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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 12 November 2018

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 12 novembre 2018

The House met at 1030.

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

Prayers.

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

This morning, we have with us in the Speaker's gallery the Runnymede public school grade 3 choir from the riding of Parkdale–High Park to help us sing O Canada. Please join us in the singing of our national anthem.

Singing of O Canada.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today Mr. Thomas Schultze, the consul general of Germany to Toronto. Joining him is the deputy consul general of Germany to Toronto, Michael Lauber. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature this morning.

Mr. Joel Harden: I would just like to acknowledge the fact that we have several people here in the gallery today from Pro Bono Ontario. These are lawyers that help some of our most marginalized citizens. I was wondering if you could stand up and be acknowledged. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Will Bouma: I just want to take a moment and welcome to the members' gallery my constituency assistant, Milan Novakovic. We are only as good as the people who work for us, and Milan exemplifies that remarkably.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It is my pleasure to introduce Adele Fawcett and her brother Owen Fawcett, who came down from Nickel Belt to be here with us this morning. Welcome to Queen's Park, Adele.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It's my pleasure to introduce members from the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance: Richard Wu from Waterloo—go, Warriors; Stephanie Bertolo, McMaster—go, Marauders; and, closer to Chatham, Mitchell Pratt from Western—go, 'Stangs.

Ms. Bhutla Karpoché: I'd also like to welcome and thank students of Runnymede public school, who just sang the national anthem. Together with them is their teacher, Mr. Ian Medley, and three parent chaperones: Karen Carey-Hill, Sally Hubjer and Scott Nishi. Welcome.

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: It's my pleasure to welcome a former colleague of mine, Louis Tsilivis, who was an intern with me in the office of the late Minister of Finance Jim

Flaherty. We served together about eight years ago now, which seems quite a while. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's my pleasure to welcome seven-year-old Grace Matthews to Queen's Park. It's her first visit. She's inspired to be involved in politics by her love of nature. I'd also like to welcome her mom, Liz Matthews.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to introduce Rick Orr from my riding of Perth–Wellington. He's here with IBAO today. Welcome, Rick.

Miss Monique Taylor: I see Laura Kirby-McIntosh in the gallery this morning. Laura is the president of the Ontario Autism Coalition. She's here to speak to the government today about the wait-lists.

Ms. Jane McKenna: I'd like to welcome today a very dear friend of mine from Burlington, Mark Preston from IBAO, who I met with this morning—and also with Rick Dresher and Dennis Howden.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I'd like to welcome Peter Henen, vice-president of external affairs for the Brock University Students' Union, who is here with us in the gallery today.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: I would like to welcome my constituency assistant, Dennis Flaherty. He's here. Thank you for being here, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Robin Martin: It's my pleasure to welcome today two supporters from my riding: Larry Babins and John Morrissey.

Mr. David Piccini: It's my pleasure to introduce a team from Northeastern University this morning: Aliza Lakhani, CEO; Rue Quizon, operations manager; and Chris Mallett, chief operating officer. I think Evan is here as well. I'm not sure if he made it—Evan, academic and student affairs manager. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Vincent Ke: Sitting in the members' gallery, I would like to welcome my good friends Mr. Gao Lijun and his lovely wife, Mrs. Zhang Lu, and their sons, Ryan and Corey. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I wish to introduce Dennis Howden, a constituent and a member of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario.

Mr. Doug Downey: I'd like to welcome all 30 delegates from the IBAO from across Ontario. I'll mention only a few: the CEO, Colin Simpson, and his executive, Traci Boland, Jeff Gatcke and Brian Purcell.

Hon. Greg Rickford: I have a dear friend from Bay Bulls, Newfoundland: Norm O'Driscoll. He goes by "Normie." His son is the chief of staff to the Minister of Natural Resources. Welcome to Toronto, home of the Leafs.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure today to welcome Zoe Smith, who attends Cedarview Middle School

in Nepean, as a page here today. We want to welcome her and encourage her to have the time of her life as she becomes a page here at our assembly.

1040

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It's my pleasure to introduce my phenomenal constituency staff from the great riding of London North Centre: Eaman Fahmy and Ty Nguyen, as well as my legislative assistant, Dr. Elliot Worsfold. Welcome to Queen's Park and question period.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm very proud to welcome to this House a good Bruce county boy, Jeff Gatcke, who is here with IBAO.

Hon. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome a good friend of mine. We used to play hockey many years ago and many pounds ago, Mr. Speaker: Brian Erwin, from the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario, is here from Ottawa.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'd like to welcome my grandniece who is here, Zoe Smith. She's a page for the next five weeks here at Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We would like to welcome all the other guests who are here who haven't been introduced.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MINISTER'S CONDUCT

Ms. Sara Singh: This question is about the Premier's standards for cabinet and how he communicates those standards. The question is for the Premier.

Last Friday, in a late-night statement, the Premier stated that the MPP for Simcoe-Grey would be leaving cabinet and the PC caucus to deal with personal addiction issues. Was that the real reason for his dismissal?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I'm actually surprised this question has come up again. My job is to make sure I protect everyone in our party, and everyone under the roof of Queen's Park. We've acted decisively.

My job, when someone comes forth with an allegation, is to protect them, not to worry about what the NDP or the media is worried about. I know the NDP maybe takes a different approach on this. Maybe they believe in not protecting their staff, not protecting their members. We have a different approach. We believe in making sure that we have a work environment that is safe for everyone. I have zero tolerance of that behaviour. We acted decisively.

It takes a lot of courage to speak truth to power. I just find it ironic that they bring this up, throwing stones in a glass house, which we won't get into about the NDP, but—

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

Interjections.

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

Supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: The Premier has since admitted that the real reason for the dismissal from cabinet was sexual harassment and misconduct. The Premier also claimed that

he hid those facts because he was concerned the media would disclose the name of the individual who came forward. But the journalists have reported on this incident for over a week and no names have been disclosed.

Why did the Premier offer a different reason for the resignation on Friday than the one he's offering to us today?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: The media did mention the chief of staff at the minister's office.

I'm going to repeat what I said earlier. We are here to make sure we protect everyone. Everyone who comes forward with an allegation—I'm here to tell them they will be protected. I'm not worried about the media. The media are smart folks; they would pick it up in about three seconds. Once it did come out, they did pick it up in about three seconds. It's not about keeping the NDP happy; it's not about keeping the media happy; it's about protecting the people who have the courage to come forward with these allegations.

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

Ms. Sara Singh: Protecting a victim of sexual misconduct is the right thing to do; protecting a powerful man accused of sexual misconduct is not. Pretending that those things are at odds with each other is the wrong thing to be doing.

As the Premier well knows, the allegations of sexual misconduct are now a matter of public record, and journalists have done their jobs without exposing the victims to any harm or scrutiny.

Will the Premier admit that this attempt to sweep this serious incident under the rug was a mistake? And going forward, will he commit to taking immediate and transparent action when dealing with allegations of sexual misconduct here in the House?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: The person who came forward with the allegations asked us over and over again to be protected, not to say a word. So that person trumps everyone else. I find it pretty shameful that the member from Brampton would even keep bringing this up.

This House here, Queen's Park, should be a safe working environment. I have zero tolerance for that behaviour. We acted decisively, and we're going to always act decisively.

MINISTER'S CONDUCT

Ms. Sara Singh: This question is also to the Premier. This is a question about the Premier's standards for cabinet ministers.

Two weeks ago, the Premier stated that he had absolute confidence in the new Minister of Tourism, who was, at the time, serving as the minister of public safety. In fact, the Premier didn't just express confidence; he claimed he had "1,000% confidence" in the minister. Yet the Premier moved him to a different job mere days after saying that.

Can the Premier tell us, on a scale of 1% to 1,000%, exactly how confident are you in your minister this week?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Speaker, I'm 10,000%—I just multiplied it by 10—confident with all our ministers, with our team.

The PC government has ended up getting more things done than any government in the history of Ontario. It has been unprecedented.

I just wish, once, the NDP would come up with some tax savings rather than always thinking about attacking our party personally, attacking ministers personally.

We recalibrated our team to make sure the people in their area are going to fit that area.

We are going to constantly make sure we respect the taxpayers, until we can make sure we continue lowering taxes, lowering hydro rates—

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

Interjections.

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

Supplementary?

Ms. Sara Singh: There have been serious concerns raised about the new Minister of Tourism. As the minister responsible for the OPP, he campaigned for a candidate at the centre of an OPP investigation, Speaker. He's currently embroiled in multiple lawsuits. And he played a central role in a \$40-million Ponzi scheme that bilked people out of their life savings. The media reports that the Premier was not happy about those revelations and that led the minister to be moved to a new portfolio.

If the Premier does not have confidence in this minister, why is he still a minister in this cabinet?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Speaker: Again, I want to tell you, this is the best cabinet and the best caucus this province has ever seen. We have a team that's turning this province around, respecting taxpayers, making sure we talk about the things that matter to the people of Ontario.

We aren't here to attack personally like the NDP does, because they have no policy to go by. We're here to make sure that we turn the province around, we start paying down the \$15-billion structural deficit.

We're making sure that we're lowering taxes, lowering gas prices. This week everyone talked about how low the gas prices were.

When I've criss-crossed this province over the last couple of weeks, Mr. Speaker, I've heard nothing but positive comments: "Keep going. Keep going. Keep—"

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

Interjections.

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

Final supplementary.

1050

Ms. Sara Singh: The Premier is supposed to set the standards for his team. There have been serious concerns and questions raised about the former minister of public safety, and the Premier's solution was not to move him out of cabinet but to move him to a different job.

The Ontario Securities Commission said that they found "disturbing aspects" in this minister's behaviour during discussions in which farm families were talked into investing

thousands of dollars that they never got back. So the question to the Premier is: Does that meet your standard?

Hon. Doug Ford: The Minister of Tourism was instrumental in creating Italian Heritage Month—

Applause.

Hon. Doug Ford: And he deserves the applause. He's a champion when it comes to heritage. He's a champion when it comes to tourism. I predict we'll have more tourists next year in 2019 than we've ever had in Ontario because of the great work the minister's going to do.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Ms. Sara Singh: This question is for the Premier. The Ontario Ombudsman reported that at least 1,000 complaints were made to the provincial Ombudsman about the Ontario Cannabis Store in just a few weeks. The avalanche of complaints were about problems with deliveries, the website, customer service, packaging, shipping and much more—not all just Canada Post-related issues.

According to media reports, the OCS warehouse and shipping is being operated by a private company that was contracted through the Ontario Cannabis Store. My question to the Premier is: Who is this private company that is running our cannabis store?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Certainly, we're grateful for the question. It's always a great opportunity to stand in this Legislature and speak.

The first thing we have to absolutely acknowledge is that our cannabis sales in Ontario are all about the safety of our children, the safety of our roads and curbing the illicit market. That's what our cannabis sales here in Ontario are all about. The Ontario Cannabis Store has assured us that they are now on schedule—back to the original schedule. You have to appreciate that we have had prohibition in Ontario for over 100 years. We took this federally legislated law and opened an unprecedented business in the province of Ontario, and here we are with 100,000 orders on the very first night.

I'll be able to speak more to our advances in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Sara Singh: I asked a pretty simple question, and I think we deserve to hear a straight answer. There are major, major problems with this very lucrative business—through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister. Apparently, there are several concerns with respect to mislabelling of that product. I know we're talking about keeping children safe, but if we're mislabelling products, I'd like to know how the safety aspect of that plays into it.

Apparently, the Premier has privatized part of the Ontario Cannabis Store and given out a big contract without telling the people of Ontario who got that contract and how they got it. Of course, a massive, lucrative contract like this should only be awarded through a tender and competitive bidding process.

Again to the Premier: Was this contract tendered, and what private company is running Ontario cannabis warehouse operations in this province?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, again, for the question.

I have to repeat a little bit about what I said. We have taken this federally legislated law and created the opportunity now to have online sales in the province of Ontario. You have to appreciate, of course, that when we took office, much of the structure had already been established by the previous government. Although there were many issues that needed correction, that was one that—we were actually satisfied that the private operation of the warehouse is in good hands. We are very pleased. Again, this is uncharted territory where we have created a company from scratch in a business that no one has been in for 100 years.

VETERANS

Mr. Doug Downey: My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Just yesterday on Remembrance Day, Ontarians came together all over the province to commemorate and honour our Canadian Armed Forces. Each year on November 11 and throughout Remembrance Week, we pause to pay tribute to those who have served and continue to serve our country during times of war, conflict and peace.

Mr. Speaker, we all know the immense sacrifices that our veterans have made to guarantee our safety, our values and our freedoms, and the sacrifices that our Canadian Armed Forces continue to make today.

Can the minister tell the House how this government paid tribute to our Canadian Armed Forces on Remembrance Day?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to the member for Barrie–Springwater–Oro–Medonte for this important question.

This Remembrance Day, and throughout Remembrance Week, our government launched a campaign to honour our heroic Canadian Armed Forces. From the World Wars through to modern-day conflicts, including the war in Afghanistan, we remember the lives of those Canadians who fought valiantly to protect our great country.

This year, we encouraged all Ontarians to take part in Remembrance Week activities and Remembrance Day ceremonies to commemorate 100 years since the end of the First World War and the signing of the armistice. This Remembrance Week, Ontarians wore poppies, attended ceremonies across the province and observed a moment of silence at 11 a.m.

I am proud to stand in the House today and share our thanks to all the men and women who have fought to preserve our values and our freedoms.

Applause.

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

Supplementary.

Mr. Doug Downey: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Thank you to the minister for that response.

I'm glad to hear about our government's hard work to commemorate and honour veterans this Remembrance Day. Whether they served in the First World War, the Second

World War, the Korean War, the war in Afghanistan or any other conflict, the men and women of the Canadian Forces represent the very best of our country, our people and our values. They deserve our gratitude and respect.

During the Remembrance Week campaign, our message renewed focus on the heroes of the war in Afghanistan, including the 159 Canadians who never made it home. In fact, the Premier and our government have announced plans to build a war memorial to the veterans of the war in Afghanistan.

Would the minister please elaborate on our government's campaign for Ontarians this past Remembrance Day?

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

Our campaign focused on the heroism of the Canadian Armed Forces who have served in many capacities throughout our country's history. This Remembrance Week served as a stark reminder that to serve your country in a time of war is to take great risks on your country's behalf. We asked Ontarians this year to find their moment of silence, with a renewed focus on thanking our Afghan veterans for their sacrifices.

We are proud to support our Canadian veterans, and that's why we announced a new memorial honouring Canadians who served in Afghanistan. As of last week, Mr. Speaker, we committed to ensuring that Ontario Legions are exempt from paying property taxes. We also announced our plans to create a dedicated support line for military family support.

HAMILTON WEST–ANCASTER– DUNDAS NOMINATION

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, there are serious questions surrounding the Premier's role in preserving integrity and respect for Ontario's electoral process. Last week we learned that police have made two arrests in their investigation into potential PC voter fraud in the riding of Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas. As we know, the Premier has said that cleaning up the mess in his own party is a top priority. Can the Premier tell us who these individuals are and what their connection to the PC Party of Ontario is?

1100

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: The member knows exactly that it had nothing to do with us; nothing to do with me. I was elected to be the PC leader to clean up Patrick Brown's mess—and it was a mess—and that's exactly what we're doing.

I cannot get involved, as you know, Mr. Speaker, in any police investigation. I have all the confidence in the world in the chief of Hamilton, and I'm sure this is all going to come forward.

Again, I was elected to clean up the mess. That's what our team is doing. That's what our team has done.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I would remind the member that the question has to deal with government policy. The supplementary has to deal

with government policy. He should phrase his question as such. If it's not, we'll have to move on.

Go ahead.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: As the PC Party heads into their convention this weekend, there are serious questions about the operation of the Premier's party. There is an ongoing police investigation into a data breach at the 407 which forced the resignation—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We're going to have to move on. Next question.

MILITARY FAMILIES

Ms. Donna Skelly: My question is for the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. Yesterday, Canadians across this country and throughout this province gathered at cenotaphs, city halls and memorials to honour those who gave their lives so that we could live in a safe, free and democratic country. Canadians continue to serve in our Armed Forces around the world and here at home, ensuring we live safely.

Service in the military comes with significant challenges for both service members and their families. We know that military families move, on average, three times more often than other Canadian families.

As we reflect on the sacrifices of Canadian soldiers from the beaches of Dieppe to the hills of Kandahar, Minister, can you update this Legislature on the action our government is taking to make life easier for service members and their families here at home?

Hon. Bill Walker: I want to thank my honourable colleague for her excellent question.

I'm sure all members of this House, while attending memorial events across our great province yesterday, reflected on the sacrifices that our servicemen and service-women face not only in conflict zones around the world but on a day-to-day basis here at home. I myself have heard first-hand about these challenges from military families across our province.

That's why I'm very proud to inform the Legislature that our government for the people is launching consultations with military families, stakeholders and other jurisdictions to hear from them what we can do to support military families when moving to Ontario. Our goal is to establish a one-stop-shop hotline for military families who make Ontario home. When they move here, they can call this hotline and get information they need about schooling, child care, automobile licensing, health care and much, much more.

By speaking with and, more importantly, listening to military families, we can learn exactly what challenges they face and how best we can help make their lives that much easier. Members and their families give so much and are willing to give it all for us and our safety. This is just one way we can give something back.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Donna Skelly: Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to hear that our government is listening directly to servicemen and servicewomen and their families. We can only properly

address their challenges by listening directly to the people most affected by them.

It is said that when a soldier serves, his or her entire family serves. Military families face significant challenges—particularly when forced to relocate from community to community and from province to province—in child care, schooling, spousal employment, and even having to change health cards and driver's licences.

Military families can often feel separated from their new homes and overwhelmed with this long list of day-to-day challenges. Minister, can you tell me what our government is doing to help mitigate these challenges for military families who call Ontario home?

Hon. Bill Walker: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I want to assure the honourable member that helping to make life easier for members of our Armed Forces is a top priority for this government. Service members are willing to give it all to keep us safe and free. We will do whatever we can to make sure their families are taken care of here at home.

Key to this is the establishment of the one-stop-shop hotline I mentioned earlier. By first conducting consultations, we'll be able to create a hotline that addresses the challenges military families face when they move here to Ontario.

Right now, military families can go to ontario.ca/militaryfamilies to participate in consultations and also to learn more about the existing programs we have in place to make life a little bit easier for them when they arrive in Ontario from abroad or another province. We will report back in early 2019 on the results of these consultations.

Mr. Speaker, whether it's our one-stop-shop hotline, cost-free fishing or the removal of property taxes from Legion halls, these are small but important steps we are making as the government of Doug Ford to give back to those who serve our country every day.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. Autistic children should not have to suffer when changing from the direct service option to the direct funding option, but they are.

Thulasika, the mother of six-year-old Kavin Somalingham, who lives with autism, unfortunately knows this all too well. Extremely unhappy with the lack of service her son was receiving from Kinark, Thulasika requested a move to DFO from DSO in July. She was told she would be placed on a transfer wait-list. In July, he was 28th on the list; today, he is still 28th on the list.

When will this government step in to ensure Kavin's story does not become the norm?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I'd like to congratulate the member opposite for being the first in nine questions on the other side of the House to talk about something substantive the people of Ontario actually want to know about rather than getting into the mud and into the ditches.

I want to say to Thulasika that we have inherited a situation in the province of Ontario with respect to autism services that really doesn't put compassion and children at

the forefront. We are guided by compassion in the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus for families struggling to provide their kids with proven autism diagnostic and behavioural services.

This government made a campaign commitment to invest \$100 million in autism services over the course of our mandate, and we plan to keep that promise. Premier Ford is focused on providing better outcomes and better lives for the people we serve by working in consultation with service providers.

I'll have more to say in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Miss Monique Taylor: As you heard from the minister, the Ford government ran on a platform that promised they would add \$100 million in funding in 2018 and 2019 to the Ontario Autism Program. However—

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government side, come to order. We have to stop the clock when there's a standing ovation, but the standing ovation should not be used to interrupt an opposition member's question.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. I'm going to give the member for Hamilton Mountain extra time.

Start the clock. The member for Hamilton Mountain.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you, Speaker. Instead of using pompoms, maybe they should make sure kids in this province have the services they need.

Speaker, families are so disappointed in the direct service option that many of them are transferring to the direct funding option. Currently, there are approximately 50 children on Kinark's transfer wait-list who are waiting for direct funding, and this is completely unacceptable.

When the OAP came into place, there was no transfer waiting list, and this government has allowed that to happen.

Children living with autism should receive quality, timely services. Will this government honour its commitment and finally release the much-needed autism funding?

1110

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Well, Speaker, we have. And I can tell you, we're not the party that 97% of the time stood there and defended a former Liberal government who took parents of autism to court. Members of this party, including our Minister of Health and myself, have been on the field and on the ground for over 12 years supporting those families with autism. She started the Abilities Centre; I started the South Nepean Autism Centre. Why? Because the party that they're aligned with cut autism funding. The party that they're aligned with didn't support the parents of autistic children.

But we've taken a different approach. That's why my parliamentary assistant, Amy Fee, is leading consultations on autism. That's why my next-door neighbour, Jeremy Roberts, is leading a consultation within our party on autism. And that's why Robin Martin is working with parents in the Ministry of Health to support parents with autism. I can tell the member opposite: We've made a promise, and we intend to keep it.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: There are many issues in Ontario today that require immediate attention. I have many questions for different ministries, because question period is supposed to be a forum for accountability, not just cheerleading for government. The co-op movement is waiting for answers from the Minister of Finance. Tenants and condo owners have been waiting for a year for the new Minister of Government and Consumer Services about the way elevators will be kept in a good state of repair.

Last week, a family physician in my riding came to express his concerns as to the position of the government in its negotiations with the OMA. The government position is to cut the funding for preventive care for physicians. This funding currently ensures that family physicians do preventive care such as childhood immunization, Pap screening for cervical cancer, mammograms for breast cancer and flu vaccinations. Does the Premier think that it will be good for Ontario to diminish preventive care through vaccinations and cancer screening?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Health, I guess. I don't know.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Well, I can't answer all aspects of your question, but I can answer your questions with respect to health.

With respect to the OMA, as the member will know, the matter has gone to arbitration and that will be decided by the arbitrator, but we hope that that decision will be made soon because we look forward to working with our partners in health. Doctors are a large part of that, to make sure that we transform our system into one that's acceptable for the 21st century and that will be sustainable from now into the future for our children and grandchildren.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: The official position of the government in this arbitration is to cut preventive care, and that's the concern.

Cancer Care Ontario has just released a report stressing that we are making headway and there are measurable results when you invest in prevention. Early detection increases the survival rates of cancer. However, let me quote from the report, page 19, chapter 4: "Despite the successes of screening programs in decreasing cervical cancer" close to 12% of cases "were still not diagnosed until stage IV."

In good conscience, we would want to continue to invest in the early screening of cervical cancer. The government knows how important it is to have flu shots; it has been advertising it. Flu shots are crucial to decreasing emergency care.

Will the Premier commit today to protect preventive medicine from cuts and ensure that primary care practitioners have all the tools that they need to do prevention?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Well, I can't speak to the exact issues that we discuss with the OMA; that is a matter before arbitration now. But I can assure you that what we are looking at is augmenting, building our health care system, not taking anything away from it. Of course, an essential component of that is making sure that people are well,

because too often our system is reactive. It waits until people get into a crisis. That's how people end up in hospitals with mental health, cancer and other crises.

What we want to do is become more proactive, to make sure that people take responsibility for their own care, that they have the early screenings, that they go for regular visits to their physicians when they need to. That's what we're trying to do as we transform our health care system into one that is modern, one that is progressive, one that is going to make sure that people are well. We want to become the healthiest province in Canada. There are a lot of steps we can take, and we will be taking those steps.

HOCKEY

Mr. Mike Harris: My question is for the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

The Ontario Hockey League has brought a critical issue to our attention over the past week. In fact, we learned that the future of junior and amateur hockey leagues were at stake.

We know that hockey is an integral part of our culture as Ontarians. We know that the OHL and junior hockey leagues provide crucial training for future NHL players, and we take any threats of its future very seriously.

Would the minister be able to update this House on the important issue brought to our attention by the Ontario Hockey League?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to the member from Kitchener–Conestoga for that question.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, I was recently appointed to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. I hope that in my role I'll be able to continue the important work that was started by my colleague Minister Jones, as the previous minister here.

As you know, the Ontario Hockey League plays an essential role in the fabric of this province. These teams are the cornerstone of towns and the fabric of our province. I know many of my PC colleagues whose constituencies house OHL teams and proudly wear their jerseys around their communities. This is where many future NHL players refine their game, and where even younger players are inspired by their local heroes.

We're proud to support the Ontario Hockey League, and we'll continue working together to ensure that we have a vibrant hockey culture in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Mike Harris: Through you, Mr. Speaker, to the minister: Thank you for that response.

I am happy to hear that our government is committed to supporting hockey, as it is an integral and iconic part of Ontario's cultural fabric. We also know that local Ontario Hockey League teams, like my Kitchener Rangers, are important economic and social drivers in their communities.

Whether it is Junior A, B, C or Tier II, junior hockey is essential to the development and promotion of one of Canada's most important sports.

Can the minister elaborate on our government's support for the Ontario Hockey League's critical concerns?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Again, I thank my colleague for that question.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that this government is committed to creating the environment for businesses to succeed.

Young hockey players across our provinces grow up dreaming of winning the J. Ross Robertson Cup or the Memorial Cup.

To be clear, I'd like to reiterate our government's support for the Ontario Hockey League. We will be doing everything in our power to ensure the success of the OHL and junior hockey across the province. We are actively looking at providing clarity to the OHL and will have more to say shortly. I want to reassure the OHL and all Ontarians that we are working hard to come to a solution.

I look forward, as the new Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, to reaching out in the near future with a solution that I am sure all Ontarians will support.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Can the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care tell the House what a virtual long-term-care bed is?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much for the question.

As you know, it was one of our primary considerations in the last election to raise more long-term-care beds, because we have over 30,000 people in Ontario who can't be moved elsewhere. They need a long-term-care bed to go to.

We have committed to finding 15,000 beds in five years. They don't all have to be bricks-and-mortar beds. There are other ideas that many groups have come forward with, including step-down. Some people may be able to move into a retirement home, for example, with home care around them and then be able to go back to their own homes. That is the ultimate for most people. They would rather go home if they're able to, with home care supports.

So we're looking at all possible alternatives, with the essential provision that it has to be appropriate for that person, it has to be safe and it has to be comfortable for them.

1120

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: There are more than 32,000 people on the wait-list for long-term care. Those with high needs and their families can wait years for the care they need today. And the list keeps getting longer. Yet this government has promised just 6,000 beds, and they say it will take five years to do that.

Now we're hearing that the minister plans to "get creative" when it comes to planning for more long-term-care beds. Speaker, people are worried that "getting creative" means cutting. It means front-line staff being asked to do even more with even less.

Will any of the minister's 6,000 long-term-care beds be virtual beds?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Mr. Speaker, through you: I would like to correct the facts. In fact, what we have promised the people of Ontario that we will provide is 15,000

beds within five years. We have already announced over 6,000 beds. It will not take five years for those 6,000 beds to come online. But we have promised 15,000, and we will deliver 15,000.

The fact is, because there are over 30,000 people waiting for long-term-care beds, we have to be innovative. We have to think outside the box. We have to make sure that we can find those beds for those people, because they deserve it. The people of Ontario expect us to provide that, and we will.

SKILLS TRAINING

Ms. Jill Dunlop: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. I know from speaking with employers that we need to do more to fill the skills gap and ensure that our young people and job seekers are given the skills they need to succeed. That is why I am proud that our government has already started to outline its plan to address the skills gap. I have heard fantastic feedback from employers in my riding and across Ontario about the government's legislation, which, if passed, will standardize apprentice-to-journeyperson ratios and reduce red tape on businesses by winding down the Ontario College of Trades.

Speaker, we know that there is a skills gap which costs Ontario's economy \$24 billion. At the same time, youth unemployment is consistently double that of the general population. Can the minister tell us more about the steps our government is taking to help increase apprenticeships in Ontario?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member from Simcoe North for her advocacy for her constituents and job seekers across Ontario. The member is absolutely right that our government is taking action to address the skills gap by reducing red tape and increasing access to apprenticeships for young people across the province.

We have heard from employers across Ontario that the previous Liberal government's approach was to place an undue amount of red tape on businesses, hampering businesses' ability to create high-quality jobs and stalling the province's economic growth. We want to make it easier for individuals to join the trades. The complex, convoluted and constraining system currently in place does the opposite.

The Making Ontario Open for Business Act, if passed, will be a step forward in delivering on our promise to help fill the skills gap by increasing access to apprenticeships. Our government—

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

Ms. Jill Dunlop: I am proud that, for the first time in 15 years, Ontario has a government which understands that skilled trades are high-quality and desirable jobs. It's taking action to make Ontario open for business and helping our young people prepare for successful careers in skilled trades.

It is great news that our government is taking immediate action to reduce red tape on our job creators. I also know that we need to do more to ensure that the training

of young people to create a career in the skilled trades is available and accessible, ensuring that there are people to fill the jobs Ontario's businesses will create.

I understand that our government made a recent announcement that will help young people develop trade-specific knowledge and work experience to support them being hired as apprentices. Can the minister outline the steps our government is taking to create better jobs in Ontario?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Our government promised to create good jobs for the people of Ontario, and my focus as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities is ensuring that the people of Ontario get the skills they need for those jobs.

Our government recently announced an investment of \$13.2 million to provide pre-apprenticeship training to approximately 1,200 people. Training is delivered through organizations like colleges or community agencies across Ontario, and applications for funding to deliver programs are now open.

Programs often combine level 1 apprenticeship training with a work placement and provide materials like tools and textbooks. The program is specifically tailored for young people who have left high school or have graduated high school but are not attending college. I encourage organizations to apply to provide the programming so that young people in their community have an opportunity to access training.

Speaker, our government promised to make Ontario open for business and create good jobs for the people of Ontario. Promise made, promise kept.

Interjections.

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

The member for Windsor West.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities. Windsor residents and businesses were shocked to learn that the Ford government is pulling the plug on the plan to establish a new law school in the Paul Martin building downtown. The provincial Liberals dragged their feet for five years before finally committing the funding needed, and the community thought the project would now become a reality.

This was a unique opportunity for federal, municipal and provincial governments to work together with U of Windsor and community partners to create a downtown experience for students while also boosting the local economy. Now everyone is at the table except for the province. Is the Conservative government comfortable with being the reason this project will fail?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

Speaker, we promised the people of Ontario to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances. The project the member identified was announced by the previous Liberal government before obtaining the necessary ministry approvals and the full authority of cabinet. This is

ultimately indicative of why the Liberals' mismanagement of Ontario's finances hurts communities. In an election year, they made empty promises to Ontarians for programs and projects they could not afford and they hid the costs from the public.

The true deficit in the Liberals' 2018 budget was \$15 billion. We owe it to our children, our grandchildren and their children to fix this mess.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Back to the minister: There is a lot of community support for moving the law school to the Paul Martin building downtown. By relocating the school and its 800 students, faculty and staff to the Paul Martin building, local businesses and community organizations were looking forward to the economic growth that the move would generate. We also know that getting more students and young professionals into the downtown core will contribute to the continued revitalization and prosperity of our community.

In the provincial election, the PCs even campaigned on this issue locally. Promise made, promise broken. Whose accountability is in question now? Why is the Ford government breaking this promise and choosing to see the Paul Martin building collect dust rather than contributing to a project that will revitalize our downtown core?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Speaker, I want to remind the member opposite about the state of Ontario's finances and the importance of returning Ontario to sound financial footing. We know, thanks to the independent commission of inquiry, that our government needs to take action. The inquiry found that the Liberals made empty promises to Ontarians for programs and projects that they knew they could not afford, creating a \$15-billion deficit.

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To make matters worse, we know from the Select Committee on Financial Transparency that senior public servants warned the government that their plan "could put pressure on the province's credit rating and overall borrowing capacity."

Speaker, Ontarians know they can't trust the Liberals to manage the province's finances, and they cannot count on the NDP to make the tough decisions to get Ontario back on sound financial footing.

Speaker, we promised the people of Ontario to restore accountability and trust in Ontario's finances, and that's exactly—

Interjections.

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

Next question.

NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Ross Romano: My question is for the Minister of Finance. Since the day we were elected, our government has a strong mandate to get this province back on the right track. This means responsible policy-making, and certainly responsible policy decisions for northern Ontario's transportation is vital. Be it for people commuting to work, to school or trying to get around, people deserve to have

reliable transportation that allows them the freedom to pursue new opportunities—and to ensure businesses can get products to market. This is why our government is committed to enhancing transportation services to help unlock the potential that we have in the north, and to ensure that northern Ontario is open for business.

Can the minister please tell the members of this House why northern transportation is such a key issue for our government?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you to my fellow northern member from Sault Ste. Marie.

Northern communities rely on dependable transportation to support jobs and grow the economy. Without reliable transportation, northern communities cannot move people and goods effectively and efficiently.

While the north was neglected by the previous government, we can be sure that the north now has an ally in the government of Ontario and in Premier Ford. We are committed to giving the north the support that has been missing for far too long. We have an opportunity—and Speaker, we have a responsibility—to open up the vast region of northern Ontario and support our communities as they create jobs and build a strong economy.

Supporting transportation services in northern Ontario is just one of the many ways we are making Ontario open for business.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary, the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norman Miller: Thank you to the minister for your leadership on this important file. It makes me proud that northern Ontario can count on our government to make the right choices that will bring economic prosperity to the region. People and businesses in the north need to move goods around the province, and I'm proud that our government is taking concrete action on this.

I would also like to thank the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, who has taken a strong leadership role in protecting our northern residents.

Last week, the government made a crucial announcement of support for northern transportation. Can the minister tell the members of this House about the details of this crucial announcement that highlight our commitment to supporting reliable and safe transportation options in the north?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for that question from the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka, and to our all-star parliamentary assistant for northern development and mines and Indigenous affairs for the important work he is doing in Sault Ste. Marie. He understands the importance of delivering product in and out of northern Ontario. Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie, Eacom in the Nairn Centre and Domtar in Espanola: These are principal companies that rely on the Huron Central Railway to move product in and out of our vast region.

We said on June 7 that we would stand up and create jobs, and, as importantly, protect jobs. Mr. Speaker, this is a promise made, promise kept.

We're going to continue to fight for new jobs in northern Ontario because northern Ontario is open for business.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Mr. Joel Harden: My question is to the Attorney General this morning. In asking this question, Speaker, I want to rise to the Premier's challenge earlier today to find our people in Ontario cost savings.

I have an answer for you, Premier and minister. Sitting right over there in the members' gallery are Pro Bono Ontario lawyers, who save the public \$5 million a year.

But what we found out is that on December 14, three law help centres that these courageous folks run will be closed. People back in Ottawa Centre, like Lori Shepherd, a constituent and mother of two who had nowhere to turn—she went to people like this when her husband died without leaving a will. Lori told me, "Once I entered Pro Bono Ontario's office, life began to change. If I had not been introduced to Pro Bono Ontario, I would have gone deeper into debt and had my head well below water."

Does the Attorney General believe that everyone deserves access to justice?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I thank the member opposite for the question.

I also would like to welcome the members of Pro Bono Ontario to the House today.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, and as the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities just said so eloquently, the previous Liberal government left our province and left the people of Ontario with a \$15-billion deficit to pay back and more than \$320 billion of debt to pay back.

Our government was elected with a strong mandate. Seventy-six of us were sent to this House to restore fiscal integrity to the province of Ontario, so we can get back on a path to prosperity.

Our government understands and values the work that Pro Bono Ontario does, and that is—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Supplementary, the member for Toronto Centre.

Ms. Suze Morrison: My question is for the Attorney General.

Speaker, Pro Bono Ontario's law help centres save this province money while providing necessary services to Ontarians—and it's a critical service that's provided in my riding of Toronto Centre as well. By providing advice on navigating the legal system, from helping clients fill out the correct forms—every dollar invested in Pro Bono Ontario saves this province \$10.

Pro Bono Ontario has called upon the Attorney General to provide emergency funding of \$500,000 in order to keep providing this valuable service. With it, the government can restore hope to people like Lori, who are at risk of losing their homes because they can't navigate the system with their creditors. Looking the other way while these centres are forced to close is penny-wise and pound foolish.

Will the Attorney General commit to permanent, stable funding for the law help centres?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member opposite that the last thing I have been doing and members of my ministry have been doing is looking the other way.

The members of Pro Bono Ontario know that I have met with them, and my ministry and members of my staff have met with Pro Bono Ontario numerous times to help them work with justice partners in the private sector, with the Law Society of Ontario, with the Law Foundation of Ontario, with other justice partners to make sure that they can provide the services that they provide in a sustainable way.

In fact, members of my staff are meeting with Pro Bono Ontario, are meeting with justice partners on this topic again this week. We want to work with the board of Pro Bono Ontario to fulfill its mandate to deliver these services to the people of Ontario.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Last week, I was at the Empire Club of Canada to watch our very own President of the Treasury Board giving an impassioned speech about Ontario's finances to a packed room.

1140

My constituents are very concerned about how years of Liberal mismanagement have saddled future generations of Ontarians with an unbearable debt load. This is why our government has been working tirelessly to transform, modernize, and reduce wasteful spending.

In fact, at one point the Leader of the Opposition was against government waste too, going so far as to say in 2014 that she wanted to appoint a savings and accountability minister.

Can the President of the Treasury Board please inform the House about his initiatives to reduce waste for the benefit of taxpayers?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: The Leader of the Opposition can rest assured that we already have a minister of savings and accountability: It's called the President of the Treasury Board.

My speech was called *The Challenge of our Generation: Building a Modern, Sustainable Government*. We are faced today with dire straits. If we let government spending and debt continue to grow unchecked, we will rob our children and future generations of the core services that they need to prosper.

The Minister of Finance this week will outline through his fall economic statement the steps that we are taking to tackle the fiscal challenges before us. We will continue to put the people at the centre of every service, every policy, every promise. That's our promise to the people of Ontario.

Interjections.

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

Supplementary?

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Thank you to the President of the Treasury Board for his reply.

It was refreshing to hear the President of the Treasury Board say that we will measure success not by dollars spent but by the outcome.

The opposition has said that they can't imagine where the government is going to find efficiencies, yet I have an article here from 2014 that quotes the Leader of the Opposition as saying, "I actually believe that there's a lot of waste inside government right now." Another quote: "There is a lot of waste in the system—I know that for sure."

It is clear that we have here a real memory deficit.

Can the President of the Treasury Board tell the House about how government is counting the pennies?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for King–Vaughan, come to order.

Minister?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: These questions are pretty tough, but I'll try my best. I'd like to thank the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills for that question.

In fact, the Leader of the Opposition said, "I'm the sort of New Democrat who also believes we need to count the pennies." Well, I look forward to the opposition's support, as I have directed my ministry to adopt a paperless approach to meetings to reduce waste. This has resulted so far in not only significant dollar savings, but the saving of 17 trees and a reduction of 54 metric tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, which I'm sure the Minister of the Environment would like.

We are not just tweeting; we are doing. After all, the proper management of public finances is not just a fiscal imperative; the management of finances is also a moral imperative. That is why we are doing this for the people.

MINIMUM WAGE

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: My question is for the Minister of Labour. This government's attack on Bill 148 has come as a shock to the working people of London North Centre, who were counting on the \$15 minimum wage increase.

One of my constituents, Roseanne Perry, told me how low wages forced her to work multiple jobs so she could simply pay her rent. These jobs gave her some financial security, but the long hours and multiple jobs meant she had no time to visit family or friends, and it took a toll on her overall mental health.

The London Poverty Research Centre found that half of Londoners are working in non-standard or unstable jobs—half. These Londoners and working families across the province were counting on the \$15 minimum wage to improve their financial stability and quality of life.

This government needs to show real compassion and talk to people about a living wage, not deal in bumper-sticker slogans.

Instead of dealing with the working people of this province, this government locks its office doors and calls the police on its own constituents. We call shame. When is this government going to listen to working people in Ontario?

Hon. Laurie Scott: Well, look: We did listen to the people of Ontario, and what they said is that they want

more jobs in the province of Ontario, better-paying jobs in the province of Ontario.

What we saw under the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, was job losses. The first month out after Bill 148 was brought up, there were over 50,000 job losses—80,000 job losses in August alone because of that legislation. They're preventing businesses from creating those jobs.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to make better-paying jobs in the province of Ontario so that everybody's constituents can have a good job.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time we have for question period this morning.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services has a point of order.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding the collection of shoebox donation gifts of love for women impacted by homelessness and fleeing violence for the Shoebox Project in members' offices.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion. Agreed?

Agreed.

I recognize the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I move that members be allowed to collect donations for the Shoebox Project, to help women impacted by homelessness and fleeing violence, in their offices and constituency offices for the remainder of the fall legislative sitting.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. The member for Hamilton Mountain. The Minister of Natural Resources, come to order.

Ms. MacLeod has moved that members be allowed to collect donations for the Shoebox Project, to help women impacted by homelessness and fleeing violence, in their offices and constituency offices for the remainder of the fall legislative sitting.

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

Motion agreed to.

NOTICES OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for London–Fanshawe has given notice of her dissatisfaction with the answer to her question given by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care concerning long-term-care virtual beds. This matter will be debated tomorrow at 6 p.m.

Pursuant to standing order 38(a), the member for Ottawa Centre has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the

answer to his question given by the Attorney General concerning Pro Bono Ontario funding. This matter will be debated Wednesday at 6 p.m.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on the amendment to government notice of motion number 15 relating to allocation of time on Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts.

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

The division bells rang from 1149 to 1154.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would ask the members to please take their seats.

Interjections.

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

On November 1, 2018, Ms. Armstrong moved an amendment to government notice of motion number 15 relating to allocation of time on Bill 47. All those in favour of Ms. Armstrong's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Gretzky, Lisa	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Sattler, Peggy
Arthur, Ian	Hassan, Faisal	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Hatfield, Percy	Shaw, Sandy
Berns-McGown, Rima	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bisson, Gilles	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Burch, Jeff	Lalonde, Marie-France	Tabuns, Peter
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gates, Wayne	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Yarde, Kevin
Gélinas, France	Morrison, Suze	
Glover, Chris	Natyshak, Taras	

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

Nays

Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Piccini, David
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Rickford, Greg
Barrett, Toby	Karahalios, Belinda	Roberts, Jeremy
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Kramp, Daryl	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	MacLeod, Lisa	Simard, Amanda
Coe, Lorne	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Crawford, Stephen	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Todd
Downey, Doug	McKenna, Jane	Surma, Kinga
Dunlop, Jill	McNaughton, Monte	Tangri, Nina
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Fedeli, Victor	Nicholls, Rick	Thompson, Lisa M.

Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tibollo, Michael A.
Ford, Doug	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Fullerton, Merrilee	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy	Yurek, Jeff
Harris, Mike	Phillips, Rod	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 37; the nays are 68.

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

Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 15 relating to allocation of time on Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts.

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

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1158 to 1159.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Smith, Bay of Quinte, has moved government notice of motion number 15 relating to allocation of time on Bill 47. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Gretzky, Lisa	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Sattler, Peggy
Arthur, Ian	Hassan, Faisal	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Hatfield, Percy	Shaw, Sandy
Berns-McGown, Rima	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bisson, Gilles	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit

Burch, Jeff	Lalonde, Marie-France	Tabuns, Peter
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gates, Wayne	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Yarde, Kevin
Gélinas, France	Morrison, Suze	
Glover, Chris	Natyshak, Taras	

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms. Jane McKenna: This weekend was a very special and moving one, as I had the honour of participating in Remembrance Day services, along with many others here, in Burlington at the cenotaph and the Legion, as well as several seniors' homes.

One of the highlights, as always, is armed services veteran and poppy seller Bill Reid. Long before you see him, you hear his beautiful baritone voice singing vintage World War I songs in the tunnel at the Appleby GO station. Everyone is all smiles as normally rushed commuters stop to stuff bills in his poppy box.

Mr. Reid, who is 85 years old—which I can't believe—has been a fixture at the station ever since it was built in 1988, making his appearances a Remembrance Week tradition. Decked out in his Legion blues, he is a hit with young and old alike.

I was proud to participate in the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 60 dinner. It was the culmination of months of work by veterans to honour veterans. I want to recognize and extend my heartfelt thanks to the Legion for their hard work now and during their deployment.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I, the Burl-Oak Naval Veterans rang the original ship bells of the HMCS Burlington 100 times at sunset at the Naval Ships Memorial in Spencer Smith Park. It was a moving dedication to pay our respects to the brave sailors and merchant marines who fought in the Battle of the Atlantic and in so many other locations around the world over two world wars.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 70; the nays are 37.

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

Motion agreed to.

HAMILTON TIGER-CATS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek on a point of order.

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, I'd just like to congratulate the Hamilton Tiger-Cats for their defeat of the BC Lions. Next week, we're coming for those Ottawa Redblacks.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: No, you're not.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I don't think we're going to have a debate on that—at least not right now.

This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1203 to 1300.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Since October 24, almost 300 owner-operators from Unifor Local 4003 have been holding an information picket against their employer, CN Rail, in my riding of Brampton East.

Through rain and cold weather, they have been out in large numbers creating awareness about what they have described as terrible work conditions. Workers don't have access to proper washrooms. They don't even have separate washrooms for men and women. Instead, they have to use portable bathrooms in terrible and unhygienic conditions.

Changes to the zoning made by the company have had a direct impact on the drivers' economic livelihood. Conditions around the yard are described as terrible by these workers. They're hazardous, and they are exposing them to unhealthy and dusty conditions. What's even worse is that workers are afraid to raise these concerns about these conditions out of fear of reprisal and what has been described as a toxic and negative work environment created by management.

Mr. Speaker, no one should ever feel unsafe at work. These women and men deserve better. They need immediate action to address these issues. They need access to clean and decent washrooms and healthy conditions. They need to be able to work in an environment that is safe and open. I call on CN Rail to take immediate steps to resolve these issues and give these workers what they need and deserve.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Jessica Bell: I recently received a letter from Dr. Matthew Muller, an infectious disease expert, scientist and physician at St. Mike's hospital. He writes:

"Within health care, it is essential that we protect both our staff, and our vulnerable patients, from contagious viruses such as the flu, which can spread easily within health care environments.

"I have seen patients suffer and outbreaks occur because the health care worker continued to work and provide care to patients despite being sick....

"Paid sick days are an important way to help workers stay home when ill with a contagious infection that could affect their co-workers and colleagues, and are essential for the protection of our vulnerable patients."

This is Dr. Matthew Muller, an expert on infectious disease.

Instead of listening to the experts, this Ford government is taking away paid sick days that keep vulnerable people safe. Instead of creating stable jobs, this Ford government is making things worse by allowing bosses to pay part-time and temporary workers a lower hourly wage than full-time workers. And instead of helping the 1.6 million Ontarians who earn minimum wage, this government is making their life harder by not moving forward with a \$15 minimum wage, essentially taking \$2,000 a year out of their pockets.

We need an economy that works for people, not just big business, and that means paid sick days, stable jobs and a living wage.

GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK

Mr. Michael Parsa: I rise today to recognize Global Entrepreneurship Week. This is a chance for us to celebrate and thank entrepreneurs across the province. Global Entrepreneurship Week is the world's largest celebration of entrepreneurship. Every November, 160 countries across the world participate in an effort to engage and inspire entrepreneurial activity.

I would like to thank Futurpreneur Canada, the official host of Global Entrepreneurship Week, and encourage members of this House and those listening at home to visit their website and participate in one of many events happening in communities across our province.

Mr. Speaker, entrepreneurs are an integral part of our community. They invest their time and money by producing goods and services on which people in Ontario rely. Their innovations are contributing to the advancements in every sector across our province. They are also using their innovations for social good, to address environmental challenges and to help develop communities across Ontario.

Entrepreneurs are drivers of economic development. Through their dedication and hard work, they create new business, jobs and the conditions necessary for Ontario to prosper. Entrepreneurs are a vital part of our economy, and that is why our government for the people is working tirelessly to create an environment where entrepreneurs can thrive. I would like to thank entrepreneurs for their hard work and let them know that we are here to support them and that Ontario is open for business.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: Yesterday was a profoundly moving Remembrance Day. I spent it in Beaches–East York, participating in a number of ceremonies, beginning with a parade down Queen Street to the Kew Beach cenotaph. It was an extraordinary feeling to be standing with hundreds and hundreds of my neighbours to listen to the Last Post and to stand silently for two minutes. Not a dog barked, and there were many. Not a child whispered. You could have heard that proverbial pin drop. Baron Byng Legion, the Naval Club, Legion Branch 345: Every ceremony was jammed. Veterans shared stories, food and drink. There were prayers; there were tears.

At Branch 345, I met a beautiful group of cadets, first- and second-generation girls and boys from all over the world, the future of Canada in their diversity. A few of the girls were there in their cadet uniforms and smart white hijab. And then three of the Toronto Raptors showed up to present the branch with a Raptors shirt with “345” on it. I wish you could have seen the looks of joy on the faces of the cadets as they lined up for photos and autographs. We all took turns ringing the Legion bells a hundred times for the hundred years since armistice.

It's an important learning moment for all of us, what happens when we create meaningfully inclusive spaces. The optimism that we can create a peaceful world in which all of us live together in harmony was palpable in that moment and in that place, and it was balm at the end of an emotional day.

VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: Le mois de novembre est le Mois de la prévention de la violence faite aux femmes. Ottawa had a gender-based-violence strategy that was focused on supporting survivors and ending the cycle of violence. With the #MeToo movement, we know that rape crisis centres across the province are overstretched. In the first 11 weeks of 2018, there were 15 deaths of women due to intimate partner violence. There were over 50,000 calls last year to rape crisis centres.

However, we are still waiting to hear the government's decision as to the funding for rape crisis centres. The Attorney General has said that she is reviewing the services to make sure they are done in an effective and efficient way, but the centres had just been evaluated last year. Front-line workers just cannot keep up with the work. They need extra funding. They need, at least, certainty about where their funding will come from.

1310

Ce mois-ci, il est absolument important que le gouvernement accepte ses responsabilités de gouverner, cesse de blâmer et commence à reconnaître qu'il faut agir pour prévenir et répondre à la violence contre les femmes. C'est urgent. C'est une crise qui nous affecte tous. J'espère que le gouvernement le fera d'ici peu.

RING OF PEACE

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Over the constituency week I had the opportunity to participate in a great show of solidarity that brought together Canadians of all faiths. Across Ontario and, indeed, across North America, people of all faiths participated in the rings of peace around synagogues on the first Shabbat following the shooting in Pittsburgh. I cannot think of a better way that we could have started Remembrance Week in Ontario than to celebrate the religious freedom that their sacrifice made possible.

On Saturday, November 3, I stood shoulder to shoulder with fellow Muslims and dozens of others outside a Jewish community centre in Mississauga. It was important for us to stand up to violence and intolerance and to protect the freedom to worship, speak and pray. An attack on anyone's right to worship as they see fit is an attack on everyone's right to worship.

The ring of peace was our way of standing up to violence, intolerance and hate. It was our way of demonstrating what Dr. King said: “Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

NOW MAGAZINE
READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: Now Magazine recently released their 2018 Readers' Choice awards. I would like to take the time today to recognize some of the amazing organizations and businesses in my riding of Parkdale–High Park, the best in the city.

For foodies out there, we have the best doughnuts at Glory Hole Doughnuts and the best sandwiches at La Cubana.

It will come as no surprise that High Park was chosen as the city's best park.

The incredible Toronto Overdose Prevention Society was highlighted as one of the city's best social justice groups for their tireless activism during the opioid crisis.

For your tax needs, stop by Parkdale Accounting on Queen West.

Dundas West Animal Hospital was the most popular place for our furry friends and their parents.

Car trouble? Be sure to drop by Josie Candito's Master Mechanic High Park, where the quick and friendly team will get that trouble sorted. Also, their daily message board will leave you feeling inspired.

No matter the event, Sweetpea's on Roncesvalles has plants to sort out all your floral needs.

Finally, as it gets colder, here are some indoor entertainment ideas for all of you: For the best blues in the city, check out Hugh's Room Live, and the best independent films at the Revue Cinema.

I want to congratulate all of the winners and the many runners-up as well, and thank them for making our riding, Parkdale–High Park, the exciting, dynamic and wonderful place it is.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Mr. Paul Calandra: It is with mixed emotions that I rise today to bring to the attention of the House a sad story from my riding. Many in this place may recall that earlier this year, 13 dead horses were discovered on a farm in my hometown of Stouffville. Another 14 horses and a pony were found living in horrendous conditions, sick, neglected and dying. This horrific discovery was an example of animal cruelty and neglect at its very worst.

Thankfully, the property owner discovered the abuse and neglect in time to rescue the remaining horses. Three people who were leasing the property have been charged with offences by the OSPCA and are currently awaiting trial.

Today, I am able to report to the House that there has been something of a positive development in this case. One of the rescued animals, a 22-year-old pony named Oreo, has recovered to a point where she will soon be leaving her home at Forever Thyme Sanctuary in Stouffville to do further rehabilitation at an equestrian centre in Florida. Forever Thyme Sanctuary has played a crucial role in helping to rescue the surviving horses, and I thank them.

This announcement is bittersweet. When Oreo was found, she was so neglected that her untrimmed hooves curled up and around, making it painful to stand. Oreo will continue to suffer permanent health problems because of her horrific, cruel treatment, but following her rehabilitation in Florida, she will join a Canadian family in Wellington.

While I'm happy to see a positive outcome for this heartbreaking case, I look forward to seeing the parties responsible for this prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. I have full confidence that our Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, our Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and local authorities will continue to work together to ensure the highest animal safety and welfare standards are enforced.

JOANNE ASHLEY

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased today to speak about my fellow Whitby Rotarian Joanne Ashley.

Joanne is the second person to receive the prestigious Dr. Bob Scott Disease Prevention Award, for her years of work educating and helping those suffering with and impacted by HIV/AIDS. The first recipient was Bill Gates, for his work in fighting polio worldwide. The award recognizes people who have made significant contributions to disease prevention and to the health of all peoples worldwide.

When her brother died of AIDS in 1991, Joanne did what many people did then: She refused to tell anyone, afraid of the stigma that would befall her family. Five years later, she told the story to her Rotary Club in Whitby, and her mission to educate began in earnest. In the years since, it has not abated; it has grown.

Joanne's energy remains unbounded as she now turns her focus to advocating for First Nations people with AIDS. Service above self. The world needs more Joanne Ashleys. Congratulations, Joanne.

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

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL POLICY

Mrs. Nina Tangri: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

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

la Loi sur la protection de l'environnement, la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire et diverses autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to the order of the House dated October 24, 2018, the bill is ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SPECIAL HOCKEY DAY ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LA JOURNÉE DU HOCKEY ADAPTÉ

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

Bill 53, An Act to proclaim Special Hockey Day /
Projet de loi 53, Loi proclamant la Journée du hockey
adapté.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member for Peterborough–Kawartha care to explain his bill?

Mr. Dave Smith: Speaker, 2019 marks the 25th anniversary of Special Hockey International. It's an organization that promotes hockey and inclusionary sport for our people with special needs. I had the pleasure, in 2017, of being the chair for that event. It was the most moving thing I have ever been involved in.

This bill would proclaim that March 27, 2019, would be declared Special Hockey Day to coincide with the start of the 25th annual Special Hockey International Tournament being held once again this year in Ontario, here in Toronto. The Grandravine team will be the host team for it.

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The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll remind members that when they introduce bills, it would be helpful if they keep their comments brief and stick to an explanation of the bill as opposed to going into great detail.

ORGANIC PRODUCTS ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 SUR LES PRODUITS BIOLOGIQUES

Mr. McDonnell moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 54, An Act to regulate the labelling and certification of organic products /
Projet de loi 54, Loi visant à réglementer l'étiquetage et la certification des
produits biologiques.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member care to give a brief explanation of his bill?

Mr. Jim McDonnell: This bill enacts the Organic Products Act, 2018. The act prohibits the marketing and labelling of products as "organic" unless they have been certified as organic in accordance with the act. It also requires that the minister assigned the administration of the act create a register of all products that are certified as organic and that the minister periodically update the register.

PETITIONS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is entitled "Reverse" Premier "Ford's Cuts to Low-Income Families."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I have the pleasure of reading a petition from the riding of Oakville.

"Whereas over 40,000 Canadian Armed Forces members served in the war in Afghanistan including the 159 Canadians who made the ultimate sacrifice; and

"Whereas the Premier made a commitment to the people of Ontario to build a memorial to honour the bravery and sacrifice of our armed forces; and

“Whereas, by remembering their service and sacrifice, we recognize the values and freedoms these men and women fought to preserve; and

“Whereas the memorial will show our gratitude to our veterans, their families and to their descendants; and

“Whereas the memorial will be a place of remembrance, a form of tribute, and an important reminder to future generations of the contributions and sacrifices that have helped shape our country;

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

“That the government of Ontario immediately construct the memorial to honour the heroes of the war in Afghanistan.”

I will gladly sign this as well.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I have a petition entitled, “Stop Auto Insurance Gouging.

“Whereas some neighbourhoods across the GTA have been unfairly targeted by discriminatory practices in the insurance industry;

“Whereas people in these neighbourhoods are penalized with crushing auto insurance rates because of their postal code;

“Whereas the failure to improve government oversight of the auto insurance industry has left everyday families feeling the squeeze and yearning for relief;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to ban the practice of postal code discrimination in the GTA when it comes to auto insurance premiums.”

I support this petition, affix my signature to it and give it to page Vincent.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

Mr. Billy Pang: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I have the honour to represent the riding of Markham–Unionville to read the following petition.

“Whereas unnecessary regulations are squeezing businesses in every economic sector and driving jobs and investment out of Ontario;

“Whereas red tape is costing employers time, money and resources that they would rather invest in growing their business, creating good jobs and launching innovative products and services that will improve people’s lives;

“Whereas the real cost of red tape is in the businesses that are forced to close their doors, the job-creating investments that we scare away or in the workers who are forced to leave Ontario in order to find work;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to pass the Making Ontario Open for Business Act to build prosperity, put Ontario back on track as a growth leader in North America and restore our province to its rightful place as the economic engine of Canada.”

I endorse this petition by signing it and pass it to page Shlok.

PHARMACARE

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas prescription medications are a part of health care and people shouldn’t have to empty their wallets or rack up credit card bills to get the medicines they need;

“Whereas over 2.2 million Ontarians don’t have any prescription drug coverage and one in four Ontarians don’t take their medications as prescribed because they cannot afford the cost;

“Whereas taking medications as prescribed can save lives and help people live better; and

“Whereas Canada urgently needs universal and comprehensive national pharmacare;

“We, the undersigned, express our support for a universal provincial pharmacare plan for all Ontarians.”

I will be affixing my signature to this and I support it wholeheartedly.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Mr. Jamie West: These petitions were collected on behalf of Henri Giroux. He is the president of the North Bay labour council. Henri is currently fighting cancer at Sudbury’s Health Sciences North and winning that fight thanks to their amazing staff.

“Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

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

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

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

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

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

“Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it” to \$15 an hour “on January 1, 2019, with annual adjustments” to the consumer price index;

“Make it easier to join unions ... ;

“Maintain workers’ rights ... ;

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

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

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

I will affix my signature and give it to page Aditya.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: My petition is from the ODSP Action Coalition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas we, as a community, have not been consulted at all by our current provincial government regarding revisions to social assistance that will come after ... the government’s ‘100-day review.’ As a result of our exclusion in this decision-making process, scheduled to end Nov. 8th, any changes that are made to our social assistance programs will not include input from the very people who are at their very core, know the most and are the most affected by these programs. Our government can and must do better;

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“Whereas members of our community were consulted on the recommendations to forming a clear path forward to social assistance and income security reform. These recommendations were put forward October 2017 in Income Security: A Roadmap for Change. They spelled our truths, addressed some of the most difficult corners of the system, while still staying very conservative in terms of the proposed rate increases (3 x 5% over the next three years for ODSP; 10%, 7% and 5% for OW). Regardless, we were still going to be well below the poverty line for a while;

“Whereas before the June 2018 elections, the Liberal government passed several recommendations from or inspired by the Roadmap, including 19 improvements to the ODSP and OW that were to start this fall. On July 31, 2018, Minister MacLeod announced that the rate increases would be cut to a one-time, cross-the-board ‘compassionate’ increase of 1.5%, and the 19 improvements were ‘on pause,’ pending the ‘100-day review’ on which our community has not been consulted;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reinstate all 19 improvements to ODSP and OW on which our community was consulted, including, but not limited to:

“—3% increase to basic needs and shelter rates;

“—2% increases to other allowances;

“—changing the definition of ‘spouse’—from three months of cohabitation to three years (as per family law);

“—replacing the board and lodge rate with full basic benefits;

“—doubling of the ODSP/OW earning exemption and reducing OW waiting period;

“—full exemptions of TFSAs, RRSPs, gifts and voluntary payments;

“—fully exempting in ODSP, payments from trusts or other life insurance policies;

“—expansion of remote communities allowance;

“—allowing dependent adults to get OW on their own when living with family due to lack of housing.”

I fully agree with this petition and will be giving it to page Lillian to take to the Clerk.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Jessica Bell: This is a petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

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

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

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

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

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

“Raised the adult general minimum wage to \$14 per hour and further raises it to” \$15 an hour “on January 1, 2019....;

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

I fully support this petition. I’ll be giving this petition to page Vincent.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I’m glad to present these petitions that were collected by Claire Reasbeck, who is from Hanmer in my riding. They read as follows:

“Save the Breast Screening and Assessment Service....

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

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

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

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

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

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

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

POET LAUREATE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I agree 100%, Speaker. I’m going to sign it and give it to Georgia to bring up to the table.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Kevin Yarde: “About 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I fully endorse this petition and I will affix my name to it.

OPPOSITION DAY

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I move the following motion:

Whereas every Ontarian deserves a dignified retirement and access to long-term care when they need it; and

Whereas the communities of Scarborough, Whitby and Oshawa have some of the longest waits for long-term-care spaces in Ontario;

Therefore, the Legislative Assembly calls on the government to commit to eliminating the wait for long-term care and, as a first step, provide the necessary funding in the 2019-20 budget to create 2,000 new not-for-profit long-term-care spaces in Scarborough, Whitby and Oshawa.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 3.

I recognize the leader of the official opposition to lead off the debate.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thank you very much, Speaker. I have to say that I am honoured to have the opportunity to rise and speak to this motion this afternoon.

I had the pleasure this morning of returning to the community of Oshawa—a place that I’ve visited many, many times—with MPP French, the representative for that riding. This morning, we were talking about the critical issue of long-term care, but we have often spoken about different issues facing the good people of the great community of Oshawa. It’s a community where people really do work very hard to support each other, where they go out of their way to pitch in, take care of one another and help lift one another up.

This morning, we were invited into the home of a wonderful couple, Reverend Steve and Annette Mills. They invited us in to talk about something that’s extremely important to them. Steve, Annette and I agree—and I think everyone in this House can agree—on one thing, and that is that our parents and grandparents and loved ones deserve the kind of care that protects their safety, that safeguards their health and that respects their dignity.

1340

We know that when seniors aren’t able to access the specialized care that they need as they age, their health suffers and their quality of life suffers. We know that this doesn’t just hurt the seniors who are unable to access the care; it also takes a toll on the family and loved ones of that senior as well. Today, in speaking to Steve and Annette in their town of Oshawa, it was really clear once again that, not only in Oshawa but in communities across the province, seniors’ care is in crisis in Ontario.

I sat in the Mills living room this morning—I had the privilege of doing so—and heard a little bit about the experience that they are having with the same problem that many, many families in Ontario are having that is making life harder for families in Ontario. Steve’s dad, Walter Mills, is 91 years old. For decades, Steve’s dad, Walter, worked as a machinist and as a minister, rolling up his sleeves to shape the metal that forms the backbone of our

economy, and tend to the hearts that make up his community. For all of his years of faithful service, we owe him the kind of care that he so readily gave to the people in his community.

This morning, Steve and Annette shared that over the past six years it's gotten harder and harder for them to keep Walter safe and healthy. In fact, it's gotten to the point that caring for Walter is extremely difficult. It's a 24-hour-a-day job. Keeping him clean and healthy has been an ongoing struggle. More often than not, their nights are sleepless because Walter's dementia causes him to wander. Steve shared that they have had to install sensors on their doors that sound an alarm when Walter leaves the house, because nobody knows when he might get up and decide that it's 2 o'clock that morning and it's time to go to work, or that it's 3 a.m. and he's got to get up and go to church for his service, or 4 a.m. and he has just got to get out of the house to make his appointment for his haircut.

Three days a week, they're able to take Walter to a specialized day program, where he can get some professional care. It gives them a little bit of respite and time to do other things around the house, but it's absolutely not enough. It's not enough to meet Walter's needs.

We have to do better for people like Walter and for his loved ones. We have to do better for this gentleman and his family—someone who dedicated his life to taking care of the spiritual needs of people in his community and who also worked hard at a trade. When he is 91 years old, this gentleman should be able to have a dignified quality of life, surrounded by professionals who care for his every need.

Three years ago, Steve and Annette put Walter on a wait-list for long-term care at their first choice of home, and now they're still on that wait-list. In fact, they're on the wait-list for not one, not two, but five different homes where Walter will be safer and where he'll get the quality of care that he deserves.

It's interesting. As we were finishing up with our discussion, it was shared with me by Steve and Annette that, in fact, Walter's first choice of home is the home that he had been in umpteen times—hundreds of times—over his years as a minister, comforting families whose loved ones were actually in that long-term-care home. Now he has been on the wait-list to become a resident of that home for over three years. Imagine that. Imagine years of waiting. Imagine being Steve and Annette, trying to do everything they can to meet the needs of their loved one, but spending years now—three years—unable to get a full night's sleep because Walter is wandering around. It's years of going through every single day on high alert, unable to look away for a moment out of fear for your parent's safety. Three years and they're still waiting to get into long-term care.

We absolutely have to do better for Walter Mills and for his family. We have to do better. This is not acceptable. But sadly, this story is not a unique story in our province. More than 32,000 Ontarians are stuck on waiting lists for long-term care that they so desperately need. The Central East LHIN, which is where the Mills live, includes

communities like Oshawa, Whitby, Scarborough and Peterborough. In that LHIN, in particular, the Central East LHIN, folks are facing the longest wait-lists in the province. Oshawa's Hillsdale Estates long-term-care facility, the one that was Walter's first choice and where he spent much of his time as a minister, has 1,437 people on the wait-list, that one facility alone—1,437 for one facility. If we look at other long-term-care facilities in the region, we see more of the same: Fairview Lodge in Whitby has a wait-list of 1,554, and in Scarborough, Mon Sheong long-term care has 2,821 people on its wait-list.

The shortage of beds in long-term care, Speaker, has real consequences for people: real consequences for Walter, real consequences for his son Steve, and real consequences for his daughter-in-law Annette.

For 15 years, the previous Liberal government allowed this issue to get worse and worse. They made all kinds of promises but didn't fulfill nary a single one of them. All kinds of promises about time frames for redevelopment of existing beds that no longer met current standards: They didn't reach their targets. Promises around the building of new long-term-care beds: They didn't reach those commitments either.

Finally, in May, just 935 new long-term-care beds were announced by the outgoing government for this region. The Liberals literally ignored the need in communities like Oshawa and Whitby. Of the 935 new beds for that LHIN, Oshawa—which has the one facility with 1,437 on its wait-list and another facility of 1,554 on its wait-list; a region with the longest, biggest and deepest problem when it comes to long-term-care bed shortages—guess how many beds Oshawa was provided with by the last government? Zero. Of the 935 beds for that LHIN and for that region, zero were provided to the most in-need community.

People hoped that things would get better with a new government, that their communities would get the investments in long-term care that they needed. But after five months, it's clear that the Premier and his government haven't gotten the message either. In fact, they're planning just 6,000 beds over five years for the whole province. There are 32,000 people today on the wait-list for long-term care, and over five years the promise of this government is merely 6,000 beds—nowhere near what's necessary or what's needed. Basically, what the Premier's government is doing is following through with Kathleen Wynne's plan, because that's what the Liberals were planning: They were planning 6,000 beds over five years. And if we saw how well they did, with this government in place, our expectations are very low.

What we keep hearing from the government is that their plan isn't to invest in health care. Their plan is to cut, cut, cut, cut, cut because all they care about is the deficit. They don't care about the health deficit and the anxiety that that is creating for family members.

1350

You can't cut \$6 billion and still build long-term care. You can't do it. You can't give big tax cuts to your friends, to the richest people and the most profitable corporations,

and still have the revenues available to build long-term-care beds in Ontario.

The Premier likes to talk about how we talked to “thousands of people across the whole province” during the campaign. I talked to those people too. I’m still talking to them today, and they still want their long-term-care system fixed.

Let’s not look at the long-term-care system with rose-tinted glasses. We all know that when seniors do get access to long-term care, the quality of that long-term care is also a major concern—another thing that New Democrats were trying to get the previous government to deal with. In 2014, there were more than 12,900 critical incidents reported in long-term-care homes across Ontario. In one year, 2014: 12,900 critical incidents reported. That’s 12,900 reports of things like improper care, residents being missing for hours—the staff not having tabs on the residents—and residents falling and requiring hospitalization.

Most staff in long-term-care homes are compassionate, caring professionals, but they are under-resourced and overworked, having to make do with much less than they should so that they are, as a result, run off their feet day in and day out. I can tell you, in the conversations I’ve had over the years, during the campaign and subsequent to the campaign, that those folks who work in the long-term-care system are stressed to the max.

In fact, I’m hearing from providers of long-term care that they can’t keep the staff anymore because it’s such a bad job, because people are working two or three part-time jobs. They’re not being given full-time work. They’re running from one facility to the next. They are calling in sick and then they are not being replaced by management, so the rest of the staff end up carrying the load and becoming even more stressed and, of course, leading to even less opportunity to take care of the needs of the residents in the long-term-care facilities.

It does not have to be this way; it absolutely doesn’t. Communities should not have to go it alone when it comes to long-term care. Families like the Mills family should not have to go it alone. There is far too much at stake right now to let this Premier and this Conservative government take Ontario seniors and their families from bad to worse. It was bad under the Liberals, and there’s a big fear out there, with the way that this government is talking, that that bad is going to get much, much worse and let another four years go by where people don’t have access to the quality long-term care that would make their lives better.

We know that that is absolutely in the cards. How do we know that? Because 6,000 beds over five years is not going to put a dent in a 32,000-person-long waiting list. That waiting list, of course, is growing, not shrinking. Anybody who pays attention to the way that Ontario is made up in terms of our residents knows that our demographic is such that it’s aging. We have an aging population. So the pressure is going to get worse, not better. This 6,000-bed Liberal plan that is now the Conservative plan is still going to fail our seniors and is still going to continue to put pressure on family members and on communities.

And that’s just not good enough. The people deserve so much better than that.

I have got to say it’s not all bad, because it’s not too late to fix it. We can all take, together, a big step forward to address this critical issue for Ontario families. We can actually do that here today. We can listen to what Steve and Annette told me this morning about Walter’s story and their story, and to the stories of thousands of Ontarians who need their government to step up and make quality long-term care for seniors a priority. I know that, with this motion, we can begin the work of doing right by these families and showing them that they don’t have to go it alone and that change for the better is, in fact, possible in our province.

We can make Ontario a leader in addressing the challenges of long-term care by adding thousands of long-term-care spaces across the province—thousands and thousands and thousands. In fact, our plan called for a much, much more rigorous investment in long-term care. Our plan called for 15,000 beds in five years. That is something that should be happening, not 6,000 over five years.

Do you know what? The creation of those long-term-care beds also means jobs. Somebody has got to build the spaces, so there are jobs right there—good-paying, quality jobs—in those communities.

Then, of course, we need to fix the other half of long-term care and make sure that the workers who are working in long-term care have good jobs to go to day in and day out where they make a decent wage, where they have enough staff supports among the folks working there—everything from nurses to PSWs—to make sure that the quality of care is there and that the quality of jobs is there.

We can actually turn back the tide on years and years of Liberal cuts and neglect and make it easier for seniors in communities like Oshawa, Whitby and Scarborough to live their lives with dignity and get the long-term care that they need when they need it.

I’m urging all members in the House to support this motion. This is a motion that I think people in every part of our province would like to see passed because in every part of our province there’s a problem. This motion speaks very clearly to the communities that are at the top of the list when it comes to a lack of long-term-care beds: Oshawa, Whitby and Scarborough. But we all know that it’s a problem around the province, so I’m calling on the government members—and the Liberal members, if there are any around—to support this motion and do something about it.

As I’ve said, it doesn’t have to continue to be this way for the next four years. It looks like this government is prepared to continue to make it worse for the next four years, but in passing this motion we can actually turn the tide and turn things around. We can start by adding those 2,000 beds right away in the region that is struggling the most: Central East LHIN in the communities of Scarborough, Oshawa and Whitby.

From there, we can build on that first step and tackle this critical issue—this crisis—that we have in long-term

care in our communities by making real, concrete and ongoing investments in quality long-term care across our province, investments that will make the lives of seniors and their families better and will help build a stronger, more prosperous and more caring Ontario so that when they need it, our loved ones are able to get the care that protects their safety, their health and their dignity so that they can spend those last years of their lives—after they have given so much to this province and so much to their communities—with the quality type of care that they deserve, not languishing on a wait-list with family members who are run off their feet and worried sick every minute of the day about the well-being of their loved ones.

Together we can build that kind of Ontario, where we take care of the people who have taken care of us over the years. We can start today.

I urge every member of this House to think carefully about the crisis in long-term care. Those on the government side: Think carefully. You're in government now. You can make the kind of decisions that will actually make a difference in people's lives. Please support this motion. Stand with us and show that you care about long-term care, that you care about the people, the seniors and other vulnerable folks who need to be in long-term care, and that you care about those families who desperately want to see a space open up for their loved ones.

Thank you very much. I look forward to the debate.

Interjections.

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

Further debate?

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I'm pleased to join the debate on the motion introduced by our colleagues in the official opposition about long-term care.

1400

I should start by thanking them for raising the issue of long-term care. It gives our government another great opportunity to tell the people of Ontario about the actions we are taking to create new, permanent, long-term-care beds that are so desperately needed.

As the health minister's parliamentary assistant for long-term care, I hear time and again about the pressures in the system. I hear from stakeholders in hospitals: doctors, nurses and administrators who have patients waiting for a long-term-care bed to open up.

I hear it from families in my riding of Oakville North—Burlington trying to get the right care for an aging parent: patients who don't need to be in hospitals at all but cannot go home, and, through no fault of their own, are taking up beds for people who do need to be in a hospital, and people who need emergency or urgent care, and are too often being treated in storage rooms or hallways. These two groups of people need care, and too many in each group are not getting the care they deserve.

Our medical staff who are on the front lines are doing their best and providing excellent care, but patients need the appropriate care that maintains their privacy and dignity.

We all know the reasons for this two-headed problem. Wait-lists for long-term-care beds are just too long. That's why our government for the people has committed to creating 15,000 beds within a five-year period of time, and 30,000 in the next 10 years.

I was proud to join the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, when she announced that we are moving forward with the first tranche of 6,075 long-term-care beds.

Our government also announced a new investment of \$90 million that will support more than 1,100 beds and spaces in hospitals and community settings across the province. This funding will go towards helping those hospitals with the greatest need to meet the challenges they face in providing care to the communities they serve during this coming flu season.

Our government is focused on building a strong and, importantly, a sustainable health care system that puts the needs of Ontario patients first.

When our party was the official opposition, we spoke out strongly about the long-term-care needs, demanding that the then Liberal government start taking action. In an opposition day debate in February, earlier this year, the now Minister of Finance laid out some facts for the government:

—the provincial seniors' population is expected to almost double, from 2.3 million in 2016 to 4.6 million in 2041; and

—there are currently more than 32,000 seniors on the waiting lists for long-term-care beds in Ontario; and

—in the absence of increased capacity, the wait-list is predicted to reach almost 50,000 by 2021. That is just three years away, Speaker.

Therefore, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario called on the Liberal government to build 15,000 long-term-care beds in five years, and 30,000 over 10 years.

So, what did the then Liberal government do in response to our call in February? Nothing. They took no action.

Well, I am proud today that Ontario's government for the people, under the leadership of our Premier, is taking action. We will build the number of beds that are called for by the opposition. Our government is one that keeps its word, and I am know the Premier will honour our party's commitment.

My colleague the Minister of Government and Consumer Services also spoke in the debate just last February. He pointed out the following: "There are 300 homes and 30,000 beds that need to be rebuilt because they're over 30 years old and yet, in their 14 years in power, the Liberals have accomplished a mere 30% of the needed redevelopment."

The messages our party heard from patients, families and medical staff earlier this year, and in previous years, about long-term care are messages we have listened to. We made a firm and solemn commitment in the election campaign to take action, and we are doing so. Our seniors deserve proper care and dignity.

I know that it's never easy for a senior to have to make the decision to give up his or her home, or whether they want to continue living with their family. A lot of families are torn apart by the decision, but unfortunately sometimes it's very necessary for the move to be made, and it's often the only way to preserve a good quality of life. But we must ensure that when the decision to move into long-term care is taken, waiting lists should be as short as possible.

Speaker, for 15 years, the Ontario Liberals neglected our health care system, making decisions in isolation and ignoring the broader system. They failed to plan for an aging population or make the necessary investments as waiting lists got longer and longer. There was no absence of money to spend, but so much of it was squandered on waste and mismanagement.

Three years ago, our party introduced another opposition day motion on health care, and here is what our members told the House in 2015.

The Liberal government cut \$54 million of the federal government health transfer from Ontario's health care budget.

The Liberals slashed \$815 million from physician services.

They cut \$50 million from seniors for physiotherapy services.

They eliminated 50 medical residency positions.

We told the Liberals then that their mismanagement of health care would lead to delays in seeing doctors, waiting lists for long-term-care beds, and backed-up emergency rooms. They didn't listen, which is perhaps part of the reason that Ontario has a new government today.

We told the Liberals they had a problem, but it wasn't just us who told them that. The Ontario Long Term Care Association, in their pre-budget submission for our government's next budget, lists some of the key facts, as of today.

Some 32,835 Ontarians were on the waiting list for a long-term-care bed as of April 2018, up from 22,601 in 2015, just three short years ago.

Ninety per cent of residents in their homes have some form of cognitive impairment requiring greater care.

In January 2018, 4,807 acute care beds in emergency were designated ALC, which stands for alternative level of care—4,807. These are people too ill or frail to be at home. Many of these patients were seniors unable to return home and unable to find a place in long-term care. This number is now at an all-time high. This is why we have hallway health care today and why our seniors and so many other patients are not getting the quality of care they deserve.

The OLTCAs says that there are three ways the government must help:

- (1) Hire more staff.
- (2) Build and modernize our homes.
- (3) Focus on care, not on unnecessary government paperwork.

The OLTCAs submission contained some excellent advice to the government on a path forward, and I know that the ministry will look at it very seriously.

One of the points they mentioned that I would like to expand on is the weight of government paperwork. This House recently debated the Making Ontario Open for Business Act, which includes our government's plan to reduce the burden of red tape on business. It's interesting to note that the red tape burden doesn't just afflict businesses but social services as well. When we think of rules in long-term care, we must first ensure that residents are safe and well-looked-after. We do need regulations and inspections of facilities, but we must ensure that every regulation and every government requirement is absolutely necessary. We must not be afraid to cut a regulation if it serves no useful purpose or is redundant.

The OLTCAs reports that homes are inspected annually by the ministry against more than 600 regulations, with more than 1,000 requirements that look at everything from cleanliness to resident safety.

1410

In their pre-budget submission, the OLTCAs offers the experience of one registered practical nurse at a home in Tillsonburg. Sasha reports that "the administrative burden is getting worse. We have one nurse who spends more than half of her time just on gathering information for the ministry inspections. I often fall behind on my charting. On a good day I only spend 15 minutes finishing up my paperwork after my shift has ended, but when I'm busy, when residents need me, I help them first and then sometimes I spend an hour past my shift finishing it up."

The OLTCAs says that 95% of the information that a home must report on is directly related to the provision of nursing and personal care services. In other words, nursing and care staff must take time away from direct care activities to report on the care they are providing.

Now, we all want to ensure the highest-quality care, and the safety, comfort and dignity of patients must always come first. But are there areas where we can make it easier on staff so that they can spend more time caring for patients than reporting on care? I believe this is something we really need to take a good look at.

I know that my colleagues in the official opposition are not unduly worried about overregulation, but it does cost money and, more importantly, it costs time—money and time that are taken away from where they should go: to good quality care.

I've pointed out some of the waste and mismanagement produced by the past Liberal government. It's also important to note that the NDP, in power, had a similar record. Ontario's last NDP government closed 9,645 hospital beds. They created a doctor shortage by putting a cap on medical school enrolment. They cut \$53 million from 10 of Ontario's psychiatric hospitals.

Today, they suggest that we should budget for 2,000 new beds in three specific cities. This reminds me of their last opposition day motion, when they suggested we put money in the budget for a new Brampton hospital, without any planning, preparation or assessment of needs. That's not the way we do things on this side of the House. We will seek out the best advice to ensure that we plan and spend properly.

As I mentioned in the last opposition day debate, one of the steps we've taken is to ask Dr. Rueben Devlin to advise the Premier and the Minister of Health on innovative solutions to end hallway health care and to make the system work better for patients, our seniors and families.

The last government, we can all agree, failed miserably in its plans for long-term care. The numbers bear that out: Waiting lists are up by 10,000 people. We have taken action for immediate needs through our announcement of 6,075 beds, and we will plan properly for the future, to meet our target of 15,000.

Health care is a system, and we must always look at it in a very holistic way. But health care is also about individuals. We plan a system, but we must never forget that it has to work for individuals and their families. We must ensure the proper care, but we must also ensure respect for human dignity and quality of life.

Madam Speaker, I leave these thoughts with you today.

In the four short months that we have been in government, I've been honoured to serve as the parliamentary assistant to the minister. I've heard from many stakeholders about the problems our health care system faces. They are real, they are acute, and members of the government recognize them. They include the hallway health care issues that we've talked about, time and again; the very, very long wait times that we have in long-term care; the challenge of retention of doctors; the challenge of nurses; and the challenge of retaining personal care support workers and other front-line care workers and volunteers.

I believe all parties can agree that the previous administrations failed dismally our health care system and the people of Ontario who need the care. I believe the NDP is trying to take the easy way out, targeting funding without planning. Instead, we need to look at health care in a holistic way. That's why I cannot support this motion today. The approach our government is taking is a comprehensive one followed by comprehensive action, and is based on evidence and good planning to meet everyone's health needs.

We made a commitment to start eliminating hallway health care and announced 6,075 long-term-care beds: promise made, Speaker, promise kept. And we will honour our commitments to improve our health care system because we all agree on one thing: that in Ontario, our loved ones deserve the best standard of quality care in the world.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to speak about my community of Oshawa and have a chance to talk about our neighbouring communities in the Durham region, specifically Whitby and Scarborough, because today we're here debating the NDP opposition day motion that challenges this government to provide necessary funding to create 2,000 new not-for-profit long-term-care spaces in Scarborough, Whitby and Oshawa, and to address the wait-list in long-term care.

This is a specific ask, but it's the beginning of what we hope will be a commitment on the part of this new govern-

ment, because we have spent years waiting for the previous government to actually invest in our seniors, invest in long-term care. We have a situation that has gone unmanaged and has been neglected for 15 years. The government talks about "promise made and promise kept," but this is a Liberal promise. The Liberals promised that they were going to create 6,000 long-term-care spaces over five years, and this government is choosing to keep that promise on behalf of the last government. We challenge them to do better, to do more. With a budget on the horizon, we would like to see more investment in our seniors, in our long-term care.

But I'm going to tell you why this matters so much to me and to my community, because I do know this is an issue across the province. There is not an MPP in this room who has not had a personal connection or a constituent come in and talk about the need to address the wait-lists and long-term care in their communities.

But it's specific to my area, because I am part of the Central East LHIN. Oshawa, Whitby—they're part of the Central East LHIN. Speaker, I'm going to take us back in history a little bit. It was the Harris Conservatives that cut and froze funding where it was at a point in time and has not been re-evaluated. From that point in time when everything was frozen, the Durham region and areas east of Toronto have flourished, have grown; they've expanded. Yet that decision to freeze at that point has not been re-evaluated. So the Central East LHIN has the dubious honour of being right at the bottom when it comes to funding. That translates into all sorts of things, like having the longest wait-lists for long-term care. When you look at the 32,000 spaces that are needed, the 32,000 folks on wait-lists across the province waiting for long-term-care beds, it's the Central East LHIN, it's our area, that accounts for one fifth of them. Well, we're wonderful in Durham region—we really are—but I don't know that we account for one fifth of the province when it comes to population or seniors, and yet we are 20% of the provincial waiting list.

That is why we are choosing, with this opposition day motion, to focus in on our neck of the woods to make the point: 2,000 beds is what we're calling for to make—it's really a start, but it would go towards eliminating wait-lists. Then the government, when they're choosing to invest in our area, will look at the rest of the province and make sure that all folks have what they need. That is why we're here challenging this government.

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But now I want to bring it home, and I appreciate that our leader came to Oshawa this morning and we had the opportunity. We were invited into the home of the Reverend Steven Mills and Annette Mills. They reached out to us, and I'd like to read part of their letter that they sent to our office: "My father, Walter Steven Mills, aged 91, has been a resident of Oshawa almost his entire life. His career was as diverse as working as a machinist in his younger years, to serving as minister of visitation at Calvary Baptist Church and as a chaplain at Oshawa General Hospital in Lakeridge. After retirement he continued to serve

as a volunteer chaplain at Lakeridge until his health deteriorated.

“Six years ago my wife and I moved in with him because it was evident to me and to my sisters that Dad could no longer live by himself ... The first three years were manageable and then Dad’s dementia escalated to the point we signed him up on a list for Hillsdale Manor—his first choice for a nursing home.

“The last six months have become unmanageable. My father is up all times of the night. We have sensors on the front and back doors that sound an alarm when he tries to leave for a variety of reasons, such as: 2 a.m. to go to work; 4 a.m. to get his hair cut; 3:15 a.m. to go to church. A full night’s sleep for us is an impossibility....

“Dad is now on the list of five different nursing homes. Tragically, those homes have up to 100 names ahead of my father.

“My wife and I are in our sixties. My two sisters are in their seventies. We simply cannot provide our father the care he so desperately needs.

“Thank you for your desire to help seniors in Oshawa.”

Speaker, it was wonderful to sit in their home, to be invited in and to share in what is a vulnerable reality for many of our community members. They had a lovely home—it was their father’s home—and we were surrounded by their family’s history, their family’s story of proud military service. Actually, his father, Walter, that we’re trying to find a space for—his grandfather had been a prisoner of war and carried in his wallet a handwritten letter from King George welcoming him home. He carried it proudly in his wallet.

Every family in Oshawa and every family across our province has a story. To know that Walter does not have a space is not right—Walter specifically, but seniors across the province. When I hear from constituents like Adrienne Reid—her husband, Don, has been out of the hospital. She’s struggling with his dementia and supporting him. He has been on the wait-list for different long-term-care homes, but he now is in the hospital because she couldn’t look after him at home. He’s in the hospital. He can’t be deemed a crisis because he’s in the hospital, so there’s no space for him.

We have seniors in our hospitals in what’s called ALC, waiting for a space, but they can’t be deemed a crisis while they’re in the hospital, and long-term-care homes don’t have to take them. I asked a question in this Legislature on behalf of Mary Anne Follest and Stephen Hoar about their mother, Anna. Again, the same situation: lived in a retirement home, fell, found herself in a hospital, but the retirement home wouldn’t take her back. She had nowhere to go. We were able to advocate and work alongside the family. She’s in a temporary space, but they’re still waiting for her forever home, because they don’t want her to die in hospital. And this is the story of so many across our communities.

So here we are, asking this government to make this a priority, to put it in the budget. We’ve heard from our leader, who talked about the numbers: at Hillsdale in Oshawa, over 1,400 people on the waiting list; at Fairview

Lodge in Whitby, over 1,500 on the waiting list. Incidentally, Speaker, Hillsdale is a home that is subsidized by the region. Everyone wants to be there. We need quality care. We need more spaces. We need to build spaces for folks that will look after their complex care needs. Folks aren’t just getting older; they’re also living longer, and we need to be ready for that.

This government should not be championing the last government’s plan of 6,000 beds over five years. That is insufficient and we all darn well know it. This is an issue in our community that focuses attention on the Central East LHIN, on Oshawa, Whitby and Scarborough, but we can extrapolate that need across the province. Ours is just extremely acute and I hope that this government has heard us. I hope that you will indeed pass this motion and put our seniors and their care as a priority in the upcoming budget because our seniors deserve at least that much.

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

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It was nice to hear the passion from the member from Oshawa and the excellent speech by the member from Oakville–North Burlington, my neighbouring riding, who I know is a passionate advocate for long-term care. There was some very good information there.

It’s an honour for me to speak here today on an important topic, such as increasing the number of long-term-care beds in Ontario in order to improve the lives of Ontarians. However, I do have serious reservations about the wording of the motion and cherry-picking certain cities, but I’ll broach that subject in my speech.

Madam Speaker, Ontarians understand the importance of our health care system, and so does this government. We understand that health care issues of this province are not going to be solved by local solutions, which is exactly why we are walking a fine line when we try and make specific changes instead of looking at the entire system in aggregate and allocating resources based on a prioritized basis with a plan for our health care system that works for all Ontarians.

We all will have someone we know, whether it is a family member or a friend, who is in need of more care than they can provide for themselves, which means that many elderly Ontarians will require the care and attention that only long-term-care facilities can provide. The generation of Ontarians who need these facilities built Ontario. They built the roads, the bridges and the subways. They risked their lives in the wars to protect our freedom and they raised us so we can now raise the generation after us. They developed the institutions that we still use today, and because of that, we owe them much more than wait times and cramped facilities.

We do need more long-term care in Ontario. The current facilities we have, of which there are approximately 600 in the province, serve a vast number of Ontarians and are critical to the success of health care in Ontario. But there simply aren’t enough beds to service the demand that we currently have. Given that Ontario’s population is aging at a rate faster than at any time before in history, we

need to make sure that we can support our society's most vulnerable in their time of need. This is the exact reason why the opposition's motion to only support the people in three municipalities is so ill-advised. Every community across Ontario is in need of more long-term-care beds. Giving a priority to certain communities over others is divisive and not the right way to approach a systemic challenge for the province.

Our government made a commitment to increase the number of long-term-care beds in the province of Ontario, and we are doing just that. In a recent announcement made by our Minister of Health, Minister Elliott laid out our government's plan to fund over 6,000 new long-term-care beds, 570 of which are in the LHIN responsible for the municipalities mentioned in this motion. Some 353 of those 570 beds are located specifically in Scarborough. This announcement was only the first stage of a broader plan by the government to increase the number of long-term-care beds in this province. We promised to improve access to, and the quality of, health care services, and we are delivering on that promise.

Guess what? We've heard from industry like the Ontario Long Term Care Association, which said the following—this is on our recent government announcement: “Today's announcement is a big first step in the right direction. The investments this government is making to add more capacity to our system will help more homes move forward with their capital plans and will allow for more critical spaces to open up for seniors who need a long-term-care bed. Long-term care is a critical component to addressing hallway medicine”—from Candace Chartier, CEO of the Ontario Long Term Care Association.

I think we need to look closer at the proposal from the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition. If the opposition really wanted to make things better, then they would want to improve the quality of care in the communities that have the highest wait times, but that doesn't seem to be their motive here, Madam Speaker.

For the benefit of all members of this House, I would like to review the wait times in the three communities mentioned in this motion. In Whitby, the average wait time is just over 28 months. In Oshawa, the wait time is around 49 months. In Scarborough, the wait time is around 40 months. These wait times are all too long. I believe that we should be benchmarking our performance metrics to the best and striving for better care, faster, everywhere. The wait time for access to a bed at a long-term-care facility in my riding of Oakville is longer than all three of these jurisdictions. In Oakville, the average wait time is just under 49 months.

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I implore the NDP and the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition to provide a very good reason why these three cities specifically named have residents more deserving of long-term care than the residents of Oakville or other municipalities in this province.

It seems very arbitrary to me, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: If we add Oakville, will you support it?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: We want the whole province fixed, Mr. Hatfield.

But this is what I have come to expect from the NDP. First, it's a \$7-billion deficit in their “fully costed platform,” and now it's a motion that divides Ontarians more than it unites us, by calling for service improvements to a handful of municipalities without recognition of the more than 400 municipalities in Ontario and their very real needs. There is no rhyme or reason for picking only three centres to build long-term-care facilities, given that they are all located in the same LHIN.

The real issue with the entire long-term-care system in the province is the lack of long-term planning and vision. Under the previous government, we had poor program and capital expenditure planning that impacted services and that will affect this province for decades to come.

Medieval Europe eventually emerged from the Dark Ages, and in Ontario, we are emerging from a decade and a half of gross mismanagement. But it will take time, given the magnitude of the poor governance of the previous Liberal government.

There are currently over 78,000 beds in this province, and that number barely budged under Liberal governance. Clearly, since funding was not keeping pace with demand, and with bed growth at less than 1% annually, long-term care was not a priority for the previous government. Under the previous government, the wait-lists for long-term-care beds grew by the thousands—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Achoo! Excuse-moi.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I hope you took your flu shot, there—wait-lists for our mothers, fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers; wait-lists for our veterans, and for the people who sacrificed everything so that their kids would never have to face the hardships that they faced in their own childhood.

I would have hoped, in the process of doubling the province's debt, that they would at least have used some of the money to plan for future needs, and have something to show for all that gross mismanagement and spending, rather than longer wait-lists at long-term-care facilities. But I have come to realize, along with millions of Ontarians, that that was wishful thinking.

The Liberal members in this House need to ask themselves: Was forcing this province into a world-record level of debt really worth it? Because I know my kids and their grandchildren will still be paying for these mistakes that have been made over the last 15 years, for many years to come. Servicing the debt in Ontario is now the third-largest capital expense, after only health care and education. Imagine what we could have done and what could have been built if we didn't have to pay billions on interest every single year. The extensive borrowing by the previous government led to multiple credit rating decreases, which, of course, in turn cost the province even more to borrow in the future. This is simply unacceptable.

Our government has promised to take a different approach, as over the next five years we will be increasing

the number of long-term-care beds by 15,000, which will serve over half the current wait-list. Our plan will be to add 30,000 in total over the next 10 years.

In fact, Madam Speaker, this government has already announced its first round of long-term-care beds. Within the first 100 days of office, we announced the first 6,000 long-term-care beds. That is almost three times as much as the previous government built in their tenure. And—guess what?—570 of those 6,000 beds are going to be in the Central East LHIN, where the three cities mentioned specifically by the NDP are located. But the reason these beds are being located there isn't because the government is choosing arbitrarily to favour certain municipalities over others. The government is following the advice of health care professionals and the appropriate process for allocating taxpayer resources for those who need it the most.

The following is a quote from Lisa Levin, CEO of AdvantAge Ontario: “We are pleased to see such quick action on Premier Ford’s campaign promise to add 15,000 long-term-care beds over the next five years. This government recognizes that this added capacity is urgently needed to alleviate the burden on hospitals and ensure that seniors receive the most appropriate care in the most appropriate setting.”

We know that more needs to be done to continue helping the people of Ontario. I know that our government is hard at work to deliver the health care that people in this province deserve after 15 long years of neglect.

In fact, I think it is important to speak more about the past 15 years, because I feel like we really need to get all the skeletons out of the closet.

Over the term of the previous government the number of health care bureaucrats skyrocketed. Can anyone really say that it is better to have more administrative staff than nurses, doctors and front-line workers? Right now, we find ourselves in a system that spends almost 40% of its funding on administration. More money needs to be focused on front-line health care workers, such as doctors, nurses and other front-line workers. We can do better in this province.

In 2015, the Auditor General finished an 18-month study that was designed to examine the state of health care in Ontario. The primary mode for examination was to be through the LHINs and CCACs across the province. The report found that having these two levels of service turned our health care system into an inconsistent mess, where the administration costs in these organizations alone were responsible for between 19% and 39% of total allowances.

If we look at the most pressing issues in the health care system today, they are long wait times and the lack of space or beds in hospitals. These are, of course, interconnected. We need to end hallway health care in this province. We need to provide better, faster care for the people of Ontario.

Let's all take the time right now to think about how people can see a doctor more quickly. There are two options: increase the ratio of administrators to patients, or increase the ratio of doctors to patients. I think we know the answer to this question. So why did the Liberals think

spending more money on health administration and cutting our front-line workers would help our health care crisis?

In 2017, a Fraser Institute report found that the current wait times in Ontario to see a specialist have increased over 40% in the last 10 years alone. I wonder if that was because the Liberals cut funding for more front-line staff.

Ontario is home to the fourth-lowest number of doctors to citizens out of all Canadian provinces, and Ontario has the lowest ratio of registered nurses to citizens in the entire country.

If we all of a sudden decide to choose what cities will receive a windfall of new long-term-care beds without conducting the proper assessment, then we will disadvantage all of those elsewhere in this province who are already waiting longer.

The recklessness of this NDP motion threatens the core operation of our health care system, which is currently in tatters from a decade and a half of mismanagement and lack of common sense at the hands of the Liberals.

Our plan for the people of Ontario is already under way. Help is here.

When the opposition makes a motion like this, which threatens to draw us back into an era of poor planning, then it is our responsibility to make sure that will not happen. If every long-term-care bed we created was only to be funded for a non-profit model, then business would cease to attempt expansion. We need to encourage investment and partnerships with private sector operators, as well, who will be able to continue to expand and provide care to thousands of people currently in care and the 30,000-plus who are on wait-lists.

The opposition has always been anti-business, and they oppose innovative solutions to complex problems in which we need to include the private sector.

Our country was founded on entrepreneurship and hard work. In order to pay for our medical system that we need dearly in Ontario, Ontario needs to regain its position as the economic engine of Canada. Ontario used to be the province that other provinces looked up to, but over the last decade we've moved to tenth out of 10 provinces in economic growth. We need this economic growth in order to pay for these additional services that we need so badly. We all know what happens if we spend more but make less.

To the people of Ontario I say, we have heard you. The government is putting more money in people's pockets, cleaning up the hydro mess, creating and protecting jobs, restoring accountability and trust, supporting our veterans and current service members, and acting to cut hospital wait times and support the creation of more long-term-care beds.

This government will act responsibly as stewards of taxpayer money. We take our job very seriously. We will listen to the advice of experts and allocate government resources appropriately, and create long-term-care beds in the communities with high wait times that need this funding the most. We will continue to do our good work that benefits the people of Ontario.

I am grateful for the attention of my peers as I have been able to speak to this motion, and more broadly, the health care system in Ontario and the plan laid forth by Ontario's government for the people.

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

Ms. Doly Begum: I rise in this House today to speak about my community of Scarborough. It's one of the most vulnerable communities in this province. I know that the government side might have some problem helping Scarborough, but do you know what? I'm really proud of our party and my colleagues for focusing on the most vulnerable communities in this province, which include places like Scarborough. So thank you so much to my team and this party for doing that.

Let me tell you all in this House, through the Speaker, why a place like Scarborough is important. In Scarborough, the Central East LHIN has the longest wait-list in Ontario for both long-term care and home care for personal support services—20% of all of Ontarians waiting for long-term care live in this region. The longest wait-lists in the LHIN overall are in Scarborough—the three facilities that we've talked about, which include the Mon Sheong Long-Term Care Centre in Scarborough–Agincourt, which is at almost 3,000; Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care, which is about 2,500; and Yee Hong Centre Scarborough Finch in Scarborough North, which is more than 2,500 in terms of the people waiting. That's more than 6,000 beds.

Looking at the government's plan—I'm not even sure if they really have a plan. But, Speaker, what I'm worried about is that a lot of these people who are waiting—and I know that the member from Oakville and the other member opposite talked about having a comprehensive plan. Well, if they read our motion carefully, it is a plan and it does have the starting steps. What we're talking about is beginning the process, unlike the government, which doesn't have a plan. What I'm really worried about is the fact that some of these vulnerable people might not be alive by the time this government actually comes up with a plan. That breaks my heart, because I meet people every single day in my community who are waiting to find a space. They don't have a year left, they don't have two years left and they definitely do not have five years left.

The other day, I helped one of my constituents named Karim. Karim had both of his parents fall down, and his mother has dementia. Karim's mother was taken care of by his father, who now can no longer take care of the mother. Both of the parents were waiting for long-term-care homes. When they went to Providence Healthcare, unfortunately they didn't have a space. They have the crisis letter. This is not a situation where they're just waiting; they do have the crisis letter. But it is so unfortunate, because these parents, these seniors who have given to our province, who paid their dues, who paid their taxes—don't they deserve just as much? Don't they deserve just as much to live the last few days of their lives in the respect and the dignity and the comfort that they truly need? They're not asking for much.

I want to point out that 77% of our individuals waiting for long-term-care beds are waiting for the lower-cost basic accommodation. They're not looking for Fairmont luxury. They're not looking for luxurious beds. They're just looking for the basic, basic, basic accommodation necessary.

So what we're really telling them by not supporting this motion—if this government doesn't—is that we don't care if our seniors, who probably have another year left, have a comfortable bed to live in or if they have a place where they can spend the last few days of their lives in the care that they need.

What breaks my heart is, when we're talking about these communities like Scarborough, like Oshawa, for example: For many, many years—and yes, I absolutely agree that the Liberal government, for 15 years, did neglect our seniors. They've neglected almost every community possible, because if they really cared about our seniors, then they would have done something about it. I completely agree with this. They would have done something about it. But they did not, and that's why we're facing a crisis right now.

The word “crisis”—what it also signals is that we need action now; not tomorrow, not next year and not in five years. We need action now, and the only way we can do something about it is by making sure that this motion is passed, because we need the seniors to have a space now. We have more than 6,000 people in my region already waiting. Yes, the entire province needs care. All our seniors need care, but if we don't step forward with just one step, then we're not moving forward at all. If we don't take the initiative, then we're not moving forward at all.

This government talks about the comprehensive plan. Well, where is it? Where is the comprehensive plan, and when are we going to see it? Because if we don't have something today—I don't want our seniors in our province, who made this province, who were the people that built the foundation of our province, to die without the care they need, without the respect they need, without the dignity they deserve.

I implore this government to understand this motion and how it works, and to support this motion. That's what the government would do if they're actually for the people, because “for the people” includes our seniors.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Good afternoon. I'd like to thank all the previous speakers for their comments and debate.

I rise today to speak in opposition to the NDP motion.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Oh, really?

Mr. Will Bouma: Absolutely. As this government has made very clear, improving our health care system is one of our top priorities.

This motion comes at a time when Ontario and its health care system are facing unprecedented challenges, following years of mismanagement by the former government. Patients are being treated in hallways and other non-conventional spaces. Wait times for long-term-care spaces are increasingly long. There are currently over 30,000

people on wait-lists for long-term-care placements in Ontario. We've heard most of this already this afternoon.

In response to these challenges, our government is committed to implementing innovative, evidence-based solutions to the challenges faced by the health care system.

We have already taken immediate steps to solve these issues through the use of new investment in capacity-challenged hospitals, the creation of new long-term-care beds and spaces, and the making of a comprehensive capacity plan a priority.

This government and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care recognize the inherent complexity of the challenges facing us, and are committed to responding in an appropriate way that is responsive, innovative and provincial in scope.

The motion by the NDP opposition is exactly the opposite of that. It is not responsive to any evidence-based analysis; it is not innovative; and it is a piecemeal, fragmented measure which does nothing to address the real and complex problems of the health care system as a whole.

So I want to begin by reiterating that our government has made improving our health care system one of its top priorities. We are committed to decreasing wait times for long-term-care beds, to ending hallway health care, and to creating and implementing a comprehensive, multi-faceted strategy to solve the current health care crisis that Ontario is in.

This is a crisis that Ontario is currently experiencing in its health care system as a result of the past 15 years of Liberal government. We all know that during this time, the Liberals neglected to address the very real issues that existed in the health care system. They failed to acknowledge and plan for our aging population, they did not make the necessary investments, and they left the system in chaos, disorder and disarray. As a result of this, soaring wait times and hallway health care became an all-too-common occurrence in a fragmented health care system.

The people of Ontario deserve better than this. The people of Ontario deserve a health care system that they can be proud of. They deserve a system where patients are not treated in a hospital hallway, one where they do not have to wait an exorbitant amount of time for a long-term-care bed, and one where they can expect to receive high-quality care. In short, Ontarians deserve a health care system that works.

We made a promise to the people of Ontario to solve these problems and to take the steps needed to realize a well-functioning health care system in our province. And we have already taken real, immediate and concrete steps to doing just that.

Speaker, last month, less than 100 days into our mandate, our government announced, as was mentioned previously, that it was moving forward with the building of 6,075 new long-term-care beds and spaces across the province.

Yet we realize this is not enough to solve the current problems we are facing in long-term care. As a result, these beds are just the beginning, the first wave of the

15,000 new long-term-care beds that our government has committed to building over the next five years, and of the 30,000 over the next 10 years.

In addition, we are investing \$90 million in new money to secure 1,100 beds and spaces as an immediate step to lessen hospital gridlock in anticipation of the upcoming flu season.

I got my flu shot last week, and I hope everyone else is going to do so soon.

I should clarify that this \$90-million investment is new funding, in addition to the already existing \$187 million in Ontario's 2018-19 budget, to support hospitals and assist them with capacity challenges. As a result, this funding, totalling \$277 million, will support more than 460 beds and spaces that would otherwise close as well as support over 640 new beds in anticipation of the upcoming flu season. These initiatives and investments show that we take our commitment to address our health care system's short- and long-term challenges seriously and have taken real, concrete steps to doing so.

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While these measures are sorely needed to address the issues faced by our overburdened health care system, we realize that they are not enough in themselves. As I have already stated, the health care system is in crisis. It is fragmented, inefficient and does not serve the people of Ontario in the way that they deserve.

Because of this, we are committed not only to addressing the short-term problems in our health care system but also to implementing these solutions in the context of a broad and comprehensive health care strategy. The first step to doing this is to uncover and recognize the extent of the problems that we face. In order to reveal and acknowledge the magnitude of need that exists in our province, one of the top priorities of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has been to create a comprehensive, province-wide capacity plan. This plan will paint a broad picture of the problems that Ontario's health care system is currently facing and will be critical to providing measured, meaningful and effective solutions.

Ontarians have entrusted us to use their tax dollars wisely, efficiently and in a way that actually solves problems. We are doing just that. We are taking real steps to solve the very real problems faced by our health care system. These solutions are effective, thoughtful and evidence-based. We know that the problem of hallway health care is a complex and multifaceted problem, which requires similarly complex and innovative solutions. Our decisions and solutions reflect this. They are not arbitrary but are made in the context of ongoing consultation with patients, caregivers, front-line workers and health care experts. Not only that, but we remain committed to engaging with stakeholders to create a long-term transformational strategy to address the issues facing long-term-care provision and hallway health care. We made a promise to the people of Ontario that we would create a health care system that works, and we are doing just that.

It is clear that our government has a plan in place and is taking concrete steps to solve the problems of our health

care system. While we make real progress in solving these problems for all Ontarians, the opposition motion is simply the NDP playing political games with our health care system by setting city against city.

It is clear from this motion that the opposition is not working to solve these problems for all of Ontario. Rather than work to devise real, workable solutions, they've picked an arbitrary number of long-term-care beds to create, without any evidence base. Let's be clear: Our government is addressing the substantial need for a broad, comprehensive approach to ending hallway health care and reducing wait times while the NDP are proposing unworkable solutions, without respect for taxpayer money, all while playing political games with our health care system.

The NDP has not been in government for over 20 years. They clearly do not know how to govern. This motion illustrates that fact. It is not an example of smart, innovative governance, but rather, this motion is simply an attempt by the NDP to score quick political points. This fact cannot be made clearer when we consider that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has not received applications for 2,000 not-for-profit beds from the cities cited in this motion. The NDP does not know how many long-term care beds this area needs and did not pick the arbitrary number of 2,000 not-for-profit beds based on any evidence. Not only that, but this motion clearly does not respect the fact that a detailed analysis which takes into account a number of different factors must be conducted before any bed allocations are approved. Once again, the NDP have not been in government for over two decades, and this amateurish motion clearly exemplifies that fact.

The NDP motion demands that the proposed 2,000 new long-term-care beds be not-for-profit. In doing so, the opposition demonstrates that neither does it know nor does it care about the fact that long-term-care homes operate according to a variety of different ownership and governance models. They may be not-for-profit, they may be for-profit or they may be municipal long-term-care homes. This shows the ineptness of this motion. By demanding that all the beds be not-for-profit, the opposition motion would limit available beds to a small number of operators and make it more difficult for patients to get beds in long-term-care homes. Let me repeat that: This motion would make it more difficult, not less, for patients to get the beds that they need.

Not only that, but the NDP motion doesn't acknowledge the fact that the Long-Term Care Homes Act requires that the minister and the ministry engage in a highly structured decision-making process for long-term-care licensing. Every long-term-care home, regardless of whether it is not-for-profit, for-profit or a municipal long-term-care home, must comply with the requirements of the Long-Term Care Homes Act. In addition, every long-term-care home is funded, inspected and enforced according to the same manner, regardless of their ownership. The minister takes into consideration both the concentration of ownership of long-term-care homes as well as the balance between not-for-profit and for-profit homes. This

decision-making process is required so that appropriate evidence-based decisions can be made.

This in-depth analysis is required for all new allocations of long-term care beds. It includes a long-term-care licence review and takes into account the long-term-care capacity and the not-for-profit and for-profit balance. This is to ensure that the tax dollars which the Ontario government has been entrusted with are spent wisely and effectively. To repeat: The decision-making process and analysis is simply the result of the ministry doing its due diligence. This government understands and respects the processes in place to ensure the good management of our province's finances.

However, Speaker, it is clear by this motion that the NDP does not respect the detailed analysis and the comprehensive process that precedes the allocation of long-term-care beds and spaces. Not only that, but for these analyses and processes to begin, there must first be applications for new long-term-care beds. The ministry has received no applications for the 2,000 beds cited in the motion. We can clearly see that the opposition do not have an understanding of what must go into these sorts of decisions. They have no concept of good governance when it comes to making our health care system work for all Ontarians.

Like the Liberals did for the past 15 years, the NDP are attempting to formulate solutions in isolation and without regard to the broader context of Ontario's health care system and its challenges. The sort of thinking that the NDP is displaying by this motion is the sort of thinking that got us into this crisis. This motion is simply an attempt by the opposition to address our current health care challenges through a fragmented and piecemeal approach. To do so is unwise, irresponsible and ineffective.

Unlike the NDP, this government learned from the failure of the former Liberal government, and decided to implement informed and meaningful solutions in the context of a broad and comprehensive health care strategy. Contrary to the proposals in the motion, our solutions are composed of detailed analysis, extensive consultation with patients, family members, doctors, nurses and other stakeholders, and an understanding that our solutions must be innovative and dynamic.

With all of this said, our government recognizes that more should be done for these cities. Of the 6,075 new long-term-care beds and spaces that were announced last month, 570 of these were allotted to the Central East LHIN, which is where these cities are. This was mentioned before. Of these, 353 will be going to Scarborough specifically. This is just one example of the fact that this government and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care are taking real and informed steps to solve the current challenges that are facing our health care system. This government is working to transform our current health care system into one which works for patients, their loved ones and front-line workers. We have already taken immediate steps to do this and create more long-term-care beds, end hallway health care and develop a comprehensive transformational strategy to address the ongoing challenges which Ontario's health care system faces.

Speaker, remember that just last month our government announced that it was taking action on long-term-care issues. We will be creating 15,000 new long-term-care beds and spaces over the next five years, and another 15,000 in the five years after that. This announcement came within the first 100 days of our mandate. Yet we know that this is only one of the first steps needed towards ending hallway health care and eliminating wait times for long-term care. We are quickly moving to address these issues and plan on maintaining our momentum and solving our health care crisis.

The NDP motion is devoid of details or evidence for its proposals. It doesn't provide an actual plan. Unlike the opposition motion, our government is enacting real solutions, solutions which are based on evidence and sound policy. This government is committed to fixing our health care system in a responsible way which both respects the taxpayer and addresses the real challenges that the people of Ontario are facing.

While 30,000 people are on wait-lists for long-term-care beds, the NDP are simply playing politics with this motion. They are continuing in the tradition of the past 15 years of Liberal mismanagement, with all of the empty promises that go along with it. Ontario, its cities and its people deserve better. They deserve a real plan to solve the ongoing crisis in health and long-term care. Our government was elected to provide effective, efficient and innovative government for the people of Ontario. We promised to provide real solutions to the ongoing challenges that Ontario's health care system faces.

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Our government for the people is delivering on its commitments. We are providing for \$90 million in new investment in addition to the \$187 million already in the budget to support hospitals with capacity challenges. We have committed to 30,000 new long-term-care beds and spaces over the next 10 years, with the first wave of 6,075 announced last month. We are making the creation of a comprehensive Ontario-wide capacity plan a top priority. Our government is working with stakeholders across the province to ensure that our health care system meets the high-quality expectations of the people of Ontario.

Finally, Speaker, we believe that one patient treated in a hallway is one too many. That is why our government will work to create an innovative and modern health care system that works for the people of Ontario.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I don't think the member from Brantford—Brant—I'm going to call "horse feathers" on him, in many ways, because he seems to think that the only government with answers in this whole province of Ontario is a Conservative government. Well, that's not the facts when it comes to how you build a province up.

We are the official opposition; you need to pay attention. We talked about this with the Liberals. The Liberals need to understand—and I'm going to call Liberals Conservatives; same idea—they need to understand what other

members have to bring to the table when they're representing their riding. This is what they neglect to pay attention to, or to put into the equation of success for everyone in Ontario—all the people in Ontario. It's for all of us to represent.

This is why this motion is very important, because we are talking about an area of representation in this province that is being neglected when it comes to long-term-care beds, and this government wants to spin what this motion is about. It is about helping seniors getting into long-term care. It's about wait times that have gone far too long when families are patchworking the care for seniors, whether they're at home or whether they're in the hospital.

This member talks about the for-profits and how this motion talks about not-for-profit. Has he been reading the paper lately? There is a multi-million-dollar lawsuit against the most profitable for-profit long-term-care homes in this province. Let's talk about finances. The for-profit homes that are being sued by these 200 families are represented probably all over Ontario, not just in his riding or where he thinks people need help. The CEO of one of those long-term-care homes makes \$4 million, and there was a \$37-million dividend for shareholders. That's your for-profit. The other one that was reported: \$1.2 million for the CEO and \$36 million for dividends to their shareholders.

Getting back to our plan: In June, we had a plan. We had solutions to these issues. The Conservatives had nothing, and somehow they sold a bill of goods to this province that was bought. So now we are here to continue to bring some logic, some heart and some real policy to this province when we're debating in this Legislature, and not just the silly little quips, slogans and signs out on the border. We actually want to make things better for Ontario and the people who live everywhere throughout Ontario.

One of the things we had in our platform was that we needed to look at systemic problems in long-term care. This is not something new that we're talking about when we say that we need to look at not-for-profit versus for-profit. Those are thoughtful policy ideas that need to be examined. It's not just one idea. We had terms of reference for a phase 2 when the public inquiry is being opened. Take that opportunity and look at all the terms of reference. We need to address the whole problem, not just what these Conservatives think is targeted to solve the issues of long-term care. It's a band-aid solution; we need to look at everything.

When we're talking about seniors, Speaker, they are one of the most vulnerable populations in our province. We all have seniors in our lives. We have parents. We have grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends. We have loved ones, our life-long partners, and that is who we owe the work that we do in this House to.

We have identified the issues, and I know every member in this Legislature has had examples of these problems. And I commend all of the people who have spoken on this opposition day motion and who have talked about the struggles in their ridings.

I also want to connect what London is facing. Seventy-eight is the number of long-term-care homes that are in

southwestern Ontario, out of all of the long-term-care homes. There are 7,456 long-term-care-home spaces in southwestern Ontario. So of 78 long-term-care homes, we have 7,456 spaces. And 2,149 is the number of people who are waiting to get into long-term-care homes. The average wait time is 106 days to get into a long-term-care home in southwestern Ontario, and 175 days waited on average to get into long-term-care homes in London.

Why do I bring that up? Because I have a couple in my riding whom I have mentioned in this Legislature before: the Turgeons. They have been married for 53 years. If you have been together with someone for 53 years, you know there is a close bond with that person. I've been married for 29 years to my wonderful husband, and when I look in his eyes I still see the twinkle that connected me with him. After 53 years, there is that special link to that person, and you want to make sure that you are there to look after them. I'm sure that that's reciprocal of every partner in a relationship when you're together for quite some time.

Back to the Turgeons: Mr. Turgeon has been placed two hours away from his wife, Christine. She does not drive, as many seniors don't. She must rely on the kindness and the good will of her neighbours and friends to see her husband two hours away. She sees him once a week. She can't get a bed in London for her husband. That is heart-breaking and disturbing. It's disturbing because we are not acknowledging that we need to do better when it comes to placing people in long-term care.

I also bring up that home care is a piece of the success of a wait-list when it comes to long-term care. If we had home care that actually fulfilled the needs of people waiting in their homes, they could stay in their homes much healthier and longer, rather than getting into crisis and going to the hospital.

I'm going to bring this up quickly, because my time is moving on: The CBC recently wrote an article and they used this word—it's a colloquialism, and I don't agree with it. They're calling them bed blockers. That's what they're calling seniors who are waiting for a long-term-care bed: bed blockers. That is horrible. They don't get enough home care hours to remain at home, they get put in crisis, and there is no long-term-care bed for them to move on to. They're forced to go into the hospital, and now we're calling them bed blockers. That is wrong. I want people to stop doing that because it's not their fault; it's the system's fault. We need to change how we do things in Ontario. We need to put the focus on the patient first, on the senior resident in a long-term-care home first.

Just to the point, again, talking about when we had that election: We had a platform that talked about how many beds we needed. We need to understand the demographics of each region and talk about the accessibility and the availability of beds everywhere. I encourage the member from Brantford–Brant to look at the platform, and know that those ideas weren't just concocted, like your own leader's, the Premier's, because, really, your platform was maybe eight pages or whatever and there were no details. You had big words but no substance. And then you hide behind those big words, like “efficient government,” when

it comes to changing legislation in Toronto and pulling a “notwithstanding” clause and justifying that.

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Read our platform. You'll see that these things were thought out. I've only been here for seven years—a very short time—but these things have been thought out long before there was an election in 2018, because we all heard the stories. We talked to the experts. We talked to the stakeholders. That's how we comprised our plan, our policy, in a way to make sure we were dealing with the people in need.

I want this member to really think about what he said and support this motion, because you need to understand there is a crisis in this area, and there is a crisis in Ontario. That's why we're at this point today.

I want to wrap up by thanking everyone who contributed to the opposition day motion, and the member from Brantford–Brant for his thoughts as well. But you've got to get beyond your Conservative agenda when it comes to helping people in this Legislature because we all are here to do the same thing and to do the right thing. We have a lot to contribute and say. To constantly dismiss the fact—that we don't know what we're doing, we don't have the numbers—it's incorrect, and it's not genuine when we are in this House trying to make a better life for everyone in Ontario.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased to rise and discuss the motion from the leader of the official opposition.

What is clear is that our government builds every day on the foundation seniors have created over decades of achievement. We value and respect the contributions that they have made and continue to make. We want to help all seniors age well, with independence and able to take advantage of the opportunities that arise in their later years and to be supported through the challenges.

Equally important, as a government, we're committed to working with our partners in health care, such as the Ontario Long Term Care Association, to put our health care system on a sustainable path for the future. In that regard, we must help long-term-care providers support a growing and aging population with increasingly complex care needs. That's part of the discussion.

Our government wants to work with partners like the Ontario Long Term Care Association to create additional capacity across the health care spectrum to support the growing demand for long-term-care beds and to ensure Ontarians get high-quality care that is best suited to their needs in environments that are right for them.

The government will continue to provide services to help care for Ontario senior citizens, particularly, as some of the members have already pointed out, as shifting demographics are increasing the number of people over the age of 65 and will increase up to 2031.

The reality in November 2018 is that the current long-term-care wait-lists are the direct result of the shameful neglect perpetuated by the former Liberal government over 15 long years.

I've come to this debate this afternoon with a background as a civil servant with the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, where I was an advocate for seniors. I also worked at the Ministry of Health. Some will know that, as a regional councillor with the region of Durham, I chaired the health and social services committee for seven years. Within that context, four long-term-care homes were part of that matrix overall. So I understand the needs that exist across Whitby and Oshawa in particular.

Having said that, the leader of the official opposition's motion calls for 2,000 not-for-profit long-term-care beds in Scarborough, Whitby and Oshawa. It's important to note that the health ministry has not received any applications for the 2,000 beds from the geographic area stipulated—not one. Demanding that all of these beds be operated by not-for-profit operators will make it more difficult for patients to get the beds they need, as it would restrict available beds to a handful of operators. That's a fact, and let's deal with facts.

The Long-Term Care Homes Act, which underpins the discussion today, requires that the minister and the ministry engage in a structured decision-making process for long-term-care licensing. You would expect that. Why wouldn't you? It's a planned, efficient way of making decisions.

The minister also takes into account the concentration of ownership of long-term-care homes and the balance between non-profit and for-profit long-term-care homes. That, again, is within the Long-Term Care Homes Act.

Speaker, all long-term-care homes, regardless of their ownership or governance model, must comply with the requirements under the Long-Term Care Homes Act.

We've taken, as a government, immediate steps in our commitment to create more beds while we continue to develop a long-term, transformational strategy to address hallway health care.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable Christine Elliott, announced that the government is moving forward with building 6,000 new long-term-care spaces across the province. This came just 100 days into the government's mandate. Of that number, 570 beds were allocated to the Central East Local Health Integration Network, which oversees the three municipalities in the motion being debated this afternoon, and 353 of those beds have been allocated to Scarborough.

We saw what happened to Ontario after 15 years of a Liberal government making empty promises and decisions without a plan. The motion before us is not underpinned by any plan. I didn't hear any of that discussed in the presentation by the leader of the official opposition, nor have I heard any discussion through the presentations of the other members from the official opposition.

Whitby is a town. Oshawa is a city and Scarborough certainly is, as part of metropolitan Toronto. These cities and towns deserve better, and this province deserves better. This province deserves a real plan, not political gamesmanship. That's what our government for the people was elected to do, and we are delivering on our long-term-care commitments.

Speaker, Ontarians deserve decisions based on actionable evidence. You would expect that, and I know other members would expect that as well. That's fundamental, a part of good government and sound decision-making—you would agree with that—not political expediency. Pitting municipality against municipality, as the official opposition motion would have us do, is expedient and it is political gamesmanship.

The former Liberal government failed to plan for an aging population and, as a consequence, did not make the necessary long-term-care investments. As I looked at and read the motion, what's clear is that the official opposition motion, and its intent, are continuing the Liberal tradition of applying ill-considered solutions to address a broader challenge.

A few months ago, I was pleased to participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Durham Christian Homes. It's in Whitby, on Glen Hill. It's a large complex: two big towers, with hundreds of seniors in it. Durham Christian Homes is the sole charitable, not-for-profit long-term care provider in Durham region. They operate another home in Bowmanville, where my daughter and granddaughters live.

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The ceremony was for the groundbreaking of Glen Hill Terrace. It's a new 160-bed long-term-care home in Whitby—160 new beds in a long-term-care home in Whitby. That joins three other long-term-care homes in Whitby. The Leader of the Opposition referenced one earlier in her remarks—Fairview Lodge—but there are two others. Taunton Mills is an example, which is now building, yet again, a larger complex that will include 230 long-term-care beds in Whitby. As stated on its website, Durham Christian Homes is building for the future, and is looking forward to opening the doors of its new facility in late 2020.

Speaker, I raise this example because there are different models. I think the MPPs here in the Legislature would agree that there need to be different models. There are different models of long-term-care successes, and Durham Christian Homes and what they've done in the town of Whitby is certainly a very special one. The seniors in that community whom I have the privilege to represent hold up Durham Christian Homes as a type of example of meeting the needs of current seniors and those seniors we anticipate as we reach towards the peak in 2031.

I think it's important, as part of the contextual discussion of this motion before us, to share some of the commentary from front-line providers and stakeholder groups that is so material to developing plans and successes and underpinning solutions to meeting the needs of seniors who need long-term-care homes, so I'll share two quotes. Some might be familiar. To begin, from Candace Chartier, chief executive officer of the Ontario Long Term Care Association:

“The investment this government”—meaning the Ford government—“is making to add more capacity to our system will help more homes move forward with their capital plans and will allow for more critical spaces to

open up for seniors who need a long-term-care bed. Long-term care is a critical component to addressing hallway medicine.”

An equally important quote that I’d like to share here with my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly is from Lisa Levin, who is the CEO of AdvantAge Ontario:

“We are pleased to see such quick action on Premier Ford’s campaign promise to add 15,000 new long term care beds over the next five years. This government recognizes that this added capacity is urgently needed to alleviate the burden on hospitals and ensure that seniors receive the most appropriate care in the most appropriate setting.”

Speaker, I’m running out of time, so I’m just going to sum up here. Ontario is aging faster than ever before, with older people in Ontario now outnumbering younger ones for the first time in our history. Across Ontario, there are now more than two million seniors. Our shared challenge together is to find out what works best, what comes next and what it really means to age with confidence, respect and dignity. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care is doing exactly that. Our goal is to ensure that seniors today and all of us who will one day join their ranks are able to age with dignity.

The motion before us this afternoon is ill-conceived, lacks any empirical evidence, is contrary to effecting the goal I just stated, and falls well short of supporting seniors and others requiring long-term care in our great province. For those reasons, Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: We’re talking about something that I care very much about.

When I listened to some of the people from the other side quote the average length of time in their LHIN areas that were lower than the average length of time in the Central East Local Health Integration Network, it shows that they haven’t done their homework. When you look at the Central East LHIN, there are three geographical areas to it. There’s the northeast part of it, there is the Durham part of it, and then there is the Scarborough part of it. The two we are going to be focusing on are Scarborough and Durham. Why? Because when you look at the stats, Yee Hong Centre in Scarborough has 249 beds. Right now, they have 2,543 people waiting for 249 beds. If you’re waiting for basic accommodation, the stats—and it’s there for everybody to see. I took the stats off the Ministry of Health website, so everybody just google that. You’ll get the same thing I do. So 90th percentile—that means 3,383 days. That’s about 110 months. That’s about 9.2 years to wait.

If you are waiting for Mon Sheong long-term-care centre, they have 158 beds, and they have 2,821 people waiting for those 158 beds. If you have the money and you’re willing to pay for private accommodation, you will wait 3,541 days. That’s 116 months. That’s 9.7 years.

So when the member quotes stats that are for the entire riding, it is to tell the people of Scarborough that it is okay

to go to Colborne, to go to Haliburton, to go to Kawartha Lakes, to go to Lakefield, to go to Peterborough, to go to Port Hope. That’s not okay.

The motion that we have put forward is very specific to areas within the Central East LHIN that are, frankly, some of the worst in our province.

Don’t get me wrong; I represent the people of the northeast, and we also have long wait-lists, but we don’t have wait-lists of 9.2 years.

I’d like to put on the record that the average length of stay in a long-term-care home is less than three years. I’ll let you do the math. For those 2,543 people waiting for Yee Hong, for those 2,821 people waiting for Mon Sheong, there’s a good chance that those people will never see the inside of those long-term-care homes. There’s a good chance that they will have to stay with their families.

The same thing is true with the Durham cluster. If we look at Fairview right now, again, if you’re able to pay for private, Fairview has 198 beds. They have 1,554 people waiting for those beds. If you’re able to pay for private, you will wait, on average, for—the 90th percentile time to placement is 1,817 days. That’s 60 months. That’s five years.

At Hillsdale Estates, which my colleague from Oshawa was talking about, they have 300 beds. They have 1,437 people waiting an average of 2,276 days. That’s 75 months. That’s 6.2 years. I guess you get the idea. If you don’t have the money to pay and wait for basic, then you will wait 2,869 days. That’s 95 months; that’s close to eight years.

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So why did we bring those specific requirements forward? It’s because the Central East LHIN is very big, and you cannot place somebody whose entire family, whose entire life, has been in Scarborough and tell them, “But there’s a place in Kawartha Lakes you can go into.”

Who are we kidding here? This would be inhumane. They’ve actually done that in northern Ontario when we were in crisis. They took people from Sudbury and shipped them to Parry Sound, away from their families, away from anybody they knew, and then we came to our senses and said, “Let’s not do that anymore.”

What happens when there is that long a period of time? I’ll tell you what happens. The family will try really, really hard to look after their loved ones. And as an 85-year-old looks after their 84-year-old spouse—it doesn’t matter if it’s a husband looking after wife or whatever, an 85-year-old person cannot work 24/7. They need to go to bed. They need to be able to sleep so that they are there the next day. But our home care system will never provide you with a good night’s sleep, and if you do, it’s because you did all of your home care work hours in one night and then you are on your own for the other six days. It never works. It always ends up the same way.

If you’re an MPP and you’re a new one, be ready. You will have families coming to you who just cry and cry in your office. I had never seen men cry before I took this job. I now buy Kleenex by the Costco box because people can’t take it any more. They come and they feel so guilty.

They don't want to let their loved one go. They know the wait-list is still years' long and they're at their wits' end. They can't take it any more. They haven't slept for I don't know how long, and they are just burned out.

Do you know what happens? One of them falls sick, ends up in the hospital, and the loved one ends up in crisis. What do you think crisis looks like? It looks like the hospital for that person also, and then the guilt starts because they know this person doesn't want to be in the hospital. They don't fit in the hospital. They need a different sort of care, but that's all there is.

And then we start to spin the big wheels and look at why 25% of the beds throughout our hospitals are full with alternate levels of care. Why? Because people in Durham and people in Scarborough wait eight, nine, 10 years to get into a long-term-care home. Their families do the best they can until they can't do it anymore, and it's still not enough. Then the loved one gets admitted into the hospital, and they are labelled ALC. It is not safe for them to go back home because all of their natural supports have fallen apart out of sheer exhaustion, and then they become the statistic who stays in the hospital.

Then we talk about, how do we end hallway medicine and how do we make sure our loved ones are cared for? We all have an opportunity here today to say, "Let's look at the areas of our province where the wait times make no sense." Wait times measuring seven, eight and nine years make no sense; wait times for 300 beds when there's 1,400 people, wait times for 249 beds when there's 2,800 people—the whole thing doesn't make any sense.

That's why we brought these forward and not Oakville. It's because we did our homework, Speaker. We looked at where the areas of greatest need were going to be, and we put forward a solution that makes sense to all. To put 2,000 new beds in areas where we have 2,821 people just for one home, 2,543 for another one, 1,554 for Fairview and 1,437 for Hillsdale—I'll let you do the math. The whole thing works.

I would encourage the members from the other side to look at this. We are giving families—thousands of families—hope. Let's do that for them. It is within our power to do that.

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

Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'm pleased to get up and reply to the debate that has gone on this afternoon.

I have to tell you, I find it pretty disappointing. We have a brand new government in place here, and unfortunately all they have done is defended the Liberals' long-term-care act, the Liberal plan for long-term-care beds. They're refusing to acknowledge that the crisis that the Liberals have put us in is going to get worse because they are simply going to follow the same route that the Liberals followed.

I think it's important for people who may be watching this debate to understand why it is that New Democrats talk about public and not-for-profit when it comes to the provision of things like health care services—and long-

term care is a health care service. It is part of the health care system, and it is part of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. What we don't believe in is what most Canadians don't believe in—that is, that people should be profiting off the provision of health care services in our province and in our country, frankly. This is a fundamental value that we have as New Democrats.

I know that the Conservatives are all about being open for business. That means if somebody can make a dime off your aging parent's back, then they're going to do it. Mr. Ford and the Conservatives are in for those folks. They're in it for business—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Two-percenters.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: They're in it for the two-percenters. They're in it for the people who want to turn a profit off the health or lack of health, the well-being or lack of well-being, of Ontario citizens, seniors, and our most vulnerable.

We fundamentally disagree with that, and proudly so, Speaker, because that is the wrong thing to do. It takes public money, it takes tax dollars, it takes that important public money and, instead of putting it directly into services for people, it puts that money or a portion of that money into the pockets of the administrators, as was being described, some making \$4 million annually to administer a long-term-care complex or a set of complexes. It puts money into the pockets of shareholders of these big private corporations that have hundreds or thousands of beds here in Ontario or elsewhere.

Why would we take our public money, our "tax dollars" as the Conservatives like to call it, and put it in the pockets of private interests instead of making sure that every penny possible is being put into the quality of service and the quality of care of our loved ones, Speaker? That is a big question that we have. We're going to continue to watch the Conservatives feather the nests or fill the pockets of their business friends, just like the Liberals did before them, when what New Democrats are always going to do is actually be the ones that fight for the people, that fight for Ontarians and that make sure that their public dollars are being provided to their services.

Look, I've got to say that the evidence is clear, as was described by my health critic, the member for Nickel Belt, a moment ago. It is very clear that this particular LHIN has a huge problem. It's the worst when it comes to the lack of long-term-care beds for people. So the pretense that these folks on the government side are bringing, that somehow we haven't done our homework—I'm sorry, you haven't done yours. What you're saying is that you don't care about the thousands and thousands of people that are waiting for long-term-care beds. You don't care that it's going to take eight, nine or 10 years, maybe, for somebody to get into a long-term-care bed. Well, we know that that person is not going to get that bed.

I have to say, if I were an elected representative, whether it be at the regional or municipal level or whether it be here at the Legislature, I would be fighting as hard as I could to get those not-for-profit providers and municipal providers to actually put applications in for long-term care.

But guess what? You have to know that there is an allocation of beds ready. Guess what that means? There needs to be money set aside in the budget for the allocation of beds. So we have come full circle.

We ask this government to do the right thing by Whitby, Oshawa, Scarborough and by the rest of Ontario and actually put money in the 2019-20 budget to grease the wheels for not-for-profit and municipal providers to make sure that those communities get the long-term-care beds they need, and those families get the dignity and respect that they deserve for their loved ones.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day motion number 3. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1540 to 1550.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Members, take your seats, please. Premier, take your seat, please.

Ms. Horwath has moved opposition day number 3. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Sattler, Peggy
Arthur, Ian	Hassan, Faisal	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Hatfield, Percy	Shaw, Sandy
Bell, Jessica	Horwath, Andrea	Singh, Gurratan
Berns-McGown, Rima	Karpoche, Bhutla	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Mamakwa, Sol	Stiles, Marit
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Vanthof, John
Gates, Wayne	Morrison, Suze	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras	Yarde, Kevin

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

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hillier, Randy	Phillips, Rod
Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Piccini, David
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Rickford, Greg
Barrett, Toby	Karahalios, Belinda	Roberts, Jeremy
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Kramp, Daryl	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	MacLeod, Lisa	Simard, Amanda
Coe, Lorne	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Crawford, Stephen	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Todd
Downey, Doug	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Dunlop, Jill	McNaughton, Monte	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Mulrone, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.

Fee, Amy	Nicholls, Rick	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Ford, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Park, Lindsey	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Parsa, Michael	
Harris, Mike	Pettapiece, Randy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 39; the nays are 70.

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

Motion negatived.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MAKING ONTARIO OPEN FOR BUSINESS ACT, 2018

LOI DE 2018 POUR UN ONTARIO OUVERT AUX AFFAIRES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 31, 2018, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 47, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi, la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail et la Loi de 2009 sur l'Ordre des métiers de l'Ontario et l'apprentissage et apportant des modifications complémentaires à d'autres lois.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, I am now required to put the question. Mr. Wilson has moved second reading of Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts.

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

I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1556 to 1557.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Wilson has moved second reading of Bill 47, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000, the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2009 and make complementary amendments to other Acts.

All those in favour of the motion will rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Harris, Mike	Pettapiece, Randy
Baber, Roman	Hillier, Randy	Phillips, Rod
Babikian, Aris	Hogarth, Christine	Piccini, David

Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Rasheed, Kaleed
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Rickford, Greg
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Karahalios, Belinda	Roberts, Jeremy
Bouma, Will	Ke, Vincent	Romano, Ross
Calandra, Paul	Khanjin, Andrea	Sabawy, Sheref
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kramp, Daryl	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Stan	Kusendova, Natalia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Scott, Laurie
Coe, Lorne	Martin, Robin	Simard, Amanda
Crawford, Stephen	Martow, Gila	Skelly, Donna
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McDonnell, Jim	Smith, Dave
Downey, Doug	McKenna, Jane	Smith, Todd
Dunlop, Jill	McNaughton, Monte	Tangri, Nina
Elliott, Christine	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Fedeli, Victor	Mulrone, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fee, Amy	Nicholls, Rick	Tibollo, Michael A.
Ford, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Hardeman, Ernie	Parsa, Michael	Yakubuski, John

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Sattler, Peggy
Arthur, Ian	Hassan, Faisal	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Hatfield, Percy	Shaw, Sandy
Bell, Jessica	Horwath, Andrea	Singh, Gurratan
Berns-McGown, Rima	Karpoche, Bhutilla	Singh, Sara
Bisson, Gilles	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Mamakwa, Sol	Stiles, Marit
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Vanhof, John
Gates, Wayne	Morrison, Suze	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras	Yarde, Kevin

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 69; the nays are 39.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE CLASSROOMS ACT, 2018

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

Ms. Thompson moved second reading of the following bill:

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

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

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm pleased to stand—

Interjections.

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

I'm going to ask the members that if you are not planning to stay to please move out quickly and quietly so that we can resume debate. Thank you.

Minister of Education?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Speaker. I do appreciate that.

I'm pleased to stand in the House today and speak in support of the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, which would, if passed, make important amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act, the Early Childhood Educators Act, the Teaching Profession Act as well as the Education Act.

I'm very pleased this afternoon to share my time with my very effective and hard-working parliamentary assistant, the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, Sam Oosterhoff. Together, we're going to outline how this bill, if passed, will indeed ensure safe and supportive classrooms throughout Ontario. We're going to do that by requiring that the discipline committees of the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood Educators revoke an educator's certificate for committing any act of sexual abuse of a student or child where the discipline committees of the colleges have found the educators guilty of such acts.

We're also going to provide regulation-making authority for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to prescribe other acts of a sexual nature prohibited under the Criminal Code that would result in the mandatory revocation of an educator's certificate.

We also will support our teachers to become even better prepared to teach the fundamentals of math. We will require teachers to pass a content knowledge test in math in order to become certified to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools.

We're also going to allow for the government to respond to the governance review under way by the Ontario College of Teachers. This review actually started earlier this spring. Based on the outcome of the review, we will entertain amendments relating to the council which could allow the government to introduce changes that could better serve and protect the public interest in regulating Ontario's teaching profession.

We also will support students and their families when making requests to bring their service animals into schools and classrooms across the province, further supporting students with special needs.

Again, I want to commend my colleague, friend and parliamentary assistant, Sam Oosterhoff from Niagara West—Glanbrook, for doing such great work. We had people in the House earlier this morning, and they are very much appreciative that we are walking our talk and making sure that the supports are in place to support students with special needs.

Further to that, our government has proclaimed sections in the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act that will require the colleges to provide funding for therapy and counselling for children

and students who have alleged that they were the subject of sexual abuse or an act of child pornography committed by an educator in the course of the educator's practice. These sections will come into force on January 1, 2020.

Now, more than ever, it is important for students throughout this amazing province to graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in work, school and beyond. We have heard this loud and clear from parents, employers and students themselves. Students are even telling us that they do not have the skills they need to go out and feel confident in securing a job.

I'm so proud to say that it's the PC government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, that has hit the pause button. We're listening and making sure we get it right once and for all. We need to make sure we're engaging youth and creating the right climate in which they feel safe, can grow and ultimately realize their dreams.

To accomplish this, we must ensure that all students receive the education and supports they need to support a career path that aligns with their interests and abilities, while building on their capacity to adapt as the world around them changes. Whether they live in Toronto, North Bay, Windsor, Vankleek Hill, Kenora, Palgrave, Caledon, Smiths Falls or even Belgrave in Huron county, students require tools that will enable them to pursue an apprenticeship, attend a college or university, or immediately enter the workplace or community.

Since our government has taken office, we have been working on finding ways to put our publicly funded education system back on track. Recently, we embarked on the largest province-wide consultation in the history of this province to engage parents and the people of Ontario on reforming our publicly funded education system. We're engaging everyone—parents, kin parents, grandparents, students, guardians, teachers and school administrators to only name a few—on a wide spectrum of topics. They include financial literacy; improving math scores; engaging more people in science, technology and engineering; and developing an age-appropriate health and physical education program.

Since we launched the consultation on September 28, the feedback has been tremendous. I'm very confident the entire realm of feedback that we're getting will help us make further education reforms in the future. Some of the most popular topics so far have included how to better manage the use of cellphones in the classroom, and how we can better prepare students with necessary job skills and life skills.

I want to talk about life skills for a moment. It was interesting. When I attended the Ontario Chamber of Commerce AGM and facilitated a round table, I heard from one employer talking about how our students need coping skills. They need an opportunity to develop resiliency. He went on to say, in terms of a couple of new hires in his organization, that one new hire who was experiencing their first performance review broke down in tears. It was a good review, but the pressure of having their performance reviewed was very stressful for that individual. Another individual, believe it or not, actually brought a parent with him for the performance review.

Somewhere along the line over the last 15 years, we have failed our students. We need to make sure that they are being equipped so that they can cope, they can feel confident in their skills and they can have hope for a really good future in whatever career path they choose.

I even want to touch on the fact that recently, in one of the telephone town hall conferences that we had, I was taken aback a little bit. I'm sure some people will be ready to pounce on what I'm about to say, because I do come from an agricultural riding, but I honestly was very pleased to hear that there were some comments around the need for food literacy. Students don't know how to prepare a meal anymore. Students don't know that if they buy a bag of potatoes and they look for and find a pork loin or some beef on sale, and vegetables, they could feed a family of four for under \$15. So many people don't realize that. They just go and they buy that processed food in a box or they can only get to a convenience store and buy what that convenience store has on hand. It warmed my heart that people around this province realize we need to recognize the importance of food, the business of food and, most importantly, how to prepare it properly. Because you know what? It would leave more money in the pockets of families.

That's the type of feedback we're getting. For those who haven't already participated, I invite everyone to go to fortheparents.ca. We have a variety of ways that people can participate in this consultation. First, there is an online survey. It follows a guided approach that allows the public to provide feedback on seven very important streams: STEM—science, technology, engineering and math—life skills; job skills; financial literacy; and the health and physical education curriculum. We have an "other" category which food literacy fell into.

1610

Do you know what? I am very pleased to share with you Speaker, as well, that people are taking the time not to just parachute in and comment on one of the themes. People are being very thoughtful and sharing their ideas on cellphone use in the classroom. They're sharing their ideas on job skills and supporting students into the future. That's the good news in all of this. We're looking at all of this data and taking it very, very seriously.

The second avenue where people can participate in our consultation is the open submission platform that allows responders—individuals or groups—to go into more detail on topics that they might have a strong opinion on. We're accepting reports and emails. They can either email it directly to us or attach it through the fortheparents.ca forum.

Finally, the telephone town halls are an open discussion which allow analysts to hear the perspectives of responders organically, as ideas are shared in a live format.

I'm pleased to share with you that just last week, we announced 10 more dates, 10 more telephone town halls across this province, to address the debate. That's good news. People want to be engaged, Speaker, and I am pleased to share with everyone that these consultations will continue until December 15.

To those of you who have already provided thoughtful and meaningful feedback: Thank you so much. Invite more to participate. Again, people are taking time to share what's working and what's not in the classroom, and it's providing us with such rich data. I have every confidence that when we pull the data together in our final report, it will provide a pathway forward for years to come for the students—the pages that we have here in the House right now, their friends and their family members, as well as every other student across this province.

It's incredible. As I was talking about data, I want to share with you that it's incredible, what valuable data and information can be collected when people have a chance to have their voices heard. For the last 15 years in Ontario, people throughout this province did not have that chance. I'm really, really appreciative that the Premier and my colleagues have allowed me this opportunity to conduct this consultation.

Speaker, in our short time in office, we have demonstrated that we are absolutely dedicated to getting it right and strengthening our publicly funded education system for years to come. Bill 48 is another important step in proving that very thing. The Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, if passed, will not only ensure that students and children are learning in safe and supportive spaces, but we are going to make sure that we have one of the best education and early years and childcare systems in the world, for years to come.

By moving forward with the changes proposed in Bill 48, we're sharing a clear message: The health, safety and well-being of children and students in this great province is our number one priority.

The proposed amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act make it clear that our government has zero tolerance for sexual abuse of Ontario's students and children. Speaker, I can't emphasize that point enough to you and to every member in this House. The previous government did not go far enough. They did not do everything in their legislative power to ensure that students and children are able to learn in an environment in which they feel safe.

In January 2018, through the Toronto Star, we learned of a troubling situation that had transpired under the Liberal watch and that our PC government is going to bring to an end. A teacher who had sexually harassed a colleague was shifted quietly to another school. Unfortunately, that same teacher was engaged in a profoundly inappropriate relationship with a student. Despite the fact that this teacher pleaded guilty to psychological and sexual abuse of the student, his teacher's licence was not revoked.

Here are a few lines, Speaker, from that Toronto Star article from last January:

“The messages came in from her high school teacher, sometimes until 2 a.m.

“‘Please don't leave me.’

“‘If I lose you, I'll die.’

“He pleaded with her not to tell administrators what happened between them.”

Speaker, this is a teacher who clearly had behaved in an egregious manner. Yet he was shifted quietly from one

school to another, only to do it again, and this time it was with a student. This is a situation no person should ever endure, let alone a student or a child.

At the teacher's disciplinary hearing before the Ontario College of Teachers, he pleaded guilty to psychological and sexual abuse. The discipline committee ordered that he be reprimanded, that his licence be suspended for two years and that he complete coursework on the college's ethical standards and maintain appropriate boundaries with students. This is after he was found guilty of two different absolutely horrible acts. Speaker, that's not good enough. That's not good enough in Ontario. Our government believes that the ramifications did not go far enough and they were totally unacceptable.

At the time of that incident, the law here in Ontario stated that the mandatory revocation of a licence can only occur if the sexual abuse falls under a predetermined list of sexual activities. Astonishingly, activities such as groping or making sexual comments were not enough to ensure that a teacher never stepped foot in a classroom again.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague across the aisle, who I respect very much, the member from London West, was quoted in this same Toronto Star article last January, calling for the very thing I am proposing to you here today: taking further action to ensure the well-being of our children in our classrooms throughout Ontario. With regard to the Liberal bill, the Protecting Students Act, that member from London West went on to say in the article, “This bill should be strengthened. Very serious and egregious sexual misconduct can take place that doesn't fall into those specific acts and should be grounds for revocation of a licence.”

The member from London West also added, “It's indefensible to have a teacher who has engaged in those kinds of activities with a student in front of a classroom.” I agree, Mr. Speaker, so today I stand here and very proudly state that our PC government agrees. The previous government should have pushed harder to ensure the protection of our children, and I'm pleased, as I said, to stand here before you today on behalf of the PC government and Premier Ford. Collectively, we believe in taking action now.

If the Ontario College of Teachers Act, under the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, were in place at that time, this teacher would have lost his licence. If passed, the proposed amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act, also known as the OCTA and the ECEA respectively, would ensure that educators who are found guilty of any act of sexual abuse, not just those acts currently contained in the narrow list of specified acts, would be subject to mandatory revocation of their certificates of registration. More stringent provisions are being proposed due to the unique nature of the professions of teachers and early childhood educators. Namely, such educators are in a position of trust and authority and work with a vulnerable segment of society.

In addition, if the proposed amendments are passed, educators found guilty by the college's discipline committees of a prescribed sexual act that is prohibited under the

Criminal Code would also be subject to mandatory revocation.

Speaker, I would like to be clear: We acknowledge that educators may need to speak about physical health, which may include speaking about sex or remarks that are pedagogically appropriate. Moreover, we also acknowledge that educators may assist children and students with their care and hygiene. To that end, the proposed amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act, the Early Childhood Educators Act and the Teaching Professions Act would clarify that sexual abuse of a student or child does not include touching or behaviours that are a necessary part of an educator's professional responsibilities, specifically those acts that are necessary for the purposes of diapering, toileting, washing or dressing, as well as remarks that are pedagogically appropriate.

Again, Speaker, since the day we took office, our government has been focused on ensuring that our education system accomplishes two goals: respecting parents and ensuring that our children are prepared for a bright future. We promised to get back to the basics, and sadly, only half of Ontario grade 6 students meet provincial math standards. That happened on the Liberals' watch, no two ways about it.

1620

By the time they get to grade 9, more than half of applied math students are failing to make the grade, and that is unacceptable. I've been asked, "When it comes to math, why are you so sure that math scores are low because teachers don't have the knowledge?" Well, Speaker, I can tell you that we've seen evidence that if teachers are not confident in the fundamentals of math, they are sometimes hesitant to teach math.

I recently attended the Rural 2 Rural conference in Blyth, where John Stackhouse of the Royal Bank of Canada shared a new report that came out this past year called *Humans Wanted*. There were six things that they outlined, but particularly the second point I want to share with everyone in this House today. Their second point read:

"Math is a big plus.

"Like it or not, numbers are here to stay. For over the next four years, 70% of job openings will place significant importance on math and numeracy skills. The ability to factor quantitative and spatial information into your decision-making ... adds up to career success."

This report endorses our position that math matters. How can anyone argue that a strong background in mathematics would not open up more doors for students down the road? We need to make sure we're giving students, as well as those teaching them, the support they need to succeed.

Another example that supports this is that several years ago I was at a math-letics competition in my own riding, hosted by the Grey-Bruce chapter of Professional Engineers Ontario. I was followed out of that event by a parent who had just received his child's score and the overall results of the EQAO from the previous year. He agreed with us that we are failing our students and we need to do better. Our first step to fix this problem was to release a

teachers' guide and a parent fact sheet that emphasizes the fundamental math concepts and skills that students are expected to know in each grade in order to meet the current curriculum.

I look forward to continued debate on this particular issue. I want to ensure that my colleague has time to talk about another very important aspect of this bill. We are looking at supporting our students with special needs and making sure we have a consistent approach to dealing with support dogs.

At this time, I'm going to conclude my remarks. I look forward to hearing additional debate and what we hear from the very hard-working member from Niagara West–Glanbrook.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Niagara West–Glanbrook.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you, Speaker. It's an honour to be able to stand in the House today and add my remarks to Bill 48, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act.

I'm pleased to stand in the House today with Minister Thompson in support of this important piece of legislation, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act. I want to thank the minister for sharing her time with me this afternoon to highlight an important piece of this proposed legislation. This is the first piece of education legislation tabled by our government. As the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, I'm so very proud of the work our team has done and is continuing to do to improve education in the province of Ontario. It's what we were elected to do, and it's yet another promise made, promise kept.

I'm proud to support this proposed piece of legislation for a number of reasons today. As Minister Thompson already outlined, this bill is designed to put students, families and educators first by making our schools safer and ensuring that there is a more supportive school environment for all.

It is designed to protect children from sexual abuse committed by an educator, as defined in the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act, by requiring that those found guilty of such abuses by the discipline committee of the colleges would be subject to the mandatory revocation of their certificates of registration. It is intended to move our students' math achievements in the right direction by better preparing new teachers for fundamental math instruction. It is meant to give parents and the public a stronger voice when it comes to the governance of the teaching profession by allowing the government to respond to the governance review under way by the Ontario College of Teachers to better serve and protect the public interest in regulating Ontario's teaching profession.

But with my time this afternoon, Mr. Speaker—my apologies. With my time this afternoon, Speaker, I would like to focus on the positive impact that this bill, if passed, would have on the lives of many students with special needs across our province.

Across the province, we know that many Ontarians benefit from the support of service animals in many

aspects of their lives. For example, guide dogs assist blind and visually impaired individuals by negotiating traffic and helping them to avoid obstacles in their paths. Other service animals may help alert people of seizures or provide support for people who use manual or power wheelchairs. We also know that some students in our province rely on the assistance of service animals in their school environment. This includes children with special education needs, such as students with autism spectrum disorder and mental health needs. Students with special education needs may require a wide range of programs and services in order to gain meaningful access to education, which may in some cases also include the use of a service animal.

Research demonstrates that service dogs perform a number of so-called invisible tasks that contribute to the cognitive functioning of students with autism. Families of children with autism report that the acquisition of a service dog increases the social skills of their child and results in a reduction of tantrums and social discomfort. Service dogs have been proven to provide increased safety for the child; help control the child by commanding the dog; passively teach the child responsibility; lower aggression and frustration levels, leading to positive behavioural changes; provide comfort when the child is upset; add a degree of predictability to social settings for both the child and parents; and reduce social stress levels, allowing greater participation in education as well as social and leisure activities.

These are all true, as a nine-year-old boy, the son of my colleague, who I recently had the pleasure of talking to and hearing his story, has told me. I had the opportunity on Saturday evening to have a conversation with Kenner Fee. Kenner has an uncontested disability, and medical professionals advised that Kenner needed a service dog in the classroom. Kenner could evidence to me that his service dog, a black lab, functioned to help him feel calm, refrain from bolting and sleep. The dog was overall able to help Kenner with his learning experience. For Kenner, the longer he goes without his service dog, the worse his anxiety becomes. This has made learning and the school environment an unpleasant experience for Kenner at times.

Unfortunately, the local school board, the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, denied his parents' request that Kenner attend school with a service dog, on the basis that he was performing well at school and that they failed to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate how Kenner's service dog would meet his educational needs. When I spoke with Kenner over the weekend, Kenner told me that when his service dog, Rickman, was with him, a lot of his fears disappeared and he was able to function much better in the classroom. Kenner told me that he thought it would be important for children like him across Ontario to access their service dog when needed. Speaker, the important thing to recognize in all of this is that a safe learning environment is not only about grades and performance but also about a student's overall well-being.

This case was brought to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal and they stood with the school board's decision.

As a result of that decision, many children with special needs are being denied a safe and healthy learning experience. This is due to a lack of legislative framework. This case demonstrates the serious and unfair accessibility barriers that students with disabilities too often still face in Ontario's education system. It shows that families like that of Kenner Fee are repeatedly required to fight against the same barriers at school board after school board after school board.

Kenner happens to be the son of my colleague the member for Kitchener South–Hespeler, and I want to take this time to thank the member for her extraordinary work in championing her son's cause, and the cause of many more children with special needs. She is an excellent representative for her community and someone I am proud to call a friend. Thank you for all your work.

We know, unfortunately, that Kenner's story is not unique. Although Kenner had a strong representative in his mother, who was willing to fight with the courts and take it all the way to the highest level possible to make sure that changes happen—in fact, this has been one of the reasons that she also decided to run for office—unfortunately, there are far more families that continue to face barriers when requesting that a service dog or animal accompany their child at school.

One of the reasons I'm a proud Progressive Conservative is that we understand the importance of lifting up the vulnerable and helping those in need. As someone who has family members with special needs, I know the difficulties and amazing joys that come with these challenges. Ontarians with special needs have unique gifts and are incredibly important contributors to our beautiful province. They are worthy of respect, dignity and acknowledgment and also of assistance, where possible.

1630

Speaker, last Friday I had the opportunity to meet with one of my constituents, Michael Jacques, and his father, Marcel. Michael is also on the autism spectrum and an incredibly bright light and advocate for his community. In his twenties, Michael works at a local Sobeys in his hometown of Fonthill. He is also a Special Olympian who was recently the best man at his friend's wedding. He also serves on government relations boards for advocacy organizations.

Perhaps most impressively, although Michael cannot read or write, he self-published a remarkable book called *Here's My Book*. You can go to heresmybook.com to order a copy. Most of my staff did. I did. I highly recommend it. He created this book through voice-to-text technology on an iPad, telling his life story. He also recently spoke at Apple Canada's headquarters and has been on breakfast TV a few days ago.

Michael is an inspiration to myself and to so many in his community. I'm proud to be able to represent fine constituents like Michael. I know that, like Michael, Kenner as well will continue to blow away expectations and contribute in amazing ways in the future, as so many of our youth and adults with special needs do. Often

individuals like Kenner and Michael just need some assistance, perhaps a friend or a family member or, yes, even a service dog.

While the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, sets out a framework related to the use of guide dogs by individuals with a disability, and the Blind Persons' Rights Act sets out a framework for the use of guide dogs for individuals who are blind or have low vision, there is no legislation in Ontario that actually addresses the use of service animals in schools. The Ministry of Education does not currently provide direction to school boards related to the use of service animals in schools.

Instead, it is up to each individual school board to develop their own process for managing service animal requests. Some school boards have developed their policies related to the use of service animals in schools while, unfortunately, others have not. In fact, only 39 school boards in Ontario have specific policies in place to address service animals in schools. This is out of 72 boards across the province. These policies vary from board to board, which means there is limited consistency across the province in how these requests are treated. What we need is consistency across the board—no pun intended.

We've heard from students and families and they have told us that the process for requesting the use of a service animal can be confusing and ultimately very frustrating. The lack of a consistent approach across our school boards has left students like Kenner without this important support, requiring their families to make difficult decisions when it comes to their children's education.

Our government for the people has always been clear that we are committed to supporting parents and students in our education system. Our Premier, Doug Ford, has been clear that we are committed to supporting parents and students in our education system, and our minister MPP Thompson has been very clear that we are committed to supporting parents, teachers and students in our education system.

Today, I want to make sure that families like MPP Fee's and like Michael's know that we are taking action to ensure their children have the supports they need to get the most out of school.

With the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, Ontario's government for the people has introduced legislation that, if passed, would provide for more fair, open and consistent processes for families when making requests for service animals to accompany their children at school.

The proposed legislation would amend the Education Act to provide the Minister of Education with the authority to establish policies and guidelines respecting service animals in schools for school boards to follow when creating service animal policies that support students with special education needs. School boards would then be required to comply with these guidelines in creating their own policies, with the expectation that all publicly funded school boards in Ontario would have a locally developed and publicly available service animal policy in place by September 2019.

I can't emphasize enough the importance of having a consistent policy across the province. One of the most beautiful aspects I've found of my job as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education has been the opportunity for me to have conversations with students from across the province of Ontario, to have the opportunity to have discussions with parents, with educators, from across the province of Ontario. Whether it's in Kenora, whether it's in Thunder Bay, whether it's Ottawa, Windsor, Niagara or Toronto, I have the opportunity to hear from students, parents and educators about the issues that matter to them.

On a special note today, I would like to thank the Ontario Autism Coalition for the excellent work that they do in advocating for children with needs on the autism spectrum.

Speaker, the changes that we're making today will not only make a difference for students and families, but will also provide clarity for school boards that have turned to the Ministry of Education for guidance on this important subject. To ensure that we're getting this right, we want to hear from everyone this proposed legislation would impact, including students, parents, teachers, educational assistants, administrators, school boards, unions, community agencies and far more. So if the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act is passed, we will ensure that there is an opportunity for them to be consulted in a meaningful way before any directive is provided to school boards.

I need to emphasize, as the minister already did, the importance of consultation here. We are proposing to ensure that all voices are heard, because we believe that these service animal policies should be locally developed to reflect the needs and priorities of communities across Ontario. We understand that there are many important considerations to take into account—considerations such as allergies and religious or cultural concerns that may need to be addressed to support students and staff. We also anticipate questions arising around roles and responsibilities for educators who would be interacting with service animals in the classroom.

We want to get this right for all members of our school community. That's why we can assure the people of Ontario that input from the public, our education partners and stakeholders will be central in this process, should Bill 48 be passed.

Speaker, I also need to emphasize very briefly the difference of perspective that this has from the former Liberal government. This is our first piece of education legislation that has been brought forward under this government, and I'm very proud to say it's one that we know will have a very real and positive impact on the lives of students in schools across this beautiful, great province. What we saw from the former Liberal government was, frankly, governance by photo op—and this is some of the concern that we hear in a wide variety of areas from stakeholders across education. We hear concerned parents who come up to us and say, "We heard that the Liberals said that they were going to take action for 15 years on some of these issues and never did." We had the former Minister of Education

under the Liberal government go out and attend rallies. The member for Kitchener South–Hespeler can speak to this. I had the opportunity to speak with her child Kenner over the weekend, and I know that he spoke with the former Liberal Minister of Education at that time—the member for Scarborough–Guildwood—and the member at that time indicated that they were going to take action. Time went on. Months passed. Months passed. What happened? Nothing. Unfortunately, that was the story of the former Liberal government.

Our government's commitment is not simply to sit there and govern by photo op, to go out and make statements and never follow through with that.

Speaker, we've seen this in other areas. I don't want to get off topic, but I think it's very important that we also look at some of the other areas in education. I'll give you an example. I had the opportunity to speak a few weeks ago at the Canadian French-speaking parents—and they spoke about some of the labour shortages that we're seeing in the supply of French teachers. It is a real concern. Especially in northern Ontario, we're seeing concerns around the supply of French teachers in the French system. Our government is committed to addressing the shortage. We're actively working, which means that we're reaching out to stakeholders, having those conversations.

But do you know what we're not doing—

Interjection.

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

The member for Don Valley East will come to order. Thank you.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Speaker, do you know what we're not doing? We're not making statements about things that we say we're going to do and then not following up on them. In fact, that has been one of the key trademarks of our government: Whenever we make a commitment, we follow through with that commitment. That's why, in this House, we're so proud of saying so regularly, "Promise made, promise kept." That's more than just a slogan; that's a way of governance.

1640

Unfortunately, we saw, under the former Liberal government, Madam Speaker, a pattern. A situation would arise, a reactive situation. Whether it was with service dogs within the schools, or whether it was a shortage of supply of French-speaking teachers, a situation would arise and we would see, unfortunately, the Liberal government react to that with a statement. They might even make a promise. What would happen? Months would go by. In some cases, years would go by. We would never, ever see action on these issues.

Unfortunately for them, the people of Ontario saw right through this. Fortunately for the students of Ontario, they put their trust in a party that was going to listen to the people. They put their trust in a government and in a Minister of Education who is going to make sure that all voices around this province are not only heard but are also listened to. I think that's an incredibly important distinction to make.

Why I say that, as well, is that when I had the opportunity to speak at this conference and bring greetings on behalf of the minister to the parents for French-speaking students at the Niagara Falls location, I had the opportunity to have a discussion with their president. They mentioned that the Liberals had made a lot of commitments and never followed through on them. That's something that, unfortunately, we saw in a lot of different areas as well, not only in education.

That's why our government is so committed to getting this right. We're committed to getting it right for local communities. That's why we can assure the people of Ontario that input from the public and our education partners and stakeholders will be central to this process.

We are confident that this is the right way forward to support students, families and school boards across the province.

We are confident because we continue to hear about the benefits that students across the province receive when they can access the supports of service animals.

On Saturday, like I've said a number of times, when I spoke with Kenner, it almost brought tears to my eyes as I heard him and his father speak about their experience within the system. As I know the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler has spoken about multiple times, they had to go through struggles in order to get Kenner the service he deserved, to get the service dog in that classroom like he deserved. No child should have to go through those sorts of barriers. No child—

Interjections.

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

I would appreciate it if the member from Don Valley East and the member from Brantford–Brant would take their conversation outside. I need to be paying attention to the member who has the floor. Thank you.

Back to the member for Niagara West.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: And yet, after all of the struggles that Kenner and his family went through, the dog still was not able to make it into the classroom. That's a real, real shame. No child should have to go through that when they're simply looking for a safe and supportive environment, a safe and supportive classroom.

That's why our legislation that is coming forward today is an opportunity to highlight some of the ways service animals are providing therapeutic, medical and emotional support to students in schools across Ontario. We know that in some high schools across the province, they have brought in therapy dogs to help students manage stress and anxiety during their exam periods. Elsewhere, service animals have been used to assist a student with routine activities that could otherwise pose challenges throughout the school day.

These, of course, are just a few examples, but for the students who are benefiting from the support of these service animals, it can make all the difference for their education and their well-being.

We believe, as Progressive Conservatives, that every child and every student deserves to show up to school,

each and every day, feeling supported in the classroom. We believe that parents and families deserve to be able to have their voices heard when it comes to what is right for their child's education and development.

We believe that when school boards seek our guidance, we must work with our educational partners to provide them with the support they need to best serve their students and school communities.

Speaker, it's my sincere hope that all members in this House share in this belief and will support this important piece of legislation.

As I begin to approach the end of my time, I want to stress that Bill 48, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, means that our government for the people is taking action. We're taking action to support students and families, while strengthening our education system for future generations.

As Minister Thompson outlined before me, we are taking action to keep children safe by proposing that all teachers and early childhood educators found guilty of committing any act of sexual abuse as defined in the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act by the discipline committees of the colleges have their certificates of registration revoked. Bill 48 will also strengthen protections for students and children by expanding the definition of sexual abuse to include any prescribed acts of a sexual nature prohibited under the Criminal Code of Canada. I think this is something that we can all agree with, Speaker. Frankly, I'm surprised that this action was not taken sooner.

In addition, this government has proclaimed sections in the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Early Childhood Educators Act that will require the colleges to provide funding for the therapy and counselling of children and students who have alleged that they were the subject of sexual abuse or an act of child pornography committed by an educator in the course of the educator's practice. These sections will be coming into force on January 1, 2020.

We're also taking action to get our students back on track when it comes to achievements in mathematics. As Minister Thompson has mentioned earlier, math matters, and by requiring teaching candidates to pass a math content knowledge test, we can help our teachers be better prepared and confident when it comes to teaching the fundamentals of mathematics. The reality is, Speaker, that in conversations I have had with teachers from across the province, they welcome this change. We've seen overwhelming support for the change that we are making today to ensure that math becomes a central focus, not only of the education system but of all Ontarians. The reality is, as was mentioned earlier, 70% of the jobs that will be opening in the next four years are going to require not only qualitative skills but incredibly important quantitative skills in the execution of those tasks. Children and students understand this.

Speaker, although I'm a few years older than high school students, I still have friends—and my little brother has friends—who are still in the education system. When

I speak to them, when I have conversations with my peers who are going into university or heading out of university, I ask them, "What are some of the things that you wish you could have been better prepared for? How do you believe that high school could have better prepared you for heading into university?" Often, one of the number one issues that comes up is math preparation.

In fact, just on Friday, I had the opportunity to have a call with a high school math teacher. Although he didn't live in my riding, he was saying that he wanted to connect with me just to thank us for this incredibly important work. I want to thank the minister for her initiative on this and showing that we are taking math seriously.

Speaker, the reality is that as we enter the new knowledge economy, as we enter the sharing economy and an economy that's based ever more on the importance of—whether it's coding, or STEM, or STEAM, or science and technology and engineering and math, we're seeing, of course, an incredibly important pressure on these young people as they head into university, and we're seeing some of them feeling that they're not prepared.

We see this already in the lower grades, and that's why we see half of grade 6 students fail their EQAO scores. That's unacceptable. Teachers are telling us that's unacceptable, students are telling us that's unacceptable and, frankly, parents are telling us that's unacceptable.

Just below my constituency office—my constituency office is the second floor of the building. On the first floor we have a math gym and a reading gym. When I talk to parents there outside of my constituency office, they say, "We shouldn't need to have this. We shouldn't need to be spending thousands of dollars"—if they can afford it—"to send our children to a reading gym, to a math gym. Our schools should be preparing our children for the jobs of the future." And frankly, over the past 15 years, we've seen the Liberal—

Interjections.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's true; it's true. And frankly, Madam Speaker, sometimes my heart goes out to and my heart breaks for those young people who are heading off to university, confident that they've been given the skills necessary, and running into a brick wall. I think back to when I first came into university and I had the opportunity to attend one of my primary economics classes. The university professor said to me—actually, he said to the whole class, about 500 of us, "I know I'm going to have to re-teach you all how to do math. But that's not your fault. The system failed you."

The reality is, we have some of the best teachers in the world. We have an excellent education system that produces excellent students. It's not the system that has failed them, Speaker; it's the former Liberal government.

1650

Frankly, our students deserve better. I'm so proud of working with a Premier, a minister, colleagues and a caucus who know our students deserve better. This is a first step of many steps that we will be taking to ensure that our students, as they exit high school, as they enter the workforce, are prepared with the skills that are necessary.

We have lots of examples from across not only North America, but really across Europe as well, where we see excellent skills already being taught in those secondary levels, and we're committed to doing the same here.

In Australia, the literacy and numeracy tests for initial teacher education students assesses initial teacher education students' personal literacy and numeracy skills through an online assessment tool. We are not the first one taking these steps. All students enrolled in an initial teacher education course, undergraduate or postgraduate, in Australia are expected to sit and pass the test prior to graduation.

Speaker, I can't stress enough how many teachers I've had reach out to me and express their support for this. This is also something that, when we talk to teachers—they understand the importance of making sure that these critical skills are being evaluated.

In Britain, the professional skills tests for prospective teachers assess the core skills that teachers need to fulfill their professional role in schools. This is to ensure that all teachers are competent in numeracy and literacy, regardless of their specialization.

We don't have to look much farther than our own backyard to see that members of both the public and the profession welcome these proposed changes. In fact, after attending a series of math content knowledge for teaching and learning workshops, a teacher from the Halton District School Board commented, "I feel much more confident teaching math to my students, because I better understand how the math concepts build on each other."

Just last week, following introduction of this bill in the House, the Toronto Star reported, "One provision of Bill 48, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, is to require Ontario teacher candidates to pass a basic math test before certification. This is a step in the right direction if teaching is to be respected as the challenging and complex profession that it is." I have to acknowledge here as well, once again, the incredible work that our educators do from every corner of this great province. On this side of the House, we thank them for that work.

The Toronto Star continues: "The Ontario College of Teachers was established in 1997 in large part because it was 'time for teachers to join doctors, nurses and other professions in self-regulation.' Testing is common before certification in many professions." Speaker, as we know that our teachers are the very best in the world, we want to make sure that we continue to develop supports and resources that will help them remain at the front of the pack.

In addition to the proposed amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act described earlier, Bill 48 also includes amendments to that act that would, if passed, impact the college's governance structure. There has been public criticism of the OCT that the public interest is not being served and that there is an inherent conflict of interest when teachers have the majority vote on the council of the college. Currently, the Ontario College of Teachers' governance model includes 23 members of the college who are elected by their peers and 14 members of

the public appointed by the government of Ontario. This model supports the belief that members of a profession are in the best position to set the standards of practice and conduct for their members and to investigate complaints of professional misconduct.

However, in September of 2011, the OCT commissioned the Honourable Patrick LeSage to review its investigation and discipline procedures and outcomes and its dispute resolution program. In his report, Patrick LeSage voiced concerns about union influence on the council, resulting from the majority of council members being unionized teacher seats since 2006, when six additional unionized teacher seats were added to the council.

As Minister of Education—as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education—

Interjections.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: That was a slip. I apologize.

I know that the minister has heard complaints from the public questioning the value, role, accountability and transparency of the college and its current governance structure. And so, I know that the minister's proposed statutory amendments would result in changes to the OCT's governance structure. As such, the existing provisions in the OCTA relating to the specific size and composition of the council, statutory committees of the council and panels of such committees would be repealed, and the number of elected and appointed members of the council would be prescribed in the Lieutenant Governor in Council regulation. The council would retain the authority to prescribe, subject to the prior review of the minister and approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the size and composition of committees of the council and panels of such committees. The appointment of the chair of the council and additional duties of the chair would be prescribed in a Lieutenant Governor in Council regulation.

If passed, these proposed amendments to the OCTA would come into force on a day to be proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor. The reason for proclaiming these proposed amendments at a later date is to allow time for the ministry to consider the outcomes of the OCT's governance review, which we know is currently under way and that the final report is expected to be presented to council at its December meeting.

Applause.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I'm not done.

This would also provide time for our government to decide on the number of elected and appointed members of council, the appointment and additional duties of the chair and prepare necessary regulations.

Speaker, the role of the OCT is to serve the public, not the profession. The new governance structure would help the OCT to meet its mandate to license, govern and regulate the Ontario teaching profession in the public interest.

I know that back in September a member of the opposition asked if the Minister of Education would say "what sacrifices—using the government's own words—parents, students and educators" will need to make. The minister at that time responded saying, "I think it's really rich, the

narrative that this party across the way is trying to create, because we campaigned on a mandate that we've been successful in pursuing, and that is doing everything we can to support our front lines. That includes our teachers in the classroom"—and I know that the minister has done so exceptionally well—"that includes our education assistants and that includes our students and parents.

"We are absolutely committed to respecting parents and delivering on our promise to ensure that our students are on the best course to success." That's exactly what this proposed bill sets out to accomplish.

In summation, Speaker, if passed, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act would require the discipline committees of the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood Educators to revoke an educator's certificate for committing any—I repeat, any—act of sexual abuse of a child or student where the discipline committees of the colleges have found the educators guilty of such acts. It would provide regulation-making authority for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to prescribe other acts of a sexual nature prohibited under the Criminal Code that would also result in the mandatory revocation of an educator's certificate. It would help students to become better prepared to teach the fundamentals of mathematics by requiring teachers to pass a content knowledge test in math in order to become certified to teach in Ontario's publicly funded schools. It would allow for the government to respond to the governance review under way for the Ontario College of Teachers, and the amendments related to the council would allow the government to change the size and composition of the council to better serve and protect the public interest in regulating Ontario's teaching profession.

Speaker, these changes will provide more confidence to parents that the government is working to keep our students safe. It will provide assurance to teachers that we are looking out to ensure that they have the competencies they need. It will provide assurance to students that we're providing them and their families the supports they need in the classroom, especially those students with special needs.

As I've outlined here today, we are taking action to support students, families and school boards and also dealing with the requests for the use of service animals in schools. This will provide that much-needed clarity. We're ensuring that this process will be fair, it will be accessible and it will be clear for all involved so that students with special education needs can access the supports they need to get the most out of their education.

With Bill 48, we're once again delivering on our government's commitment to support students and families and to support our teachers and educators by making our schools safer and more supportive for everyone. Speaker, do you know what that sounds like? It sounds like another promise made and another promise kept.

1700

Speaker, as I approach the end of my time, I want to thank you for indulging me today and hearing me speak about this important legislation.

I want to thank the minister for her initiative and strength on this education issue, as on so many others that I know she's working on. I look forward to standing behind her and supporting her every step of the way.

I also wish to urge fellow members in this House to support this piece of legislation. The legislation that we have brought out today is non-partisan. The legislation that we have brought out is about supporting families. It's about providing clarity for school boards, and ensuring that all students and all teachers have the tools necessary to have a safe and supportive classroom.

This isn't something that's an NDP idea or a Liberal idea or a PC idea. This is about doing the right thing. So I'm very confident that all members of this House will be able to come together. I look forward to hearing the contributions from other members in this House, and making sure that as we pass this legislation—and I hope all members will come in and support it—we look forward to the future. We look forward to the changing economy and to a world that is more inclusive and accessible for all.

Speaker, I want to take special notice and, on behalf of the government, thank the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler for her work on ensuring that this becomes a reality.

I'm so proud to be able to stand with members like the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler, like the Minister of Education and like our Premier, Doug Ford, and make sure that Ontario is a province that truly is welcoming to everyone.

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

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am glad to be able to add a few remarks after listening to the hour-long lead presentation from the government on what we have before us: Bill 48, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to education and child care.

I think folks across the province have been waiting with bated breath to see what would actually be presented by this government, with so much talk about education in this chamber and out in the community.

I'll say that there's not too much in this bill. There is a fair bit of hype, and I'll get to that in a moment, but there isn't the substance I would have wanted if we are going to tackle education broadly, or even if we were to try to reach the goal that the Minister of Education herself said, which was looking for ways "to put our publicly funded education system back on track." Those are the words of the minister, and I would say that that would be a great goal.

Having taught in the public education system, I would acknowledge that there are many ways that we could support our public education system, and support our educators and the caregivers working with our children.

Unfortunately, there's a lot that is missing from this bill, if we were talking about equity initiatives or supporting educational assistants and ensuring that we actually had the resources in place to support our children with special needs and special education challenges.

There's nothing in this bill about violence in the classrooms. That is something that we have spent a lot of time

talking about and bringing forward. I know that the government members who were here last session heard about it ad nauseam, and it's disappointing to not see that reflected in this piece of legislation.

But what is in the bill—they've mentioned a math test. There's one line in here about a math test. I am wondering who will have to take that math test. The Premier? That would be great.

Anyway, thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm out of time.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you to the members from Huron—Bruce—our minister—and Niagara West and Oshawa—great questions.

As mentioned before, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act is geared towards keeping our children and students safe and ensuring that they are better supported in their learning environment.

Also, this bill will help deal with the empty student spaces—roughly 55,000 in southwestern Ontario school boards alone, and across the province—by upholding a moratorium on any school closures until we have an opportunity to reach out to our stakeholders.

This bill will make it mandatory for all aspiring teachers in Ontario to pass a math proficiency test before receiving their licence to teach, aimed in part at addressing years of declining student scores in the subject. I hope that answers the member from Oshawa's question. In fact, Bill 48 will not subject current teachers to the math test.

We saw that the EQAO data released in August showed that 49% of grade 6 students met the provincial math standard last school year, down from 54% in 2013-14. Among grade 3 students, the EQAO said that 61% met the provincial standard in 2017-18, down from 67% in 2013-14. We know this is not acceptable.

A couple of months ago, I had a very good meeting with ETFO. It was interesting hearing them convey ways that we could improve the EQAO, maintain it—

Interjection: What's the name of that organization?

Mr. Will Bouma: The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario? Yes. Thank you.

It was interesting how they had innovative ways of improving the testing, maintaining the testing, making it cost less, and being able to develop a better math program.

In short, we know that the results are unacceptable. We're going to make those changes necessary for our students.

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

Mr. Jamie West: Just a few of the comments—the member for Niagara West went through the bill fairly clearly. I think there are things that we're all going to agree on. I don't think anyone is going to argue about service dogs and making them more accessible. It just seems like a no-brainer to me that we want—

Interjection.

Mr. Jamie West: Service animals; I apologize.

“We want to hear from everybody” was a comment that he said, and then—

Interjections.

Mr. Jamie West: Sorry, Speaker. I don't know if I have the mike or not.

“We want to hear from everybody” was a comment that was said. I don't know if that's really happening, because I keep hearing about this world's largest consultation that we're having and I don't know anyone who has been consulted. I know it's a lot of phone consultations, but it seems strange for us to put the bill out before the consultation is finished. The whole content of education is that you use your facts to make decisions, not make decisions and choose facts that fit them. I think there are things we need to worry about and look at. Maybe, when we do the consultation, we'll find out that the funding formula needs to be adjusted and updated, or maybe the training has to be taken care of, or maybe we'll learn that in 1998, the Conservatives decided to try something just before and abandoned it afterwards. Why put the cart ahead of the horse? It just doesn't make any sense.

The other concern—and it's almost on the last page of the bill—has to do with the Ontario College of Teachers. Two parts of this will be that the government will have the ability to prescribe the composition of the Ontario College of Teachers and the government will be able to prescribe the appointment and duties of the chair of the council.

I know that this government believes they're flawless and would never make a mistake, but let's assume that, at some point, someone else will be in government and they make a mistake. Do you really want the government prescribing what this council is going to do and determining what the chair is going to do without a third-party review, without any kind of—just allowing you to have your thumb on the scale all the time? That's a concern for me.

I think if we distract from the other stuff that is common sense and we all nod our heads and we focus on almost the last page of the bill, that's where the meat is.

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

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I can do without the commentary from the other side of the room. I know how to do the job, thank you.

Questions and comments.

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: I am so incredibly excited to rise today to speak about this bill and to speak about our government's ambitious plans around education improvement and curriculum review. I've got to start right off the bat, Madam Speaker, by thanking the Minister of Education and the member for Niagara West for their work on this incredibly important bill and this incredibly important work that we're doing in education.

I don't think that we could find a single member in this House who isn't interested in making sure that our children have a brighter future. That's something that we're pretty much all engaged on.

Whenever there's a new government, Madam Speaker, it provides a wonderful opportunity to press reset, to have an opportunity to look at what has been working, what hasn't, and what we can be doing better. That is exactly what we're doing here. From the material in this bill, we're

taking steps to make sure that our classrooms are safer for our students—something that all of us want to see. We're taking steps to ensure that our teachers are qualified to teach math skills, which, as we know, are incredibly important to ensuring that our students have success in this modern, 21st-century economy.

The work that the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler has been doing advocating on behalf of her son Kenner and others like him has been inspirational. The fact that we're now going to be able to see some really good improvements on getting service dogs better access to schools so they can be there to help those students is a wonderful, wonderful addition. Madam Speaker, I've been doing consultations across my riding, meeting with stakeholder groups and constituents, and people are excited about this.

1710

The message that I send to every single Ontarian out there, including the members of the official opposition: Go online to fortheparents.ca. Take part in this consultation. Together, we'll build a brighter student.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Back to the Minister of Education for her wrap-up.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I really appreciate the comments that have been shared in the House today. I think the member from Niagara West has done a great job as a parliamentary assistant and a champion for getting it right in the classroom.

This bill has the support of our entire caucus. I particularly want to say a thank you to the member from Brantford–Brant as well as Ottawa West–Nepean. You get it. You understand what this bill is all about. It's about safe and supportive classrooms. When we talk about safe classrooms, we're talking about getting it right once and for all.

We know that the previous Liberal government did not go far enough when it came to inexcusable behaviour threatening students in the classroom. I'm so proud to stand in this House today and say, once and for all, it's the PC government of Ontario that is standing up for students, and we're going to get it right. I know that Ontario is looking forward to our getting it right as well, because we've listened to them and we understand that students, parents and teachers alike want to feel safe in their classrooms.

When it comes to being supported, I just can't say enough about the amazing member from Kitchener South–Hespeler. She is leading by example with her son Kenner. They're out being a champion duo, if you will, advocating for why we need to ensure that our classrooms are supportive as well. As my parliamentary assistant said, it was stunning to find that there are so many inconsistencies across the province from board to board when it comes to supporting students with special needs.

I can't wait to continue on this dialogue, continue on this debate, because at the end of it all, at the conclusion of third reading, Ontario is going to know that the PC government of Ontario cares about our classrooms.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm pleased to rise today on behalf of the official opposition to begin debate on Bill 48, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, which makes significant changes to the Early Childhood Educators Act, the Education Act, the Ontario College of Teachers Act and the Teaching Profession Act.

Some may be surprised to learn that this is actually the first piece of education legislation tabled by this government. That is because this government has already made major changes to our education system without bringing it before this assembly. They rolled back the health and physical education curriculum, they made cuts to school repair funding, cuts to parent engagement grants, cuts to continuing education subsidies for teachers looking to upgrade their skills, and they cancelled Indigenous curriculum writing sessions that were already under way.

As we begin to debate this bill, we must keep that context in mind. So far, this government has put politics ahead of the safety and well-being of students. Instead of taking action to fix the most pressing issues facing our education system, they have prioritized austerity. Now, in their first significant legislation on this file, we have a bill that takes the very serious issue of sexual abuse in schools and cobbles it together with a number of very unrelated changes, like a new math test for teachers, policy changes regarding service animals and giving the minister really unprecedented power to completely restructure the Ontario College of Teachers.

In my remarks today, I'm going to discuss these proposed changes. I'll also take the opportunity to talk about what this government could be doing to truly ensure safe and supportive classrooms in this province.

First of all, let's talk about the mandatory revocation for sexual abuse. Bill 48 amends the Early Childhood Educators Act and the Ontario College of Teachers Act to expand mandatory revocation of a member's certificate where the discipline committee of the college finds the member guilty of professional misconduct consisting of or including all acts of sexual abuse or prescribed criminal offences that are of a sexual nature.

Bill 48 also proclaims existing provisions of legislation that, I just want to note, were passed in May of this year, to give a date 13 months from now by which the Ontario College of Teachers and the College of Early Childhood Educators have to begin providing funding for counselling and therapy for victims of abuse and harassment at the hands of a member of the college. The colleges were aware that they were to create therapy and counselling funding programs last spring. Those changes were meant to mirror those made in the Regulated Health Professions Act. In fact, the colleges governed under that act already have their programs up and running.

So my question for the government would be: Why do victims of abuse have to wait an additional 13 months before they can access support for therapy and counselling? This legislation seeks to stiffen the penalties for members of the college who have committed those

heinous acts but would delay the very necessary supports that victims and survivors of abuse need to heal.

The tabling of this legislation has also brought to light another really glaring contradiction in this government's approach, which is the rollback of the health and physical education curriculum in this province. By forcing teachers to use an outdated curriculum developed 20 years ago, Madam Speaker, the government is keeping essential information from kids, and that puts them at even greater risk of exploitation. The curriculum rollback means topics like consent and online safety simply will not be taught—

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Point of order.

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

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I don't believe the dialogue that's happening in the House right now pertains specifically to Bill 48.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'm listening to the member from Davenport.

Back to the member from Davenport.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This speaks in fact very much to the title of this bill, which is "Safe and Supportive Classrooms." I don't believe it goes far enough, and I believe that this government is putting our students at risk. They are not being kept safe and they are not being supported adequately with the rollback of that education curriculum. By forcing those teachers to use that outdated curriculum, the rollback means that topics like consent and online safety simply will not be taught. The minister knows this, Madam Speaker.

Experts are clear. Kids need to have this knowledge in order to identify and report abuse. You can see the contradiction here now between the actions of this government and the legislation before us.

In August—and I'll remind the minister of this—1,800 health care professionals signed a petition opposing the health and physical education curriculum rollback on the grounds that it jeopardized the health and well-being of children in Ontario. Dr. Andrea Chittle, a family physician from Guelph who was here at Queen's Park—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): If the Minister of Education would like to get up and challenge the Chair, she is welcome to do so. Otherwise, I would ask her to stop telling me how to do my job.

Back to the member from Davenport.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Dr. Andrea Chittle, a family physician from Guelph—

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Okay, I will. Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Stop the clock, please. Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Point of order: I would like to hear your explanation as to how the dialogue that we're currently hearing in the House pertains specifically to Bill 48 in terms of math, the Ontario College of Teachers, supportive classrooms in terms of support dogs etc., as well as reframing the whole review of the Ontario College of Teachers.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): This is an education bill. The member is allowed to speak about what is in the bill and also what is lacking in the bill. In my opinion, the member is on topic.

Back to the member from Davenport.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, Dr. Andrea Chittle, a family physician from Guelph who was here at Queen's Park to make the case, said:

"Reverting back to the 1998 curriculum is an affront to the youth of Ontario.

"It is imperative that children learn about difference and inclusivity, consent and safety. The human development and sexual health components of the 2015 curriculum are critically important for informed decision-making related to health behaviours and relationships.

"Ontario's children deserve a current, complete and evidence-based curriculum."

The petition was signed by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, the Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario, the Association of Ontario Midwives, Canadian Women in Medicine, the Ontario Association of Social Workers, the Ontario Medical Students Association and Planned Parenthood. At the same time, 26 school boards in this province, including those in Toronto, Peel, York and Halton regions, Hamilton-Wentworth and Ottawa-Carleton, spoke out against reverting to the 1998 curriculum.

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The Canadian Paediatric Society wrote to the Premier in July to express their concerns with the curriculum repeal. They said, "An out-of-date and incomplete sex ed curriculum is a potential source of harm for Ontario's children and youth, increasing the risk of misinformation, discrimination, disease and abuse."

In the same letter, they specifically highlighted that those risks are greater for girls and LGBTQ youth. I'm going to quote here again: "Parents, teachers, school boards and government each play an important role in ensuring that schools are a safe place for children and youth of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Studies have shown that almost one half of gay men and one fifth of lesbians were verbally or physically assaulted in high school because of their orientation"—safe schools. "Respect and consent must be a part of our sex ed curriculum if we are to reduce rates of sexual assault and gender-based violence. With one in three Canadian women experiencing sexual assault in their lifetime, a sex ed curriculum that is rights-based and gender-sensitive is essential."

Sandeep Prasad, the executive director of Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, told the Ottawa Citizen, "What we have to bear in mind as the fundamental goal of sexuality education in schools is really twofold, on a very basic level: It's respect for oneself and respect for others."

It's not just the experts, Madam Speaker. Parents across the province have expressed real concerns about the government's approach and what it means for their

children's safety in and out of schools. The Parry Sound North Star put it this way in an editorial, saying that youth "need to know about so they have a full understanding that the force of the law is behind them whenever anyone wants to touch them or commit any sexual act upon them. That includes family members, coaches, leaders at church and everyone everywhere."

As many members here will be aware, countless parents have written us to ask for clarification on the government's rollback of the health and physical education curriculum and to speak up in support of one that protects their children from harm. Facebook groups have sprouted up for parents and for students to organize against this move and share information. Queen's Park has seen multiple rallies, many of which I have been honoured to attend. I think the striking thing about those rallies is that they were organized, in many cases, by the parents and students themselves. Students like Rayne Fisher-Quann, Indygo Arcscott, Frank Hong and others organized rallies and demonstrations because they felt their voice was being ignored by this government.

I want to reflect for a moment on a small, little rally that happened here during one of our break weeks a few months ago. I was contacted on Facebook by a woman whose son, Mason, had said to her—he'd heard what was coming in terms of the changes and the repeal of the sexual education curriculum, and he said, "We've got to do something. We've got to do something, mom. What can we do?" So they put together a little rally. I say "little" because they didn't have the reach. They just sent the word out on Facebook. Still, maybe about a hundred people showed up at that rally, just by word of mouth. They did it with no resources, but you know what? Mason and Mason's mom said to me when I went to that rally, "We don't know what else to do."

I have found, going to those rallies, that the most important role I play, actually, is to just listen, to be somebody who has the great privilege of sitting here in this House, making decisions, being part of decisions that are made that affect those students—to actually listen to them, one on one.

This, of course, culminated in that historic student walkout on September 21, where over 50,000 students demonstrated against the repeal of the comprehensive health and physical education curriculum and, as well, the cancellation of the Indigenous curriculum-writing sessions.

One of the students who walked out had this to say to CTV News: "I think it's really important for people to see how important this is to us as students because we are the ones who ultimately suffer from this change."

In their statement on the rally, the student organizers wrote, "It's time for all students to stand up and fight for our right to education. We the students will walk out, protest, and demand the reinstatement of the 2015 sex ed curriculum and re-establishment of the Indigenous curriculum rewrite. We the students will not stop," they said. "We will not relent. Not until we win this fight." I remind you, Madam Speaker, that those same students are 16 or

15. A couple of years from now, in time for the next election: voting age. They make sure to remind me of that, I'll tell you.

Sharon, a constituent of mine in Davenport, wrote to me and to the minister to express her concern, so the minister would have also received this. She says, "I'm writing to ask for your support to not repeal the sex ed curriculum in schools. As a parent of two girls aged four and seven, and as a physician, I think it's critical that our children learn about consent, anatomy, family and individual diversity, and contraceptives. Whether some families like it or not, the reality is that LGBTQ families and people exist. In fact, we have many in our lives, and I have many in my practice," she says. "Repealing the sex ed curriculum, especially around LGBT issues, doesn't make people disappear. It only pathologizes and delegitimizes human beings, making it unsafe for them and children who may now or one day identify.

"At the same time," she continues, "not teaching properly about human anatomy and sex does not make abstinence and precaution more likely. It creates misinformed children who are more likely to get pregnant young or contract an STD. Please don't send us back into the Dark Ages. Let's help our children better love and respect themselves and others." It was signed "Sharon." I thank Sharon for her amazing letter. If the government truly wants to address abuse in schools, they would make sure that kids have the language, the knowledge and the tools to protect themselves, and that is only going to come from a comprehensive, up-to-date health and physical education curriculum.

Now, Madam Speaker, I want to speak to the math proficiency test that is also included in this legislation, which I find kind of strange given the name of the legislation, the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act. To me, I'm not really sure why this is added in there, but let's talk about it. Bill 48 would make amendments to the Ontario College of Teachers Act that, if passed, would make the successful completion of a math proficiency test a requirement of registering with the Ontario College of Teachers for a certificate to teach.

Now, I think it's fair to say that very, very little is known about what that test would look like. The government, in the briefings we have had, was not able to get any examples of similar tests in any other jurisdictions, or any evidence to back up the claim that a test of this nature would improve math scores.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Australia and Great Britain.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm glad to hear that the Minister of Education knows it, because the staff that met with us last week had not one example. Clearly they are now doing their homework, which is important in terms of success in education, as the minister will know.

Candidates for teaching certificates, Madam Speaker, are not tested on any other subject matter at this stage of their career, so this is really a move without precedent in Ontario. At the time that this bill was introduced, it wasn't even clear if this would apply to teachers who are already licensed. It's another example of how this government is

quick to make very symbolic gestures on an issue, but is not willing to put in the work to get it right when it comes to policy.

The root of the problem is not that teachers don't understand math; it's that classrooms are underfunded, stretched to the limit. This Premier is taking that problem from bad to worse, so while introducing this math test for new teachers, the government is actually taking resources away from teachers currently in the system. This is something that we in the official opposition have been trying to shed some light on, because it is really outrageous that the government has not actually announced any of this publicly. This is just stuff that we're unearthing in conversations with families and educators.

Last month, we learned that the government was cutting a subsidy for teachers who wanted to upgrade their skills in math—amazing—through additional qualification or additional basic qualification courses. Hundreds of teachers have been able to use this funding, and it really begs the question: Why is this government trying to put barriers up for teachers who want to sharpen their math skills?

In another stunning example, the government also cut the Parents Reaching Out Grants. That is very modest funding, Madam Speaker, that was used by parent and school councils to host workshops and speaking events. Really, the intention is to help break down barriers to participation in the education of their children, for parents and guardians who might face barriers like linguistic barriers, socio-economic barriers, even transportation-related barriers, for example, for those parents who are living in rural communities in Ontario.

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In many cases, those school councils—and most school councils do apply for this funding—applied for that funding in good faith. They were patiently waiting to hear the results of their applications for funding. Many of them—and I've had multiple calls on this—have done a great deal of planning for their events, including booking speakers, because they were confident that their applications not only met the program criteria but also matched the priorities that this government has identified.

That was the case for an event planned to encourage participation in STEM, science, technology, engineering—and we often add arts; STEAM is really the more modern way to talk about it now—and math. It was the case for another event that was focused on helping parents support their kids in—guess what?—math. You can't blame them, then, for being shocked to hear that this government would cut that funding just to save less than—really, we're talking about \$1,000 for each school. The maximum amount is \$1,000 in these grants.

To make matters worse, this government did not even have the decency to inform parent applicants, many of whom had spent hours and hours of volunteer time applying, that the funding was never going to come. There is no other way to explain this other than as a complete lack of respect—I want to call it what it is: a complete lack of respect—for parents and particularly parent volunteers and a complete lack of foresight into the impact that those stealth cuts to education would have.

The government is also supposedly in the midst of consulting Ontarians on the subject of improving math scores. So you have to wonder just how interested they are in hearing from Ontarians on this when they are already going forward with this legislation. It's a point being made by some of the province's largest teachers' unions, including the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, whose president, Sam Hammond, had this to say: "This government is in the middle of province-wide public consultations on math and other education subjects and has already decided that teacher candidate testing on math is the solution...."

"This proposed teacher candidate test will not increase math outcomes. If improvements are sought as a result of the public consultations, the government needs to look at the math curriculum and the support provided to teachers and teacher candidates. This includes professional learning"—remember, they cut that subsidy for professional learning—

Mr. Wayne Gates: No. Did they?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes, they did—"resources such as textbooks" that are actually "aligned with the curriculum and more time to build pedagogical knowledge around the subject."

"Testing doesn't grow confidence," he adds, "competency or proficiency. We need to ensure that our school boards and educators have the proper resources needed to deliver curriculum effectively."

Let me take a moment here, Madam Speaker. I want to talk for a minute about another provision in this bill. Again, it's an interesting one. Bill 48 gives the Minister of Education the authority to establish policies and guidelines respecting service animals in schools and to require school boards to comply with the policies and guidelines and develop policies of their own. It bears noting that 39 of 72 school boards currently have policies in place. Boards are receiving an increase in requests for accommodation of service animals because of the benefit that they can have for students with disabilities or special needs.

A consistent approach is certainly a step in the right direction. It's, in fact, something that has been sought by school boards. In a 2017 submission to the Ontario Human Rights Commission consultation on accessibility in education, the four school board associations—I won't list them all here—noted, "There has also been an increase in the demand and request for the use of service animals by students in schools. Many boards have service animal procedures and adhere to the code guidelines around this issue. However, as publicly funded school systems, we do need to consider competing rights for students and staff who have fears of service animals, cultural sensitivities, or physical or medical realities of their own. School boards are looking forward to the development by the Ministry of Education of an exemplary practice resource guide for the use of service animals in schools."

With that in mind, I would have hoped that the minister would meaningfully consult on this issue. I want to note for a moment all of the hard work of our Hamilton Mountain MPP, who has done tremendous work in this

area as well. I also want to applaud the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler for her advocacy. I appreciate that.

But it does seem like there is a disconnect, because we know, having talked to folks who have been some of the main advocates and who have been lobbying the government and previous governments for years on this issue, that they have not been consulted. We find that concerning. It's going to be really important that we get this right. I know everyone is hoping that the minister will meaningfully consult with those stakeholders, but as I have been pointing out, we may have a very different understanding of what meaningful consultation means, given their willingness to unilaterally act and, in the case of the health and physical education curriculum, their willingness to actively defy evidence and expert advice.

I want to talk a bit about the changes to the Ontario College of Teachers. Government communications on Bill 48, up until today, really, in the comments that were made across the way earlier, have focused on the three main aspects of the bill: the mandatory revocation and sexual abuse, the introduction of the math test and the guidance on service animals in schools. But buried in that legislation are measures that would give the minister sweeping new powers over the Ontario College of Teachers, and it really remains to be seen why.

The college, as you may know, is the self-regulating board of the teaching profession in Ontario, meaning that—and I'll just give you some examples of what that means—it sets the requirement for entering teaching, it certifies qualified teachers, it develops and maintains ethical standards and standards of practice, it accredits teacher education programs and courses to ensure consistent high quality in the preparation of teachers, and it disciplines those who breach provincial standards for conduct in teaching. Indeed, the Ontario College of Teachers is the largest self-regulating body in Canada. I believe the only other province that has a similar body is Saskatchewan.

The Royal Commission on Learning's 1995 report helped to inform the creation of the College of Teachers by including it as one of its four key strategic projects: "the professionalization and continuing development of teachers, the single most important key to any possible improvement in the quality of schooling."

The report goes on to say, "Our views here reflect our confidence in the professionalism of the teaching profession. And we take this position to its logical conclusion. Our conviction is that teaching should be a self-governing profession, with greater responsibility and greater autonomy for teachers. Our recommendation is that teachers would collectively, through a College of Teachers, set the standards for entry into teaching, maintain a register of those licensed to teach in Ontario, and determine the criteria for accrediting (or recognizing) teacher education programs, whether that means pre-service preparation or the ongoing professional development for practising teachers."

That self-regulation is important, because as the college itself describes, self-regulation means that the government

has delegated its regulatory functions to those who have the specialized knowledge necessary to do the job. The granting of self-regulation acknowledges that a profession's members are capable of governing themselves.

As it stands right now, the 14 college council members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and 23 are elected from among the members of the college. It was interesting to hear the member from Niagara West speak to this, because I thought his comments were quite telling and, I think, shed quite a lot of light on what the government's intention here is, because Bill 48 would remove that requirement and give the government the power to determine the composition of the council, as well as its committees and panels. The member opposite was quite explicit in what he believes the intention of that is, which is to limit the number of teachers on their own self-regulating body—which, I have to say, was not apparent until that moment, but now I think we know where they want to go with this.

The bill would also give the government the ability to choose the chair of the council and prescribe their duties. What's interesting about that is that the college is currently in the midst of an internal governance review that will include recommendations on the size and scope of the college's council and its 14 committees. Again, it raises the question about why the government would make this kind of sweeping power grab even before seeing the recommendation of the internal governance review.

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Madam Speaker, it's particularly worrisome, given that the government has already gone to such great lengths to drive a wedge between teachers, parents and students. I just want to refer you for a moment to the unprecedented snitch line that this government set up to report teachers who dared to continue to teach about consent or cyber safety or LGBTQ identities, notwithstanding the fact that the College of Teachers already has a system in place for the public to bring forward complaints about the professionalism of its members, meaning that the government snitch line was really just a duplication of work. We're dying to know how much it all cost in the end.

Our freedom-of-information request revealed that of 25,000 submissions received in the first month, none—none—were found to warrant forwarding to the college for follow-up. It was clearly another example of this government playing political games with the education system while ignoring the real issues.

Another element tucked into this legislation that deserves examination concerns the public interest committee of the Ontario College of Teachers. Now, this is very interesting. In August, when the government announced its education consultation, the minister announced that she would use her powers under the Ontario College of Teachers Act to, in fact, strike a public interest committee—that's the wording that was used—to help inform what we have all come to see as an American-style parents' bill of rights.

By "strike" the committee, I guess the minister meant "strike out of existence," because that's what Bill 48 does.

It abolishes the public interest committee entirely. We find this all very confusing, Madam Speaker.

That committee itself, I think it's worth noting, seems to have been ignored by the previous Liberal government and has not met in many, many months. That much is definitely true. But the fact remains that the government already has the power to appoint members and to ensure that it's fulfilling its mandate. We also don't know what the internal governance review would recommend regarding this committee and what role it could play. The college has a public interest mandate, remember.

I hope that the government's intentions on this become clearer as we debate this bill, along with its intentions for this so-called parents' bill of rights. So far in the consultation town halls that I've listened in on, many Ontarians have no idea what this government means by a parents' bill of rights. They have no idea why it's even being discussed. They just don't see it as a priority at all. Most of their comments say, "What I would like to be talking about is repairs to my school, or how we provide better supports for special-needs students," and that kind of thing. They want to see our public education system properly funded.

I also want to mention, while I'm on the topic of those town halls, that we have been hearing from many Ontarians who have said they feel they are clearly being screened out. We've also heard complaints from people who have called in to listen to these town halls and heard very frankly offensive comments. We've also heard from many who say that the call is generally characterized by a lot of confusion.

I would like to see at least one of these town halls actually take place in public. Wouldn't that be a radical idea: to have a town hall in public, where we could all hear, and people could get up and ask their questions and see the minister's response? That would be, I think, a step in the right direction, maybe.

The Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association has expressed grave concern with the proposed changes to the Ontario College of Teachers contained in Bill 48, saying that they threaten to transform the Ontario College of Teachers "from a self-regulatory body into an arm of the government."

I want to quote OECTA's president, Liz Stuart. She says, "What problem is the government trying to solve? What kinds of policies and practices is the government expecting a newly comprised" Ontario College of Teachers "to implement? Are similar changes in store for other professional bodies? The government should have been upfront about these issues. Teachers and the public deserve an immediate explanation as to what is really going on."

Madam Speaker, I think that when we talk about a bill that is called the Safe and Supportive Classrooms Act, you really have to look at the government's record thus far. With Bill 48, this government is asking Ontarians to trust it with broader, even more direct powers over our education system.

In the case of the math test, they're asking us to trust them to develop a test, without any information about what

it's going to look like, without any evidence that it will improve outcomes for students. And despite the cuts—I'll remind the members opposite again that we talked about the cuts that they are making to continuing learning for teachers already in the system—they're asking people to trust them that this test needs to be enshrined in law now, before this so-called consultation on math is even complete.

With the governance changes, they're again asking us to trust them to remake the entire regulatory body of the teaching profession in a way that suits the public interest, in the same bill where they effectively blame teachers for poor math scores, and just after creating a teacher snitch line.

Can I say, Madam Speaker, that what I have found, being a former school board trustee as well, and as a parent of two daughters in the public education system, is that what really bothered me the most about this snitch line and many of the actions of this government so far is the damage it does—the very considerable damage it does—to that crucial relationship of trust between teachers and parents? It's an absolutely essential relationship of trust. I hear this every day, not just from teachers who are concerned about that, but from parents who are concerned about that.

When I was a school board trustee—some of the members opposite may have been trustees at some point as well—if we got a call from a parent about an issue going on in the classroom, there's kind of a protocol, but we'd always encourage them to go back and talk to the teacher first, because if that communication isn't happening, if that hasn't already happened, then I'm not going to be able to do anything.

The fundamental way to solve any issue in the classroom is to talk to your teacher. Develop that relationship as a parent. It's really important, and we do a lot of work to try to encourage parents and give parents the tools to be able to feel empowered to have those conversations with teachers—which are not always easy, right? Maybe English is your second language. Maybe you have difficulty communicating in that. Maybe you're new to Canada and you're not as familiar with the education system here. So you need to have that conversation. If it doesn't work out with the teacher, then you take it to the principal. And if that's not working out, you go to the superintendent, and then you go to the trustee. That's really important because, again, it's making sure that that relationship between the teacher and the parent is at the forefront. It's crucial to the success of students.

Before we give this government the benefit of the doubt and before we trust them with these powers, we need to take a look at their record since coming into office. What have this Premier and this minister done? Let's talk first of all about one of their very first acts. One of their very first acts after the election was to cut the Indigenous curriculum writing workshops without any explanation as to why. Indigenous educators and elders had in some cases already travelled to Toronto to meet and undertake this really important work before it was suddenly cancelled at

the last minute. Madam Speaker, I want to remind this House that this work is part of Ontario's obligation to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, and to date the minister has not been able to confirm that her "pause"—which is a word they like to use a lot—on this curriculum will ever end.

When we talk about safe and supportive classrooms, as this bill attempts to do, we really need to consider what that means. Is a classroom that doesn't include Indigenous people and Indigenous perspectives truly a supportive one? Speaking to the CBC about the cancellation of the writing sessions, Indigenous educator Shy-Anne Bartlett said this: "The old education system definitely did a lot of cultural misappropriation. This was our chance and our opportunity to bring to the table something that was authentic and real, teaching our children the accurate histories of Canada."

My colleague the member for Kiiwetinoong has been tireless in making sure that Indigenous issues are front and centre in this House. He wrote to the Minister of Education in August, and he said this: "As a person who went to residential school myself, it troubles me that Ontario children may not learn about the traumatic experiences of many thousands of Indigenous children who suffered as a result of Canadian policy and law. Minister, delaying or cancelling Indigenous curriculum development will set progress towards reconciliation in this province backwards. Incorporating Indigenous content in our schools is vital to fulfilling Ontario's commitment towards reconciliation."

Maggie MacDonnell is a teacher who has been working for many years in the fly-in community of Salluit in northern Quebec. She actually won the Global Teacher Prize. Isn't that amazing? The Global Teacher Prize—phenomenal. This weekend she was at the People for Education conference, and one of the things that she reminded us of during that conference was that for some populations, education was oppression. So what does that mean for educators today? What leadership will government play in assuring that we begin real reconciliation? How do we reconcile the fact that there are communities in this province that don't have a school, or where schools are so mouldy and beyond repair that they're of little use, that they're not even meeting in them—they're not even going to school there—or where a 13-year-old can commit suicide because they feel so deeply hopeless? How does that happen?

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I was a trustee with the TDSB, the Toronto District School Board, when we passed the requirement that all of our schools say a land acknowledgment. At the beginning of the day, in every school in the TDSB, along with O Canada, they will read a land acknowledgement. I thought that was so incredibly important. But it's only important if we follow up with understanding and action. In fact, part of our introduction of that land acknowledgement was to ensure that there be follow-up in the schools, that it not just be a statement that's read every day that becomes rote and meaningless. It's more about, what is it actually

about? What are the questions it causes us to ask and our students to ask, and how do we talk about that? That is what that's supposed to be about.

I want to talk for a moment about somebody else who I think has done an incredible amount of work on this issue, particularly for Indigenous children in First Nations communities, and that's Charlie Angus, a federal MP. He literally brought to Parliament what we've all come know as Shannen's Dream. Shannen Koostachin said this: "School is a time for dreams, every kid deserves this." The truth is, we know that many First Nations schools receive less funding per student than provincial and territorial schools and zero dollars for things like libraries and computers and languages and extracurricular activities. Many also do not provide a safe and appropriate learning environment and may pose serious health concerns, including, as I mentioned earlier, mould, contamination, high carbon dioxide levels, rodent infestation, sewage and inadequate or a lack of heating.

Shannen Koostachin: Who was she? She was a youth education advocate from a Attawapiskat First Nation, who worked tirelessly to try to convince the federal government to give First Nations children a proper education. I want the members opposite to know that Shannen really was a youth advocate. She was a student herself in the schools. Unfortunately, she passed away in a car accident at the age of 15 before her dream could come true. But she fought hard, and others continued the fight in her name. On June 22, 2012, which was the day that Shannen would have graduated, construction started for a new school in Attawapiskat and it opened in August 2014.

I wanted to talk about that, because I really can't talk about education in this province without mentioning Shannen. She remains a very important role model for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and young people, who continue to carry her dream for safe and comfortable schools for all First Nations children in Canada.

Education is the second priority area of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action. In the report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls on Canada to provide culturally based education for First Nations children and to educate all people in Canada about Indigenous peoples to prepare them for the important work of reconciliation. I want to recognize the advocacy of all of the Indigenous children and families and the leaders who have fought for the right for their children to have an inclusive, caring and safe place to learn.

I also want to acknowledge the work of many young people. I mentioned earlier that it's also non-Indigenous youth, I think, who have been inspired. Many young students across this province, as I mentioned earlier—it was 50,000 of them who walked out of their schools in September to oppose the sex ed curriculum rollback. It's been reported like that, as if that's really—which was one of the main issues. But I can tell you that the students felt very passionate. There was not one student I spoke to at those various rallies who did not want me to understand that they were also there equally to protest the failure of this government to implement the Indigenous curriculum writing. That was as important to them as anything. I really

feel, again, that it's up to us to bring the voices of the youth, who are the most affected, into this Legislature.

I also want to talk about another area where I believe this government is failing in relation to school safety and support, and that is in terms of school repair funding. Across this province, even if you are fortunate to have a school at all, a school that wasn't cut or closed by the Harris government or the previous Liberal government, chances are your community school is in massive disrepair. In this government's haste to take Ontario out of the fight against climate change, a number of funding streams vanished, including one that was meant to put a very small dent in Ontario's \$16-billion school repair backlog—I say it and still I shake my head; I can't even believe it. Wow.

Interjection.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Believe me, it is true.

The minister will debate the amount of funding that flowed from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund thus far—as if honouring contracts that were already signed is some kind of benevolent act on the part of her government. But the fact of the matter is that the \$1.4 billion that was promised by the previous Liberal government represented the bare minimum in funding required to meet routine maintenance and repairs in Ontario schools, and the Auditor General agrees. With any cut that allows that backlog to grow, student safety is going to take a back seat without question. So, too, does workplace health and safety. Let's face it, our schools are also employers. Our education system is an employer, and those teachers working in those schools have to deal with the safety issues around the disrepair.

The truth is that this government has no plan to tackle the repair backlog, and that's despite the fact that the minister herself, during the election campaign, signed, as did many other members of this government, the Fix Our Schools pledge.

In the absence of leadership from the province, the federal government is now talking about making direct investments into Ontario schools. But let's be clear: The federal government has not stepped up until it seemed politically expedient for them; I grant you that.

It goes without saying that schools in a good state of repair, with heating systems that work, with windows that close, with water fountains that work with water that's actually drinkable—let's start there, something that the member from Waterloo has raised repeatedly in this

House—are absolutely essential to student health and safety.

We need to talk about the impact of school repair backlog on student success in subjects, yes, like math. You can't focus on learning any subject when you're shivering through class because the school's boiler is broken or you're sweltering in increasingly hot spring and fall weather.

I have to tell you, Madam Speaker, how many times I've had calls from parents who told me that their children were nauseous, got sick at school because of the heat. You can't learn in that environment. We have to do something to address it. And you can't teach in that environment.

I want to talk now a little bit about some of these other issues—because these issues are all converging. We have the rollback of the sex education curriculum. We know that we are seeing rising numbers of anxiety and depression among youth in our schools. We know that many students experience homophobia and transphobia and sexism.

Students in my riding started the “we do not consent” campaign. Students who walked out were concerned about their siblings. That was interesting. They were the most concerned, also, in addition to the Indigenous curriculum—they were really more concerned about their siblings who were in junior school and elementary school. They were really concerned that they wouldn't get a chance to learn the things that would keep them safe.

The truth is, I'm not really that worried about my daughters learning about consent, because I teach them that too. I teach them how it works and what's expected and why it matters, and luckily they all benefited from the new curriculum, as well.

But what I am worried about is the young person whose parents haven't taught him about consent. That is where we, as a society, have a responsibility to ensure that our young people and our children have the tools they need to understand what consent means. We can't rely on YouTube videos about consent to teach this. We can't rely on teachers to come up with all this themselves. It's an enormous amount of pressure. We owe it to our children, to our neighbours' children—

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1800.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
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Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
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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	
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Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
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Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
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Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
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Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
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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
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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	
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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	
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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	
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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	
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Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
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