over to page Annabelle for the Clerk.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I rise in this House to present this petition:

"Scrapping the Basic Income Pilot Project is Not Being 'Compassionate' and 'for the People.'"

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the priorities of the Conservative government are dragging Ontario backwards leaving people with no basic income to those living on low income;

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"Whereas the Conservative government is breaking their promises by scrapping the very own program that they said they would keep;

"Whereas the Basic Income Pilot program brought help to 4,000 people living in Thunder Bay, Lindsay, Hamilton, Brantford and Brant county;

"Whereas reducing poverty in the province of Ontario does not work by decreasing the rates for Ontario's most disadvantaged and marginalized people on Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program;

"Whereas Ontarians have a right to know about—and have a say—in the government decisions that affect them;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services to stop the pause on the Basic Income Pilot project, particularly the regulatory changes that would allow people to keep more of their part-time earnings. If this government is truly for the people, then it should be for all the people."

I will sign this petition and give it to page Bavan.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: On behalf of my constituents in Beaches–East York, I’m presenting a petition.

“Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

I agree with this petition. I will be affixing my signature to it and giving it to page Sophie to deliver to the Clerk.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr. Michael Mantha: “Stop the Cuts to Indigenous Reconciliation.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario is situated on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, many who 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;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to act 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 cooperative government-to-government accords;

“—support TRC education and community development...;

“—support Indigenous communities across the province....”

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition. I affix my name and present it to page Eliana to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have a petition that is called “Time to Care.”

“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;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“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 support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Justin to bring it to the Clerk.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Brampton Centre.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

“Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

I support this petition, will affix my name and give it to page Bavan.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I apologize to the member for Brampton North. I called you Brampton Centre; I apologize.

Further petitions.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Marit Stiles: I’m very pleased to present this petition on behalf of Judy Land, a long-time resident of the Bloordale community and head of the community improvement association.

“Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

I strongly support this petition and will be affixing my name. I would ask legislative page Eric to please deliver it to the Clerks on my behalf.

WEARING OF POPPIES

Mr. Michael Mantha: I have a petition.

“I Wear My Poppy With Pride and Respect.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

“Whereas the poppy is an enduring symbol of sacrifice that was initially inspired by the Canadian poet and

soldier John McCrae while in the trenches in the Second Battle of Ypres, Belgium, during World War I;

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

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

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

I agree with this petition, affix my signature and give it to page Hannah to bring it down to the Clerks’ table.

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AFFAIRES AUTOCHTONES

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member from Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Merci, madame la Présidente. Félicitations d’être dans la chaise.

« Pour mettre fin aux coupures affectant la réconciliation avec les autochtones.

« À l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario :

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

« —donner son appui aux communautés autochtones à travers la province (en appuyant, par exemple, les

travaux de nettoyage du réseau hydrographique de Grassy Narrows) ».

J'appuie cette pétition, je vais la signer et je demande à Eliana de l'amener à la table des greffiers.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Jamie West: This petition is called "Time to Care."

"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...."

I will affix my signature and give it to page Eric to bring to the Clerk.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Jessica Bell: This petition is "Stop Doug Ford from Interfering in Municipal Elections."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

"Whereas Doug Ford's meddling in municipal elections is an abuse of power;

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

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

I support this petition, I will be putting my signature to it and giving it to page Annabelle.

VISITORS

Mr. Michael Coteau: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I recognize the member for Don Valley East on a point of order.

Mr. Michael Coteau: Thank you, Speaker. I just want to take a moment to recognize Leslie Wolfe, the president of OSSTF district 12, and her daughter, joining us here today in the Legislature.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I move the following motion: That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should not meddle in municipal or regional elections and should withdraw Bill 5 as the government did not campaign on interfering in elections in Toronto, Muskoka, Peel, York and Niagara and changing the rules of a democratic election in the middle of a campaign period is undemocratic, un-Ontarian, and un-Canadian; and fails to reflect widely held beliefs that decisions about our democracy should engage citizens so they have their say about any changes to the electoral processes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Ms. Horwath has moved private member's notice of motion number 7. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has twelve minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's a pleasure to not only be bringing this motion forward and speaking to it in the chamber this afternoon, but to do so with you in the chair, Madam Speaker, is a thrill for me. I'm wanting to congratulate you on your position as a deputy Speaker.

I'm very, very proud also to stand up for the millions of people—literally millions of people—and their rights here in our Legislature: people in Toronto, people in York region, people in Peel region, people in the area of Muskoka, people in the Niagara region. The bottom line is, the rights of all of these people—their democratic rights—have been thrown under the bus by Mr. Ford. Speaking of buses, on his campaign bus, he didn't talk at all about doing this to the people of Ontario. He wasn't once up front with the people of Ontario about his secret plot to deny them their democratic right to have a voice in how their local elections are run.

The most shocking part of it all is that he is doing this in the midst of an election campaign. In any other jurisdiction around the world, we would call that election-rigging. That's exactly what it is here, because it's all about Mr. Ford and the fact that he was rejected by the people of Toronto many times. They didn't want him to be their mayor, and he has been rejected by those folks so many times that now he has got—I think it's sticking in his craw. He's taking revenge on those folks and he's going to pull the power to control what happens at city hall into his office here in the Legislature. It is absolutely an abuse of power, it is absolutely the wrong thing to do, and it is something that he was not up front with the people of Ontario about during the election campaign, which just ended on June 7.

It's a shameful way for this Premier to behave, particularly considering, when his party was on this side of the House with us in opposition, they howled at the Liberals whenever the Liberals did something that was not properly debated and discussed. They constantly howled at the Liberals for their behaviour. Now we have the Conservatives, drunk on their power, doing the exact same thing, which not only did they reject when they were in opposition but the people rejected in the last election campaign.

Let's face it: The people of Ontario said that they don't want that kind of behaviour anymore. They want a government that's going to be respectful. They want a government that's going to listen to them. They want a government that's going to get their permission when big changes are made.

Let's face it: The privatization of Hydro One, which the Conservatives support, was one of the straws that broke Kathleen Wynne's back, because she didn't consult with the people of Ontario. In a ham-fisted way, after an election campaign when she didn't say a word about selling off Hydro One, she then decided that she was going to sell off Hydro One, and people were rightfully outraged.

Similarly now, right after an election campaign, when the Conservatives didn't say a word about the fact that they were going to trample on people's democratic rights, first and foremost—because that's the big issue here: simply by edict, like he's the king of Ontario as opposed to a Premier, in such a ham-fisted way taking away the democratic rights of everyday Ontarians and people in Toronto and these other regions. This is exactly what people don't like. They believe that they have a right, and they should have a right, to participate in the democratic process, particularly when it comes to things that we all, regardless of party stripe, value: things like our democracy, things like our public assets that we collectively own. It's the same principle.

Here we have a Conservative government disappointing, almost immediately after the election, so many millions of people by the approach that they're taking. This approach is not the kind of approach that people support overall. I think that the Premier is behaving in a very inappropriate way, which is tantamount to truly an abuse of power. He's abusing his power here in the Legislature as the Premier.

It's a sad day for Ontario, because I think people had hoped for change. They're not getting change. They're getting a government that's doing exactly what they said they weren't going to do. In fact, not only are they doing that by trampling on people's democratic rights in this situation, which is what my motion speaks to, but when you look at some of their other behaviours, they're doing that as well: \$330 million in cuts to mental health. They were going to make the biggest investments ever in the history of the world when it comes to mental health. Oh, but guess what? They're cutting \$330 million annually from mental health.

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They're cutting \$100 million to schools—\$100 million to school repairs.

They're actually taking a promise that they made on the Basic Income Pilot, and they're putting it in the trash can. So promise made, promise broken, it looks like. They're actually attacking the most vulnerable people in Ontario. That's their biggest agenda.

And they're wasting tax dollars by dragging the federal government to court in a way that's going to cost untold millions, knowing very well that it's not going to be successful. What a waste of tax dollars. That money could be used to help ensure that we have a vibrant democracy in all these regions, that regional chairs are able to be elected in their local communities, instead of dragging us backwards to a place where those appointments are made in backrooms by well-connected people who have an agenda at hand.

The agenda should be the agenda for the people. That's what the agenda should be: the agenda for the people. Give the people the opportunity to elect their own representatives. What are we? We should be going forward when it comes to people's democratic rights, not being dragged backwards. But that's what we're doing with Doug Ford—sorry, with the Premier—and the Conservative government. They are dragging our province backward on a number of different files, and it's a disgrace.

They're taking half of the expected increase to the lowest-income people, the people who are living in deep and dire poverty because the Liberals allowed that poverty to deepen year after year after year until people are in a horrifying situation. They basically took over from the Conservatives after a brutal and callous 22.5% decrease in social assistance rates when they were last in government. And guess what? That mean-spirited, ugly Conservative agenda is back on the table here in Ontario, attacking the most vulnerable people that we have.

But, look, the bottom line is, the people of Ontario's basic democratic rights to have a say in their democracy and in their local elections should be tantamount. That should be the priority. To allow a government—any government—to allow a Premier—any Premier—to abuse their power in this way does not only send chills up my spine, but it is being noticed by many, many people, not only around our province but around our country. People can't believe that this kind of thing is happening, in this day and age, in 2018, in Canada, in Ontario.

It's a shameful, shameful commentary on the agenda that this government is setting out. It shows that they don't care about people's voices. They are going to behave in a ham-fisted way without providing people the opportunity to be consulted—and this makes it doubly worse, I think. Not only are they taking away people's democratic rights to have a say in their own local democracy, but they are actually taking away our democratic rights to argue this point and to put it through a public hearings process so that people can do what they would normally do, which is have a say on government legisla-

tion. So they're going to ram this legislation through the House. They're not going to allow it to have public hearings and a proper public process. They're, once again, going to act in a ham-fisted way.

I know that many, many, many people have come to the Legislature today to fight against this shocking and outrageous move by Premier Ford. I want to recognize the citizens who are here still—some were here this morning and have had to leave; some joined us for a press conference on the front lawn. I want to say thank you to all of you, because you're here and you're taking the time to represent not only your concerns, but I know that for every person who has been here today, they're representing the voices and the concerns of thousands and thousands—millions, frankly—of other people around the province. We appreciate that.

It's interesting because this really is not a partisan issue. What this is is a democracy issue. Democracy is something that should not cross any political lines. In fact, everybody in a vibrant and respected democracy should be able to be equally upholding of those democratic values, of those values of the rights of people to have a say in their democracy.

So the Conservatives are going to blah blah blah about things like money, like \$25 million. Meanwhile, they're wasting millions and millions and millions of dollars on other initiatives. In fact, we don't even know how many millions of dollars are going to be wasted on all of the contracts that they're cancelling—in a very undemocratic way as well, Speaker, things that are having the business community really beside themselves because this Conservative government is so recklessly tearing up contracts. We remember what happened when the Liberals tore up contracts. It was supposed to only cost—only—\$40 million to tear up the gas plant contracts. And guess what? Instead of that, it was actually \$1.1 billion.

The six-million-dollar man at Hydro One—the Premier has turned him into a nine-million-dollar man, He won't show the people of Ontario how much his foisting out of the board really is costing Hydro One. But again, this is a government that doesn't care about being open and transparent. It doesn't care about engaging citizens. It is just going to run roughshod over people's rights, over corporation's rights, over everyday communities' rights. It's really a sad, sad day when we see a Premier who is prepared to abuse his power in such a way.

You know what? Leadership isn't about puffing up your chest and using your power to drive people down. Leadership, in fact, is quite the opposite: It's engaging people in a vision for the future that builds us all up. Unfortunately, that's not what this government is doing.

In fact, what this Premier and this government are doing is the very definition of following through on a hidden agenda. They had this agenda throughout the campaign, they didn't talk about it, and now they're trying to couch it in other terms, like it's got nothing to do with the Premier's vendetta against his former political foes; like it's got nothing to do with punishing Torontonians for rejecting him year in and year out.

It is an absolute travesty that he will use that power and that his members, some of whom I thought were actually Progressive Conservatives—whoops, I guess that was a mistake. That his members are actually supporting this kind of absolute travesty in terms of our democratic rights in our province is really frightening and it's a slippery slope. I worry that the people of Ontario are going to see more of this nasty, mean-spirited kind of attack on their rights and on the rights of other municipalities.

Again, I look forward to hearing what other members in the chamber say, because there is no justification for this move.

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

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I'm pleased to speak on the leader of the official opposition's private member's motion.

The people have spoken on this. I just wanted to remind the member opposite that we finished a provincial election where voters elected Premier Ford with a large majority and a mandate to deliver on our commitment to find efficiencies and reduce the size of government. There is no better referendum than the election campaign we just completed.

When you speak about people, a recent Toronto Star poll indicated that 71% of Torontonians agree with our plan. They agree that this will save money and be good for democracy.

My office has received emails and calls on the topic, and I want to acknowledge all those who took the time, both for and against. I also want to let them know their voices are being heard. But I also want to recognize those I have met in the grocery store, those I have met at local restaurants, who are cheering on this government and are pleased with the proposals that we are making.

Residents of my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore want less politicians and they want a streamlined process. They want to see Toronto moving. They are tired of the bickering at city hall. They are tired of the week-long council meetings. They just want to see some progress.

My councillor was one of the 17 who supported this government's plan. Yes, I know: It is hard to vote yourself out of a job. But that's true leadership: making the tough decisions, making the best decisions for your people.

I have to ask why the NDP is prioritizing saving politicians' jobs over saving taxpayers \$25 million and giving them better local government. This includes faster decisions on housing, transit and infrastructure. Unlike the NDP, this government wants to get Toronto moving.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to address this motion. As you may well know, I have an opportunity later today to do the NDP leadoff on the bill, and I will enlarge upon some of the things I'm going to address right now.

Speaker, this bill is clearly an abuse of power. I think the member for Hamilton set it out very well, but I want to enlarge a bit on that. I would oppose this bill even if it was coming into effect for the next election. But it's not. It's coming into effect in the course of an election that is happening right now—right now. This is extraordinary.

It is very clear that this bill addresses a number of interests of Mr. Ford: clearly taking control of the city; clearly making sure that the grassroots have less power; clearly making sure that the well-heeled and the well-connected are in a much more powerful position; and clearly making sure that developers have a much freer hand in the years to come. But aside from all those things, this is about settling political scores; there is no question about it.

I strongly urge members of this Legislature and those in the audience and those on television to avail yourself of the nearest public library. Read Mayor Rob Ford: Uncontrollable by Mark Towhey—not exactly a lefty; his experiences as the chief of staff to Rob Ford—and Crazy Town by Robyn Doolittle to understand the milieu, to understand the kind of people that the Ford administration has worked with and the kind of approach they have to power and politics. As they exhibited so clearly in this city when the Ford administration was in charge, it was a time of chaos. It was a time of battles. It truly was a time of dysfunction, but it wasn't because we had too many councillors; it was because we had two people who were trying to ram through an agenda that disrupted the city. And so the city of Toronto became noted around the world as a place of chaos and dysfunction.

It only started getting sorted out when the majority of council decided, "Enough. We're going to seal off the Ford administration and we're going to run the city." That was the unity of the left, right and centre.

Norm Kelly became the interim mayor. He is not known as an NDPer, but Mr. Kelly and the council that supported him actually had an interest in the well-being of the city, rather than satisfying their own personal interests. That's the reality.

This Premier can never forgive the fact that Toronto stood up to look after itself—never, never. But that was the reality. This Premier tried to run for mayor in the city of Toronto in this election.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: How did that work out?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I think people know. There was no support on the ground. He was going nowhere. He dropped out in January.

So, like a boyfriend whose partner just said, "I'm going to dump you," and a boyfriend who can't stop obsessing over it, who stalks the poor woman, we have a Premier who at last feels he's in a position to get even with the city, aside from his other interests. That is a powerful thing driving his interests and driving this whole agenda. That is no way to run a Legislature or deal with a city.

I look forward to expanding on my remarks later this afternoon.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Speaker. It's the first time I've been speaking since you've been sitting in the chair. Congratulations on your election.

I'm proud to stand up for democracy and speak in favour of motion 7. I find it deeply disturbing that the Premier of this province would interfere in local elections in the middle of a campaign. I never thought I would see the day when an Ontario Premier would actually cancel local elections, as what's happening right now in Peel, Muskoka, Niagara and York regions.

If the provincial government wants to start a conversation about how to improve municipal government, I'm all for that. But let's follow a proper process in doing so. The way it's being done right now is disrespectful of democracy and it's disrespectful to the people of Toronto and the regions. These actions are really what you might expect to see on the evening news in reference to a tinpot dictator, not the Premier of Ontario. It's not what I would expect to see in this House, in this province and in this country.

In the past month, the new Conservative government has shown a disturbing disregard for the rule of law and our democratic traditions. Cancelling government contracts, passing legislation to attempt to shield the government from lawsuits for acting in bad faith and, now, meddling in local elections sends the wrong message. It sends a message that Ontario is not a stable, democratic place that respects the rule of law.

Madam Speaker, I find it ironic that, just this morning, the government officially announced that it is filing a lawsuit against the federal government's plan to price carbon pollution. I find it ironic that the province is saying to the federal government, "Don't meddle in provincial affairs when it comes to pollution pricing" at the exact same time that the province is meddling in the affairs of local government.

The Premier has set aside \$30 million to fight a legal battle that the government has little hope of winning. The government would rather spend \$30 million fighting a hopeless legal battle than spend that money on education or health care or better transit. I find it ironic that the Premier is willing to spend more money to fight the federal government's pollution program than what will be saved by creating chaos in local democracy in the city of Toronto.

The Premier's hopeless legal battle with both the federal government and now with the city of Toronto, I believe, puts ideology ahead of truth. It puts it ahead of the facts on the ground. This isn't about saving money; it's about settling political scores.

I know that the Premier has talked a lot about knocking on doors. Well, I would encourage the Premier to go knock on some doors and ask people, "Would you rather spend \$30 million on a hopeless legal battle with the federal government, or would you rather spend that \$30 million on health care and education and better public transit?"

I would encourage—
Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Order.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I would ask the members opposite to please think deeply about the actions you are about ready to take with Bill 5. Is this really the legacy you want to leave? Is it really something you want this government to be remembered for: interfering in local elections in a way that violates proper protest and disrespects our democratic traditions?

I ask you to think deeply about what you are about ready to do, reconsider Bill 5 and follow proper process before we have a discussion about how to change municipal government.

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

Mr. Roman Baber: I rise on this motion as a proud resident, voter, taxpayer and a fan of my beloved city, the city of Toronto, also known as “TO,” “T-dot,” “Hogtown” and my personal favourite, “the Six.” This is where dreams come true, where opportunity is plenty, where everyone’s welcome, the best place on earth, the magnificent, the one and only, the city of Toronto.

From downtown to North York, from Scarborough to Etobicoke, Torontonians expect all levels of government to do their job, to move the city forward, to build transit, to provide good services and to put people first, not politicians first. So I couldn’t be more proud to be a member of this government under the leadership of Premier Ford, who had the courage, the decency to do something that needed to be done long ago: cut the size and streamline the function of city council to put Toronto first.

But, Madam Speaker, the opposition motion would have this House believe that city council is functioning fine. The opposition does not care for the dysfunction of council—no. Look at what the dysfunction and gridlock on council have done to transit in our city, to subsidized housing, to policing, to social services.

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For instance, under the leadership of the Premier’s beloved brother, the city voted in 2011 to build the Scarborough subway. Since then, every six months or so, council calls for a new vote on the same project. Ten times now they have voted on it, and seven years later, not a shovel in the ground. The people of Scarborough want a subway, but the Leader of the Opposition wants the dysfunction and resistance to continue. Well, no more, Madam Speaker. Our plan will ensure that the gridlock is over and that the subway will be built. My favourite three words in the English language, Madam Speaker: Subway, subway, subway. Say it with me, colleagues: Subway, subway, subway.

But here’s what matters most to people, to this House, to our history and to our future: It is democracy. The Leader of the Opposition rises every day in this House accusing the government of undermining democracy—shame. Shame on the opposition. It is in fact the opposition leader who is undermining democracy by opposing a plan that respects voter parity and equal representation. The Supreme Court repeatedly stated that equal represen-

tation is a constitutional right, but you don’t need the Supreme Court to know right from wrong.

Every vote is equal. Every voter is equal. That is a hallmark of democracy. But under the existing structure there is an unjust disparity between Toronto voters. Ward 18 in Parkdale–High Park has 72,000 residents. Conversely, ward 21 in Spadina–Fort York has 29,000 residents. I live in ward 8; we have 54,000 residents, but ward 20 has 36,000 residents. How is that fair, Madam Speaker? That is not equal representation. That is not democracy.

Bill 5 will ensure that every Toronto resident will be represented equally under the provincial and federal boundaries, which are designed for population. I urge the Toronto members of the opposition to think carefully and not deny me and my constituents democracy. Vote for equal representation. Vote against the motion.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: I rise today to stand in support of this motion calling for the withdrawal of Bill 5 and in bold opposition to all aspects of this bill. Make no mistake, Madam Speaker: Bill 5 is an attack on Toronto; it is an attack on the regions of Muskoka, Niagara, Peel and York; and it is an attack on the very foundation of democracy. This government is abusing its powers to interfere in municipal elections. Every single member of this chamber should be entirely chilled to their core by this undemocratic move.

I’d like to address three specific concerns with this bill today: first, the absolute falsehood that this government campaigned on this issue; second, the absolute falsehood that the government has completed any kind of meaningful consultation related to this bill; and third, the absolutely reckless idea that it is appropriate to change the rules of an election in the middle of a game.

First, let’s talk about the mandate that this government does not have on this issue. I stood in this chamber on Tuesday evening and spoke to this, and apparently I wasn’t clear enough the first time. Again, this government did not campaign on a promise to meddle in elections. There is absolutely zero mention of such a measure in the Conservatives’ plan—I’d dare to call it a platform, because at eight pages in length, it made for lighter reading than a drugstore romance novel. In fact, the first time anyone that I’ve talked to heard about this absurd plan was in the bombshell Thursday-night announcement that the Premier made, although from all accounts I hear Mayor Tory got more of a heads-up than the citizens of Toronto, which brings me to my second point.

The government has not consulted the people of Toronto on this unilateral and undemocratic move. I will kindly remind my colleagues across the aisle that campaigning is not consultation. I could knock on, say, a thousand doors and come back into this chamber and say, “Hey, do you know what, Madam Speaker? I’ve talked to thousands and thousands of people, and they all tell me we have enough schools. We have too many schools. Our kids have too many schools. We should start closing

schools and saving tax dollars.” I could very well have knocked on those thousands and thousands of doors, and maybe it’s true that not one person told me that they think we have exactly the right number of schools, but were they actually prompted and asked the question? Was there any documented, accountable process? Were the people informed about what their opinions were being used for? Was their consent to participate given? And more to the point, is closing schools the best decision for children, regardless of people’s opinions?

This is why public consultation processes are deliberate, why they are organized, why they are transparent, why they are documented and why they are accountable.

Do you know who has consulted on the size of democracy in the city of Toronto? The city of Toronto has. They spent years talking to residents, drawing maps, looking at growth projections, talking to more residents, debating it at committees, at city hall. And after years of public consultation and expert advice, only then did they make the decision about what their government and what their democracy should look like. They made that decision with the outlook of this upcoming election in mind, knowing that elections are complicated, that they are logistical behemoths to organize, and that the city clerk and staff would need time to do the work of holding a fair, open and democratic election.

That brings me to my third point: It is absolutely reckless of this government to storm into the city of Toronto weeks before an election and pull the rug out from everyone’s feet and change the rules in the middle of the game. We are setting the city—my city, the city that raised me—up for failure, and it’s deplorable. It is not reasonable to ask the city to reboot its election process when they’re halfway to the finish line.

Madam Speaker, I hope my Conservative colleagues will do what is right and support this motion calling for the withdrawal of Bill 5.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Further debate? The member for King–Vaughan.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: I will start by congratulating you, Madam Speaker. I understand that this is your second day in the chair.

I do want to respond to the leader of Her Majesty’s loyal opposition. What I think is most offensive is the fact that, in her judgment, she cannot accept the democratic will of the people, who gave us a mandate to govern, and who rejected resolutely the socialist agenda of the New Democratic Party. That is the issue at play: the fact that one cannot accept, in their judgment, that the people have rejected a higher tax plan under the NDP.

We are talking today about the Better Local Government Act, legislation that I believe will help improve the efficacy of government, reduce the size of government and ultimately improve the service delivery of government.

Some of the rhetoric by the members opposite—and I’m not one to judge, but honestly—

Interjections.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: No, I say this with humility. But honest to goodness, to use the rhetoric about the Premier—I’m not going to repeat it. I have gone to promote democracy in north Africa after the Arab Spring in Tunisia twice, as a presidential election observer, among others. It’s nothing to joke about, actually. In the promotion of democracy, I find it very compromising that the leader of Her Majesty’s opposition is prepared to dial up the rhetoric and oppose us speaking about issues that real people care about, like taxation, like hydro, like better jobs and, ultimately, better social services.

The reason why we’re bringing forth this legislation is to enable the fifth-largest economy in this country to do the business of governing, to serve the people, to build transit, to improve the lives of every single Torontonians. I would submit, that should be the primary function of government—not obstruction, not political theatre, not gridlock, which we have seen far too long at the city of Toronto.

The member opposite, the member of Her Majesty’s loyal opposition said—and I’m going to invoke a quote, if I may—it’s wasting money to fight the carbon tax and we ought not to be doing this. To be fair, I’m only commenting because she introduced the concept. But I think it’s an abdication of leadership when a member of this House is ill-prepared to stand up against a federal government that is raising the prices on every single person, every consumer, every small business.

What is progressive to the Leader of the Opposition about raising taxes on low-income families? What is shameful—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Order.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: There is nothing progressive about raising taxes on single mothers—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Order.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: —on seniors, on young people. You should be ashamed. That is not leadership. That is not—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Order. I have to be able to hear the speaker, and you all have to be able to hear me. I said “order” a few times.

Please continue.

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I do believe that standing up for our provincial interests, for economic prosperity, for the competitiveness of our industry is what leadership is about. We’re prepared. I understand that other parties in this House are ill-prepared to do that, but count on the members of this government, under the leadership of this Premier, to stand up for private enterprise every single day.

1410

If I may conclude, Madam Speaker, just to contextualize the problem: They’re ill-prepared to fight against the carbon tax that the Parliamentary Budget Officer of this country said just days ago would take \$10 billion out of

the economy. And they suggest that this is a waste of money? That's an abdication of leadership.

Start to focus on the priorities of people, like lower taxes, lower hydro rates and better jobs. That is our priority. Come onside and join us.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Madam Speaker, it's wonderful to see you in the chair.

I wanted to speak a bit on this motion. I obviously support the motion. I'm absolutely thrilled that our leader has put forward this motion, because I'm a resident of this city. I came here from Newfoundland about 20 years ago. I love this city. I love the people of this city. That's why I ran to be elected, first as a school board trustee and then later as an MPP for this city.

This government is acting like a dictatorship. This move, this bill that has been put forward—

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Withdraw.

This government is acting in an extremely anti-democratic fashion. They did not ask the people of this province or of this city what they wanted to see in the local elections taking place here. When they say that they ran on this in their platform, it's baffling, because there isn't a word about it in their platform—not a word.

They're meddling in our local elections for their own political purposes. Not once have they asked the people of Toronto what they think about this. Not once have they asked the people of Toronto if they want to see changes to our electoral process. And do you know why they haven't asked them? Because they don't want to listen, because they don't want to hear what the people of Toronto would have to say about that, because the people of Toronto are looking for better services and better representation. This government is going to reduce the service that people in our communities have come to expect, and why? Why are they doing it?

I've had this question come up so many times as I walk around in my community right now. People are asking me, "Why would they bother? Why are they wasting their time?" Do you know why? I could tell you why. It's about the developers. You talk about private enterprise—it's about the developers.

One of the most effective roles that a city councillor plays in this city is ensuring that the voice of the residents, of the community—through the Chair—that the residents of the community's voices are heard in decisions about development. That means negotiating for more affordable housing units. It means negotiating for more park space and green space. Those are the things that developers don't want to give up—

Interjection: Very easily.

Ms. Marit Stiles: —very easily, and this government wants to hand developers on a silver platter everything they possibly can.

Listen: I just want to talk for a moment about something else that has been really disturbing to me about this

government, and that's the attack on school board trustees, one of our most important local representatives. They are requiring the school boards to change the ward boundaries by August 14 or they're going to impose boundaries on them. I cannot think of a greater affront to democracy.

You want to talk about investors? I'll talk about investors. You're sending a message to investors that we have a dictatorship here.

Interjection: Oh, really?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Oh, yes.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Withdraw.

You don't respect contracts and you meddle in local elections, and that is a message of a lack of stability. Investors are not going to want to come anywhere near this province, so thank you very much.

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

Miss Kinga Surma: I rise in the House today because I am passionate about our party's direction on the local government bill. I felt an obligation to rise in the House today so that I could address my constituents, the residents of Toronto and the members in the House in terms of my experience at city hall. Just to be clear, it probably took me about two city council cycles to draw my own conclusions about how dysfunctional it is. Throughout a four-year term, even with a very clear mandate, I watched council titter-totter, flip-flop, defer and postpone projects, large and small. Now I'm going to use two very clear examples.

The Gardiner: Toronto city council waited until there were, literally, rocks falling from the sky on commuters trying to access the city. Even when it was brought to their attention, they had studies, surveys, consultations and an endless amount of speeches for months on whether or not to fix, replace or create a new hybrid model. It was actually disgusting.

The second example I would like to use that my colleague addressed was the Scarborough subway. For how many years have the people in Scarborough been fighting for a subway? Although I do not represent the constituents of Scarborough, I do represent a suburb, and we would like to see public transit in those areas as well.

The biggest problem is that there are 44 councillors and a mayor that often are continuously tied up by internal politics, as opposed to doing what's right for the city of Toronto.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I return to the member for Hamilton Centre for her two-minute reply.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I certainly appreciate the contributions of all members across the aisle and on our side who contributed to the discussion on this motion, but I find it quite disturbing that a government that got elected with 40% of the vote—not 50%, not 51%—thinks that that makes their Premier a king. That's not the case. The Premier is not a king. He's actually a Premier, and he is

abusing his power by taking away the democratic rights of people in all of these communities to determine the future of their municipalities.

When I think particularly about Toronto, it's very, very concerning that this Premier has decided that he wants to control the city of Toronto from the Premier's office for reasons which we've all described—and I thank the NDP members for outlining those reasons.

But, look, what's going to happen when the Premier has the power to control Toronto? He's going to privatize the TTC. He's going to privatize Toronto Hydro. He's going to sell social housing to his developer friends. He's going to pave the way for developers to do anything they want in the city of Toronto, not caring a whit about the livability of the city. That is the wrong direction for the city of Toronto. It disrespects the people of Toronto.

Hiding one's secret plans during an entire election campaign does not show respect for voters. It demonstrates utter contempt for the people of Ontario—utter, utter contempt.

I will remind those folks on the government side who talked about transit that, in fact, transit has been built in the city of Toronto. You might not know it, but there's something called the Eglinton Crosstown LRT that's being built and there's the Spadina subway extension that has been built. So please be honest about what you're saying and describing in terms of some of the improvements to transit.

But, look, what I'm saying to Mr. Ford, as the Premier of this province: Stop acting like a bully, stop acting like a dictator, and act like a leader who actually respects Ontarians and their right—

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Why are you so angry?

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington will come to order.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'm going to ask all the members one last time nicely to come to order. If I have to do it again, I will start with warnings. Thank you.

Orders of the day.

1420

PTSD AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LA JOURNÉE DE SENSIBILISATION À L'ÉTAT DE STRESS POST-TRAUMATIQUE

Mr. Bouma moved second reading of the following bill:

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

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Will Bouma: It gives me great pleasure—and the opportunity to change the subject—to present a bill entitled An Act to proclaim an awareness day for posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, as most people call it. With this bill, we hope to set aside June 27 as PTSD Awareness Day. The first awareness day was created in the US in 2010. However, in Canada, only Alberta has an awareness day.

We hear the initials “PTSD” a lot these days. We hear it used to describe problems facing the men and women in our armed services when they return from the battlefield. We hear it used to describe the experiences of victims of spousal abuse or playground bullies. PTSD affects those who have been hurt in tragic accidents or other traumatic events. In war, PTSD has been called many things: shell shock, war neurosis or combat fatigue.

During the Second World War, air crews who refused to fly were accused of lacking moral fibre. It was common to think of people suffering from PTSD as malingerers or cowards. They were told to man up or just deal with it. We have come a long way, but unfortunately there are still tinges of that old way of thinking in our society today. We tend to think of PTSD in connection with members of the military or first responders, and that's true. On a day-to-day basis, because of the nature of what they do, they are most apt to come face to face with the types of trauma that lead to PTSD.

But it can also strike randomly and indiscriminately. The tendrils of PTSD can reach deep into families, deep into neighbourhoods and deep into communities. Just think about the recent Yonge Street and Danforth Avenue attacks. In those two events, a dozen people died and several dozen were wounded. In many cases, we have seen their faces, we have learned their names and we have heard their stories. The families of the slain are dealing with an immeasurable loss. The wounded and their families will live with the physical and mental scars for the rest of their lives.

But the impact of those two events doesn't end there. What of the witnesses, what of the bystanders who watched these horrific acts unfold? They may have been busily rushing down the street to a business meeting where the van attack occurred or they might have been just another diner in a Danforth restaurant when the shooter did his worst. We don't know their names, we don't know their stories, but they may have been scarred just as deeply just the same. How will they feel the next time they walk down that street or step inside a favourite eatery?

What about the dispatchers who take these calls, who listen to the terror on our streets? They may not be able to describe the anxiety and the deep emotions that they're feeling. They may not be able to put a label on it. They just know that their lives have changed forever. Some will find a way to cope either on their own or with the support of friends and family. But others will not, and they need to know it's not their fault. More importantly, they need to know that they are not alone and that help is available.

That's what a PTSD Awareness Day is all about. It's about helping more people know about this illness, to recognize it and to learn how to get help.

There's another group of people who could benefit from greater public awareness of PTSD. These are the victims of spousal abuse. In many cases, these people have lived with violence for years. They may have had moments when they feared for their own lives or even for the lives of their children. The stress imposed by a violent spouse can sometimes lead them to become violent themselves, turning on those around them. It's a cycle of violence that can be passed on from one generation to the next.

One study found that women who take refuge in shelters are at a much higher risk of developing PTSD. Victims of domestic violence already suffer from self-doubt. They blame themselves instead of their abuser. They need to know the PTSD they suffer is not their fault either. Society needs to recognize that even long after the physical signs of abuse have healed, the mental and emotional wounds still need to be dealt with.

I want to talk a bit about my own experiences as a first responder. I've been touched by PTSD myself and so have some of my colleagues. I make my living as an optometrist, but for 10 years, I've also been a volunteer firefighter with the county of Brant. These days, a volunteer firefighter goes through the same training as a full-time firefighter, and we have to respond to all of the same types of calls as our full-time colleagues. That means we respond to house fires and traffic accidents. Sometimes we're first on the scene at a medical emergency or even, sadly, sometimes a suicide. You can be confronted by some pretty horrific scenes. Imagine the feeling of pulling a teen out of a car after he's wrapped it around a tree, or looking into the face of a senior as they take their last breath, or doing CPR on a newborn who is vital signs absent—the baby lived, I'm happy to say.

Those images will never go away. There are times, when I'm conducting an eye exam, when I'm suddenly staring into the face of someone whose death I've witnessed. Sometimes, it's hard to have a conversation with a child without these thoughts coming back to you. It's distracting. You can't get them out of your head. Fortunately, I haven't suffered any permanent damage to my family or my career, but for others, I know it can impact your productivity, your relationships and the way you function on a day-to-day basis. If you wait until the wheels fall off, you could lose your job, your home, your spouse.

All of us want to think of our first responders as tough and resilient, always ready to answer the bell calling them to service—and they are all of that, but they're also human. Fortunately, in the Brant fire service, no one is afraid to say, "That was a tough one." We know that our chief, our deputy chief and our captains are ready to talk about it. We are also grateful that, in 2016, this House passed the Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act. It assumes that when a first responder suffers from PTSD, it is a work-related illness. This allows faster access to

treatment and benefits. It was a tremendous step in reducing the impact that PTSD has on people.

But the stigma of PTSD remains. Too many people still consider PTSD a personal weakness that must be overcome, rather than a terrible and common consequence of traumatic experiences. In fact, Ontario has one of the highest rates of PTSD sufferers in the world. It has been estimated that one in 10 of our fellow Ontarians has been affected by it. Just to emphasize a point that I made before, we're not just talking about our veterans and our first responders; we're talking about people all around us who we meet every day. They may have been victims of violence in their own home or on the street. They may have seen a tragedy unfold or lived through a life-changing experience. Surviving a near-fatal illness can trigger PTSD. What they need is our support and a helping hand, and that's what I hope to do with this bill, which will designate June 27 as PTSD Awareness Day. It's my hope that we can decrease the stigma and help everyone realize that PTSD is a normal response to extreme stress and that there is help for those who suffer from it.

Before I conclude, I want to share just one more personal experience. My family immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands when I was a child. For years, I heard my father talking about when he was a boy at the end of the Second World War, when the victorious Canadian soldiers gave him a ride on one of their tanks. Our parents raised us to always say thank you to those who sacrificed so much for our freedom. Years later, when I was living in Michigan, I was in a parking lot when I noticed the licence plate of the car in front of mine. It had a tag reading, "World War II veteran." When the driver stepped out of the car, I went up to him and said, "Thank you." He was confused at first. When I explained that I had noticed the licence plate and I just wanted to thank him for his service, he burst into tears. Sobbing, he said, "It has been 70 years, and that's the first time anyone has ever said that to me."

In a way, this bill is another way for me to say thank you to our veterans and first responders. To all the victims of PTSD, we're saying, "We know what you're going through and there's help for you."

I know that marking a special day on the calendar isn't enough; there's more to do. But I hope that it will be seen as another step in the right direction as we bring PTSD out of the darkness and provide some light to those who suffer from it.

1430

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm very pleased to be able to rise and have the opportunity—only six minutes; never enough time when we are talking about something so important as recognizing service and the supports needed. I appreciate this bill, which is the PTSD Awareness Day Act, and I appreciate the member bringing it forward and his service to his own community.

I think it's very important to have a bill like this that does indeed aim to bring awareness. We have spent many

hours in this chamber debating and discussing our first responders and talking about post-traumatic stress disorder, but to have a day when the rest of the province can have a better understanding and can learn more about this, I think, is only going to serve those who struggle with PTSD and mental illness. It's going to serve them better. I think that something like this to bring awareness helps to destigmatize, helps to challenge the culture of a lack of acceptance.

One of the very first meetings that I had over four years ago in my office was with a veteran who came to me and wanted me to have a better understanding of PTSD. I knew about it academically but to have a gentleman sitting in front of me bringing this to me—he explained that he felt like a broken teapot, that while through the years he's been able, fortunately, to get the help that he needed to put those pieces back together and re-glue that teapot, so to speak, so that it could function again and do what it was supposed to do, you will always see the cracks. That was how he explained it to me.

And then I was struck by a conversation I had recently with a female veteran who came to me and she said in her own journey she didn't see the broken teapot. She was putting her life back together as a new mosaic with those pieces and creating something new.

Each individual on this journey needs the support by the professionals that we need across our communities that unfortunately we don't have the way we need. We do need to always take the opportunity to invest in understanding mental health and the supports and services.

One of the things that came up with the presumption that we brought forward—with the presumptive legislation—was that our first responders no longer had to prove and re-traumatize themselves with WSIB to get coverage for PTSD. I would encourage this government to take a look at some of the legislation that was brought forward towards the end of session that didn't make it through committee—my colleague from Essex and Bill 151—and that was adding more folks under that umbrella for the presumption. So let's do that.

One of the things that came out was for people to even get that diagnosis. The new legislation says that it has to be under DSM-5. Well, the short version is that the DSM-5 diagnosis for PTSD means it must be done by a psychologist or psychiatrist, no longer a medical doctor. That is a real challenge for our friends up north and in rural communities who don't have access to that same psychological support and service. That's an unintended challenge, but it's something we have to be talking about.

I'm not going to tell all of the stories of the individuals we have met in our communities; I know that we all have. I want to thank our first responders; I want to thank everyone who struggles with PTSD. I'm very glad to see in the text of this bill that it does say PTSD can affect anyone regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, age, nationality or vocation, because trauma can happen everywhere and we need to support it when we have the opportunity.

It's so hard not to tell individual stories here, but I know that's what will come from having an awareness

day, that across our communities people will have a better understanding of the challenges and the struggles. Our police officers—I had a gentleman come in. He's a greater Toronto area officer, and he went back to work. He was off work with PTSD, and he went back before he was ready, partly because of financial pressures, partly because of the desire to be a part of—policing is a community. He went back early, and unfortunately that exacerbated his PTSD. He has had very challenging consequences.

We know that we want all of our first responders, whether they be our correctional officers, our firefighters, our nurses, our police officers or our military folks, to be healthy. Their families want them to be healthy. They want to be healthy. Our community needs them to be healthy.

While we bring awareness and we talk about it, we have to, in tandem, be ensuring that those services are accessible and that they are there every day.

In the fall, we will all be at our Remembrance Day ceremonies. It's a very solemn and important day that brings a broader understanding, but what I've learned from some of our veterans is that it is so challenging for them to maybe even leave the house on that day. How do we support them every other day as well? That has to be part of what comes from an awareness day like this.

The conversations, on an ongoing basis—we need people to have that support everywhere they turn in our hospitals. Our mental health needs to be a significant focus, and we have to invest in that.

I congratulate the member. We are very pleased to support this.

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

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I am proud today to speak to the private member's bill, the PTSD Awareness Day Act, 2018, introduced by my colleague the member from Brantford–Brant. This is an issue that is very close to constituents in my riding of Barrie–Innisfil. PTSD can affect anyone but is most common with our military personnel, veterans, first responders, rescue workers and journalists, as well as the families of the victims.

I want to share a story from my riding with the House: the story of Natalie Harris, an advanced-care paramedic, and her journey and her struggle with PTSD. In 2012, Natalie, a paramedic, was a witness to a double murder at a hotel in our riding. The details of the call were too gruesome for her to recount. For almost two years, she managed to push down her feelings of this event to the back of her brain until she had to testify in court. She had had the support of her family and friends, but when Natalie got home after the testimonial in court, she took an entire bottle of allergy pills. In her words, she “ate them like jelly beans.” Thankfully, she was texting her friend at the time and her friend ended up calling 911. Her best friend saved her life.

Mr. Speaker, the point of the story is that this is unacceptable. We need to do more for mental health. That's why our government is committing \$3.8 billion to mental

health over 10 years, making it the largest investment in Canadian history into mental health and addictions.

We are committed to creating a comprehensive plan, but the first thing we need to do is create more awareness. That is why I am proud to support my colleague and his private member's bill to make June 27 PTSD Awareness Day.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I'm going to acknowledge to the member, regarding the bill, that I will be supporting it. Again, I'm from northwestern Ontario. There are a lot of First Nations communities that I represent in the riding. I support it because there are certainly a lot of issues related to PTSD that go unnoticed in our communities.

As you know, the history of Canada and the history of Ontario, with residential schools, with the Sixties Scoop: The governments that are in place never were involved in those processes of attacking the structures of our communities—the families. An example is, I know in my home community over the last 30 years or so, I've seen about 25 suicides in my home community, for a community of 500 or 600 people.

1440

There was a lot of mention of first responders, of police, and also nurses and physicians. We don't have full access to these types of services, but our first responders are sometimes the community members. These are the ones who have to respond to the crises or the incidents. Whether it's a drowning, a suicide or a house fire, those are the issues that they have to deal with.

When I speak about within the northern Ontario region—I spoke about my riding. I know that in 2017, within northern Ontario and First Nation communities, in the last calendar year we had about 37 or 38 suicides in our communities. People have to respond to that.

I want to mention this as well. Back in the 1970s and 1980s there was a pedophile who was in our communities in northwestern Ontario. This non-First Nations person was a Boy Scouts leader. He had his own plane. Not only that, he was a minister of a church that serviced the communities. When I talk about that, we believe that he abused during that time about 500-plus boys.

I talk about those issues because when we talk about PTSD, that's the impact it has in our communities. One of the counsellors who I used to work with a long time ago when I was doing mental health and health work said, "These communities are like a war zone." He was describing the PTSD.

I support this motion; I support this bill, because it has got to be recognized. I know that in northwestern Ontario sometimes—again, I keep saying this—our people are forgotten within the system, and again, PTSD having a recognized day would really show recognition that we are part of Ontario, that our people are a part of the province. I hope that the government will work with First Nations people, Indigenous people, with respect to the issues that are happening in our communities through the treaties that have been signed.

I'd like to emphasize that Ontario was a treaty signatory to Treaty 9. We should not forget First Nations. We should not forget what's happening in the backyards of this great province. I believe that in order to move forward towards reconciliation, we need to work together.

Again, I thank you for this motion. I thank you for this bill. I fully endorse it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Please be seated.

Further debate?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I'm humbled to be able to stand today and add my voice to the debate surrounding Bill 9, An Act to proclaim an awareness day for posttraumatic stress disorder. I really wanted to stand today and speak to the bill brought forward by my good friend the member from Brantford—Brant, because I think it's so important that we recognize the beauty of private member's business and the fact that we can bring up these important issues that really are of vital importance to Ontario and to our people and constituents. It's very easy in the business of governing to have some of these issues be overlooked in the rush of passing some big, flashy objects, for lack of a better phrase. I think it's important that we recognize the importance that there is in this Legislature of discussing these issues, and the member has recognized that.

I know in the last government, we had a bill come forward that actually wanted to name the tomato as the official fruit of Ontario. I remember thinking, "What a waste of an opportunity to have a serious, substantive discussion about something that matters to the people of Ontario"—seriously. That's a huge privilege that we have here in this House, to discuss issues that impact our lives and the lives of our constituents, and the member from Brantford—Brant has done this with this bill.

Post-traumatic stress is something that, like the name says is not purely for those who are first responders or purely for those who are in the military—although, it absolutely impacts them, and thank you for being willing to share your very personal story on that subject—but it's something that impacts everyone who has experienced trauma. Although maybe not all of us in this House have personally experienced the level of trauma that would lead to PTSD, there are those in each and every one of our communities who have. It's so important that we stand together and recognize the importance of providing help to those who experience PTSD. This is a great first step towards making that a reality.

I thank the member for bringing forward this substantive legislation. I'm so proud of speaking in support of it and I look forward to voting for it this afternoon.

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

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: It is a privilege to rise today and express my support for Bill 9, tabled by my colleague from Brantford—Brant. Post-traumatic stress disorder is a global health issue that can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, nationality, occupation or

socioeconomic status. This anxiety disorder can have life-long impacts on patients, their families and friends.

As we see time and time again, PTSD and mental health patients continue to face stigma, yet there is a tremendous lack of public awareness and education. This stigma prevents patients from accessing the resources and help that they need to combat the intense fear, helplessness and horrors that come with this illness.

PTSD impacts people from all walks of life; for example, our veterans, who fought bravely for our freedom and the freedom of future generations; our first responders, who are the first to arrive at scenes of horrific tragedies; our health care providers, who see our patients through enormous suffering; and survivors of sexual violence, abuse and human trafficking.

In my role as a registered nurse, I worked with paramedics and first responders every day. The brave men and women who save our lives, protect us and help us fight the traumas that afflict us themselves sometimes have to face demons that no one should have to face alone.

One of these first responders and survivors of PTSD, Natalie Harris, is a paramedic whom I had a chance to meet during my journey as a nurse and an open spokesperson for improving the mental health of first responders in Canada. In her book, *Save-My-Life School*, she shares her own battles with PTSD. She states: "The horrible part about depression is that you can't see it; it's a secret life, a secret feeling, and it's very, very lonely.... People with depression need an army of people behind them. They can't fight it alone, but they often feel they have no choice because of the powerful stigma."

This stigma, Madam Speaker, leads to a culture of shame among those afflicted with PTSD. Natalie Harris tells us how elaborate planning would go into hiding herself, a first responder, during every hospital visit, because of the embarrassment about her PTSD. The stigma is so bad that those working in our health care system are ashamed to access the very resource they are an essential part of.

Marking June 27 as PTSD Awareness Day in Ontario can help thousands of people in the province, and beyond, move past stigma, isolation and helplessness and towards resources, understanding and, ultimately, the road to recovery.

1450

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise today and support An Act to proclaim an awareness day for posttraumatic stress disorder. It's brought forward by our new member from Brantford-Brant. I just want to say, as a fellow optometrist—we're both optometrists, and I'm sure that the optometry association is starting to wonder why we don't want to practise optometry. But I think this bill and his speech before speak to the fact that optometrists are health care providers in all of our communities. They worry about their patients and see a lot of patients

from various walks of life, from various professions. Many of our patients are first responders.

When I first moved to Ontario from Quebec, I practised up in Keswick. I don't know how well people know the Keswick area, but there are a lot of first responders, firefighters and police officers who live in the Keswick area. They sometimes do see horrific things that no human being should have to witness. It's difficult.

I think that maybe our education system can do more to address the fact that many of us are going to experience things, even if we're not first responders. If we've had children or we're a teacher, we might have to be there to help somebody in need and see something horrific, even just as a bystander. We know that Toronto had horrific events just over a couple of months, and for people who were innocent bystanders and had to witness this, it's difficult for them.

We want to work together to ensure that people in our communities are safe, and one of the ways we can do it is just to start with young children to say, "There may be times in your life where you feel anxiety or you have nightmares" and what that means. Maybe this is something that the awareness day can do.

We want to declare that June 27 in Ontario is PTSD Awareness Day annually, and we want to help people deal with this mental illness and have the best quality of life that they can possibly have in Ontario. I'm looking forward to this passing, and I'm looking forward to the first PTSD Awareness Day with my fellow optometrist here in the Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Further debate? The President of the Treasury Board.

Applause.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to my colleague from Whitby and thank you, Madam Speaker.

I've had a charmed life. I've had a lot of success in my career so I haven't been touched by PTSD directly. My parents came here—they were refugees—during World War II: my mother when she was nine, bullets and bombs overhead; my father left when he was 19 and never saw his parents again.

I lived in New York for a number of years. My family grew up there. Then 9/11 happened. I had not been touched by the horrors of, in that case, terrorism, but I came to appreciate that, in that case, a lot of people and first responders ran to trouble to try to help other people.

I was fortunate enough to have dinner one time with Roméo Dallaire, our senator and former NATO commander. He told me something that still troubles me to this day: that if you go to Washington, DC, there are 57,000 names of missing or killed-in-action soldiers in the Vietnam War. Over 100,000 veterans of the Vietnam War have killed themselves by their own hand. It's a very real thing.

In Afghanistan—you may not agree with war, but we voted to go fight in Afghanistan and our soldiers bravely went there, our men and women. We've had almost 80 suicides out of about 159 deaths, so it is a real phenom-

enon. It doesn't just cover that individual; it's the family and friends around that.

This is a real thing. We're just in the first inning of understanding PTSD. I had the fortune to trek to the North Pole with True Patriot Love and 12 veterans who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. They need to talk and they need to know that we're there for them, and awareness is the number-one attribute that they talk about.

This is a great effort on behalf of all of us, the 124 of us who want to move the needle just a little bit. I'm fully in support of this motion, and I congratulate my colleague for putting this forward as an awareness day for post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Brantford–Brant has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Will Bouma: I would like to thank the members from Oshawa, Barrie–Innisfil, Kiiwetinoong, Niagara West, Mississauga Centre, Thornhill and Pickering–Uxbridge, our President of the Treasury Board.

I also have to take a moment to thank our Minister of Infrastructure, the member from Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, for helping me with this because he had this ready to go, but it was such a great fit for me. I'd like to thank everyone for all the kind words they've had said about this. It is really, really important to the people of Ontario and, indeed, to everyone to realize that this is a real problem—we still have a ways to go—and to realize that it affects so many more people and so many stories that we haven't heard of. It is so critical. So, thank you so much for allowing me to bring this forward.

When I was on county council, I would talk to a patient the next day and they would say, "You know, I watched you on YouTube last night." The county of Brant has a YouTube channel. I would say, "Oh, what did you think?" "Well, why do you put up with all that stuff?" I said, "You know what? Once in a while, we get to do something that's really special." In fact, that's one of the reasons why I wanted to be here, so that once in a while we could do something special. We play the game. We go back and forth. I appreciate all those things, and some of it makes me smile. But today, we have the opportunity to do something really special for the people who suffer from this so I'd like to thank you all for your support.

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

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

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

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

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Stan Cho: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my sincere privilege to rise in the House this afternoon to speak to Garrett's Legacy Act, which, if passed, will help protect children throughout our province from injury and death on our neighbourhood soccer fields and in our community centres.

First, I'd like to thank the government House leader, the member from Bay of Quinte, who has championed this bill and this cause over the past year. My honourable colleague introduced this bill previously in the 41st Parliament and I'm so proud to speak to it here today.

I'd also like to recognize the stakeholders who support Garrett's Legacy Act: the Insurance Bureau of Canada, the Ontario Trial Lawyers Association, the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, Parachute Canada, the Ontario Injury Prevention Resource Centre, the James Grant sport organization, the Ontario Safety League and the MLS champions, the Toronto Football Club.

Interjection: And every parent.

Mr. Stan Cho: Most importantly, I would like to thank Dave and Gwen Mills for being in the members' gallery. They are the parents of Garrett Mills for whom this act is named. It's a privilege to have them here as we remember their son and debate this very important bill.

In May 2017, a 15-year-old boy from Napanee, named Garrett Mills, was playing in a park with his girlfriend, Joanna, and best friend, Josh. Garrett was a friendly, positive, young man who enjoyed making other people laugh, especially through his silly puns. He made people better just by being around them.

On that May afternoon, Garrett was goofing around with his friends in a park he'd been to his entire life. He was hanging off the crossbar of a movable soccer net doing chin-ups when tragedy struck. The 200-pound soccer goal collapsed, falling on top of him and fracturing his skull. Garrett passed away later that afternoon, the victim of an entirely preventable accident.

1500

Over the past 40 years in North America, there have been over 50 deaths and hundreds of injuries caused by the collapse of movable soccer goals. Almost all of these accidents involve children, some as young as six years old, like in the case of Mark Weese of Wallaceburg, Ontario, who died after being crushed while playing soccer.

I'm sure all members of this House will agree, Madam Speaker, that we must make every effort possible to prevent these kinds of accidents and protect Ontario children at play. Most people simply don't recognize the danger movable soccer goals can pose in our community spaces like parks, schoolyards and community centres, the places that most parents assume are safe. These are incredibly heavy pieces of equipment and they can weigh up to 500 pounds, yet because of their design they are extremely prone to tipping.

In July 2012, a five-year-old girl named Jaedyn Hicks died when she was struck by a falling soccer goal at her

school in Yukon. The coroner later reported that the goal had not been anchored to the ground and that it could have been toppled over with the simple push of a single finger. Surely we have a responsibility to protect the children of Ontario and give their parents peace of mind by ensuring that this kind of sports equipment is properly secured at all times.

Garrett's Legacy Act, if passed, Madam Speaker, would require organizations or entities that own movable soccer goals to anchor them securely in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions in order to prevent the goals from tipping over. The act also empowers the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport to appoint inspectors and establish whatever mechanisms are necessary to enforce the requirement to anchor soccer goals. But I sincerely hope that if this bill passes these enforcement measures won't be necessary at all. I hope that the mere existence of the act will encourage and remind organizations to take the necessary precautions.

Nevertheless, this bill is measured. It does not require substantial resources or red tape to enforce, neither does it overburden community organizations with additional regulations or costs. These new regulations would be minimal and inexpensive, yet effective.

Similar laws have been passed in Yukon, New York, Illinois, Wisconsin and Arkansas, and in all cases they were given overwhelming support from legislators from across all party lines.

I believe that it is time that we have a law protecting children from these kinds of accidents right here in Ontario. The use of movable soccer goals is becoming more and more prevalent as more and more families and parents enroll their children in soccer clubs throughout our great province. In my riding of Willowdale, soccer is a very important part of our community. With an incredibly diverse population, it is not uncommon to see children of Korean, Persian, Greek and Russian descent, from different socio-economic classes—both boys and girls—playing soccer together in our neighbourhood parks; a mini-world cup, if you will.

As a dense, urban riding with limited green space, Willowdale has a number of multi-purpose sports fields which rely on movable soccer goals to accommodate the multitude of activities that take place. I know that our community would be devastated if we had a tragedy like the one seen in Napanee, which is why it is our responsibility to make sure that this kind of accident never happens again. We must learn from the past to prevent fatalities and injuries in the future.

In Yukon, the government published safety standards for soccer goals. It outlined several types of securing anchors that could be used to prevent movable soccer goals from tipping. These included ground anchors, portable auger anchors and pop-up anchors. These range in cost between \$64 and \$320, depending on the type of goal. A small price to pay, I'm sure every member in this House will agree, to prevent this type of accident from happening again. This bill would ensure that organizations are taking this very basic precautionary step. Recreational and professional sports leagues alike, from

soccer and hockey, to football and baseball, have all, in recent years, changed their rules and regulations to make their sport safer. We've come to recognize the incredible importance of being active, of participating in sport, of playing outside. We must always ensure that no matter the activity, we're all taking the necessary precautions to prevent injury, whether that's changing the rules or ensuring that sports equipment is safe, and that the field of play is safe as well.

In fact, the Ontario Soccer Association, which governs over 600 youth soccer clubs in Ontario, along with FIFA and the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, have all set out best practice guidelines for soccer clubs. These guides all call for movable soccer goals and nets to be anchored during the game of play. This act would make this best practice a requirement and ensure that goals are secured even when not in use. After all, Garrett wasn't playing soccer; he was just being a kid hanging out with his friends.

This bill would require that all movable soccer goals that are made available for public use be secured at all times as directed by the manufacturer's instructions or, where none exist, by attaching the goal to the ground. It would also require movable goals used inside, such as in a community centre gym, to be secured to the wall, to the floor or by using weights. These measures are straightforward, easy for organizations to implement and will help to prevent more injuries and deaths in our community spaces.

I spoke with Garrett's dad, Dave Mills, a few days ago, before reintroducing this bill to the House. I had the pleasure of having lunch with Dave and his wonderful wife, Gwen, this afternoon. They spent some time telling me a little bit about Garrett and how great of a kid he was: how he was 15 going on 50, how he just cared for people, that he was a good friend. He was the type of individual who would hold his friends accountable to a higher standard, and sometimes even his dad.

I really wish, Madam Speaker, that I had met Garrett. One of his favourite sayings was, "Get out there and change the world for the better"—at 15, to have this sort of wisdom. I think that is something that all of us here in this place should aspire to. He wanted to change the world, and it sounds to me like he would have been an incredible leader, had he just had the chance to grow up.

Garrett's dad also told me that a week before his accident, his son asked him a question. He said, "Dad, what's a legacy?" Dave explained that a legacy is something you leave behind after you're gone, something positive that you are remembered for. Garrett reflected for a moment, then looked at his dad and said that he wanted a legacy.

Madam Speaker, I am so inspired by Garrett's memory, by his wish to change the world for the better. Today, I ask for the support of my colleagues across the House to pass the Garrett's Legacy Act; to help make sure that sports fields, parks and community centres are safer for our children; to require organizations and entities to take the simple and inexpensive precautions that can save lives; and to make it Garrett's legacy that

children in Ontario can play safe. We owe it to them, and we owe it to Garrett.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's the second time I've actually had the opportunity to speak to a bill in this House on this issue, so thank you for allowing me to rise today to speak to private member's Bill 11, the Garrett's Legacy Act. Also, I'd like to thank the member from Willowdale for bringing this legislation forward. I know that previously, the member from Bay of Quinte brought it forward. We supported that legislation then, and we still do today.

The incident that inspired this bill was heartbreaking. Garrett Mills was a local soccer player for his club in Napanee, harmlessly playing near a soccer goal when it toppled over, crushing him underneath. I can't imagine the pain that the family felt. I know that when this bill was brought forward, it was brought forward with the intent to ensure that no other family will ever have to experience it again.

1520

This private member's bill is an example of how this Legislature should work. An issue has been identified, a reasonable legislative solution has been proposed, and hopefully, with the support of the members in the House, it can finally get passed. When we work together in a reasonable way to get results for people in our community, we are showing the people of Ontario that we can actually accomplish things in this House. That's important.

It's important because the nature of this bill in its most fundamental state is to protect our children and our grandchildren. As MPPs, there isn't anything more important than protecting our children.

For those who don't know, I'm a father of three daughters—five grandchildren. I can tell you that they're my main motivation for being an MPP. Most of my children and grandchildren play or have played sports. Many of them actually played, or are currently playing, soccer. It's an important part of their lives as they grow into adults. Some of my fondest memories, as a parent or as a grandfather, are of watching my kids or coaching my kids as they play youth sports.

I know that some parents are fearful to put their kids in sports. A lot of parents are looking at the injuries associated with football and hockey and say to themselves, "Do I really want to risk my child getting hurt?" Quite honestly, I don't blame them. But if we can take steps, as a government, to increase the safety of children's sports, parents may be less likely to have concerns.

We saw that in the last Legislature. The provincial government can tackle safety issues with appropriate legislation. The last government passed Rowan's Law, an important piece of legislation that addressed the issue of concussions in sports. It was a powerful message of what this Legislature can do when we work together for the betterment of our constituents.

Concussions in sports are a serious problem. We've seen in the NHL and the NFL how damaging concussions

and brain injuries can be to players. It was only right that the province stepped in and addressed the issue with youth sports. I know that when we examined that piece of legislation, the stats were staggering on how many children in Ontario playing youth sports were suffering from concussions. It was startling that no one had taken the appropriate steps to address those concussions.

This bill is very similar. I was shocked at the stats on the number of children who have been either killed or injured due to blunt force trauma from the soccer goalposts not being anchored down. By the way, I think most of us who have been to a soccer pitch, we think they are anchored down. I think some of the problem is that kids play on them and they jump on them, not realizing that it's not anchored down, and then it comes down.

I know others have mentioned in this House that since 1978, 51 children have died from blunt force trauma related to unanchored soccer goals. We also know that 59 children have been injured, by this same time, by accidents due to unanchored soccer goals. These are staggering numbers for the type of accident you wouldn't think happens very often. I truly believe that if we don't take action on this issue, we may see these numbers rise.

There has been a huge growth in the popularity of sports throughout the world and right here in Ontario. Just look at the interest in Ontario this year from the World Cup or the interest in Toronto FC. I couldn't go to a restaurant anywhere in the city without a large group of fans cheering on that team.

Madam Speaker, in just a few short years, in 2026, we will be co-hosting the World Cup right here in Canada. Think about how many young people in Ontario are going to be inspired and want to play soccer.

In my communities in Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake and Fort Erie, there are several active youth soccer clubs. The soccer clubs are a huge part of our community. They bring together families and community members while working to help our children grow through sports. I have spoken several times to them about this bill, and they understand the importance of it. I got off the phone earlier today; they support it. Children should be able to play the sport they love without fear of significant injury and, in this case, death.

Once again, I'd like to thank the member from Willowdale for bringing this bill back. I fully intend to support it. I believe it is an important piece of legislation that will make youth sports safer for our children.

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

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I rise today honoured to speak in favour of Garrett's Legacy Act, a private member's bill which has been introduced and discussed previously in this chamber by my good friend and colleague, the member from Bay of Quinte, and now, of course, by the member from Willowdale. Thank you both.

I am pleased to note that this bill received support from both sides of the chamber when it previously appeared here, and I'm confident, from what I've heard today and in discussions with all members, that the same cross-party support will be there for this bill. I thank all

members on both sides for their encouragement as we pass this legislation and start saving lives.

We all should know, from hearing the members before me, that Garrett Mills was just a positive, intelligent, 15-year-old kid hanging out with his friends at a local soccer field after hours. It's the kind of thing that we all did at that age. He was a true credit to his community, which I'm now privileged to represent. In May 2017, the heavy soccer net fell forward and, sadly, ended his life.

As we have heard, the net was unanchored, which is too-typically the case for soccer nets. Unlike football posts and baseball backstops, soccer nets are moved around. While heavy and awkward, they can also be lethal, and, as we've heard, they have killed and maimed so many young people when they've toppled.

Regretfully, as we've heard as well, Garrett was not the first Ontario youth killed by toppling goalposts, but his parents, Dave and Gwen, want him to be the last. As a parent and grandparent myself, I can only imagine, so bless them, particularly as in their grief, they're reaching out and they've sought to help others.

Dave and Gwen, and the members who have introduced and supported this bill—let's stand together with them. This is the third time it's been introduced in the last eight months; due to prorogation and, of course, then the election, it died. This time, let's get it done, now, in his memory and for his legacy.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I'm honoured to rise today on this bill. This is wonderful work done by the new member from Willowdale. Congratulations, sir. I commend you on bringing this forward as your first act as an MPP in this building. I couldn't imagine a more poignant and important bill to bring forward. I think you're getting the sense that there's some consensus around the room. There will be some redundancy in what I say because this is a measure that I think we can all understand and all apply to our various communities.

I want to thank the member from Bay of Quinte, the government House leader. I know he got this moving and worked with Garrett's parents. I want to welcome them. Thank you for being here, David and Gwen. I am honoured and inspired by your courage. Just by being here, you invigorate this building and this chamber.

This is the type of work that we all aspire to do together. The cut and thrust of politics on a daily basis can get ugly, and I think most of my colleagues would agree, but when we can do this stuff, this is where the good stuff happens. It is because of your courage and your initiative, and the members who have taken it upon themselves to bring this forward, that we will get this done for you and get this done for Garrett.

Speaker, you know I am the father of two beautiful kids, Drake and Airika. Drake is turning 11 in two days, so hopefully I'll get home one day to go and be at his birthday. That would be great.

1520

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you remember what he looks like?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I know he's cute.

Airika is 14. She's going into high school next year. Both of them—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Do you remember what she looks like?

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thankfully, they look like their mother, and they're really good-looking.

Those two have played soccer since they could, since there was soccer available in our community of Lakeshore and Essex county. Now they're both playing travel soccer, so they find themselves in all parts of the province and into Michigan.

I am amazed at how much the sport of soccer, as we call it here in North America—it's not football, it's soccer here; we know that—has expanded. It's really remarkable, because it's a wonderful game. It is a beautiful game. It's great to see the kids, and it's great to see our communities invest in those soccer pitches where the game can be played, because it's affordable, it's great for health—great exercise.

As you drive through your communities—as I will now, because this bill has informed me; I think that's the intent of the bill, to inform all of the members of our communities. Drive through those communities and you'll see those investments in soccer pitches. There are nets everywhere. Sometimes there are 20 or 30 nets, so you'll see a game over here, and a game over here and then a bunch of vacant nets. Then the other kids go and play on those vacant nets, where there isn't an organized game happening. I've watched it my whole life. That should spark our concern now, and it's our responsibility as legislators to inform our communities and inform the leadership of those soccer organizations that we can protect our kids. We can ensure that no one gets hurt.

To David and to Gwen: I read an article, and I heard about the tragic circumstances of Garrett's passing. He was on the pitch, and he was doing chin-ups. I'll tell you, he sounds like a kid who I would have hung out with in my adolescence. We would have been doing a chin-up contest; I know it. This kid was, I'm sure, incredibly athletic and raring to go. I'm so deeply saddened for you that his life was cut short. But indeed, the work that you're doing—this bill, a legacy, is what we will have. He will be forever known as having initiated this and protecting other kids. That's a wonderful thing. That's a wonderful legacy and something that yourself and your family should be incredibly proud of. I hope that you are.

Speaker, we can do this. We can do this with expediency. The government knows how to do this with expediency. You will find no roadblocks on this side—as fast as we can get this thing done. Let's move this through this House and through the committee so that another season doesn't go by without having all movable soccer nets anchored and all associations aware of the regulations and the responsibilities under it.

I just want to commend again the members who have brought this forward, thank them for their initiatives and thank my colleagues today for their attention.

Speaker, I will cede my remarks right there.

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

Mrs. Nina Tangri: I am pleased to speak before the House on Garrett's Legacy Act, introduced by the member from Willowdale. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that we create legislation that protects Ontarians.

Madam Speaker, as you may recall, this bill was introduced in the last session of Parliament in response to the tragedy that occurred in Napanee, when in May 2017, 15-year-old Garrett Mills was struck by an unanchored soccer goalpost that tipped over onto his head, killing him instantly.

Unfortunately, this tragic accident could have been prevented. The passing of this bill will mandate requirements for soccer nets that will prevent injury and enhance safety with stiff penalties for contraventions.

This type of accident isn't new, and countless families have had their lives shattered while their children were being active and living like children should. In 2014, 15-year-old Jamie Palm was killed after she became trapped under an overturned net in Bradford. A young five-year-old girl named Jaedyn died in 2012 when a portable soccer net fell on her, hitting her head while she was playing on a school field in Watson Lake, Yukon.

Madam Speaker, I'm the mother of three children. No parent should ever, ever have to go through such tragedy as the parents of Garrett Mills and the others have. I myself played soccer and many, many sports growing up. I have the cuts, the bruises, the stitches, all through playing the sports that I enjoyed so much. When something like this happens to someone that's completely unnecessary and undue, it really, really is very painful for those families.

Back in 2012, when Jaedyn was killed, the US organization called Anchored For Safety listed 38 deaths, including six in Canada, and many serious injuries from falling portable soccer nets since 1979. Madam Speaker, I believe we can all agree in this chamber that legislation is long overdue and that we desperately need to act swiftly so that no one else is either injured or killed due to insecure soccer goals. I urge all members of this House to unanimously support Bill 11.

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

Miss Christina Maria Mitas: I'm proud to stand up and express my support for Bill 11, an act that will provide safety measures regarding soccer goalposts so they will be securely fastened to the ground going forward. What happened to Garrett is an absolute tragedy, and it's our duty to ensure that no such thing ever happens again.

As a teacher, I know that there are many improvements that our schools, our students and our parents need, but the safety of our children has to be chief among them. To be out on the field hanging out with your girlfriend, being a regular teenager and die unexpectedly is not something that should be part of anybody's reality; and to get that news is not something that should be part of any parent's reality.

To mandate that goalposts be securely fastened is not difficult. It's a common-sense decision that I sincerely cannot believe has not yet been made. Our children should be safe when they are at school, they should be safe when they're on the field—they should be safe always.

I'm heartbroken, as any person would be, by Garrett's story, but as a teacher, someone who acts in loco parentis of many of our kids, I'm especially saddened. Further, I can't help but have a picture in my mind. I keep picturing bringing a baby into this world, watching them take their first steps, sending them off to kindergarten, watching them grow up and become more independent, trying to strike that perfect balance between protecting them and fostering their own sense of independence as they enter young adulthood—and then losing them in such a senseless way. Having my own baby on the way as a soon-to-be first-time mom, I'm terrified by Garrett's story and my heart really hurts for his parents.

I hope that this act honours his memory and I hope that it helps you find some peace. I hope that all of us continue to make the safety of our children our priority as we move forward over the next four years.

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

Mrs. Gila Martow: I was here when the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, the member from Bay of Quinte from my caucus, presented this. I sincerely hope that we're going to move quickly and that we will get it passed. It should have been passed then.

We are here to discuss yet again Garrett's Legacy Act. It's a private member's bill and it was brought forward by the newly elected MPP for Willowdale. I was at his campaign office opening, and it was quite a moment when I saw on election night that he won. I knew he was going to be doing good work like he's doing today, so thank you.

We're discussing a private member's bill to honour the memory of a 15-year-old boy named Garrett Mills of Napanee. He was killed, as we've heard, in May 2017 when a movable soccer goal fell over, fracturing his skull and killing him instantly. The act would establish requirements for organizations or entities respecting the secure installation of movable soccer goals that they make available for use by members of the public. The act would provide for inspections and requires the minister to establish a mechanism to report complaints of alleged non-compliance with the act.

This has been going on all across North America. We're hearing and we're learning that this is not a one-time accident, that these goalposts are top-heavy, just like we hear about trucks that are carrying heavy loads, make a quick turn and topple over. It's the laws of physics, Madam Speaker, and I think that the member opposite, my fellow optometrist, understands what torque means in physics. These soccer poles can be deadly.

1530

We live in a society where we can't bubble wrap our children. We all understand that. There are calculated

risks that we all take every day. I remember once being told by a kid that I was taking on a field trip—I said, “You have to get off the road and walk on the sidewalk,” and he said, “I can get hit by a car on the sidewalk too.” This kid was a bit of a smart mouth, I guess, and I said, “Yes, but it’s much more likely that you’re going to get hurt on the road than you are on the sidewalk.”

Yes, life is full of calculated risks, but there’s no reason why we can’t ensure that the soccer goals are adequately anchored. This is not a risk that we need to take unnecessarily.

I look forward to this bill passing and celebrating its passing. I want to commend the parents for continuing to advocate on the legacy of their son Garrett.

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

Hon. Todd Smith: It’s a real honour and a pleasure to join this debate. First of all, I want to congratulate the new member from Willowdale on the grace with which he has handled his first private member’s bill today. It’s been outstanding.

I know it means a lot to the family, my friends Dave and Gwen Mills, who drove all the way from Napanee to be with us today. We really appreciate the fact that they’re here.

I’m not going to repeat everything that was said here this afternoon because everybody who spoke to this bill made very good points today. This is something that was entirely preventable. All we need to do is ensure that these portable soccer goals are locked down, that they’re anchored in place.

I just want to tell a little story. It was April of this year, and our leader at the time—now the Premier of Ontario—Mr. Ford came through Belleville for a visit. For those who don’t know, Dave Mills is a morning show host. He goes by the name of Buzz Collins on Rock 107. Doug came in and did the morning show and talked about the upcoming election campaign. Buzz said to Doug, “I just want to thank the member that you have here. He’s been a great member. He’s really taken this to the Legislature and highlighted the unfortunate death of our son.” Very quietly, off mike, when the cameras weren’t on, Premier Ford said to Buzz, “We’re going to get this done for you, buddy.”

Today, we have taken a monumental step to getting this done for you, buddy, and making sure that we honour Garrett’s legacy in this place. He will have a legacy in Ontario if we all work together to make it happen. We’re going to make it happen, buddy.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Willowdale has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Stan Cho: Madam Speaker, I have to tell you, going through my notes this morning and yesterday—and maybe even just presenting it here in the House—I’ve had a really tough time keeping it together on this one because it’s just been so emotional. To the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington and other members throughout this House, we can feel that emotion, and that’s fantastic.

But it’s 3:35 and there are children everywhere out there playing right now. As the member from Essex pointed out, they’re not all playing soccer, but those soccer nets are everywhere. Let’s remember that there is a sense of urgency to this.

Dave shared with me a story over the phone where he said that a few days after the tragedy had happened, he was just on his sofa and it hit him, a light bulb went off. He said, “This is the legacy that Garrett was talking about.”

This legacy is extremely time-sensitive, that we get it into place because—the member from Niagara Falls was talking about some of the numbers of these tragedies that have happened. He’s absolutely right: It has happened far too often and it has taken way too long to get to this point.

To everybody, and I think we’re all in agreement in this House, let’s get this done. Let’s get this done ASAP so that not a single child more has to be injured, or worse, as a result of something so senseless. Let’s try to make sense out of the senseless and give Garrett that legacy and make sure that this never happens again in our great province of Ontario. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Consideration of private members’ public business has concluded before the expiry of the two and a half hours’ time allotted. This House is therefore suspended until 4:05 p.m., at which time I will be putting the question to the House.

The House suspended proceedings from 1535 to 1605.

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

The time provided for private members’ public business has expired.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): We will deal first with ballot item number 4, standing in the name of Ms. Horwath.

Ms. Horwath has moved private member’s notice of motion number 7. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

PTSD AWARENESS DAY ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LA JOURNÉE DE SENSIBILISATION À L’ÉTAT DE STRESS POST-TRAUMATIQUE

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Bouma has moved second reading of Bill 9, An Act to proclaim an awareness day for posttraumatic stress disorder.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'll go to the member to find out what committee he would like it to go to.

Mr. Will Bouma: The Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Is that agreed? Carried.

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

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

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Cho, Willowdale, has moved second reading of Bill 11, An Act to provide for safety measures respecting movable soccer goals.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I go to the member for Willowdale: which committee?

Mr. Stan Cho: I would like to refer it to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Agreed? Carried.

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

The division bells rang from 1608 to 1613.

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

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

Ms. Horwath has moved private member's notice of motion number 7. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Harden, Joel	Natyshak, Taras
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hassan, Faisal	Rakocevic, Tom
Arthur, Ian	Hatfield, Percy	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Horwath, Andrea	Shaw, Sandy
Bell, Jessica	Hunter, Mitzie	Singh, Sara
Berns-McGown, Rima	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bisson, Gilles	Lindo, Laura Mae	Stiles, Marit
Bourgouin, Guy	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Burch, Jeff	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul	West, Jamie
Gates, Wayne	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Yarde, Kevin
Glover, Chris	Morrison, Suze	

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 35; the nays are 68.

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

Motion negatived.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BETTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR L'AMÉLIORATION
DES ADMINISTRATIONS LOCALES

Mr. Clark moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 5, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 / Projet de loi 5, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la cité de Toronto, la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités et la Loi de 1996 sur les élections municipales.

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

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to let the House know I'll be sharing my time with my two parliamentary assistants, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

On Monday, July 30, I had the honour of introducing the proposed Better Local Government Act, 2018. This is another example of our government moving swiftly to fulfill our commitment to the people of Ontario. Our commitment is to restoring accountability and trust and reducing the size and cost of government. The people of Ontario expect and deserve an accountable provincial government. We are showing the people of Ontario that their trust in our government is well placed.

When it comes to their local and regional level governments, people expect and deserve that same level of responsibility and accountability. That includes how

their tax dollars are spent. They expect their local governments to run efficiently. This government believes the hard-working people of Ontario have every right to expect that. That is why we are committed to finding efficiencies in local government and to listening to concerns raised by the people of Ontario.

What's more, we are acting on these concerns. We are taking action to address issues that have been ignored far too long. This is a timely piece of legislation. The 2018 municipal elections will be held across Ontario on Monday, October 22. The Better Local Government Act, 2018, is the action we are taking to address two of the issues that involve elected municipal positions. It is intended to institute a series of reforms to municipal government in the city of Toronto, as well as regional governments of York, Peel, Niagara and the district of Muskoka.

Our plan is to have these changes in effect for the upcoming October 22 municipal election. The election date would remain unchanged. I want to repeat: Our proposed legislation, if passed, would not change any municipal election date in Ontario.

Before I get into the details of our proposed legislation, I want to tell you a bit about my background and why this bill is so important to me.

1620

In 1982, I had just graduated from the University of Waterloo and I had decided to run for political office. I thought it was important to be part of the political process and to further policies that would benefit my local community. That is still my belief. It's our government's belief. This is what drives our government commitment to remove red tape, to find efficiencies and to respect the taxpayer.

In 1982, Speaker, I campaigned for the office of mayor of Brockville. I knocked on countless doors and I had hundreds and hundreds of meaningful conversations with the aim to improve my hometown. Why did I do this? I did it because of my drive and commitment to improve my community. Plain and simple, Speaker, I wanted to make changes for the betterment of my community.

Now, as Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I have the tremendous opportunity to create change for the betterment of communities across Ontario.

As a first step, on Monday, I introduced this important piece of proposed legislation. Speaker, anyone—anyone—who runs for public office must remember who the boss is, and the boss is the people you represent. It's the people you must respect. You must respect the taxpayers. It's for the people of Ontario. Those are the people that we all work for, and that is exactly what we are doing in this government. We are respecting the people we represent and we are respecting their hard-earned taxpayers' dollars.

I followed those principles from the beginning, when I began as mayor of the city of Brockville. I always kept in mind that an elected representative needs to respect and work for the people that brought them into office in the first place.

And now, Speaker, I'm so very fortunate to be part of a government that is working hard to deliver the benefits of those same principles to people in communities large and small and in every corner of this great province.

Given my experience as a former mayor, I think I get it, Speaker. I understand the nuts and bolts of working with a municipal council and the process that can serve the taxpayer, a process that I think we could always make better.

When I consider the demands placed on me first as a mayor, then as an MPP, and now as the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, some things become very clear. Fundamentally, Speaker—and this is a very important point—the rules that I learned when I first took office so many years ago are the same principles that apply today. The taxpayer is the boss. It's their hard-earned dollars the government is spending, and it's up to the government, at every level, to make sure they are spent as wisely, as efficiently and as effectively as possible. Those important rules—

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you to my colleagues.

The same rules that applied then I think are even more powerful today.

During the recent provincial election campaign, my caucus colleagues and I heard very strongly from Ontarians that they want us to respect those taxpayers' dollars. We heard very clearly from Ontarians that government is supposed to work for them. I think Ontario sent a very clear message on June 7 that they want a government that looks after those taxpayers' dollars, and that is exactly what we're doing with this bill.

So, Speaker, I want to get into some of the details of the bill, and specifically I want to talk first about the city of Toronto. The bill, if passed, would reduce the size of Toronto city council to 25 councillors from the present 47 plus the mayor. This would give the taxpayers of Toronto a streamlined, more effective council that is ready to work quickly and puts the needs of everyday people first. This action is long overdue. Local governments deliver many critical services to residents, and it's in everyone's interest that local governments work quickly, they work efficiently and they respect the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

Les administrations locales fournissent quantité de services indispensables aux résidents. Il est donc dans l'intérêt de tout le monde que leur fonctionnement soit rapide, efficace et respectueux de l'argent rudement gagné des contribuables.

The Premier and I both have experience as elected officials at the municipal government level. The Premier served four years as a councillor at Toronto city hall, and I was mayor of Brockville for nine years. I was also a former CAO. Both of us know first-hand that municipal government is the level that's closest to the people, providing services that residents need and they depend on for their everyday lives.

Les administrations municipales, qui sont le palier de gouvernement le plus proche de la population, assurent

les services dont leurs résidents ont besoin et sur lesquels ils comptent au jour le jour.

The more efficiently municipalities are run, the better it is for their residents. Towards that goal, our proposed legislation would reduce the size of Toronto city council by aligning the city's municipal ward boundaries with provincial and federal electoral districts: 25 areas that provide fair and equitable representation and that are familiar to voters. Candidates for council would now have until September 14 to decide in which of the new wards they wish to run. This would be done in time for the October 22 municipal election.

Our proposed reforms would also allow for the redistribution of Toronto-area school board trustee seats. I want to emphasize that the number of trustees would remain the same. As this is governed by a regulation under the Education Act, I have engaged my cabinet colleague the Honourable Lisa Thompson, the Minister of Education, on this item. Her ministry will work with the four district school boards that would be affected by this legislation to undertake the redistribution of school board trustee electoral areas to align with the 25 new wards. Those four boards are as follows: the English public school board with 22 trustees, the English Catholic school board with 12 trustees, the French public school board with three trustees and the French Catholic school board with two trustees.

The new nomination deadline of September 14 would also apply to candidates for these Toronto-area school board trustee seats. I want to emphasize that these timetable changes would only apply to the Toronto city council and school board trustee elections. Furthermore, they would apply to the current election cycle only.

We recognize that some candidates have already filed their nominations to run in the current ward system. If our legislation is passed, to help those candidates transition to the new wards, we would make regulations for that purpose. The regulations would address how their campaign contributions are transferred to their new campaigns, if they choose to run in the new wards or school board electoral areas. There are no changes to nomination dates for the role of head of council, the mayor of Toronto. That date was July 27, and nominations closed, as most people know, last Friday.

Our ministries will work with the city and with the school board staff to ensure that they have the help and support that we can offer to run a successful municipal election this year. There will be savings for the city as well. We estimate that the reduction in the size of Toronto city council would save the taxpayers approximately \$25.5 million over four years. That's \$25.5 million taken out of administration that could be put forward directly helping the residents and businesses of the city of Toronto.

The current size of Toronto city council hinders decision-making. Debates are time-consuming, inefficient and costly. Forty-four independent councillors, each with their own agenda and outlook, hamstring the city's decision-making on so many, many issues the city is

facing. Allowing Toronto city council to then grow to 47 councillors, I think, would make that even worse. The residents and businesses of Toronto deserve better than that, and our government is acting quickly to deliver on our promise and to deliver to the taxpayers.

Some may wonder if reducing the size of Toronto city council will negatively affect the representation of residents at city council. We looked into that, Speaker. We compared the average population per ward under our proposed legislation to the population per ward of comparatively important cities in other jurisdictions. Under our proposed legislation, the average ward size would be 109,263 people, based on the latest census figures. Speaker, I believe this is a very reasonable number.

The current size of council is unwieldy and a hindrance to decision-making and getting things done at city hall. The opinion was stated on Friday, July 27, by many, many Toronto councillors. A press conference was held with Councillor Vincent Crisanti, Councillor Michael Ford, Councillor Stephen Holyday, Councillor Justin Di Ciano, Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti, Councillor and Speaker Frances Nunziata, Councillor Cesar Palacio, Councillor David Shiner, Councillor Michael Thompson and Councillor and Deputy Mayor, East, Glenn De Baeremaeker. It's important to note that these councillors span a wide range of opinions, and they have different political affiliations. Among them are first-time councillors along with some very-long-term elected members. There is a pre-amalgamation mayor among the group, and three members of the mayor's executive committee—in short, Speaker, a varied and well-respected group of councillors.

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What they all share in common is that they voiced strong support for our reduced council size. They had three main reasons why they say that a smaller council is needed.

First, they agree that a smaller council will lead to better decision-making at Toronto city hall, which would benefit Torontonians as a whole. They gave an example of the current 44-member council having 10-hour debates on issues that would end with the vast majority of councillors voting the same as they would have at the beginning of the debate. Time is wasted, Speaker. They said that their Speaker often had to ask for quiet in the council chambers because no one was listening during these debates. It takes too long to make the right decisions.

Second, they point out that it will save money, and those savings go beyond just the savings of those councillors' salaries. The current 44-member council also creates a huge challenge for the Toronto bureaucracy, which has to respond to motion upon motion, to reports, reports and more reports, and then to deferrals and then more deferrals. Let's use the most recent city council meeting, where there were 128 members' motions presented. If we allowed council to grow to 47 and hadn't acted quickly, many believe the situation would have become worse. Toronto city staff would have to work on

all those reports instead of working on the issues that are important to the people of Toronto, important issues like transit, infrastructure and housing.

Third, it would result in a fair vote for residents, which was the very reason Toronto itself undertook a review of its ward boundaries. The Toronto councillors I referred to earlier reminded everyone that the Supreme Court of Canada said that voter parity is a prime condition of effective representation. They gave examples of the current ward system, where there are more than 80,000 residents in one ward and 35,000 in another. They acknowledge that this voter disparity is the result of self-interest, and that the federal and provincial electoral district process is better because it is an independent process which should apply to Toronto as well. I want to repeat that, Madam Speaker: The wards we are proposing are arrived at through an independent process.

The councillors that I mentioned agree that our proposed solution is fair. They point out that it has worked for both provincial and federal elections. The councillors point out that Toronto's process for achieving voter parity is an ongoing process. If allowed to continue, it would not reach voter parity and fairness until 2026. That's eight years from now. Toronto voters would have to wait another eight years of wasting taxpayers' money and endless debates for a fair election process in the city. However, our proposed legislation, if passed, gives Toronto residents voter fairness this year, in time for the upcoming 2018 municipal election.

How can anyone argue against giving the residents of Toronto a fair vote as soon as possible? Toronto voters will benefit from voter parity if our legislation is passed. Can people who are against our proposed legislation really believe that denying a fair vote for Torontonians is equitable? Is this really what you want to be known for?

After our announcement, many community and business leaders voiced their support to these changes. Our legislation, if passed, will meet the wishes of a majority of Toronto residents. Just as ward 5 Councillor Justin Di Ciano said, "People are in favour of smaller governments, less politicians."

At the current 44 seats and growing to 47 seats, Toronto city council will become increasingly dysfunctional and inefficient. A combination of entrenched incumbency and established special interests hobbles the efficient functioning at city hall.

As ward 7 Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti said at the councillors' news conference, "I think it's quite clear that most of us up here have either made speeches or have moved motions in the past that very clearly pointed to cutting ourselves in half because we are so frustrated with the system." That was his quote.

Let's remember, Mr. Speaker, that as Councillor Di Ciano said, "Going to 25 wards works for the federal level and works for the provincial level and will work for the city of Toronto." Councillor Di Ciano is absolutely right. I don't for one minute think that having the same electoral district for an MP, an MPP and a local city councillor is a bad thing. As I've said in this House over

and over again in question period, I think it's a good thing, and there are many, many others who support our proposed legislation and see the need for this bill.

Ward 24 councillor David Shiner said of last week's Toronto council meeting—let me read his quote; it's a great quote: "I will tell you to look at what has happened in the past week as the fact that we are dysfunctional. We started on Monday. This is the longest meeting we have ever had. It's Friday afternoon and we still have not come close to finishing." He further added, "The fact that our Premier, who has experienced all that frustration here, decided to move quickly and make the decision on that I think is absolutely right and I am 110% supportive of it."

Speaker, these are people who experience the dysfunction at Toronto city council every day and I think their comments carry a bit of weight.

Hamilton mayor Fred Eisenberger reflected on his own experiences at Hamilton city council, where they have 16 councillors. He said, "Sixteen is difficult enough; working with 47 would be virtually impossible." That's his quote.

Sensible solutions to this dysfunction are not new. Here's a quote from ward 11 councillor Frances Nunziata, who said, "When Mel Lastman was mayor ... we had 57 councillors. And at that time, there was a motion to reduce the councillors and we reduced it down to 44. And then when David Miller was mayor, we moved a motion to cut the council to 22."

Ward 3 councillor Stephen Holyday made a very convincing observation about our proposal for 25 wards for Toronto. He said in his quote, "At the federal and provincial level, we have a single representative in an area of that size. They seem to get it done."

Madam Speaker, how can people argue against these comments? How can they argue against people who live with this every day at Toronto council? It works for the federal level. It works for us at the provincial level. Why would it not work at the municipal level?

This is not a new position for our Premier. As ward 37 councillor Michael Thompson said, "[The Premier] is being, basically, steadfast with respect to his position that he has always maintained, that the size of council needed to be addressed in order to be more efficient, more effective, and address the issue around cost."

Overall, I think this was an opportunity to streamline, an opportunity to make decisions faster. We need to make sure that this council can work fast, that it can move quickly after the October 22 election and work on those important issues like infrastructure, like housing, like transit. The people of Toronto should have the opportunity to say they know who their member of Parliament is, to make sure it's the same jurisdiction as their member of provincial Parliament, and then to have the same jurisdiction for their municipal councillor.

I want to talk about the nomination deadline. Our proposed legislation does something else. As I mentioned, if passed, it would change the nomination date in the city of Toronto to September 14. I want to point out, Speaker, that the second Friday in September, September

14, is the exact same day as the previous nomination deadline in the 2014 election. It's a date that is not new for people in the municipal sector. It's the same one, so candidates who ran in the last municipal election in Toronto would be very familiar and comfortable with the deadline. It's one of the steps our proposed legislation includes to be fair to candidates running for Toronto city council and for Toronto school board trustee elections. This gives candidates the time to consider what ward they want to run in and it gives them the time to work out the reporting and the expense side of it. Our government would work with the Toronto city clerk's office to ensure that candidates for municipal council or school board trustee are able to continue their campaign and ensure the contributions they collect are treated fairly. Working with the clerk's office, we would assist the city's efforts to provide clear guidance and rules with regard to spending limits and reporting requirements.

Overall, our goal is to make it straightforward and simple for candidates to determine which, if any, of the new wards they want to run in. And I want to emphasize that this new nomination date would apply to the city of Toronto only. No other municipal election process in Ontario would be affected.

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Now, Speaker, our government is committed to providing a better future for the everyday people of Ontario. Municipal governments are the level, as I said earlier, closest to the people. They play a large and important role in delivering services, and we want to ensure that we get those services to people in the most effective and most efficient way possible.

This bill strengthens the ability of local governments to meet the expectations of ratepayers and residents. That's why, this fall, our government will be building and launching a consultation on a very important level, the regional level of government. What we are going to do is take a long look at regional government across this province. We're going to look at what has been very effective and what hasn't. Since regional governments were created in the 1970s, not much has been done to continue to support them. Many of them have grown large and have to deal with very, very complex issues, like providing infrastructure and services to rapidly growing communities.

Speaker, we want to know what works and what doesn't. We want to figure out what we can do better for the people of Ontario. We also want to engage municipalities in finding solutions and ensuring that these communities have the right form of government to support the needs of their residents and their businesses.

A few weeks from now, the largest municipal conference in Canada will be taking place. This year, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, which many of us fondly call AMO, will hold its annual conference, a conference with more than 1,500 municipal representatives from almost every municipality in Ontario. They're going to gather in the city of Ottawa.

I think the AMO conference is a great opportunity for our government to informally engage in conversations

that will inform us on some of those future decisions. We want to hear from municipalities. If they have other ideas to make government more efficient, if they have ideas on streamlining their operations, getting business done more quickly to ensure that Ontarians are open for business, then our government is all ears. This is an exciting time for municipal government in Ontario.

As I said—and it's worth repeating, Speaker—our government ran on a commitment to restore accountability and trust. We ran on a commitment to reducing the size and the cost of government, including an end of the culture of waste and mismanagement.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I want to reiterate that this bill is all about accountability and respect for the people of Ontario. Our proposal for Toronto ward boundaries to match federal and provincial electoral districts is an example. The electoral districts were established by an unbiased third party.

As the Premier has said, our government is restoring accountability so that everyday people can feel confident that government works for them, not for the insiders, not for the elites. We are focused on putting everyday workers and their families first, lowering taxes and reducing regulatory burdens.

Nos efforts sont principalement axés sur les travailleurs ordinaires et leurs familles, et ce, en réduisant les impôts et en allégeant les fardeaux réglementaires.

I think the people of Ontario sent a clear message on June 7: They want a government that gets things done, and that's exactly what we're doing. Since our swearing-in, our government has already passed our Urgent Priorities Act. Through that act, we ended the strike at York University and ensured that York students can begin their school year next month.

That act also ensures that hydro ratepayers, through our government, will have a say on salaries at Hydro One, and that act cancelled a wind farm in Prince Edward county that local residents didn't want.

We've also tabled our Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018, which is our government's first step towards lowering the price of gasoline in Ontario.

Now we're working to deliver the Better Local Government Act, and it's just a start, Madam Speaker. Our government will continue to make the provincial government and local governments work harder, work smarter and more efficiently to make life better for all Ontarians.

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

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'd like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for introducing the Better Local Government Act, which highlights the importance of local government and emphasizes that all levels of government must work effectively and efficiently for the people of this great province.

As the minister mentioned, the proposed legislation has two parts. He has explained the proposed changes for the city of Toronto for the members of this House. He has also provided an introduction to the vision, and we

have to review the functioning of regional governments to ensure they better service the needs of their communities.

I'm honoured to be given the opportunity to stand in the Legislature to speak about how this bill, if passed, will improve those regional governments, because our government for the people believes the regional municipalities of Ontario should be the ones to make important decisions about how they serve their residents. That includes how they select regional chairs.

Two years ago, in 2016, the previous government changed the Municipal Act to require that regional municipalities select their chairs by election. Municipalities that used to choose to appoint their regional chairs were no longer allowed to choose. The exception was Oxford county, which was allowed to continue to appoint one of their elected officials to also serve as regional chair.

We are proposing to reverse the changes that were introduced two years ago, changes that were unfair to regions that already had processes in place that work for their local communities. Four regional councils had to change their processes. They were York region, Peel region, Niagara region and the district of Muskoka. As I mentioned earlier, these regional governments had all previously appointed their chairs. We have proposed a return to the system that they used in the 2014 election, a system they designed and delivered before the previous government's legislation was forced upon them. The previous system is one that they are familiar with. It's a system they had decided had worked best for them.

We're reversing the 2016 changes for this election. In the future, regional councils will decide for themselves how to select their chairs. Going forward, we want to give that decision-making power back to the regional municipalities because they understand better than anyone how this intricate two-tiered municipal system works.

In Ontario's regional government model, voters are represented at two levels: at a local municipal level and regionally, where municipalities come together to address issues that affect a larger regional area. Regional governments, working with their member municipalities, decide which is best for their individual communities and the region as a whole.

Some regional governments had already decided to elect their chairs. People in the regions of Waterloo, Durham and Halton have been doing that for years. It was their choice; nothing was imposed on them, and with this bill, nothing would change for them either. But the regions of York, Peel, Niagara and the district of Muskoka didn't have a choice. The previous government imposed legislation on them, forcing them to elect their chair. We want to hit the pause button, allowing them to return to appointing their chairs, the same way they did in the 2014 election.

Regional government is a level of government that is closer to the people than you or I, Madam Speaker. They deal with everything from garbage pickup to waste water, from policing to paramedics and from daycare to retire-

ment homes. They know what their local communities need and they are more than capable of deciding how their regional government should operate. This is something they did on their own for years, and we are very confident they can do so again.

Because every region is different, they deal with the different priorities and different issues. Take Peel region, Madam Speaker. The region has laid out 11 priorities for their regional council: priorities such as increasing affordable housing, planning and managing growth, and increasing waste diversion; priorities such as modernizing service delivery, attracting top talent to the region and making the movement of goods more efficient. These are all things that they deem important to their region and to their municipalities. When you scan this plan, you notice one thing: the majority of the municipalities in this region are focused on urban growth. That means they're dealing with urban issues. They know about the demand for real estate in the 905 and the increased cost to living.

Downtown Mississauga is not a farming community. However, you can bet that agriculture is the number one priority in Niagara region. Niagara boasts some of this province's finest wineries and most bountiful farms. Many of you probably enjoyed Niagara cherries or peaches this past weekend.

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The region attracts tourists who contribute to the economic prosperity of their communities. They need a regional council that stands up for growers and for the tourism that this industry brings to the region and local economy.

While these two regions may share some of the same needs, Peel and Niagara are very different. They rely on very different things to survive and to thrive.

York region is another example. Their strategic plan focuses on urban growth and transportation. They have also put affordable housing high on their priority list. They are feeling the same pressures that most of the municipalities in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area are feeling right now, with an increasing population and a high demand for homes.

However, the same cannot be said about the district of Muskoka. Drive three hours north of where we are right now, and there's a different story. Most of us know Muskoka as cottage country, a place where people from the urban centres of southern Ontario often go to escape and relax. While many people do in fact call Muskoka home, others call it a second home. It's a favourite vacation spot for many in the province and those visiting from other provinces and abroad. That is why the district of Muskoka's official plan has a section that focuses specifically on tourism and resorts—places many families in Ontario have gone to swim, hike or just relax for a weekend. Many of these resorts pride themselves on offering a serene experience in nature, many highlighting outdoor adventures in canoes and kayaks. You don't see much of that being offered in Vaughan, which we all know as a growing part of York region.

Madam Speaker, I say this to underline the strengths and priorities of each area. Not all regions are the same.

That is why we cannot have a one-size-fits-all approach to regional governments. We want them to be able to choose how they select their heads of council—what works best for them.

Last week, when our government for the people announced our intention to propose these changes, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing said during the press conference, “It doesn’t matter if you’re in a rural or urban municipality, what you see time and time again is that the municipal level of government is the closest to the day-to-day lives of most people.” He said, “This is another example of the province getting out of the way and making local government work harder, smarter and more effectively to make life better for everyone.”

I think most people sitting in this room can agree. Many of the members here today got their start in municipal government. They understand the differences that make municipalities unique, and it’s exactly these differences that make our province so great.

Premier Doug Ford was a Toronto city councillor for four years. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who introduced this bill, was the mayor of Brockville for 10 years.

I’ve also been fortunate to serve at the municipal level. I served three terms as a municipal councillor in Charlottenburgh and South Glengarry townships, and was elected mayor of South Glengarry three times. I’ve been honoured to sit on many committees and boards in eastern Ontario, and served as the warden of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry in 2006. I understand two-tiered municipalities. County and regional governments are two-tier levels of government, and I understand that they are governments filled with experienced, elected representatives who are more than capable of choosing what’s right for their own communities. I understand the important relationships these counties and regions establish with their member lower-tier municipalities to ensure that they collaborate and cooperate to deliver important services to their residents. And I understand why it’s important for them to be able to choose how they select their heads of council of these counties and regions. Be it an elected chair or an appointed one, they can decide, and they should decide.

From day one, some communities opposed the previous government’s decision to force municipalities to elect their regional chairs. Bonnie Crombie, the mayor of Mississauga, has been quoted multiple times in the media as being against it, calling it “a solution to a problem we do not have.” In fact, upon hearing about the changes that our government for the people is proposing here today, she is quoted as saying that this change “will signal that mayors and local councils are being heard on this matter.” In fact, she made Mississauga’s feelings plain, saying to the media that “Mississauga is the third-largest city in Ontario, and our council is perfectly capable of controlling our own destiny and working with the appointed regional chair to do so. In fact, in Peel, we voted 22-1 in 2017 against electing a regional chair.”

This reinforces what we have been hearing all along. Regional governments need to be able to choose what is best for regional governments. They need to be able to take this to their councils and have a full discussion on the matter to debate what is right for their communities.

We propose to revert back to the same processes that these four affected regional municipalities used in the 2014 municipal election for the upcoming October election. We are directing municipalities to do what they have done before. York, Peel, Niagara and Muskoka would appoint their own chairs in October. Waterloo, Durham and Halton would elect them. Oxford county would appoint one of their elected councillors. This is not new to them. It’s the way it was prior to 2016, when these sweeping changes were foisted upon them.

If regional municipalities want to revisit the issue after this election, they would be more than welcome to do so. The Better Local Government Act would, if passed, effectively give regional municipalities back the power to determine how their regional chair is selected in 2022 and thereafter. The imposed decision to add a fourth level of elected government in some of these regions invited dysfunction and discord. We would give the power of choice back to these regional governments. We want all levels of government to work in the best interests of their people.

I’m honoured to stand here before you as a representative of the residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. I’m privileged to have served my community in various capacities, including as municipal representative. As a former municipal politician in a two-tiered municipality, I can safely say that they know what’s best for their own communities. I’m looking forward to going to the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August. It’s a place where we can continue the conversation about how different levels of government can work together to provide prosperous, efficient service for the people. We can hear what works and what doesn’t work.

I always found it helpful for municipal politicians to have open lines of communication with other levels of government, and we want our government for the people to continue that tradition. We are taking a first step here today by proposing the return of decision-making powers on selecting the heads of council for future elections back to regional governments. Regional governments have other important issues that they need to focus on, and we, as the province, need to get out of the way to make life better for the people whom we serve.

Thank you, Speaker. Now I turn it back to the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to thank the minister and the member, my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, for sharing their time with me today. The reason I wanted to speak is that this act actually affects my riding and will help the people of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, so I just wanted to add some comments to the dialogue today.

Premier Ford and Minister Clark showed great leadership when implementing the Better Local Government Act. During the campaign, Premier Ford was very clear about his desire to find efficiencies and reduce the size and cost of government that will work for the people.

This shouldn't come as any surprise. During his time as city councillor, then-Councillor Doug Ford often spoke about the fact that the city of Toronto was too large, inefficient and simply did not work well for the residents of Toronto. Time and time again, Doug Ford has said that it makes perfect sense for the city of Toronto ward boundaries to mirror the federal and provincial jurisdictions: 25 MPs, 25 MPPs and 25 city councillors.

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Madam Speaker, this issue isn't new. In fact, this issue has been discussed for nearly 20 years, and since amalgamation there have been several ward boundary changes. Former Toronto city councillor Doug Holyday brought this up time and time again, even writing the Minister of Municipal Affairs back in 1999, urging him to reduce the size of council to match their federal and provincial counterparts. Councillor Holyday said it's simple: one MPP per riding, one MP per riding and one city councillor per ward.

Holyday, who served as the last mayor of Etobicoke, deputy mayor of Toronto and an MPP in this Legislature, always knew that inflated council sizes and government waste never served residents well; in fact, it did the opposite.

Today I spoke with Doug Holyday, and he took me on a trip down memory lane and reminded me that it's a very difficult task to get politicians to reduce their role in people's lives and rein in spending. Thankfully, we have a Premier, a minister and Toronto city councillors, including Doug's son Councillor Stephen Holyday, who are taking on the badly needed leadership to get this done and serve the people better.

On August 9, 1999, Doug Holyday was quoted in the *National Post*: "This council is too large. We have completed our agenda only twice since the new city of Toronto was formed, even though council sometimes meets late into the night, and unfortunately, hurried decisions are often made to finish off as much of the agenda as possible."

He was also quoted in the *Toronto Star* that same year: "Council, because of its nature, is unlikely to ever downsize itself, so if this required reduction is to take place, it will have to be instigated by the province."

Twenty years later, Holyday's words have proven truthful. We know that city council needs to be reduced, and we know that the province would have to be involved, which is exactly what is taking place right now, with the leadership of Premier Doug Ford.

It has been brought up at city council twice in recent years. In 2013, then-Mayor Rob Ford tried to get council colleagues to vote in favour of reducing the size of council, but to no avail. Again, in 2016, council revisited this issue, to no avail.

Work is not getting done at city hall. Council has become inefficient and ineffective. Transit projects are never on time, if built at all, and never on budget. Who is losing out? The people of Toronto are losing out, the taxpayers.

I know first-hand of the bloated bureaucracy at city hall. I worked in a councillor's office for several years and saw the endless debate, non-stop roadblocks on transit, and infrastructure projects that should be taking place that are years behind schedule, because all they're doing is talking and talking and nothing is getting done. The system is simply not working.

I stand by and support the city councillors who are in favour of reducing council to 25 seats. Many of them are putting their own re-elections at risk by doing so. I particularly want to recognize the leadership of Councillor Justin Di Ciano, who happens to be my councillor in ward 5, Etobicoke-Lakeshore. Councillor Di Ciano has supported the Premier and the minister in the Better Local Government Act, and he has communicated his message very effectively to the people and to the public on how this act will only improve government services in order for a more efficient government.

Over and above Councillor Di Ciano, I'd also like to recognize other councillors who have joined in to endorse our plan: Councillor Holyday, Councillor Mammoliti, Councillor Ford, Councillor Crisanti, Councillor Nunziata, Councillor Thompson, Councillor Shiner, Councillor Palacio, Councillor Karygiannis, Councillor De Baeremaeker, Councillor Kelly, Councillor Holland, Councillor Crawford and Councillor Di Giorgio, all councillors across party lines.

Hon. Steve Clark: That's a lot of support.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: That is a lot of support; I agree.

These councillors are experienced. They have been councillors for some time now and they know all too well that more politicians is not the answer. As Premier Ford said, when you ask people if they want more politicians, what's the answer? No—no more politicians; less politicians.

In closing, I fully support this initiative and I thank the Premier and the minister for their leadership because I know this will help move my community forward. We need better access to our councillors and this will help streamline the process to get better access, to create more transit and more infrastructure for the city of Toronto and for Etobicoke, and it will finally get Toronto moving.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: The Conservatives are talking about the need for better representation, and one thing that really concerns me is, why is it only Toronto that is being required to match provincial and federal boundaries? That seems utterly undemocratic to me.

Let me give you some examples. If we applied this rule of matching the federal and provincial boundaries to some other areas in Ontario, let's see how many councillors they would have: Waterloo, one councillor; Guelph,

one councillor; Milton, one councillor; Newmarket, one councillor; Oshawa, one councillor; Ottawa, eight councillors, down from 23; Hamilton, five councillors, down from 15; and Muskoka–Parry Sound, half a councillor each.

And then check this out: The 38 municipalities in Algoma–Manitoulin region would have one councillor for 38 municipalities.

This is not fair. Let's call this for what it is: It's an attack on Toronto and it's an attack on democracy.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like to just touch briefly on the last comment, that it was an attack on democracy. Elections Canada, in their piece about enhancing the values of redistribution, "Making Representation More Effective," actually has this statement: "A system which dilutes one citizen's vote unduly as compared with another citizen's vote runs the risk of providing an inadequate representation to the citizen whose vote is diluted."

This act will provide parity, or very close to parity, for all of the wards in Toronto. That's completely in line with what Elections Canada has said, and it's a key component of democracy. We're not diluting anyone's vote. This bill, when passed, will give parity, or very close to parity, across Toronto: 25 MPs, 25 MPPs and 25 councillors.

Now, there's been some talk about sizes. None of these wards are actually going to be as big as what my own riding is and I'm able to represent the people in my riding. I'm not sure why it's not possible, then, for other councillors to be able to represent that many people. It's less than what I'm representing.

We made a promise to the people of Ontario that we were going to bring transparency and accountability to government. We know that the current Toronto council is dysfunctional, that they're not able to do the things that they want to do, that they should be doing, to represent their people. By making Toronto council smaller, we're giving better government to them. We're giving better representation to them.

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

Ms. Jill Andrew: I'm just going to read some words from my community members: "It feels like we are screaming into the void right now. Many of us, especially those of us who are not wealthy, who are disabled, are genuinely fearful for what is to come." The initials of that person are L.M.

This person gave permission to give their name: Janet Conway calls this Ford government agenda "an assault of our most basic democratic right." I say it again: She calls it an assault of our democratic right.

I've heard from our friends on the other side that the boss is the people that you represent: fair and equitable representation. Well, listen to your boss, because Toronto–St. Paul's residents were not consulted. That's the piece we're missing here: consult, consult, consult.

You might have asked people a misleading question, like "Well, do you want more politicians?" But did you actually say, "Do you want us to cut city council, nearly by half, cut representation, keep it looking the same way it has forever, predominantly white, predominantly male"—

Interjection: That has nothing to do with it.

Ms. Jill Andrew: Actually, it does. Representation matters, and there's a member across who really shouldn't be laughing when I say that representation matters. It's pathetic.

Equity means that we look at communities and we look at their needs, and we respond to their unique needs. That's the difference from equity and equality. You can't paint every community the same, and that's what Bill 5 is doing.

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

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: As someone who grew up in Scarborough, as someone who went to school in Scarborough, who worked in Scarborough, and as I represent the great riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park—it is the east end of Toronto—what Toronto does not need is more politicians, Madam Speaker.

Transportation is the most important issue for the people of Scarborough. We need a transit system that is more dependable. An oversized council makes it almost impossible to build a meaningful consensus and get their job done. As a result, Madam Speaker, infrastructure crumbles, the housing backlog grows and transit isn't built.

We believe in better local government. We are going to reduce the size and cost of Toronto city hall so that decisions can be made quicker, while services can be delivered more efficiently and effectively. We are committed to restoring accountability and trust in government. We also promised to reduce the cost and size of government and end the culture of waste and mismanagement.

The Toronto Star poll shows that 68% of the people are in favour of reducing the councillors to 25. People made their decision loud and clear on June 7 to deliver our mandate. They elected us to serve them, to serve the taxpayers, Madam Speaker. We are not spending \$25 million for more politicians. We need a small government to function effectively and efficiently.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to take this opportunity not just to thank my parliamentary assistants, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry and the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore—

Interjection.

Hon. Steve Clark: I would also like to, despite the heckling from the member from Timmins, thank the members from University–Rosedale, Peterborough–Kawartha, Toronto–St. Paul's and Scarborough–Rouge Park for their comments.

As I said in my address, Speaker, we believe in better local government. We believe in more streamlined

decision-making. We want the council in the city of Toronto, after the election on October 22, to be streamlined and have the opportunity to make those quick and important decisions that will help people's everyday lives.

We also want to hit the pause button on those four regional chair elections that the previous government imposed on them in a bill in 2016. But we're doing in a way that we want to be open and consult. We think that the best opportunity to do that is at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in a couple of weeks in Ottawa, which—we make no apology for it—is the largest conference of its type in the municipal sector. We want to work with our municipalities and we want to listen to what they have to say.

But clearly, in Toronto, for decades, it's been a problem. Decisions have been slow. Councils have been dysfunctional. We've got an opportunity with Bill 5 to put a new direction in Toronto politics, with the election of a smaller council. We listed many, many councillors who supported us, many councillors who I think need their voices heard.

To address something that one of the members opposite said, this is not a laughing matter for me. I know that the member talked about laughing—that's not true. It's a very, very important issue, one that we're listening to—

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

Further debate?

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words on the Bill 5 debate. I will be sharing my time with the MPP for Toronto–Danforth, who will be responding on behalf of the NDP with leadership on this file.

It's incredibly disappointing to all of us and to millions of Ontarians to watch the government, having defeated my motion this afternoon, barge ahead with the most anti-democratic action that this province has seen in years—anti-democratic. The government members are going to couch this as a debate about functionality of a council. What this debate is about is the fundamental premise of our democracy, which is that people should decide how their local councils look and what shape they take.

So I am very proud to be on this side of the argument, because history will show that this caucus, this official opposition, is on the right side of this argument. What this government is doing is wrong. It is an assault on local democracy. And in this day and age, in a country like Canada, in a province like Ontario, this kind of ham-fisted, heavy-handed, anti-democratic approach should not be happening.

The people of Ontario actually care about democracy. The people of our province actually respect each other and respect each other as voters. Every single Ontarian believes that the fundamentals of democracy need to be respected and need to be in place for us to be able to function as an appropriate place where decisions are

made and debates occur in the best interests of the people—not in the best interests of Mr. Ford; not in the best interests of his attempts to kneecap his former political opponents; not in the best interests of Mr. Ford's desire to control a city that rejected him over and over again.

Regardless of political stripe, the process here is the issue. They're going to make a lot of noise as a government, trying to say that this is about functionality, this is about money-saving—a government that's wasting so much money already in lawsuits with the federal government, which are useless, in the tearing up of contracts that are going to cost untold millions and likely billions, just like what the Liberals did, as a matter of fact.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: They learned nothing.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: This government learned nothing from the wails that they made against the Liberals with their tearing up of contracts. They're now doing the same and, at the same time, scaring the heck out of the business community. Oh, my goodness: A Conservative government in Ontario, and they're scaring the business community because of their reckless and partisan and ideological behaviour. It's unbelievable, Speaker.

1720

The thing that's most worrisome of all is the fact that this government caucus is following behind a Premier who is behaving in a very vindictive and inappropriate way, a very personalized way, whose only purpose is to expunge progressives from city council, the very progressives who wouldn't vote for Mr. Ford. Really, that is what is our democracy has been reduced to? Shame on him.

That is not leadership, Speaker. That is not leadership at all. That is something completely different. In fact, leadership is actually embracing the voices of people, of our constituents, listening to what they have to say, giving them an opportunity to have a say not only on how their democracy operates and how their local councils operate but even here at Queen's Park. This government is about to ram this legislation through without even public hearings, just like they've done with everything thus far. It really is worrisome, Speaker, to see a government come into office and behave so badly so quickly.

This Premier's actions are outrageous; they are undemocratic. They're shocking to millions of people. Toronto and Torontonians are the ones who should have a say about their future, their council and their ward makeup. If that's going to change, then so be it. Change it, but do it in a democratic way. Do it with a process that actually engages people in their democracy, not with a knife, not with a machete slashing their rights, slashing their democracy, cutting it off at the knees—absolutely unacceptable, Speaker.

It strikes at the very values that we hold as Canadians, which is why my motion earlier said today very clearly that this is an undemocratic move. It is an un-Ontario move. It's an un-Canadian move, Speaker, and shame on the Premier for undertaking this particular action.

What we have in front of us is a debate and a bill that speaks to the nature of this Premier—his vindictive behaviour, his difficulty with being rejected. I think our member from Toronto–Danforth talked about that a little bit earlier. That’s not leadership, Speaker. That’s not Premierial behaviour.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I’d just like to mention to this side of the House that I am trying to listen to the speaker on this side of the House. During the hour time that this side of the House had to speak, this side of the House sat quietly. I’m sure they would appreciate it if you would give them the same courtesy.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker.

Look, what’s very, very clear here is that this initiative was not discussed at all during the election campaign. In fact, people were blindsided by this announcement, which makes it that more disgusting, frankly, Speaker. It makes it that more wrong that out of nowhere, after an election campaign where this was not raised at all, suddenly this move is robbing people of their democratic rights, robbing people of their ability to have a say on how their democracy functions. It is absolutely wrong, Speaker.

Again, it’s something that the Conservative Party should have learned from the Liberal Party. People don’t like it when you’re not upfront about what your intentions are during an election campaign. Here we are, just a month and a half after the election took place, maybe a little bit more than that, a month and maybe two or three weeks. The bottom line is this: The government that we now have is no better than the government we got rid of because they’re doing exactly the same things. They did not tell the truth in the election about what they were going to do to the city of Toronto, and now they’re doing it. They said they were all about not wasting money, but they’re wasting money like crazy. To top it all off, they are cutting off the democratic rights of the people of Toronto and they’re dragging our province backwards. It’s 2018. People should be electing their representatives. The regional chairs in Peel, in York region, in Niagara region and in Muskoka should not be chosen in the backrooms by other elected officials. They should be voted on by the people, the very people that this party pretended to respect and care about during the election, and six weeks later we find out: Oh, they don’t care about the people. They care about their own vindictive agenda. They care about consolidating power, in particular the power for the responsibilities for the city of Toronto, into the Premier’s office. This is what this is all about, right? The Premier couldn’t get elected as mayor—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Point of order.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: Madam Speaker, on a point of order, the language being used by the Leader of the Opposition is unparliamentary in my view. The word

“vindictive,” under standing order 23(i)—she has been using the word “vindictive,” which imputes motive. She has used it several times now. I do believe that it is inappropriate and that she is debasing the conduct in this House and causing people to create disorder within the House. That’s why we’re reacting the way—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): When I stand, please sit.

I would caution the member to please be careful with the language that you were using.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you, Speaker.

The bottom line is what this Premier is doing is basically trying to consolidate—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. I don’t need an interaction from the government side of the House when I make a ruling.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What this Premier is doing is he’s trying to consolidate the power for himself in the Premier’s chair and trying to take over the city of Toronto, a municipality that has rejected him time and time again. How disgraceful is that? It’s like being the worst sport in the world. The worst sport in the world can’t win so they change the game, right? They change the rules of the game to rig it so that they can win. That’s what a poor sport does. How sad is it for the people of Ontario, the 60% who didn’t vote for Doug Ford and even the 40% who did, to see that this is the nature of the Premier elected to this chamber? It’s a shameful thing, I think, all the way around.

But one of the things that I think people understand and recognize is that the Premier, no matter how hard he tries, is not the king. He’s not the king of Ontario. He’s the Premier of Ontario. He should show some respect for the people of Ontario and protect their democratic rights, not tear them up.

In discussing this issue today with the hundreds of people who were on the lawn, hearing what people are saying from Toronto and Niagara and Peel and York and Muskoka, the bottom line is that it’s very, very clear that this move is a move that the government should reconsider. The government should withdraw this bill, and we urge them to do exactly that, because it sets a precedent in this place that says that government can behave with a complete lack of interest for the public’s interest. That should never be the case. The government should always be for the people, which is what Mr. Ford pretended he was all about during the campaign. But, in fact, we find out afterwards that he’s not.

What he’s for are his backroom developer friends who are now going to have free rein in Toronto because that’s what this is all about for Mr. Ford. It’s about making sure his well-connected, rich cronies are able to buy up the TTC because he’s going to privatize that after this move takes place. I would expect we’ll see developers wanting to buy up some social housing units because that’s probably another thing that’s going to happen. Social housing will be sold off to his developer friends. It’s going to mean the privatization of more public utilities,

like Toronto Hydro, because that's what the conservatives on city council want to see happening.

Really, what is the agenda here? It's not about the democratic rights of Torontonians. It's not about the rights of people to actually elect their representatives in the year of 2018. It's all about the Premier wanting to rule the city of Toronto from the Premier's office and, at the same time, provide his friends and his developer friends and his other friends with the spoils that they couldn't get in a democratic way.

1730

Speaker, I want to say thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this disgraceful piece of legislation and leave—

Interjections.

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

The member for Eglinton–Lawrence on a point of order.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Madam Speaker, on the same point of order: The member is imputing motive by saying the Premier is trying to rig the elections and other such things. She said it several times and I think she should be sanctioned for it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you for the point of order.

Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's a pleasure to be able to rise and speak about this bill and the light it throws on the Premier and the way he's going to run this province in the next four years. It's very clear to me, and I think it's very clear to the people of this province, that he's abusing his very vast political power in the way he is dealing with the city of Toronto and with the regions of Niagara, York, Peel and Muskoka.

He's acting like a dictator. This is an extraordinary approach to the way one exercises power in a democracy. He cooked this up in a backroom. He consulted no one and, frankly, he—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Point of order.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: Madam Speaker, the member opposite used the word “dictator,” which is abusive and insulting language. Earlier today, that same word was—

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Withdraw.

So what do we have before us? A bill that I think would be more appropriately titled the “roll back democracy in Toronto, Peel, Niagara, York, Muskoka, and throw your weight around act, 2018.” That's what we've got on the table.

There are a variety of things I want to touch on, but I'm going to talk about the content of the bill first. When I do that, I need to acknowledge the researchers who did this work. Bilbo Poynter did great work in a very short time, and I have to say that when things go well, we have

to recognize that researchers make us look good. When things go badly, we have to acknowledge it is our fault because they tried to correct us in the first place. So my thanks to them.

Again, this is a caution: When I was new here, I used to go into the details of bills, going clause-by-clause. Frankly, Speaker, you have to caution people to not operate heavy machinery after I do that. It's simply dangerous. Those of you who are driving home tonight, take a little coffee after you hear my speech.

I'm not going to go into every segment of the bill. I think the minister and the parliamentary assistant touched on it. I might have done a bit more, but I'm not going to go into every section. I do want to speak about some elements.

Bill 5 amends the City of Toronto Act, 2006, the Municipal Act, 2001—I know you remember that one—and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as well as providing—and this is important—the minister of housing and urban affairs the ability to further amend this act through regulation. That's really unusual. Those of you who understand the way we write laws here know we write the legislation that sets the framework within which regulations are written. Often, when a government acts in a way that's outside of the law that has been written—*ultra vires* is the term. When it's outside the law that has been written, the regulations are struck down. But in this, we have an inversion. In fact, the minister will be able to write regulations that will supersede any act that we put forward in this House.

The debate you're having today—frankly, you can debate it. We can go into committee, we can try to amend it, but the minister will be able to rewrite this act much as he wants. This is quite an extraordinary thing. I actually had a chance to talk to our House leader about that, a parliamentarian. I don't think we've seen this before. Maybe I'm wrong. It's highly unusual.

I want to say to you that not only is this a bill that rolls back democracy in the jurisdictions I listed, but it also undermines your power—our power as legislators—to determine what goes out and what exists on the ground. It's an extraordinary piece.

I know that when the minister can do this, it opens a door to those famous overnight regulation-writing binges where you see crates of Scotch and coffee going into the minister's office, where they're going to go overnight and rewrite the legislation because, you know, they feel like it. That's a real problem. I don't think one-man rule is a good idea. I think having debate out in the open amongst legislators, where the public can hear the arguments that are made and, assuming you have consultation, can come and speak about what's there—when you close the door to that, you open a very, very dangerous precedent. A very dangerous precedent.

Now, there's one generous interpretation to this: When the Attorney General's lawyers got the grease-stained napkin from the Tom Jones Steakhouse with all this written on it, they couldn't make it all out. They knew there might be problems when they wrote it up, so they

took down what they could and realized, “We’ve got to throw this in, in case there’s stuff we don’t understand, in case there’s a snag that can be corrected by the minister.” That is the most generous interpretation I can give.

There’s another interpretation in that a lot of games can be played when vague legislation gives a lot of power into the hands of one man. That is a problem. That is a problem.

Schedule 1 of this brief bill amends the City of Toronto Act and strips the city of Toronto’s ability to determine composition of city council and the division of the city into wards. No surprise. That’s his direction. But beyond that, he’s saying not just this election but in future, the city of Toronto won’t have the power to set its wards. It’s gone. One of the largest governments in Canada, bigger than a number of provinces—not exactly amateur hour—and a government that was given the power to determine its structure is being told not only not this time but not in future; forget it.

It’s interesting to me because I hear regularly from the other side these complaints about the nanny state. The nanny state: Higher levels of government are trying to tell us how to live our lives. Well, the nanny has spoken, and when it comes to Toronto, “You naughty kids. God, how is it that you divided up those toys and didn’t talk to us first? From now on, we’re going to tell you how to divide up those toys. Be sure of it; you’re not going to be heard from again, because we get to call the shots.” Not, not, not a democratic approach.

Now, even then, a nanny does have some limits—some limits, Speaker—and those limits express themselves in schedule 2. I know you’ve all read schedule 2: the racy parts, the fascinating parts.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Is this about accommodation of the voter?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: No, no. Schedule 2 is a whole other thing. You’ve got to read it to appreciate it and let it soak into you.

It provides that for the 2018 regular election, the head of council of certain regional municipalities shall be elected by a general vote. You understand that, Speaker. That section is re-enacted except for a number of municipalities: Niagara, Peel, Muskoka and York. No, let’s not re-enact it. They are going to go back to appointments. I’m going to speak about Niagara shortly.

But, interestingly, that section lapses. After 2018—even though this time the Premier is acting towards those who are running in those races in a way that I will describe later—those regions can write their own rules and say, “Ah, we’re going to have an elected regional chair in the future.”

The nanny, when it comes to Toronto—you know, it’s an unruly place. What are you going to do? You’ve got to take it over. But for these regions, this is a one-time-only offer.

So we’re going to have this sort of drive-by beating-up of Patrick Brown in Peel—not that I’m a fan of Patrick Brown. I would have worked very hard to defeat him in the last election, if he had been the leader. But, frankly,

going in and changing the regional government to get at the guy is an extraordinary thing to do with provincial power—and then Steve Del Duca in York. Steve and I fought regularly. He’s not here, so I don’t have to call him by his riding name. Steve and I fought all the time. But using the power of the province to do in those two politicians is an extraordinary abuse of that power; an extraordinary abuse. Now—

Interjection.

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

1740

Mrs. Robin Martin: On a point of order, Madam Speaker: Again, the member opposite is using his opportunity to speak to impute motive, which is under—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. I appreciate the point of order. I will caution the member to choose his words wisely.

Back to the member.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I want to speak a bit about Niagara region. I’m from Toronto; I know a bit more about Toronto, but my colleagues from Welland, St. Catharines and Niagara are dealing with a very big issue as well.

Niagara region was slated to directly elect their regional chair for the first time. This government stripped the people of Niagara of their democratic choice, of their democratic voice. Many in Niagara were looking forward to the election of the regional chair. Members in Niagara have brought to my attention that there has been an ongoing problem and disagreement at the regional level, a real divergence of opinions on the direction of the region. How do you solve that? Typically, in a democracy, elections seem to be a good idea. I don’t know what everyone who is elected in this room thinks, but I actually think elections are a good idea, and so do the people of Niagara. The people of Niagara had a diverse choice of candidates; I’m sure it was all over the political map. They were going to make a choice on what direction they felt was best for their community—but not anymore. With no notice, the government has stripped them of this election. Beyond not notifying the province, they made the announcement the morning of the deadline for nominations. How do you run elections when you’re changing things so late? This is an extraordinary thing. Those candidates had a very tough time deciding where they were going to go. I don’t think people’s main concern is what happens to candidates—frankly, it’s just not on their radar—but in terms of democratic choice and direction in Niagara, this was a really, really bad decision. It’s a major step backward for the Niagara region. There are about a half million people who live in Niagara. They deserve to be able to make a choice. That is being taken away by this Premier.

I stand with the people of Niagara, and I encourage them to fight, and I encourage this government to withdraw this antidemocratic bill and respect the people of the region.

I note that the point I made right at the beginning about the minister having power to write regulations to

overturn what we will debate here in the Legislature applies to Niagara and these regional races as well. It's quite an extraordinary piece of legislation—very noteworthy.

You have to say, Speaker, when you look at this kind of action taken against these regions, that this is a directed political measure. It is not a measured, thoughtful way of dealing with a problem in a democracy; it's a way of getting at people you don't like and making sure that they're out of the picture.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Withdraw.

In Toronto, the Premier has announced that he intends to slash the number of councillors on Toronto city council from 47 to 25, as well as cancel those other races. That race is already well under way. People in Toronto went through a four-year process of consultation—and I'll touch on that later. In fact, the former mayor of Toronto, Rob Ford, initiated that project of consultation. He thought it was a good idea that we decide how many people are needed to run this city.

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Amazing, eh?

The news broke last Thursday evening, and the reason the Premier gave was, to reduce the size of government and end a culture of misuse and waste—from someone who wants to spend 30 million bucks on a legal action against the federal government, when his Attorney General in a press conference today could not say “Yes” to the question, “Do you think you can win?” She didn't even say, “Maybe.” That was too strong. She would not answer the question. So 30 million bucks, folks, is being blown on this legal action that is going to wind up in the ditch. That is waste and abuse. So we have a small group on the right flank of Toronto council holding press events on Friday and again on Monday where they supported the Premier's decision. It was pretty clear that at least Michael Thompson knew on the Thursday that this was going ahead—not the rest of us. We don't really count because we're just elected representatives of the people, but Michael Thompson knew that. Intriguing; fascinating.

Two of the councillors appearing with Thompson, Justin Di Ciano and Giorgio Mammoliti, appealed an Ontario Municipal Board decision that upheld a city of Toronto decision to increase the council's seat count to 47 from 44. They appealed it to the OMB and they were rejected. The OMB wrote, “The board rejects that public consultation was inadequate.” The OMB is a pretty conservative body. Those of you who have dealt with it may know they're cautious in their language. They're not generally considered friends of local government and tend to be an obstacle. But in this case they said that “the evidence was clear that the 47-ward structure initially recommended was in fact adjusted to reflect input from stakeholders in respect of communities of interest.”

In a particular rebuke of Mammoliti's “do nothing” proposal, the OMB wrote the following: “Ultimately, the

decision to re-examine the city's ward boundaries is one that lies with council.” The OMB was right. “It has the ability to review its ward structure as often (or as little) as it chooses. The city undertook a lengthy detailed process, incorporating public comment and considered (and reconsidered) various options. Public and stakeholder inputs were incorporated throughout the process.”

There was in fact a multi-year consultation process—something not happening here. Some people liked it; some people didn't like it. That's the nature of an open society. In the end, council adopted a position based on consultation with the people of this city that was upheld by the Ontario Municipal Board against the interests of those who don't like the idea of representation. The OMB ruled to dismiss the appellants' appeal of the council decision and to uphold the council decision.

Now, who would do something like this? Who would ask for a review of council structure so it was better reflective of the people of this city? Was it David Miller? No. Did David Miller do this?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: No, no, not him. Was it Mel Lastman?

Interjections: No.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: No. But, who could it be? The mystery deepens. It deepens.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Tell us; tell us.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Mr. Phillips may know that Mr. Lastman wasn't involved; he would have advised him on this matter.

No, it came later. It was 2013. It was the Ford administration. Amazing. How about that? Who would have thought it? Who would have thought it?

Interjections.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I actually went and looked at the city council record and the motion of the executive committee, which was intriguing. The motion was to set up this broad consultation and assessment. In fact, it set out responsibilities for those who were going to do the study. The consultant was to “undertake a ward boundary review for Toronto that is legally robust and will withstand legal scrutiny and possible appeals to the OMB.” Well, apparently, they did that. And to “implement a two-stage broad engagement and consultation strategy with the Toronto public, communities, key stakeholders, the mayor and councillors to elicit input on Toronto's current ward boundaries and input on ward boundary options.” Apparently, they did that, because it held up at the OMB. They actually delivered on the instructions given by Mayor Ford's executive committee.

“The consultant will be responsible to undertake a Toronto ward boundary review within the following parameters:

“Develop a ward boundary review process, work plan and engagement and consultation strategy that does not assume a predetermined number of wards or specific boundaries of wards for Toronto.”

They didn't say, "You've got to take it up," or, "You've got to take it down." They said to come back with ward boundaries that reflect the needs of the city of Toronto and to apply "the principle of 'effective representation' as outlined by the Supreme Court of Canada and applied by the courts and the OMB in developing ward boundary options."

1750

Well, I think they did that. They were given instructions to look at what would work for the city of Toronto and they were told to go out and consult and make sure this is something that reflects the will of the people of Toronto—the will of the people of Toronto. And they did that.

So, in the winter of 2013-14, consultants brought in a report, a work plan. Then, in 2014-15, the ward boundary review process started, with the two-stage consultation going on. Then, in the spring of 2016, council considered the final report. So we're talking 2013 to 2016-17, roughly four years.

Tell me if I'm wrong, members of the government side, but I expect you're going to wrap this up in a few weeks. So four years of consultation with the people of Toronto, in an open process meant to elicit from them what they wanted in the way of representation, one that was challenged by those who were unhappy with it—they were rejected by the OMB. We have a decision, which most people would consider democratically arrived at and democratically representative, being thrown in the trash. That's an extraordinary thing. It was not a job creation plan. It was meant to deal with adequate representation of the people of Toronto by their elected representatives, and that's what we have here.

That's an extraordinary thing: being thrown out on a whim—actually, more than a whim, Speaker. I will go into my assessment of why this is happening as I get further into my speech.

The rules and legislation governing this: The city of Toronto is legislated primarily by the City of Toronto Act. Most other municipalities are primarily governed by the Municipal Act, 2001. Those bills are going to be amended.

Now, we know, notwithstanding the OMB ruling, that ultimately the province has jurisdiction, it has power over the city of Toronto. One should always exercise power carefully. You never know what's going to blow up when you exercise it badly. But it's pretty clear the province has power.

I'll note, though, that the City of Toronto Act, 2006, contains a set of governing principles committing the government to maintaining a co-operative relationship with the city and provides that this relationship be formalized in a written agreement. I'll just read from that agreement:

"The province of Ontario endorses the principle that it is in the best interests of the province and the city to work together in a relationship based on mutual respect, consultation and co-operation."

Who would argue with that? Put up your hands if you don't think there should be a system of consultation and

co-operation. Come on. I look forward to people saying that that's bad news. I generally think that in dealing with municipalities, provincial government should work with them in a consultative and co-operative way—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes, Parry Sound. Take your—

Mr. Bill Walker: Owen Sound.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Owen Sound is a great place, a wonderful place, I have to say. But you would want consultation and co-operation in dealing—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Yes.

"For the purposes of maintaining such a relationship, it is in the best interests of the province and the city to engage in ongoing consultations with each other about matters of mutual interest and to do so in accordance with an agreement between the province and the city."

So we actually have in the act not a requirement to consultation but an agreement between the province and the city that there will be consultation and co-operation—thrown out the window, irrelevant to this government.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Aren't they big on consultation?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Oh, I'm going to speak about consultation further; I appreciate that.

Not only was there an extensive process with the citizenry, there was an agreement between the province and the city for ongoing coordination, consultation and co-operation—not happening. There was no consultation on the bill before us, and there may be none. I look forward to seeing whether time allocation is brought in. Some of us will not be shocked if it is. I think you're wrong to do it. But I don't think you're going to consult. I don't think you're going to go anywhere near what the city of Toronto did with its citizens, because you don't have an interest in it. You've shown no evidence of such interest.

Speaker, we in the last few weeks have been seized with the debate about the sex ed curriculum. I've listened to the Premier, the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education speak at length about the reason we're throwing out a sex ed curriculum meant to keep children from being sexually abused and meant to ensure that we could prevent depression amongst LGBTQ youth. We've been told, "No, you can't go there because there was a bad consultation and we're going to throw it out and we're going to go on a consultation for an unspecified period of time"—

Interjection: "Biggest ever."

Mr. Peter Tabuns: "Biggest ever," yes. Sorry. Thank you. "Biggest ever."

But when there actually is a lengthy consultation by a city government with its citizens, that gets thrown out in a heartbeat; no problem. The cover being used for sex ed is a very thin cover; in fact, it's saran wrap. One can see through it.

I would oppose this bill even if it was being set in place so that it would have effect on the elections four years from now. I would oppose it because I don't think

it makes sense. But that's not what is happening. In fact, what's happening is a disruption of an election process that is already under way, because I have been canvassed at my door by candidates already. I think that's a good thing. I'm very appreciative of the fact that they are out on the street and talking to people now. You've got to do it.

So it's an extraordinary thing, and it would be extraordinary in Ontario if the federal government stepped in when we were in the middle of an election and said, "Oh, you know, we're going to change it all today." It shows utter, total lack of respect for the people of Toronto.

Speaker, I know my time is short, but I know I get more time next week and I'm looking forward to that. I had an opportunity earlier today when we were debating our leader's motion on rejecting this bill to talk a bit about what are the motives here. I gather there's some sensitivity in my talking about the motives, so I will just note that there are two books that I urge every member of this Legislature to read. And I urge that those who are watching today read *Crazy Town* by Robyn Doolittle and *Mayor Rob Ford: Uncontrollable* by Mark Towhey.

Now, Robyn Doolittle is not as sympathetic to Mayor Ford as one might want if one was in favour of Mayor Ford, but it's still a fairly good journalistic piece. Uncontrollable by Mark Towhey—let's be gentle. Mark is no leftie. He's a bright guy and, frankly, after I read the book I thought, "This is a guy I'd like to talk to someday." But he has a very clear-eyed assessment of what went well and what went wrong in that administration.

Frankly, those who want to understand how this Premier is dealing with the city of Toronto would be well advised to read those books to see how power is used and abused. Because one can only think that the ego of this Premier was deeply damaged by his experience with Toronto city council. Why else would you do this? Why is this a priority, frankly? Why would this be a priority?

When the city of Toronto was dealing with the chaos of the Ford administration, the mayor of the time and his brother, who, when you read those books, you can see was deeply integrated into the decision-making—and "deeply integrated" may be an understatement—were, those two men, isolated and pushed out by the rest of council, a council composed of people on the right, on the left and in the middle, because they couldn't stand the chaos. We were getting a reputation globally for chaos. I had friends who were in Uruguay on holiday. A guy came up and said, "Where are you from?" They said, "Toronto." "Oh, Toronto, yes. We've heard about that." Michael Prue, formerly from Beaches—East York, was in Taiwan. He picked up the newspaper and there was a big picture of Doug and Rob on the front cover—Taiwan. Oh, no, we hit the big time. So you have a Premier who got locked out by the rest of council who were trying to protect the city.

You look like you want to say something, Speaker.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. on Tuesday, August 7, 2018.

The House adjourned at 1759.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioic Lim, William Short
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

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Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
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Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
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Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
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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
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Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

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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, Bhutilla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina 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	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
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Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Government and Consumer Services Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
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