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Mercredi
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 8 May 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 8 mai 2019

The House met at 0900.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIXING THE HYDRO MESS ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 POUR RÉPARER LE GÂCHIS
DANS LE SECTEUR DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 7, 2019, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy / *Projet de loi 87, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I've been advised that when we last debated this matter, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing had the floor and more time remaining on the clock, so I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. Pursuant to standing order 48, I move that the question now be put.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Clark has moved that the question now be put. We're satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

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

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

There is going to be a division as a result of the members standing. That means we will have a deferred vote after question period today.

Vote deferred.

MORE HOMES, MORE CHOICE
ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR PLUS DE LOGEMENTS
ET PLUS DE CHOIX

Mr. Clark moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 108, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing, other development and various other matters / *Projet de loi 108, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne le logement, les autres aménagements et d'autres questions.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I look to the minister to lead off the debate if he cares to do so. Once again, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you, Speaker. I want to start off by saying that I'll be sharing my time with the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, and the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

I am pleased to rise in the House today for second reading of the More Homes, More Choice Act. Last week, I first introduced the legislation that proposes amendments to many existing statutes to support our government's comprehensive Housing Supply Action Plan. That plan, More Homes, More Choice, outlines how we intend to transform the housing development system we inherited in Ontario. Speaker, it's a broken system that we, as a government, now need to fix for the people of Ontario.

Ce plan, « Plus d'habitations, plus de choix », décrit la façon dont nous allons transformer le système d'aménagement des logements de l'Ontario dont nous avons hérité. Ce système ne fonctionne plus et le gouvernement doit maintenant le modifier pour le bien de la population de l'Ontario.

Speaker, it's difficult to navigate and has led to a troublesome situation in Ontario. Prices are skyrocketing. It takes approximately 10 years to complete either a low-rise or high-rise development project in the greater Toronto area. Over the last 20 years, less than 7% of all housing built in Ontario was purpose-built rentals. The province's overall rental vacancy rate in 2018 was 1.8%, close to historical lows, and, as most members know, 3% is considered a healthy market.

We need to turn things around. The proposed legislative amendments I will be speaking to today would, if passed, help bring more housing, more quickly, to our province. They include changes to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act, along with an impressive suite of legislative policy and regulatory changes that will support our robust plan to address development challenges in Ontario.

These proposed changes complement what my colleague the Honourable Vic Fedeli, our finance minister, has outlined in our government's thoughtful, measured and forward-thinking budget. We must put the experience of real people first in everything we do—every program, every policy, every service change—and that is exactly what this legislation would do. Adding 10,000 housing starts per year is estimated to grow real GDP by 0.3% and create more than 15,000 new jobs over three years.

To speak plainly, Speaker, there's a housing crisis in Ontario. Every region of our province has its very own unique challenges. In the north, construction is expensive and the building season is very short, but the planning approvals process just doesn't take that into account. Some

municipalities, especially in northern and rural Ontario, have faced excessive red tape and administrative burdens—burdens that make no sense in the local context or market—and that needs to change. Costs are rising all over the province, straining people’s wallets.

I want to talk about a particular shortage that we see in the market, something we call “the missing middle.” In fact, the Toronto Region Board of Trade states that, “With more than one million people expected to call the Toronto region home in the next decade, governments need to adopt measures that increase the amount and variety of housing available to residents.”

The More Homes, More Choice Act is about unlocking the construction of all kinds of housing, from ownership to rental housing, whether built by private home builders or non-profits. Our action plan will help give people more choice and help bring costs down.

This plan is complemented by our Community Housing Renewal Strategy, which helps people with low and moderate incomes who can’t afford today’s high rents to actually find affordable housing. It will transform a fragmented and inefficient system into one that is more streamlined, sustainable and ready to help people who need it most.

Late last year, our government launched a housing supply consultation. We wanted to hear about new and innovative ways to overcome the many, many barriers there are to housing. Through these public consultations we heard a range of ideas, which ultimately informed our Housing Supply Action Plan.

We were crystal clear from the beginning: The goal is to help spur on the construction of new homes, give more people more housing choices, reduce housing costs, and help taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned dollars. The response was overwhelming. We received over 2,000 submissions; over 85% of those were from the general public. We learned what matters most to the people of Ontario, what they value when they’re trying to find a home. Details about that will be given by my parliamentary assistant Ms. Hogarth very shortly.

We also learned what was important to those who are actually involved in the building of new homes for Ontarians. Municipalities, home builders and housing industry experts all shared their perspectives that informed this plan.

We heard that there are too many barriers that are slowing down housing construction, creating years and years of delays. The broken housing development system doesn’t work for people waiting for new homes, it doesn’t work for municipalities hoping to strengthen their communities, it doesn’t work for employers that need housing to attract workers and it certainly doesn’t work for those trying to put shovels in the ground.

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I want to talk now, Speaker, about our five-point plan, because coming out of the consultation, we heard and we knew that we needed to have a comprehensive plan that touches on everything that matters to Ontarians. The solutions would not be simple, because the challenges are very, very complex. We knew, as we always have, that we have to put people first, and again, that is something that we put

at the forefront of every policy, every program and every service change: We have to protect what matters, and we have to put people first. That’s why we released our action plan, also called More Homes, More Choice, which covers five main themes. Those themes are the areas of concern of those trying to find an affordable home in Ontario and those who are trying to increase the supply of homes. The themes: speed, cost, mix, rent and innovation.

First, we want to address how long it takes to build homes for people in Ontario. So the question: Why is speed important? Because the housing crisis demands that we act now. A housing start today doesn’t mean a new home tomorrow. These projects take years, and we have to get started today. That’s why we’re tabling this plan. Red tape and paperwork can add years to a construction project. With the previous government, sometimes many years were squandered with duplication and inefficiency.

Next, we must address cost. We all know how costly it is to build housing in Ontario. Layers of permits, government approvals and charges by municipalities add to the cost of building new homes. We are determined to make these costs more predictable, to encourage home builders to build more housing and to make housing more affordable for homebuyers and for renters.

The third theme is mix. We are committed to increasing the range of housing options across the province. We want to make it easier to build different types of homes to fit different needs. Nous voulons aussi nous assurer qu’il y a plus de variété de logements partout dans la province. Nous allons faciliter la construction de différents types d’habitations pour répondre aux différents besoins de la population. Whether that be townhouses, family-sized condos, mid-rise apartments or basement apartments in a home, we know people need more choice, not just in one region but all across our province. These pressures aren’t felt just by homeowners. It’s got to be something that our government addresses.

The fourth theme is rent. Renters are also feeling the crunch. Mr. Speaker, we need more rentals in general. That was something that came out universally during our consultations. There are more people out there looking for homes than there are places to rent. In some areas of the province, the situation has reached its peak. Our plan will protect tenants and will make it easier to build rental housing.

Last fall, we took swift action to support the creation of new rental housing by exempting new rental units from rent controls while protecting existing tenants. This was a promise that we made to protect existing tenants. The rent control exemption for new rental units creates a positive investment environment for new purpose-built rentals. When rent control was expanded to all units in 2017, there were reports of purpose-built rental units that were planned but later cancelled or converted into condominiums. That’s unacceptable, because we need to create a greater mix of housing options for Ontario’s growing population. We’ve looked at the numbers, Speaker, and it works. Our research suggests that rent control exemptions for new units has had significant impact in Manitoba. New

rental units there accounted for 22% of new housing. That's compared to only 10% where rent control was in effect. We want to make sure all families can find a good place to live, at a good price that they can afford. We are making sure we're doing this by facilitating the building of a variety of homes. One way to do that is by making resources we already have work harder.

The fifth item is innovation. We will spur innovation while protecting health and safety, a vibrant agricultural economy and the environment, including the greenbelt. We've said it before and I'm going to say it again today: We'll protect the greenbelt in all its beauty.

The Ontario government also, Speaker, owns hundreds of unused vacant and surplus properties across the province. Millions of taxpayers' dollars are wasted every year maintaining them. We are committed to selling these lands to build not only homes but also long-term-care facilities and affordable housing. In fact, over the last six months, we've freed up land in communities all across Ontario, from London to Quinte and all the way to Hornepayne.

When Premier Ford spoke to the Ontario Real Estate Association at the end of last year, he signalled what we are speaking about here today. I want to quote Premier Ford: "It's almost never been more difficult or expensive to find a home to rent in Ontario. I promised the people of Ontario that our government would help create more housing—and more housing people can afford. We're keeping that promise."

Interjections.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thank you.

The Ryerson City Building Institute shared some staggering facts regarding rental housing over the past decade. In the GTA, between 2007 and 2016, a total of 2,300 rental units were built. That's only 2,300 units, not buildings, in 10 long years. Ryerson told us that Toronto's rental market relies significantly on condos rented through the secondary market, which is a concern. I'm going to quote Ryerson: "Condo units rented through the secondary market do not offer the same level of tenure stability, are susceptible to being removed from the rental market, often come with more amenities and a higher monthly rent, can initially be left vacant by the owner, and can be rented on short-term platforms instead of to residents of Ontario."

Speaker, we don't just need new rentals; we need a new approach. We need to encourage more innovation and we need to add that creativity to our housing sector. To solve new problems, you need new ideas. By working together, the private and non-profit sectors, we can achieve far more than our government can alone. Innovative designs, construction techniques and materials can bring costs down and give consumers more choice. This includes making homes more accessible as we age and for people with disabilities, something that I know the Honourable Raymond Cho is very, very concerned about.

We need to encourage creative approaches to home ownership. My colleague the member of provincial Parliament for Durham and parliamentary assistant for the Attorney General, Lindsey Park, has suggested one way we can do this is through the Golden Girls Act, and I couldn't

be happier to see her leadership in trying to clarify this issue around co-ownership for her constituents and the people across Ontario. She tabled a private member's bill, and we intend to support the work of our colleague from Durham. It is totally in line with our housing priorities and highlights an innovative approach to seniors living. It addresses the fact that Ontario has an aging population who may not be looking for traditional home ownership models as they age. So, to help municipalities and residents understand their rights for co-ownership, we're going to be developing guides for the public to cover things like co-ownership, life leases and second units. These are very important changes, and we're committed to making them.

Of course, the legislative changes we're proposing here today are key to addressing our housing challenges in Ontario. But before we get into those details, I want to highlight some of the decisive actions our government has already taken to this point. We had to move quickly to fix mismanagement and a broken housing system. Of course, the situation here in the greater Golden Horseshoe is very unique. It's home to 25% of Canada's population. Development challenges are very complex. Building new homes and apartments is taking too long. House prices and rents have risen faster than incomes. As a result, the housing market is really hitting people in their bank accounts. It's hard to find a home that meets your needs, much less one that you can afford.

Getting growth right here in the greater Golden Horseshoe is key. That's why we're launching A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It will help communities develop in ways that expand economic opportunity and make it easier to build housing close to transit. We all know one size doesn't fit all when it comes to how our communities grow. These changes will address the needs of the region's growing population, its diversity, its people and its local priorities.

0920

In about 20 years, this region is expected to grow to 13.5 million people working at 6.3 million jobs, so it's critical that we act now. A Place to Grow is our framework to help shape this growth. These changes will support municipalities and help respond to local needs and regional priorities. This will increase housing supply, support businesses, create jobs and attract investment.

A Place to Grow will cut red tape, to not only support investment in the region but also to help business owners create and protect jobs. This plan will empower the agricultural sector by respecting Ontario's valuable agricultural lands. We're going to be doing all of this while maintaining protections for people's health and safety; the environment, including the greenbelt; and our vibrant agricultural sector.

A Place to Grow is going to make it faster and easier to make modest planning changes, supporting municipalities so that they can respond to local needs and those regional priorities. It will help cut red tape and foster mixed-use development that will actually increase housing supply. It will make it easier to construct new homes around major transit station areas, and it will support housing and jobs

around transit and places where people want to live, want to work and want to play.

In addition, to ensure that employment areas that are crucial to our regions and our province's growth—we've identified provincially significant employment zones where employment areas would receive enhanced protection.

Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned, the housing industry faces a lot of challenges. While government doesn't build housing, we can actually make it easier to build. We can create the conditions to spur on housing growth in our province.

But right now, there are too many barriers. It's not what anyone in this province wants. It's not what homebuyers and what renters want, it's not what home builders want, it's not what municipalities want, and it's not what our government wants. To get rid of those barriers, we need to build more housing more quickly, and make housing more affordable for thousands of frustrated homebuyers and renters.

More time also equates to more money. For example, I know of a non-profit housing project in Hamilton that required a minor change, and they waited almost two years for approvals. In that time, construction and materials increased by 20% to 25%. Those things have to change. We've got to build more housing more quickly.

On May 2, we announced our action plan, More Homes, More Choices, at a Habitat for Humanity build in Scarborough. Habitat for Humanity is a fantastic organization which makes sure that everyone has a safe and affordable place to live. At the announcement, the vice-president of donor and community partnerships for the greater Toronto area told attendees that the organization has faced many barriers to get those homes to market. It impacts the families waiting for those homes.

But these unnecessary delays are going to end, and they're going to end under this government. Our plan would help reduce official plan approval timelines by three months, subdivision plans by two months, and a zoning bylaw change by generally two months, to cut red tape and to build housing faster.

We are taking a whole-of-government approach to this file. Legislation administered by several ministries across government impacts housing development. We can't just fix the problem by changing one act. We have to fix the system, and we have to reduce duplication and unnecessary delays so that it works more efficiently.

That's why this bill that is in front of the Legislature today includes a broad sweep of proposed legislative changes. It's complex legislation that is trying to fix a very complex problem.

My ministry also wants to improve land use planning. Land use planning affects nearly every aspect of our lives. It helps municipalities manage land and resources. It also guides decisions around where to build homes and where to build factories, schools and parks. It signals where roads, sewers and other essential services are needed. It balances the interests of property owners and the greater community where they live. Good planning leads to more

complete communities so that people can get the services they need.

Our proposed changes to the Planning Act would, if passed, cut red tape and get more new homes built faster. They would bring housing to market faster by accelerating local planning decisions and putting in place a more efficient appeals process.

They would also make it easier for homeowners to create second units, whether they be in the basement, on top of a garage or backing onto a laneway. Our government believes this is one way that we can increase a variety of rental options for people across Ontario.

Our proposed changes would also make upfront costs for home builders easier to predict and give more certainty to both homebuyers and builders. Put simply, we want them to know what they can build and where they can build it.

Of course, we all know that there are disagreements that come up because of our land use planning process. The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal hears these disputes, and there's a backlog of cases—a significant backlog, I might add. There are approximately 100,000 units in the pipeline impacted by the backlog in Toronto alone. We want to ensure that the tribunal has the powers and the resources needed to make fair and timely decisions and to make the best planning decisions in the place of the council. Our government believes this will ensure that the best planning decisions possible are made.

What this all comes down to is trying to spur construction, get new homes into the system to meet the increasing demand and ensure that people can realize the dream of home ownership. However, we realize that growth must pay for growth and that new homes need to be supported by services. Municipalities collect a fee called "development charges" on every new building or facility to help pay for various infrastructure projects, ranging from roads to transit to police stations. They can be used to cover growth-related costs for facilities that benefit communities, like recreation centres and public health clinics. These development charges are collected through processes set up in the Development Charges Act.

In their 2018 report on development charges, the C.D. Howe Institute flagged how these fees impact the final cost of a home: "Many Canadian municipalities impose development charges on home builders—around \$80,000 per single-detached home in some large Canadian cities.... These fees have been rising in recent years, worsening housing affordability in the process, since" they "are ultimately passed on to homebuyers in the form of higher home prices." It's staggering, Speaker.

We are proposing changes to the Development Charges Act which would, if passed, help increase housing options for Ontarians and make the upfront cost of building housing more predictable. These proposed changes would make it easier to create more rental housing in Ontario.

As it stands, many home builders can cover upfront development charges by pre-selling condos and homes before a shovel even gets into the ground. However, rental and non-profit home builders don't have that luxury. If passed, development charges for rental and non-profit

housing would be paid over a five-year period instead of upfront. Deferring development charges until the units are occupied would make it more attractive to build rental housing. This is at a time when many municipalities need more rental options.

The proposed changes before you here today would also lower costs for building second units. Second units, such as basement apartments, not only help homeowners pay their mortgages, but they also make more rental housing available. In fact, if passed, we would propose to put in place the necessary regulation so that one second unit in newly built homes would be completely exempted from development charges. This could reduce the cost of building a second unit and help increase the amount of rental housing in Ontario.

These proposed changes would also make the costs of development clearer from the outset. This protects new homebuyers since development charges are often passed directly to the consumer. Development charges would be temporarily frozen when a municipality receives an application for the site plan or zoning approval, whichever comes later. If a site plan or zoning approval is not required, development charges would be determined when the building permit is issued. Municipalities would be able to charge interest while the rate is frozen. This would help cover increases to the cost of services for the new development.

We're also opening up to feedback through the Environmental Registry. These items are already posted, and people have until June 1 to comment.

In conclusion, while we've started with these comprehensive legislative changes, there is much more work to do to address the housing challenges in Ontario. We are working across provincial ministries to reduce duplication, set service standards and improve coordination. We inherited a convoluted and broken housing development system that's very difficult to navigate. It has led to a housing shortage and skyrocketing prices and rents. The people of Ontario deserve better. While we cannot fix the housing shortage on our own, we can make it faster and easier to build new housing for people to rent or own. This will give more people more choice and make housing more affordable.

0930

Our More Homes, More Choice plan outlines how we will cut red tape so that more kinds of housing will be built faster. It will encourage innovation. It will protect tenants, health and safety, our cultural heritage and our environment. Notre plan, « Plus d'habitations, plus de choix », décrit la façon dont nous allons éliminer les lourdeurs administratives pour faciliter la construction rapide d'une variété de logements. Il va encourager l'innovation et il va protéger les locataires, la santé et la sécurité, notre patrimoine culturel et l'environnement. Our plan calls for home builders, municipalities and communities to work together to ensure the hard-working people of Ontario will have the homes that meet their needs and their budgets.

I'm proud to say that we have a government that works together across ministries on these proposed changes so that we can get it to the floor of the House. I don't want to take all the credit, Speaker, so I'm going to pass my torch

over to my parliamentary assistant, the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore. Oh, sorry; I'm going to pass it over to the Minister of Labour first.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Continuing with debate, I recognize the Minister of Labour.

Hon. Laurie Scott: I want to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the excellent work that he has done in bringing this bill together—more choice for the people of Ontario; it's our government's Housing Supply Action Plan—and how we in the Ministry of Labour are supporting that. I know that other members who have had input are going to speak this morning, so I'll just make a few comments on the Ministry of Labour's part of the bill.

As Minister of Labour, my vision is an Ontario that is the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow. But we can only do that if those people have a good place to live, so our government has created Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan to make that happen.

I'm in politics to solve problems. As the Minister of Labour, I talk a lot about cutting red tape and making Ontario open for business. Red tape isn't something that happens to someone else; red tape is the mountain of rules, regulations and bureaucracy that makes it harder for businesses to recruit, retain and reward Ontario workers. Policies that make it more expensive for businesses to operate ensure that costs get passed down to the customer, taking more money out of the pockets of those people.

Since being named Minister of Labour in July, I've introduced multiple labour market reforms, including joining WSIB in returning nearly \$1.5 billion in WSIB premiums to employers, substantially repealing Bill 148 and eliminating bureaucracy in the approval of overtime hours. So far, our labour market reforms are saving businesses and governments more than \$4 billion annually. I say "so far" because the task is far from over.

As Minister of Labour, I am constantly reviewing my department's policies and ask three important questions: What is the impact on Ontario's economy? Does this provide a real benefit for the people? How do we ensure Ontario is open for business? Those three questions led to other important labour market reforms that are included in More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan.

This legislation includes improvements to the joint health and safety committee certification training standards. This bill, if passed, will give the province's chief prevention officer the power to amend training and other requirements for the joint health and safety committee member certification. Until today, every workplace in Ontario with 20 or more employees was required to send an employee sometimes for five days of in-class study, and that employee was required to take a one-day refresher course every three years.

Losing an employee for a week was a major burden for our businesses. Spending a week away from family was unfair to hard-working Ontarians. If that employee left, the business was required to send another employee for the five-day training all over again. By leveraging 21st-century

technologies, we are able to cut the time commitment without sacrificing any of the quality health and safety training. Imagine the benefits for an employer in Ottawa, Windsor, Barrie or Kenora even. Imagine the benefits for the employee: less time, less cost, more options and great training. This is a big win for Ontario workers and job creators, and I am excited for it to be included in this bill.

More Homes, More Choice will also allow the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to continue setting a lower premium rate for construction job creators who act in administrative roles without performing construction work. These people are exposed to lower risks of injury at work, and the new WSIB premiums will reflect that. This change will remove unnecessary financial burdens on Ontario's construction industry, which is a vital, growing part of our economy, providing good jobs that families and communities depend on and building the very homes this bill was designed to create.

We need to let common sense inform good public policy. Ontario can be the best place in North America to recruit, retain and reward workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow, but only if they can find a place to live. I'm very excited and proud to speak to the introduction of More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan, and I know that the minister of consumer, business and other things wants to speak next.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Continuing with debate, I now turn to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. Bill Walker: I am pleased to participate in this morning's debate, and I commend my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Honourable Steve Clark, on delivering the Housing Supply Action Plan for the people of Ontario. I know the minister and his entire team worked very hard over the past months, and they worked very quickly, Mr. Speaker, travelling across this great province, going into many communities, consulting with the people about how we best increase the housing supply.

Municipal leaders in my riding and I were very pleased to welcome the minister to Owen Sound in late February and to hear his interest in crafting a housing plan that would reflect the many and diverse needs of our communities, including filling that "missing middle" in housing that are the duplexes, triplexes, tiny homes or laneway homes.

Because of all of their hard work, we have before us Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act, that aims to address Ontario's housing crisis and to help us build more homes that are more affordable. This bill represents an important shift for the many families across the province who have faced difficulties over the years when seeking housing options, Mr. Speaker. It answers the questions: How can we streamline development approvals? How can we drive down costs to make sure that we try to maximize affordability when it comes to new types of housing development?

As the members heard earlier from the minister himself, the former government neglected our housing needs for over 15 long years. They left Ontarians with a housing

crisis. This means record low vacancy rates and a low housing supply, which drives up costs. But our government is fixing the mess with our More Homes, More Choice Act that will provide options for people that make sense to them financially.

In addition to the details the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing shared with us just a few minutes ago, I want to add that we are further addressing people's concerns by strengthening protections when they are making one of the biggest purchases in their lives: a new home.

On February 20, I was pleased to announce our government for the people was transforming Tarion and implementing initiatives to better protect purchasers of cancelled pre-construction condominium projects. Mr. Speaker, for our government, one thing is clear: Tarion is broken. Purchasing a new home is the biggest decision most families will ever make. They deserve the peace of mind during this complicated and stressful time that their government will always be on their side, and that's what our government aims to give them. We are strengthening consumer protection to make sure Ontarians can safely navigate the process of buying a newly built home. As part of these reforms, we are reforming Tarion so that it is better able to provide the strong consumer protections that people expect.

In More Homes, More Choice, we outline the following additional improvements to Tarion that we heard during our recent consultations:

—We're supporting greater quality in new home construction through proactive risk-based inspections during construction.

—We're improving transparency through access to information on the track record of builders on Tarion's Ontario Builder Directory.

—We're enhancing dispute resolution so that it's quick and fair and that consistent decisions can be made.

Mr. Speaker, our Tarion announcement represented another important shift, as it showed a government taking decisive action to put the people of Ontario first by transforming Tarion and strengthening consumer protection. This is again in stark contrast to the former government, whose lack of action left homebuyers vulnerable. We are cleaning up yet another mess left by the former Liberal government.

We're moving forward with key recommendations from Justice Douglas Cunningham's report to make sure we are protecting Ontarians. We are making these changes because we want to ensure that people's ability to buy a house, a home, a condo—whatever it be—that they have the services, the programs, the protection and the confidence when making the biggest purchase they'll probably ever make in their life.

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We want to ensure that the entities within the ministry are always providing value for taxpayer dollars and delivering the quality and service that they expect. We'll be working with industry stakeholders and Ontarians to ensure that the proper protections are in place for consumers, that the regulatory burden for business is reduced, and that

organizations and agencies like Tarion are there for people when they need them.

Our changes—such as creating a new, separate regulator from Tarion to improve oversight of builders and vendors; exploring the feasibility of a multi-provider insurance model for new home warranties; and moving to a more balanced, skills-based board—are all welcome changes.

I'm also pleased to share with the members of this House that Justice Cunningham is "delighted to see that the Ontario government is about to implement many of the recommendations contained in my report."

Mr. Speaker, our government for the people is also addressing the issue of surplus properties. Surplus properties are those that are currently sitting empty and unused while taxpayers fund things such as snow removal, grass-cutting and regular maintenance. We need to ensure that these properties are put to the best use of taxpayer dollars. That is why we're implementing important reforms and removing needless red tape. By removing this unnecessary red tape, we're removing an estimated 150 days of administrative time. This reduction will put properties on the market in a shorter time frame and, by putting them into productive use, help local economies, and create jobs and taxes for our municipalities.

I'm happy to report that our plan will also support Ontario's most vulnerable. We'll be identifying properties within the portfolio that can be repurposed for priorities of our government such as affordable housing and long-term-care spaces.

Just last week, I was pleased to join the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing when we announced the successful sale of 26 Grenville Street and 27 Grosvenor Street to Greenwin and Choice Properties REIT. In place of the former Ontario chief coroner's office and parking deck, we will have two towers with at least 700 purpose-built rental units, a daycare, retail space. Most importantly, more than 200 of those units will be affordable housing.

Mr. Speaker, consider the fact that over the last 20 years, less than 7% of all housing built in Ontario was purpose-built rentals. The province's overall rental vacancy rate in 2018 was 1.8%, close to historical lows; 3% is considered a healthy market. That's what makes our government's housing action plan so meaningful.

On top of that, the sale to Greenwin and Choice has generated \$36 million that our government will be able to reinvest into core public programs and services, while removing \$260,000 off the government's books for maintenance costs of those two properties annually. That's money that goes back to those things that matter most for us. We expect construction to begin at Grosvenor and Grenville this fall, and completion is tracking for Christmas 2023.

I'm happy to continue to work with my colleagues and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to pinpoint surplus properties that can help our most vulnerable.

Our plan is about working harder, smarter and more efficiently so we can reduce costs, generate much-needed revenue, make life better for the people of Ontario and protect the things that matter most.

As members will be aware, there are hundreds of unused properties across the province that the government owns, and maintaining them every year wastes millions of taxpayer dollars—money that's not going to the most vulnerable in our society, the people who are less fortunate. As members will be aware, there are hundreds of these unused properties across the province that the government owns and maintains, but we are going to get rid of those. We have a plan in place, as I announced back in December, to sell surplus government properties, which will make it easier to free up space for affordable housing and long-term-care spaces across many communities.

The value we receive from these sales will also allow us to continue to invest in protecting better health care and education services while putting Ontario on a responsible path to a balanced budget.

In *More Homes, More Choice*, we outline improvements to remove an estimated 150 days of administrative wait time and speed up the sale of 283 properties, proposing to generate an estimated \$105 million to \$135 million in revenue and, at the same time, saving the government more than an estimated \$9.6 million a year in liabilities and ongoing maintenance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time to address you this morning. I'm happy to turn the floor over to my colleague and friend the MPP for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Continuing with debate, I now recognize the member from Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see you in the chair this morning.

I would like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the opportunity to speak on the current state of housing in Ontario. He has been a tremendous leader in the charge to fix the broken housing development system in our province. That system was one left for us by the previous government. That is why, today, our government has launched our housing supply consultation for this fall. Minister Clark spoke about how much of a tremendous success that was. He heard from thousands of people and stakeholders from all across Ontario.

I was able to meet with people from across the province. The members from Durham, Brantford–Brant and Simcoe North were gracious to host me in December and I was of course pleased to host people in my community and community leaders in Etobicoke and especially in Etobicoke–Lakeshore. They all spoke to me about their concerns and their needs.

With the prices and rents we see in the market today, finding a place to live in Ontario has become unaffordable. Supply has not met demand. With record low vacancy rates across Ontario, it is clear that limited housing choices are increasing costs.

Of the 2,000 people we heard from during our consultation, 85% of them were members of the public, people who were concerned about the housing situation in Ontario and how that housing situation affects them and their families. More than half of them said their top criteria when looking for a home to buy or rent was affordability. That's

no surprise, given the current housing climate. Prices are going up, and spaces are shrinking. It's not great for those who are looking for more space when they want to start a family or as their kids get older. Living with a couple of children in a tiny apartment or house is not an ideal situation, but many people are forced to do so in Ontario and especially here in Toronto. They are forced to stay in their starter home. They don't have a place to grow their family or their lives. These increasing prices mean decreasing choices for everyone, no matter what their budget is, especially when people are trying to find a location that meets their needs.

While money constraints were a top priority for the public in these consultations, it was not the only thing they flagged. Access to transit was another top priority. Many young professionals don't own cars or rely on transit to get around. Others may only have one car for a large family. Many, simply, especially here in Toronto, prefer to take transit to get around. Our government is proud to be working to get our new transportation vision in place.

Our new \$28.5-billion transit expansion will get shovels in the ground and new subways built. It will build four rapid transit projects in the greater Toronto area: The first, the new Ontario Line, will deal with the overcrowding on the Yonge line; a Yonge North subway extension to connect the subway to one of the region's largest employment centres; a three-stop Scarborough subway extension to better serve communities; and the Eglinton Crosstown extension, a large portion of which will be built underground. This is on top of our other commitments to transit.

But this isn't just about Toronto. We're expanding GO service to Niagara Falls and St. Catharines ahead of schedule, and we're dramatically enhancing GO service to the Kitchener-Waterloo region. We've also committed billions of dollars to transit projects in Hamilton and Ottawa.

We want to see more housing built near transit so people can get to work and get home to their families faster. We are investing \$1.3 billion to repair and rebuild highways across this province and billions in infrastructure to better support our rural communities.

These investments and improvements will not only serve those already living in communities I just spoke about, but they will also give more options to people looking for housing across the province.

Families also want to be close to schools. That way, their kids can safely walk to class, and parents will save time and money commuting.

Having services nearby will also be a huge priority for people. Everyone needs access to local services to better make their lives easier. They need choice. They need to feel like they live in a community, a place where they can live healthier and more productive lives. We're looking at a variety of ways to make that happen.

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Our government has launched A Place to Grow, a framework to shape the growth of the greater Golden Horseshoe. It is a crucial step to help encourage new home construction in this region.

But when we think about housing, it's not just about the land that we build. It's about what we build on that land and how we do it. Ontario is a leader when it comes to setting standards for safety and accessibility in our building code. This is something we can be very proud of, and these are the highest standards that we still must maintain. However, there are still many delays and far too much red tape. We are working to harmonize our codes with the codes across Canada to open up new markets and bring construction costs down. This is one way we can help lower the costs of construction and create economic opportunities for Ontario manufacturers over time.

We also believe in using renewable resources that are not only innovative but also cost-effective. Wood is just that, an innovative and cost-effective modern building material. Through my colleague the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, our government is advancing efforts to put forward a made-in-Ontario environmental plan to increase the use of wood in residential building sectors. This includes providing training and technical resources to architects, engineers and the skilled trades to support work with modern wood products such as mass timber. It also encourages mass timber demonstration projects and supports 150,000 jobs in Ontario's forestry sector, many of which are in rural Ontario, northern Ontario and Indigenous communities.

Mr. Speaker, we're also thinking outside the wooden box, so to speak. We know that municipalities also need infrastructure to support their growing and changing populations. That is why we've unlocked up to \$30 billion in infrastructure funding that will make the province's roads safer, commutes easier and communities healthier. This money will be available for various projects, from new bridges to updated sewage treatment plants, over the next 10 years. This fund will also create and protect good jobs across the province because we know we need more skilled labour across this province.

We also need to build more housing faster, and to do just that, companies will need more skilled trades. They'll need carpenters, plumbers and electricians to get the job done. That is why our government has put in place a strategy to help more people learn these critical skills. Once they do, they will be able to get these great jobs, and that is part of how we're making Ontario open for business and open for jobs.

The legislative pieces we are speaking to today, if passed, would work together to make it easier to build the right type of homes in the right places. They would improve affordability and options for homebuyers and renters across Ontario, and they would help increase the housing supply. Because no matter where you go, people are trying to find homes that meet their needs and meet their budgets.

These proposed changes would also allow us to move forward with other matters. The provincial policy statement applies province-wide and contains overall policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. It recognizes there are complex relationships between environmental, economic

and social factors in land use planning. It has three main sections: one that focuses on building strong, healthy communities; one that includes strong policy direction on the wise use of natural resources; and one that outlines how our government needs to protect public health and safety.

The Planning Act requires that any decision on planning matters be consistent with the provincial policy statement. That means the policies of the provincial policy statement are applied as an essential part of the land use planning decision-making process. We are considering changes to the provincial policy statement that will encourage the construction of more and different types of housing specifically to address the “missing middle” challenge we face right here in Ontario. We’re going to do this while continuing to protect the environment and matters of public safety and health.

Mr. Speaker, these type of changes we are considering will reduce the barriers and costs for developers, ultimately making things more predictable. This will update planning and development policies to reflect Ontario’s changing needs, and it will recognize local decision-making in support of new housing and development. We need to consult with stakeholders on these proposed changes.

More homes and more choices will spur innovation while protecting health and safety, a vibrant agricultural sector and the environment, including the greenbelt. Building more housing will make this province more attractive for businesses and investors, proving Ontario is open for business and open for jobs. It will give renters more choice by encouraging the development of purpose-built rentals. It will put the dream of home ownership back in reach for people at every stage of their life: for those first-time homebuyers looking to break into the market, those looking for large spaces for their growing families, seniors looking at downsizing to meet their needs or maybe for accessible housing as they age. This will help the hard-working people of Ontario and give them more choice that not only fits their needs but fits their budget.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: It’s a pleasure to rise in the House today to talk about this housing bill. I’ve heard the members opposite in the debate, and one of my big concerns is that with housing, when developers want to build housing, they want to build towers, but communities and people want to live in neighbourhoods. So how do you balance those things?

I’ll give you one example of where this bill comes short: the education development charges. In 1998, the former Conservative government changed the regulations around development charges so that school boards could only use it to purchase land and only if they didn’t have enough land. For the last 20 years in Toronto—and I was a TDSB trustee before this—for every unit that’s gone up, roughly—well, today \$1,500 goes the Catholic school board and nothing goes to the public school board. What this has meant is that the public school board doesn’t have the money to buy the land they need to build the schools that they need—mainly along the waterfront in my riding, with all the towers, but also along the Yonge corridor.

We as the school board kept prodding the former government to change those regulations so that the public school board would be able to purchase land to build the schools that they need. They were listening to pressure from the developers instead of the pressure from the citizens and the parents who want schools to be built.

I’ll give you just a quick example. In my riding, in City-Place, there is a nine-acre site that was set aside by Jack Layton and Dan Leckie when they were city councillors. They forced the developers to contribute money to build, and today there’s a public school, a Catholic school, a community centre and a drop-in daycare for kids going up there. In another part of my riding, we’ve got 0.9 acres of a toxic site beside a railroad track, and that’s where the school is going to have to be built.

So if I could make one request, please change the regulations on development charges.

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

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I’m pleased to speak in support of Bill 108. As the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing said, the housing crisis demands that we act now. For far too many people, housing is unaffordable and it does not meet the individual’s or families’ needs.

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The previous government created an overly complex and costly housing system, a system with layers of building permits and just too much red tape, creating endless delays and ever-increasing costs passed on to homebuyers. In the GTA, it’s estimated that about a 10-year wait exists in order to be able to complete low-rise or high-rise projects. Some 83% of Ontario households couldn’t afford the average price of a resale home in 2018.

Bill 108 will make the process easier, cutting red tape and costs. Our action plan is based on a broad consultation with the public, business, local government and not-for-profits that received more than 2,000 submissions—85% from the public. Maintaining environmental stewardship is key to us, and in my own constituency of Oakville North-Burlington, we are pleased we will be doing all of this while protecting the greenbelt. We will encourage different types of housing to suit different people and different needs. We will also make it easier to build rental housing, including basement apartments, encouraging innovative designs, approaches to home ownership and partnerships between government, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector.

Bill 108 shows that our government puts people first and protects what matters most: providing real relief and real choices by increasing the number of affordable housing units and by helping people realize their dream of home ownership.

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

Mr. John Vanthof: It’s always an honour to speak in the House, and today on Bill 108, which has something to do with the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal process.

Since we have the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Francophone Affairs here, I’d like to tell a

little story. I had a recent clinic in a small municipality in my area, Eldee and Thorne. One of my constituents came forward with an issue. The constituent was looking for a permit to reopen an aggregate pit. A worthy cause: They want to create some business. One of my other constituents raised a concern, and it went to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. Now, Thorne and Eldee are right next to the Quebec border, and, for many people there, their only language is French. But this case is now sitting dormant because there is no ability for the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal to have an adjudicator who can do the job in French. It appears that, because the government has—according to my constituent—a hiring freeze or an appointment freeze, this case is not going on and is not proceeding because it cannot be done en français.

I appreciate very much that the minister did part of his speech en français, and I'm glad he's here to listen. Hopefully, he can move this issue ahead so that this case and others can actually go on. This area is, under the act, designated as an area that should have services en français. So in this case, we need to move ahead so this case can move ahead en français if this province is really open for business for everyone.

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

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'm delighted that the minister has tabled the More Homes, More Choice Act. Many people choose to move to Canada and to Ontario for the dream of equality of opportunity. They work hard and they play by the rules, but oftentimes that dream of home ownership is out of reach. I remember, when I came to Canada as a refugee with my grandparents, our dream of home ownership and how we saved every dollar we possibly could in order to obtain that dream.

Back then, there was an opportunity to buy homes, but right now it's out of reach. In Barrie, in fact, in all of Canada, we're the fourth most expensive rental housing market, and according to CMHC, we're the second most expensive rental market in Ontario, after Toronto. That creates a bit of an issue. The big issue is supply. It was a huge issue during the election and that's what a lot of people want to see, given that the average rent is over \$1,380 a month—not to mention the cost of buying a detached home, which is growing. Barrie expects to see an increase in population of about 21,000 people. Many of these people have hope again, hope in this government that we are delivering homes, and we're delivering a different mix of homes.

I want to thank the minister for introducing this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now return to the minister of municipal housing and affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Sorry, I stand corrected. It's Municipal Affairs and Housing. Thank you.

Hon. Steve Clark: You've got a bit of Fedeli-itis this morning.

I want to thank the member for Spadina–Fort York, the member for Oakville North–Burlington and the member for Barrie–Innisfil, et merci beaucoup au membre de la circonscription de Timiskaming–Cochrane.

I first want to address your comments regarding the LPAT. Part of our More Homes, More Choice Act is that we're going to be appointing 11 more adjudicators for the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. We really believe strongly that we need to unlock that backlog, those 100,000 units that I mentioned in my address. I think the plan of the Attorney General and I will go a long way to addressing the concern, but I appreciate and want to thank the member for that comment.

Speaker, we inherited a confusing and a broken housing system that is impossible for people and home builders to navigate and has really led to the housing shortage and the skyrocketing housing prices and rents that we face in Ontario. I believe, and I know our government believes, that the people of Ontario deserve better. We can't fix the housing shortage on our own, but we can cut red tape and make it easier to build new housing for people to rent and to own.

We want to give the people of Ontario more choice, and we want to make more housing more affordable. It's all about balance, and I really, truly believe that this bill, More Homes, More Choice, provides that balance. It outlines how we're going to accomplish this, but underlying, Speaker—I think I speak for all of my colleagues who made up this bill—we believe people right across Ontario and in every stage of life should be able to find a home that meets their needs and their budget. The More Homes, More Choice Act accomplishes that.

I appreciate the very respectful tone that we've had in debate this morning, and I look forward to this bill moving through the legislative process.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, I'd like to make a point of order first to stand down the lead on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member from London–Fanshawe is seeking unanimous consent to stand down the lead. Agreed? Agreed.

Further debate. I recognize the member from London–Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: What a wonderful morning it is to take the time to contribute to debate for Bill 108. It's a fairly substantial bill, as we know, and it's a very important bill because it's going to move many, many communities into a direction where people are looking for affordable housing.

In London, I'll specifically talk about our housing issues. We are now experiencing a shortage of housing and even in rentals. The real estate agents who came to my office to talk about the cost of housing—London has experienced a rise in purchasing of homes over the last very short time, five years. I remember seeing it creep up slowly, but now it's just booming. The cost is so high, people are actually having bidding wars. Homes are on the market for four hours and people are already bidding on that house. There are people who are buying homes sight unseen. There's a lot of speculation buying happening in London.

What's happening is a lot of the homes are becoming very unaffordable. A semi-detached in London used to be

\$150,000, move-in condition, might need a little TLC, but it was affordable. Now if you want to buy a semi-detached, you're looking at at least \$200,000, and it's a fixer-upper. Some people might think, compared to other areas of the province like Toronto, that seems affordable. But London is not Toronto, and there is a housing issue happening in our midst.

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When this bill is presented, I hope it's going to truly address things like affordability. Affordability looks different to a lot of people. It could mean co-operative housing. It could mean geared-to-income housing. It could mean housing for seniors. I know that in my area, many people who have raised their families in their neighbourhoods are getting older and can't look after their lawns, or the house is too big; they've outgrown the space. They want to move into a little apartment, a seniors' apartment building, and there are not affordable apartment units for seniors, so they either have to stay where they are or move to different parts of the city where they really can't afford the rent.

Even in London, the vacancy rates are so low that, believe it or not, tenants are having bidding wars. If you're a landlord and you list your apartment for a rental income of, let's say, \$1,000 as an example, you have tenants coming in and bidding higher in that rental income, so that they can actually get a unit. This government—I have concerns around whether they're actually going to create legislation that won't divide communities, that will bring communities together.

When housing is so important—we have people who are homeless in London. We have people homeless throughout Ontario. We need to create homes so that they can have a housing-first strategy and then create those supports and wraparound services that people need. Development is great, affordable housing is good, but we need to make sure that when we're talking about housing, we're including all of our members in our community, because the cost of not having people housed is greater to the pocketbook—and I know the Minister of Finance is all about pocketbook issues. It's much more economical to have people in homes where they can afford to stay, and not worry about month-to-month paying the mortgage or paying the rent and having to leave their home.

I have a constituent who the landlord offered cash to move out, so they signed, not understanding that when they went to look for another apartment with the cash they were provided, the rent was so much higher in other places that they couldn't afford to move. So they changed their mind, and what's happening is that the landlord is now evicting those tenants because they didn't agree to—a mini, little statement is really what it is. It says, "If I give you X amount of money, you will move out on this day." But once they discovered that they couldn't find the same amount of rent or within a reasonable amount, they said, "We don't want to move. We can't move," and the landlord said, "Well, too bad. You've signed this agreement, and now I'm going to force you out." That's what's happening all throughout the province.

When we talk about legal aid, the low-income tenants who are in this unit need to go to legal aid. Luckily they

can get representation, but when we talk about legislation that works for people, cutting legal aid services—these are the kinds of people who are going to be affected. They don't know what the market is like out there. They think, "Okay, well, the landlord is offering me a big sum of money. I'm going to go look for a place to rent," and they discover that with their income that they have, they can't afford to move. So then they were kind of taken advantage of, and they back out of that agreement, and now they're being forced to be evicted. They had to go to legal aid to fight the landlord so they can stay in the unit. That's happening in London.

And so when we create this legislation, I want to make sure it's not only going to work for developers and profit when they're building these homes, but that it's also going to work for everyday people: people on low income, people who have jobs, people who are retired, seniors—that it's going to work for everybody, because that produces a healthy community. We know that if we house people in the appropriate place for where they are in that phase of their life, it costs us less.

In London, we had a wonderful, huge property up for sale, the London Psychiatric Hospital. It was 160 acres. The government owned the land, obviously, and they put it up for sale. I was hoping the government would actually keep it and do something in London where we could meet the housing needs of the residents—and I see my time is coming to an end, so I will wait for you to call a recess, Speaker. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much to the member from London—Fanshawe. When debate on this bill continues, you will have time left to debate, so I thank you for that.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): It is now 10:15. This House will stand recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I want to welcome Family Service Ontario to the House this morning. There are a number of people from my riding here today: Jack Cleverdon, the executive director of the Catholic Family Development Centre; Nancy Chamberlain, executive director of Thunder Bay Counselling; Abi Sprakes, manager of psychotherapy and trauma services; and Melissa Beaucage, Thunder Bay Counselling board member. I look forward to speaking with all of you this afternoon.

Ms. Jill Dunlop: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce all members of the Ontario General Contractors Association who are here today. I would like to welcome all MPPs to join us on the staircase after question period for a picture—hard hats included—and also join us tonight for the spectacular reception this evening.

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a big list today. Once again joining us in the gallery are Michau van Speyk, Amy Moledzki, Crystal Burningham, Reshma Younge, Stacy Kennedy, Angela Brandt, Amanda Mooyer, Faith Munoz

and Jaime Santana. Welcome to Queen's Park. Welcome back again.

I would also like to introduce some wonderful friends who are in the House today: Kim Moran, who is the CEO of Children's Mental Health Ontario, and Angela Fowler from Children's Mental Health. But a really special guest as part of that contingent is the chair of the youth action committee, Victoria Kaulback, who is from my riding. Welcome to Queen's Park. It's really great to have you here today.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a couple of introductions today. The first is Audny-Cashae Stewart, a co-op student from Guelph CVI, who is here at Queen's Park for the first time today and working as a co-op student in my constituency association.

I'd also like to welcome Joanne Young Evans, the executive director of Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington, who is here today for the noon-time reception.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I'd like to welcome the entire team from Children's Mental Health Ontario and the youth action committee. Welcome. I hope you enjoy your time here.

I would also like to ask for permission, Speaker, for all members to be able to wear the green pins that are on their desk to show their support for Children's Mental Health Week.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The minister is seeking unanimous consent to allow the members to wear the pins that are on their desk for Children's Mental Health Week. Agreed? Agreed.

The member for Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Mr. Speaker.

Remarks in Oji-Cree.

I'd like to welcome the following guests to the Legislature today: from the Eabametoong First Nation, Chief Elizabeth Atlookan, Wanda Sugarhead and Peter Siebenmorgen; also, from the Neskantaga First Nation, Chief Chris Moonias, Gary Quisses, Peter Moonias, Kelvin Moonias and Monika Lucas; and from Aroland First Nation, Chief Dorothy Towedo.

Meegwetch.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Today I'd like to welcome Brian Bancroft, a good friend of mine from Mississauga-Lakeshore.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It is my pleasure to welcome Joyce Zuk to Queen's Park. She's the executive director of Family Services Windsor-Essex. It's great to have her with us today.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I want to give a warm welcome to grade 12 students from John Fraser Secondary School in my riding of Mississauga-Erin Mills, who are visiting Queen's Park today. Welcome to the people's House.

Mr. Jamie West: I'd like to welcome Natalie Gauvin from le Centre de counselling de Sudbury to the Legislature for family service day at Queen's Park. Welcome.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I noticed up in the west public gallery, way up in the nosebleed section—I'd like to recognize, from Chatham-Kent family services, the executive director, Mr. Brad Davis. Welcome.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased to welcome to Queen's Park Elizabeth Pierce, the executive director of Catholic Family Services of Durham, and Stan MacLellan, the board chair of Catholic Family Services of Durham. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'd like to welcome to the House Paul Kossta of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I also would like to welcome Paul.

In addition to Paul, I would like to welcome Matt Farrell from Ripley, Ontario. He's representing the Ontario Building Officials Association and promoting the Building Safety Month that we have upon us.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Today I'd like to welcome, from the Ontario Building Officials Association, Matt Farrell, whom the minister just introduced, Joyanne Beckett, Sandra Burrows and Dennis Purcell. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: I am excited to welcome a number of people from Developing Young Leaders of Tomorrow, Today. Thank you for coming to Queen's Park, Hyacinth, Maddison, Shanique, Candies and Michelle. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to welcome representatives from Family Services Perth-Huron to the Legislature this morning: executive director Susan Melkert; board president Nick Forte; and clinic supervisor Kate Aarssen. They are here as part of Family Service Ontario day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Today I'd like to welcome two very special guests: Mr. Juliusz Kirejczyk and John Tomczak, the president and vice-president of the Canadian Polish Congress. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Michael Parsa: It's a pleasure to rise today to introduce the family of page captain Jadon, who are visiting the Legislature today. In the members' gallery we have his mom, Anita Lo, and grandma Susan Tsai, from Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill. Welcome to the Legislature.

Mr. David Piccini: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Janet Irvine, executive director of Northumberland Community Counselling Centre, to Queen's Park today. Thank you for the work you do, Janet. Thanks for having me at the situation table the other day and for your ongoing work. I'm looking forward to seeing you at lunch.

Mr. Ross Romano: I want to welcome, as a part of the family service reception that's occurring today, Ali Juma, chief executive officer; Sandie Leith, director of services; Marsha Nicholas, board director; and Megan Bouchie, board director, all of Algoma Family Services in Sault Ste. Marie. Thank you for being here today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our introductions of guests.

1040

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I've been informed that the member for St. Catharines has a point of order.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I rise on a point of order today, Speaker. I seek unanimous consent for the House to observe a moment of silence to recognize the 74th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic and honour the sacrifices of thousands of Canadian allied seamen, merchant mariners and airmen who fought valiantly for our freedom during the Second World War.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for St. Catharines is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to have a moment of silence to recognize the 74th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. Agreed? Agreed.

The House observed a moment's silence.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question is for the Premier. Another morning brings more news of more Ford government cuts to health care services that families rely on. Municipalities report that ambulance and paramedic services will see their funding frozen at 2017 levels, and the Ontario Telemedicine Network has eliminated 44 front-line staff jobs.

Can the Premier confirm these latest health care cuts and explain why the government feels that Ontario families can do without these services?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I have to tell you, I had a real interesting visitor yesterday. It was a grade 11 student from Lindsay. He couldn't figure out why the opposition—couldn't figure out where all the spending went for the last 15 years that they doubled the debt. They increased the debt by \$200 million. And this is a grade 11 student.

He said he'd go up to his friends and say, "When you turn 18, and your parents give you a credit card, and it's just accumulated debt, and you're paying interest, do you want to continue racking up the debt, or do you want to pay it off?" Once he explained it that way, all of his friends in grade 11 said, "Yes. It makes sense. Pay off the debt."

My point is, Mr. Speaker, the NDP doesn't understand it, but a grade 11 student gets it. It's all about spending, spending, spending; they put our province in debt. That's what it's all about.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I'd say, Speaker, that what the Premier doesn't get is the vast majority of hard-working families in this province don't give their kids a company or a credit card when they turn 18.

The cuts to telemedicine are particularly irresponsible. The Ford government had claimed that they intended to—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The government side will come to order and allow the questions to be asked so that I can hear them.

Restart the clock. Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: The Ford government had claimed that they intended to boost the amount of virtual medical care in Ontario, but now they're handing layoff notices to 44 of the very people who provide that service. The Premier's promise that no government employee would lose their job is about as credible as his promise that parents of children with autism would never have to demonstrate on the lawns of Queen's Park again.

Why is the Premier breaking his promise to protect health care jobs?

Hon. Doug Ford: To the Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Well, in fact, the situation with the Ontario Telemedicine Network is this: They're making thoughtful, pragmatic decisions about how they are using taxpayer dollars, which is what Ontarians expect them to do and expect us to do.

With respect to the emergency department services, we are streamlining and modernizing the service by consolidating dispatch and service delivery into regional locations and adopting new models of care to build a sustainable, connected system. This is all part of our overall plan to modernize our health care system to make sure that patients receive the care that they need, that they receive connected care throughout their journey in health care, which is not the situation that we have right now. We want to centre care around patients, and that's what we are delivering on.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, their plan to streamline and modernize is simply a cloak of cuts that this government is putting in place. People don't actually see a plan for health care. But the people who ensure that our ambulances arrive on time and our children are vaccinated don't see a plan either. All they see is cuts and chaos: cuts to public health units, cuts to ambulance services, cuts to telemedicine, cuts to OHIP coverage.

If the Ford government truly has this plan, why do doctors, paramedics, nurses, reeves, chairs and mayors all tell us that the only plan they see is a plan to cut and hurt families?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Speaker, through you, I want to correct the record of what the leader of the official opposition just said. We are actually adding more—over a billion dollars more—into our health care system. In our budget, we indicated that what we're prepared to do is to protect what matters most, to make sure that we actually have a health care system and have an education system in the future, because we sustained—received—a \$15-billion deficit. That is a huge amount of debt.

What we are doing is building up the things that are most important, the things that people most care about. Health care is probably top of that list, and I can tell the leader of the official opposition that health care providers are very, very enthusiastic about the changes that we're bringing about. We are receiving numerous applications already for local health service providers. So to suggest that people are not happy is entirely wrong. People are very happy that we're making the changes that we're making, and can't wait to get started.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier, but here's a news flash for the minister: Nobody believes that all of these people have one opinion and the government has another opinion and the government is right and everybody else is wrong. Everybody can see through what this government is claiming.

Yesterday, in fact, municipalities also received some shocking fallout from the Ford government's big budget cuts. Support for regional tourism is ending effective this year, blasting yet another multi-million-dollar hole in municipal budgets. Can the Premier tell us how much his province's download will cost municipalities and property tax payers?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to repeat what the Minister of Health just mentioned. Has the Leader of the Opposition ever added up everything that she has promised? We're in a \$15-billion hole. All the people up in the stands there and everywhere else are \$23,000 in debt. We have the largest sub-sovereign debt in the entire world, created by the NDP and the Liberals. It's unsustainable. I wonder if they run their family budgets the same way they would run the public's budget, because they don't care. It's not their money.

Our government is worried about the people's money. We worry about what is most important, which is health care, which we increased by \$1.3 billion. We worry about education, which we increased by \$700 million. No teacher is going to lose their job. Seniors are going to get dental care that they've been waiting for for years. That's what matters to people. It's not about spend, spend, spend; tax, tax, tax.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the city of Toronto estimates that the Premier's download is draining \$100 million out of city budgets this year alone, and London has been forced to contemplate a property tax hike to backfill the Premier's cuts. The Ford government budget is forcing municipalities to choose between property tax hikes, cuts to services, or both.

1050

When the Premier ran last year, he didn't tell people he'd be Ontario's first tax-and-cut Premier. Why is the Premier raising taxes and cutting services?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the Premier for referring the question to me.

We were crystal clear at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference, the ROMA conference, the OSUM conference, the NOMA conference. Speaker, we inherited a \$15-billion deficit from the Liberal Party, supported 97% of the time by the NDP. We made it very clear that we were going to do a line-by-line review of our expenses to ensure that we get value for money and that we look at every program, every policy, every service, and put people first.

Through the Minister of Finance's budget, we are putting forward a budget, a responsible and sustainable

budget, a very thoughtful budget, that protects what matters most to people. But we made it very clear to all of our partners, whether they be Ontario's 444 municipalities, that we expected them to do the same, that we expected them to review every policy, every program, every service, and put people first.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Yesterday we heard from Toronto Mayor John Tory and Guelph Mayor Cam Guthrie, both of whom are speaking out about the Premier's thoughtless cuts, both of whom are or were well-respected, card-carrying members of the Progressive Conservative Party, and they were both very clear. Despite what the Premier likes to call it, what we're seeing aren't efficiencies. They are "straight-up cuts."

Why is the Premier so committed to forcing painful cuts and painful tax increases at the same time that will only hurt Ontario families and make life more expensive? Why he is a tax, tax, tax, cut, cut, cut Premier, Speaker?

Interjections.

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

The question has been referred to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to remind the honourable member that back in March, before the end of the fiscal year, we provided 405 municipalities \$200 million unconditionally to be able to help drive efficiencies, to be able to have service delivery reviews if they felt it was important, to be able to modernize their IT, to be able to work with some of their neighbours on shared service agreements. This was the largest municipal modernization fund that has been provided in many, many years across Ontario's municipalities, and we made it flexible. We made it so that one size doesn't fit all; so that if a community decides they want to be more efficient and more effective, we put some money into it for them, that we gave them the opportunity to have those types of conversations.

But make no mistake, Speaker; we inherited a financial mess from the previous government, and we ask all of our partners, especially Ontario's 444 municipalities, to work with us to continue to consult. The groups that the honourable member—

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

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Marit Stiles: This question is for the Premier. For months, this government has assured us they are listening to Ontarians when it comes to the future of public education, pointing to their call-ins and their online surveys as proof. But it's clear, Mr. Speaker, that students and parents feel they haven't been heard. The public backlash to their education cuts is real and it is growing.

Something else that appears to have grown substantially is the cost of those so-called consultations. The ministry's initial contract for service cited a maximum cost of \$200,000. Now we've obtained government estimates showing that the total cost came in at \$973,000.

Can the Premier explain how this government managed to spend nearly \$1 million on a so-called consultation he was only going to ignore?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: You know something? I get tired about hearing from the radical left about “cut, cut, cut.” What I want to say—is this province better off now than it was before we got elected? The province is 10 times better off, you ask any financial adviser. The 123,000 jobs—unprecedented, by the way—that were created because we created the environment for companies to thrive and prosper and grow: When they thrive, prosper and grow, they hire employees, Mr. Speaker. We focused on what matters.

As I said earlier, we put \$90 million to 100,000 seniors for dental care. We put \$2 billion for child care, and that matters to working families. We ended up putting \$1.3 billion into health care, protecting all teachers, added another \$1.6 billion, \$700 million more into education.

Our economy is on fire. We have more jobs available out there than we have people to fill those jobs. Ontario is—

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

Interjections.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Mr. Speaker, I understand why this makes the Premier uncomfortable. Every day, we are hearing new reports of teachers—and this is back to the Premier. We’re hearing new reports of teachers and education workers being handed their walking papers, courses being dropped from student schedules and school boards facing major budget shortfalls as a result of this government’s cuts, yet this government somehow found \$1 million to pay for 37 telephone call-ins and an online questionnaire, only to ignore the results.

Given the cost of this consultation, the Premier should be able to tell us how many people asked for their kids to be jammed into larger classes, how many asked for fewer adults in schools and fewer course options for students, and how many said their child deserves less from their education system.

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to share with everybody listening today, and with the member opposite as well and with her party, that we are listening and we’re getting it right.

The fact of the matter is, our consultation was absolutely historic, and we listened. Do you know what? People were asking us to conduct a board governance review. So, what did we do? We included it in our budget. People were telling us that Indigenous studies are very important. So what did we do? In our budget, we’ve recognized where, from grades 9 to 12, we’re introducing an absolutely encompassed curriculum that our Indigenous partners are going to be pleased with.

People have asked us to make our education system more accountable, and that’s what we’re doing. That’s why we’re looking forward to working with our labour partners and our education partners to realize that there are efficiencies at the administration level, so that we can

absolutely focus in on a great learning environment in the classroom for teachers and students across Ontario.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Mr. Stan Cho: My question is for the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. The minister is responsible for Ontario’s new home warranty program run by Tarion. Now, many Ontarians have voiced their concern with Tarion and have called for reforms to the structure and practices of the organization.

In February, the minister announced our government’s plan to transform Tarion to ensure it better protects new homebuyers. The minister outlined a number of initiatives our government is taking to fix Ontario’s new home warranty program. These changes, of course, are even more important now that our government has announced its Housing Supply Action Plan. More homes for Ontarians means more new homebuyers in need of protection.

Could the minister outline the initiatives his ministry has undertaken to transform Tarion?

Hon. Bill Walker: I want to thank my friend the honourable member for Willowdale, MPP Stan Cho, for his great work and representation of his people in Willowdale and for the great question.

Our government is taking action to protect hard-working Ontarians when they make one of the biggest purchases in their new life, a new home. We recognize that consumers across the province have serious concerns with Tarion and we are committed to fixing it.

Our plan to transform Tarion includes establishing a separate regulator from Tarion for new home builders and vendors to address conflicts of interest. We’re exploring the feasibility of a multi-provider insurance model for new home warranties and protections in Ontario. We’re introducing proposed legislative amendments that will enable the government to require Tarion to make executive and board compensation publicly available and to move to a more balanced, skill-based board composition. We’re introducing new initiatives to better inform and protect purchasers of cancelled condominium projects.

Speaker, these measures will help ensure that, going forward, Tarion is accountable, transparent and provides quality service for the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Stan Cho: Speaker, through you, thank you to the minister for his response. I know Ontarians will be glad to hear of the actions the minister is taking to transform the program and strengthen protections for homebuyers.

In addition to protecting new homebuyers, our government is committed to ensuring more Ontarians can finally have the opportunity to enter the housing market. I know the minister has a key role to play in our government’s plan to expand housing availability for the people of Ontario. In addition to the changes the minister just outlined, our government’s Housing Supply Action Plan also contains additional reforms to Tarion.

Speaker, could the minister outline these aspects of the transformation and how these changes will help protect

Ontarians and expand access to new homes in this great province?

1100

Hon. Bill Walker: I want to thank the honourable member, MPP Cho. Stan is the man for the people of Willowdale.

The member is absolutely correct that a key component of our government's plan to improve housing availability for Ontarians is strengthening protections for new homebuyers by transforming Tarion. Our proposed changes address key consumer concerns heard during consultations. We're doing this by supporting greater quality in new home construction through proactive risk-based inspections during construction. We're enabling greater transparency through access to information on the track record of builders on Tarion's Ontario Builder Directory. And we're enhancing dispute resolution so it is quick, fair and so that consistent decisions can be made.

These measures are in addition to the initiatives announced earlier this year to transform Tarion and support our plan to build more housing and reduce housing costs. Buying a home is likely the most significant financial decision most Ontarians ever make in their life. Our plan ensures more Ontarians will be able to make that step and that they will be protected when they do so.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, the Premier seems completely unable to curb his government's spending of taxpayer dollars, the people's money, on foreign junkets and the gravy train of six-figure jobs for the Premier's friends. That hasn't stopped him from insisting that he knows best when it comes to spending at the city of Toronto.

Now that Conservative mayors in Guelph and London are calling out this Premier for his reckless cuts, will the Premier be taking his show on the road, touring Ontario and offering budget advice to municipalities suffering from his Ford government cuts?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: What the member doesn't realize—I guess he's never experienced it—when you're involved in an organization, a government this size, and it's been a bankrupt government, around the world all the investors ended up leaving. They didn't want to invest any longer. You have to go out to some of the world's largest investors, which I did with our all-star champion finance minister. We're able to raise funds to pay for their debt. That's ironic. We're raising funds over in the US to pay for your debt.

We went out there. We attracted Fortune 500 companies. They're excited. They're opening up jobs here. That's what it is all about. That's why our Minister of Economic Development went over to India, again, to tell the world that Ontario is open for business, open for jobs, open for investment. And it's coming in. You can see it coming in. Our jobs that have been created—123,000 new jobs and billions and billions of dollars of new investment because of this government.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Rambling, Speaker. What the Premier seems to conveniently forget is that companies like Chrysler, GM and Ford started cutting jobs the minute after he was elected as the Premier of this province. So maybe he should check the facts before he starts rambling off incoherence.

The fact is that municipal leaders, even card-carrying ones, know what this Ford government budget means. It means higher property taxes or cuts to services or both. Now we know that the Premier loves hiking property taxes, because that's exactly what he endorsed at city hall to pay for the Scarborough subway.

Speaker, does the Premier understand that sometimes Conservative municipal leaders don't want a Doug-Ford-style cut and cut government?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to remind all members that we refer to each other by our ministerial titles or riding name, as applicable, not by our surnames.

The Premier to reply.

Hon. Doug Ford: Again, through you, Mr. Speaker: As I said earlier, we're creating an environment for companies to thrive. People are thriving. You ask any business owner, from the person who has a convenience store to the companies that employ thousands of people—you ask them who they support. They support this government, because we're lowering taxes, lowering hydro bills, putting money back into the common folks' pockets. We ended up giving a tax break that they're paying 0%—the lowest-income people in the entire province. That's over a billion dollars; they're paying 0% tax.

Our government has a theory, Mr. Speaker: You put more money into the people's pockets, they'll go out and spend what they might otherwise not be able to spend. When you have the debt, when you're being taxed to death, when you see a carbon tax that is absolutely destroying the economy across Canada—people are paying more for gas, paying more for heating bills. We're doing the opposite. We actually lowered gas by 4.5 cents. We lowered home heating bills. We are focused on what's best for the people—

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

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: My question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. Yesterday—*Interjections.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the members to come to order to allow the member for Mississauga East–Cooksville this time to ask his question in such a way that I can hear him.

Once again, I apologize to the member.

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Yesterday, another report was released confirming the federal government's failed border policies. The Auditor General found Canada was ill-

equipped to deal with the surge in illegal border-crossers seeking asylum by crossing at unauthorized ports of entry.

More than 42,000 asylum seekers have entered Canada between official border crossings since this crisis began two years ago. Can the minister please explain to this House how our government is managing under the federal government's failure?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I truly appreciate the advocacy from the member for Mississauga East–Cooksville, who has come to this country and made a great life. We're very proud of you, in the government for the people, for your contributions to your community, but also to our government.

I appreciate the question because this is something we have consistently raised in the government for the past 11 months. There is a port of entry that is not known as a legal or authorized port in Quebec which is sending thousands of people across the border into Ontario, which is costing our taxpayers \$200 million and growing.

But don't take our word for it. The federal Auditor General has just agreed with the Parliamentary Budget Officer as well as the Toronto neighbourhood studies process to suggest that this is a process that we cannot continue to support in the province of Ontario because of two things. One is that Canadians do not have confidence in the border. As you know, federal border crossings are the sole jurisdiction of the federal government. However, the downstream costs on our shelter systems in our two largest cities, in Ottawa and Toronto, are over—

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

Interjections.

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

Supplementary question.

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: After the previous Liberal government failed to stand up to their federal counterparts, it is refreshing to have a minister who will fight for Ontario taxpayers.

It appears the Prime Minister and minister responsible feel they can spend their way out of this issue. The 2019 budget committed \$208 million in new funds for the Immigration and Refugee Board to help clear the backlog. Speaker, it's hard to imagine how we'll clear such a backlog as more illegal border-crossers arrive each day.

Can the minister please tell us how we are standing up for Ontario's taxpayers?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I have joined every single Premier who joined our Premier, Premier Ford, across this great province, across this great nation, through our territories as well as the other provinces, in calling on the federal government to pay for its bills at its broken border crossing.

You don't have to take my word for it. Every single Premier of every political stripe in this country signed on with Premier Ford. The Parliamentary Budget Officer, who is an independent officer of the federal Parliament, has agreed. The Auditor General federally has also agreed. That's why we continue to call on Minister Bill Blair and Minister Ahmed Hussen to provide Ontario with \$200

million, which is \$84 million in shelter costs in our two largest cities, \$90 million in social assistance costs and growing, and over \$20 million in education costs.

The reality is simple, Speaker: The federal government has no control over its border, but it does have control over its finances, and we want our \$200 million.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. Jeff Burch: My question is to the Premier. Families devastated by flooding across Ontario were relieved to hear the government announce that disaster relief assistance will be available as they prepare to put things back together, but they're worried that the promise of assistance will dry up as soon as the cameras go away.

The minister has promised to address the long delays and cumbersome paperwork that have afflicted this program and left people without the support they desperately need. Will the Premier tell people applying for disaster relief today when they can expect the support they're applying for?

1110

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: My heart breaks. When I went up to Muskoka, to Ottawa—I've been up to Muskoka several times and Ottawa several times to make sure I saw the damage myself and made sure the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment were involved. I gave my word to the mayor of Muskoka Lakes and the Bracebridge mayor and the Huntsville mayor that we'd put a task force together.

Mr. Speaker, I'm so glad to announce that yesterday we sat down with the ministries. We're putting a task force together. It has taken us two days to get that going, which is unbelievable in government. But our government moves quickly when emergencies happen.

We're reaching out today, actually, to the three mayors. I'm going to be heading up there again to pay them a visit, to sit down. We're going to have the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of the Environment plus the three municipalities up in the Muskoka region, along with the Ottawa region, and we're going to come up with great ideas on how we can take care of the watershed up there, to make sure we can prevent the flooding in the pass and control the water a lot better than what has happened over the last year.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Families who have watched their homes disappear under flood waters shouldn't be left waiting for years for help as they put things back together. Following the tornado that hit the Ottawa region last year, only seven of 111 applicants have received the disaster funding they applied for. For the flooding in 2017, residents of Windsor are still waiting for the assistance they applied for.

Will the Premier be clear today that help will come when the cameras are gone and commit that these people will receive support when they need it, not years from now?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I'm glad that the Premier mentioned the task force. I want to thank Premier Ford and also all of my ministerial colleagues, including my seatmate the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, for all of their work that we're doing.

As the Premier said, the safety of the people of Ontario is a top concern of our government and my ministry, specifically. I want to thank all of the first responders, all of the municipal staff and everyone who's on the ground, including the men and women of our Canadian Armed Forces, for assisting in this terrible disaster.

As the member will know, we activated the Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program back at the end of April in the Renfrew and Pembroke area—which I travelled to with the minister last week—and Huntsville and Bracebridge, as the Premier referenced. As well, yesterday, we authorized DRAO in Kawartha Lakes and the Ottawa region, including Clarence-Rockland, the township of Alfred and Plantagenet and the township of Champlain.

We'll continue to work with our municipal partners, always wanting to make the program improve, if possible.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Mr. Michael Coteau: My question is to the Premier. Premier, public health in Ontario has embraced a preventative health care strategy that not only saves money but saves lives. One would think that this government would understand that. But unfortunately, they've put ideology ahead of science and data.

Speaker, through you to the Premier, can he explain how cutting funding to public health will help make our health care system more efficient?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much for the question. We are modernizing our public health system. It's important to do that to make sure that people are protected and receive the essential services that they need.

There has been a lot of incorrect information out there about the effects of these changes. They're small changes over the course of three years. We want to make sure that local units can concentrate on the things that are most important, like making sure that children are being vaccinated. We're in dangerous territory in some parts of Ontario with respect to that, because we require a certain percentage of the population to be vaccinated in order for everyone to be safe.

We want to make sure that nutrition programs are going to continue—that is continuing with funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services—and that children with special needs get the help they need, as well as women expecting children.

All of those things are essential. We recognize that. That is something that, with the funds that the local units are receiving from the provincial government, they will be able to continue. We have to focus on priorities. We have to focus on what is most important—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnett): Thank you.
Supplementary question.

Mr. Michael Coteau: Again, back to the Premier: If the government will not accept science and data, how about some history? Under Mike Harris, massive cuts were made to health care, and there was a breaking point. The SARS outbreak took place under the 50-50 public health formula. Recognizing the crucial role that public health plays in preventing outbreaks, the former Liberal government increased public health spending by 25% that year.

We know that this government wants to take us back to the 1990s and only fund half of public health. But, Premier, you have a duty to look ahead, to strengthen our public health care system, not to undermine it.

So Speaker, through you, how does the Premier think that these massive cuts will help prevent a future public health care crisis?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would say let's look at the facts and let's look at the math. We inherited a \$15-billion deficit as a result of things that your government did—\$15 billion. And do we have a better health care system, a better education system or a better financial system? Certainly not.

We have to take the steps necessary in order to make sure that we have sustainable services for the future. We are protecting what matters. Health care and education matter.

We are taking every step possible to make sure that we do our responsibility to the people of Ontario to be responsible financial stewards, and we are expecting municipalities to do the same. With the funding they will be receiving on public health from the province, they will be able to do it if they concentrate on the essential priorities. I'm sure that they will, and we look forward to working with them in order to do that.

POLICE SERVICES

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: My question is for the Solicitor General. Mr. Speaker, the rising trend of opioid overdoses across the country and in Ontario is a public health issue that demands action. In an effort to fight back against the opioid crisis, I recently introduced my first private member's bill, which, if passed, would mandate that all police services across Ontario be trained in the administration of naloxone.

Naloxone is a life-saving medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and allow for medical help to arrive.

Mr. Speaker, can the Solicitor General please explain to this House how our government is empowering police services across this province to save lives?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member for Mississauga Centre. As a registered nurse, I know that she has a particular interest and insight into this issue and how we can do more work to support our everyday heroes on the front line.

Last fall, our government made changes so police officers would not be subjected to an automatic criminal investigation when they used naloxone in an unsuccessful attempt to revive someone with an overdose. It was the right thing to do. This amendment enabled police officers

to carry out their duties without fear of facing a criminal investigation, but more importantly it helped save lives.

Police should be subject to the same rules as other first responders when administering this potentially life-saving measure. Police officers are often the first to arrive on the scene of an emergency. In a medical emergency, they do what any first responder would do: They try to save a life.

These changes were important. They sent a message to our front-line responders that we are going to have their backs when they need it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you very much, Minister, for your answer, and for your continued advocacy and steadfast leadership when it comes to ensuring the safety of our province.

Mr. Speaker, we know many overdoses happen in a victim's home and police officers are often the first to arrive at the scene. The brave police officers in my riding and the rest of the province will now be treated the same as firefighters and paramedics when it comes to the administration of naloxone. This is the right thing to do for our men and women in uniform, who are key first responders in the opioid crisis.

Mr. Speaker, could the Solicitor General please share more about our government's commitment to supporting public safety in Ontario?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: It would be an honour, Speaker. In less than a year, our government has done more to respect and support public safety heroes than, frankly, the previous government did in 15 years. We fixed and passed legislation that restores respect to the brave men and women of the police and put public safety first. We announced two phases of our plan to crack down on gun violence and break up the gangs who prey on our young people within our communities. We recently highlighted our government's commitment to move ahead with building a new, modern correctional facility in Thunder Bay that will keep correctional officers safe, and better protect the people of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, we're just getting started, and I will have more to announce soon.

1120

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Mr. Speaker.

Remarks in Oji Cree.

My question is to the Acting Premier. Recently, the government proposed legislative changes to the Endangered Species Act, reviewing the Far North Act and changes to the Environmental Assessment Act. The language used by the government to describe these proposals is that this is all about efficiencies and nothing else. But these changes can't take place without real, prior and informed consultation and consent of First Nations.

What is the government's plan for meaningful consultations with all citizens, including First Nations, before moving ahead with these changes?

Hon. Christine Elliott: To the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to again state that we continue to want to engage with our Indigenous peoples and all of our communities about our environmental policies. As part of our More Homes, More Choice Act, we've worked very directly with the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. Our government is working very diligently as part of our More Homes, More Choice plan. We've brought forward a key piece of our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan that will help turn our housing crisis around.

I appreciate the member's comments about some of these environmental—they're still posted on the Environmental Registry for comment. We're still engaging with a variety of stakeholders. Again, I look forward to the feedback that we get. We have received a tremendous amount of feedback from the public and Indigenous communities to date.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Back to the Acting Premier: The purpose of the current Environmental Assessment Act is for the betterment of the people of Ontario by providing the protection, conservation and wise management of Ontario's environment. The Matawa chiefs were working on an enhanced environmental assessment process with Ontario and have insights—strong insights, actually—on making improvements to environmental laws that can bring certainty for communities and industry alike.

Why has the Premier not responded and not taken the time to meet with Matawa chiefs on the Ring of Fire development and the approach of including First Nations in decision-making in the north?

Interjections.

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

Minister.

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the honourable member: Consultation with our Indigenous communities is very important to us, whether it be in my Housing Supply Action Plan or whether it be in our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan. I know that if the Minister of Indigenous Affairs were available today, he would talk about the extensive consultation that we've had regarding a number of these matters. I appreciate the number of folks in the room, and I will pass along some of their comments involving our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan.

Again, from my perspective on some of the things that I'm carrying forward in this legislation, things like the changes to our Endangered Species Act, things for our Environmental Assessment Act, I might say that a number of the things that we're exempting under the Environmental Assessment Act are very low-risk projects that in no other jurisdiction in Canada are part of the environmental assessment process. These are things like snowplowing, creating bike lanes, creating community parks. No other jurisdiction includes those in the environmental assessment process. There's not one other location that does that.

Again, consultation is important. We want to—

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

ROAD SAFETY

Mrs. Gila Martow: My question is to the amazing Minister of Transportation. We all know that our roads and highways are among the safest in North America, but I'm sure we can all agree that there's always more that can be done to ensure that Ontarians are safe getting from point A to point B. I know that there are a number of safety measures in the Getting Ontario Moving Act that, if passed, will increase the safety of every person who uses our roads, highways and bridges. The people of Ontario expect our government to make the roads safer for them, and we are doing just that.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Transportation share with the Legislature some of the proposed safety measures in the Getting Ontario Moving Act?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I thank the member from Thornhill for that question. She truly is a champion for transit in her area. I can't remember a day when I haven't heard from her on the transit file.

Mr. Speaker, last week I was thrilled to table the Getting Ontario Moving Act, as well as a number of proposed regulatory changes that will cut red tape, save businesses and taxpayers time and money, and help keep Ontario's roads the safest in North America. We are doing this because it's our fundamental belief that we need to put the people first in everything we do, and the people of Ontario expect us to keep our roads safe.

We are proposing increased fines for slow-moving drivers who travel in the left-hand lane, because when people drive dangerously slow, they're putting the safety of others at risk. If passed, the legislation will make learning to drive safer by introducing a new offence for any driving instructor that violates a zero blood alcohol or drug presence requirement.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing more in my supplemental.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you to the minister for his great response. Our government continues to keep the people of Ontario front of mind in every decision we make. In fact, no matter what the service, regulation, program or policy, we want to hear from all Ontarians and involve them in decision-making.

Mr. Speaker, our number one priority is keeping the people of Ontario safe, whether at home, at work or during their commute. This is why we are working to ensure we have a safe and efficient transportation network. It is important that we continue to work together to find ways to make sure Ontario roads remain among the safest in North America.

Will the Minister of Transportation please share more about the proposed regulations and safety measures?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thanks again for that question. We do have a number of proposed safety measures in our bill

and regulations. We're proposing stronger fines for driving carelessly around maintenance and construction workers, tow truck drivers and recovery workers. We're allowing motorcyclists to use the HOV lanes, a much safer part of the road for them to use. As I announced a couple of weeks ago, we'll give municipalities the tools they need to target drivers who threaten the safety of children crossing roads on their way home or to school.

Mr. Speaker, Ontarians expect the government to enact laws and regulations that keep them safe, especially on our highways. We are committed to increasing the safety of every person who uses our roads, highways and bridges. I don't know why the NDP, the opposition, voted against these proposed amendments and changes. They're all for the benefit of Ontarians, to make our roads safer. Hopefully when second reading comes around, they'll hop on board and support our government with these changes.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Sara Singh: Today we are all wearing pins, all members of the House, to commemorate and recognize Children's Mental Health Week. Recognition, Speaker, is long overdue, but the time for action is now. Children in this province shouldn't have to wait more than 18 months in order to access the vital help they need. According to Children's Mental Health Ontario, one in five children and youth has a mental health issue in our province, but only one out of six of these young people will get the support and specialized treatment that they need. Yet, this government has provided less than a quarter of the \$150 million that CMHO needs to support children and youth with mental health services.

Will the Premier reconsider and provide the full funding needed to treat youth mental illness, prevent youth suicides and prevent children from unnecessary hospital visits here in our province?

Interjections.

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

I recognize the Deputy Premier to reply.

Hon. Christine Elliott: I certainly would agree with the member opposite that we do need investments in our mental health and addictions system, particularly with respect to children's mental health. That's why, during the election campaign, we committed to spending \$3.8 billion over 10 years, matching the federal commitment of \$1.9 billion.

We are making sure that we make investments in the proper way. That's what the people of Ontario expect us to do. Just the other day, on Monday, I made an announcement of an additional \$174 million in mental health funding. We want to make sure that we reduce wait times for children receiving mental health care. We know that students are also in need of additional funding. Our colleges and universities are being overwhelmed by the mental health and addictions needs of their students.

But we need to do it in a careful way. We need to make the right investments. So, as a matter of fact, I am meeting with Children's Mental Health Ontario and the Youth

Action Committee to talk about their suggestions for how we can improve mental health services for children and young people. We have been hearing from many groups. We've had over 19 consultations so far. But we need to hear from the people who are receiving services or who need to receive services. I'm looking forward to—

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

1130

Ms. Sara Singh: Back to the Acting Premier: Today, a group of young Ontarians have come to Queen's Park to ask the Premier to invest in their future. As the minister says, she'll be meeting with them later. These pins and ministerial statements are not enough when young people's mental health initiatives continue to be underfunded in this province. These gestures aren't going to help children who remain wait-listed for over 18 months for the emergency mental health supports they need.

The Premier promised to match the federal government in mental health funding by committing \$3.9 billion over 10 years, but this year's budget for mental health is actually all just federal money; there's no new commitment from this province. Ontario's children cannot wait any longer, Mr. Speaker. Can the Premier please tell us why this government has once again failed to invest in young people here in Ontario?

Interjections.

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

Minister to reply.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Through you, Speaker: I'd have to say I completely disagree with what the member has just indicated. We have made the commitment to spend \$3.8 billion over 10 years. As a matter of fact, with respect to the announcement I made on Monday, of an additional \$174 million, which is part of our budget plan and which will include more supports for children and youth, we are going to make sure that children get mental health assistance in schools, as well as in the community.

We're also going to make sure that people who are homeless are going to receive housing supports; that people with severe mental illness get better support through mobile crisis teams working with the Solicitor General; and that youth and adults get faster access to addictions treatment. But we certainly recognize the need for faster access for children and youth to get services and connected services.

There's also a problem with youth transitioning into adult services, where they get dropped when they're 18 and then they can't get picked up again for services. We want to work with children and youth. We want to hear from them directly about their—

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

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Mr. David Piccini: My question today is for the Solicitor General. Mr. Speaker, Ontario's government was elected with a mandate to improve public safety across this

province, and to provide the hard-working front-line staff in our correctional facilities with the tools and the resources they need to accomplish their duties safely and effectively.

Each year, during the first week of May, we celebrate the significant contribution made by correctional officers, probation and parole officers, nurses, social workers, recreational staff and so many others to keep Ontario safe. To help mark this important week, could the Solicitor General please explain to this House how our government is supporting the efforts of front-line heroes in our correctional facilities?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Thank you to the member from Northumberland–Peterborough South for this important question. Whether it's behind institutional walls, or in our communities, correctional officers and their staff are essential partners in Ontario's justice system. Through their hard work and dedication, these professionals perform important supervision, care and rehabilitation duties and help keep our communities safe.

Their diligence and professionalism does not go unnoticed by our government. Over the course of the coming week, the member from Brampton South, my excellent parliamentary assistant, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria, will be visiting correctional facilities and probation and parole offices across the province. These meetings are another opportunity to learn, first-hand, from front-line workers about the challenges they experience in their day-to-day work keeping our communities safe.

Let me be clear: Our government will always support correctional staff in their vital work, which is essential to protecting Ontario communities and families.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. David Piccini: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for her response and for taking the time to meet with front-line workers in my community. I will tell you that my constituents are heartened to hear this government's commitment to public safety and front-line workers like those at Brookside and Warkworth corrections in my riding.

This week, the province of Ontario's correctional services staff will pay tribute to those who have fallen in the line of duty at the annual correctional services ceremony of remembrance at Queen's Park. Ontario formally honours the contributions and sacrifices of the province's correctional services staff at this solemn ceremony each year.

Could the Solicitor General tell us how our government is working with front-line heroes in our correctional facilities to provide a safer Ontario?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I hope members from across all party lines and the general public actually participate in the ceremony tomorrow because, as he spoke about, it is very emotional and very important to acknowledge.

Though it goes unseen by most Ontarians, the vital work of correctional service professionals helps make Ontario one of the safest jurisdictions in the world. We do not take this for granted, which is why we renew our commitment to corrections officers, probation and parole and other correctional staff.

Over the past several months, our government has made improvements at adult correction facilities across the province, including better health and wellness supports for correctional officers; reconfirming Ontario's commitment to building a new, modern complex in Thunder Bay; expanding the female unit at Monteith Correctional Complex; having a dedicated K9 unit at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre; and increasing safety at the Kenora Jail by upgrading infrastructure and strengthening partnerships between the corrections staff and the police service.

If the NDP members actually spoke to their corrections officers, they would hear about the investments—

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

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: My question is for the Premier. This Conservative government is making massive concessions to the auto insurance industry in their regressive new plan. Right there in black and white, the government is planning to allow insurance companies to jack up drivers' insurance rates even more if they don't have perfect credit by allowing insurance companies to ask for your credit history to determine how much you have to pay. That will be devastating to families in areas like Humber River–Black Creek, Brampton and Scarborough and even the Premier's own riding, who are already overpaying because of the neighbourhood they live in.

What you pay for auto insurance should be based on your driving record, not where you live, and not based on your credit rating. Premier, what on earth does credit rating have to do with your driving record?

Hon. Doug Ford: The Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much for the question. It's so clear that the Liberal-NDP system of failed stretch goals on auto insurance is broken. It is completely broken. They have done nothing about this. Our plan that we've proposed in the budget will provide choice for families. It's putting the drivers first. It will allow drivers to be able to select items for their own insurance. It will allow the insurance companies to offer options to drivers that aren't available today.

This is an opportunity to modernize, to digitize. You'll be able to use an app now for your driver insurance instead of having it on a pink form in your glove compartment. We're modernizing government, we're transforming government, we're digitizing government, and auto insurance is a big part of this program.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I see that the minister doesn't want to talk about that dark secret in their auto insurance plan.

The Conservative government voted against my bill, the Lower Automobile Insurance Rates Act, that would have lowered auto insurance premiums for millions of Ontario's drivers.

According to economist and auto insurance expert Dr. Fred Lazar, my bill could have lowered how much drivers

have to pay for insurance by \$1 billion a year, province-wide. Instead, this government is giving rich auto insurance companies new discriminatory tools to go after drivers based on their credit rating.

Why is this government siding with rich auto insurance companies over Ontario drivers who are being gouged?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Drivers across Ontario have been pushing for 15 long years for change to this file, and we are bringing that. Rather than meaningful change from us, we continue to hear these programs from the NDP and the Liberals that go absolutely nowhere.

Let's hear from a couple of professionals: The Canadian Automobile Association: "CAA insurance is pleased to see that the 2019 provincial budget provides Ontario motorists greater choice around auto insurance, so that coverage better suits individual needs."

The Insurance Bureau of Canada: "The Ontario government's multi-year plan to fix auto insurance is a win for consumers. These changes will give consumers greater choice in their coverage and better control over the price they pay for auto insurance."

Speaker, it's so awful to see that the opposition is not going to support this budget and bring choice and lower costs for insurance for the families of Ontario.

1140

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr. Daryl Kramp: My question is for my neighbour, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry—the rather quiet neighbour. Our government for the people understands just how important the forestry industry is to the people of Ontario, and both the minister and I are personally aware of the impact. Yet for 15 years the previous government ignored this extremely important industry. They let it fall right by the wayside—completely ignored it.

I know the Minister of Natural Resources has been working hard to make Ontario open for business and open for jobs. Could the minister update this House on how our government is directly investing in the forestry industry?

Hon. John Yakabuski: I want to thank my neighbour from Hastings–Lennox and Addington for that question. He's right; we are making Ontario open for business and open for jobs. I recently visited Killaloe to see first-hand how our investment of \$5.5 million over five years has helped to protect local jobs at Ben Hokum & Son, a family-run sawmill. It was great to be there with Dean Felhaber and his wife, Tanya. Dean is the fourth generation at Hokum & Son. It is one of eastern Ontario's largest lumber producers, and the province's biggest producer of red and white pine lumber. This investment will help protect over 100 jobs and help the sawmill compete with anybody in the world. It has been too long since the government invested in such an important industry, and I can tell you that supporting success stories like Ben Hokum & Son is just the beginning for this government, because we stand 100% behind our forestry sector.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: Certainly, I can advise all people, if you've never been to Killaloe, you're definitely missing something.

Minister, it's really exciting to see our government taking measures to make Ontario really the best place in the world to do business. It's one of our government's number one priorities: to grow the economy, and help create and protect our jobs. I'm getting really, really tired of seeing this \$15-billion industry just neglected and flushed down the toilet by the 15 years of inaction of this previous government. I know that this investment by our government and the development of our forestry strategy are only a very few of the number of ways that this minister is helping companies like Ben Hokum & Son continue to thrive here in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, could our minister please inform this House on how this investment is beneficial to the entire forestry industry?

Hon. John Yakabuski: I thank the member for his supplementary.

Since being founded in 1956, Ben Hokum & Son has gone from a small circular sawmill producing about two million board feet to two sawmills that produce over 31 million board feet each per year. When we support producers like Ben Hokum, when they succeed, so do harvesters that provide their logs and other producers that depend on their products. This was not just an investment in Ben Hokum & Son but an investment in the community and our forestry sector as a whole. We're creating an environment where jobs will be created in the forestry industry. I have so much confidence in the future of this industry as we develop a forestry strategy and send the message to our forestry partners that we're behind them, not trying to stand in their way. I hope that my colleagues on the other side, in the NDP, will stand with us and support our forestry industry as we try to bring it forward into the 21st century.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. That concludes question period for this morning.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Government and Consumer Services has informed me that he has a point of order.

Hon. Bill Walker: I'd like to correct my record. This morning, when I was speaking about the housing supply action bill, I stated inadvertently that we had 283 surplus properties in government that we'll be disposing of and putting those monies back into the programs we value most; it should have actually been 243 surplus properties, Mr. Speaker. We're looking forward to selling all those and bringing that money back to the people of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): It is entirely in order for members to correct their own record, and I appreciate that.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The next one with a point of order is the member for Brantford–Brant.

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hate to steal your thunder, but I want to welcome to the House my friends from Faith Lutheran church: Wilhelm Hilgendag; Art Oswald; William Neeb; Elizabeth Mongeon; and a former member here, my friend and mentor, David Neumann, from the 34th Parliament, and his beautiful wife, Elfrieda. Welcome to this, our people's House.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Welcome back to the Legislature.

THERESA LECCE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader appears to have a point of order.

Hon. Todd Smith: Yes, a point of order; thanks, Speaker. I just want to pass this along to the House, because a lot of people have been asking about funeral arrangements for the member from King–Vaughan's—Stephen Lecce's—mother, Theresa. I can tell you that Vescio Funeral Homes in Woodbridge will have visitation on Thursday from 2 to 4 and 6 to 9, and then 6 to 9 on Friday night as well. The funeral mass will be taking place on Saturday morning at 11:30, and that's at St. Margaret Mary Roman Catholic church on Highway 27. I just wanted to pass that along to everyone.

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

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry appears to have a point of order.

Mr. Jim McDonell: I wanted to welcome Raymond Houde, the former executive director of the Counselling and Support Services of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Richmond Hill on a point of order.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to welcome Ms. Tracey McGruthers, executive director; and Nousheh Hodgson, director of counselling and group services, from Catholic Community Services of York Region.

Mr. Speaker, Family Service Ontario and its 47 member agencies are hosting a brief luncheon in committee rooms 228 and 230 at noon. I encourage all members to attend to learn about the long history of providing community-based mental health and addictions services in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Waterloo on a point of order.

Ms. Catherine Fife: On behalf of Counselling Collaborative of Waterloo region, Lisa Akey from Interfaith Community Counselling Centre and Carizon family and community services and Diane McGregor from KW Counselling Services are also here today. We'll be joining them for the reception.

DEFERRED VOTES

FIXING THE HYDRO MESS ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 POUR RÉPARER LE GÂCHIS
DANS LE SECTEUR DE L'ÉLECTRICITÉ

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy / Projet de loi 87, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 87.

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

The division bells rang from 1147 to 1152.

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

On May 1, 2019, Mr. Rickford moved third reading of Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy.

Mr. Clark has moved that the question now be put.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Harris, Mike	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	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Todd
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	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
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy	Yurek, Jeff

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Gretzky, Lisa	Schreiner, Mike
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Shaw, Sandy
Arthur, Ian	Hassan, Faisal	Singh, Gurratan
Begum, Doly	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Sara
Bell, Jessica	Horwath, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Berns-McGown, Rima	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Bisson, Gilles	Lindo, Laura Mae	Tabuns, Peter
Burch, Jeff	Mamakwa, Sol	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
Fraser, John	Miller, Paul	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	Yarde, Kevin

Gélinas, France
Glover, Chris

Rakocevic, Tom
Sattler, Peggy

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 66; the nays are 40.

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

Mr. Rickford has moved third reading of Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1156 to 1157.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Rickford has moved third reading of Bill 87, An Act to amend various statutes related to energy.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Harris, Mike	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	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Smith, Todd
Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McNaughton, Monte	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	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
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy	Yurek, Jeff

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 66; the nays are 40.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines has informed me he has a point of order.

Hon. Greg Rickford: I'm relieved to make the vote for my own bill.

Today I'm joined by two constituency staff all the way from Kenora and Dryden. Friends, join me in welcoming Lorna Wood from Dryden and Linda Nelson from Kenora.

ARCHIE HARRISON MOUNTBATTEN-WINDSOR

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Sarnia–Lambton apparently has a point of order.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have in my hot little hand here the announcement from Buckingham Palace of the name of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's newly born baby: Archie Harrison Mountbatten-Windsor. Congratulations from Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): This House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1201 to 1500.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Jill Andrew: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I hope you're having a wonderful day. It's my pleasure to introduce to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario Dr. Caroline Newman, along with her husband, Mitchell Kamiel, and Naomi Litwack-Lang. Dr. Caroline Newman is an outstanding member of Toronto–St. Paul's, and she and her family are quite the activists for our environment.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: On behalf of the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, I would like to welcome Susan MacIsaac, the executive director of Family Service Ontario, who is here with all of Family Service Ontario's agency members and their volunteer board members for their MPP reception day. Welcome, everyone, to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, with the flooding here in Muskoka and Ottawa and across eastern Canada, and the devastating cyclones in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, it's

clear that climate change is not going to let up. Our society faces grave risks. People are already losing their property and, in many cases, losing their lives. The Conservative government's attack on any substantial climate action, the wasting of \$30 million to fight the federal climate plan in court and their ill-conceived plan to force gas stickers on gas pumps show that, in the end, this government has no concern for this issue.

There is climate action we can take. I'm working with my colleagues on measures to stop climate change, including bringing in a private member's bill to prevent fracking in Ontario, given the increasing natural gas leaks that are heating up our world. I was pleased to support the climate strikers when they had their demonstration here last week, as I have been since last fall.

Speaker, I know that people are concerned about climate change, about its impact on their lives and what they can do. I urge everyone, if you can do nothing else, at least come and stand with the students as they fight for our future.

VETERANS

Mrs. Amy Fee: Supporting veterans and members of the military has long been a passion of mine and of my eldest daughter, Sarah. In grade 3, she started speaking to her class about the importance of military service and eventually helped to organize her school's Remembrance Day services, including arranging fundraisers for veterans to come and speak to her peers. We're often looking for new ways to reach out and support, as Sarah calls them, our nation's heroes.

A few weeks ago in my riding of Kitchener South–Hespeler, the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association held their sixth annual conference at Conestoga College. It included a special focus on how PSWs can best support military veterans who have operational stress injuries. I had the honour of attending the keynote address by Tim Laidler and Alex Huang from the University of British Columbia. Tim, who is a retired corporal in the Canadian Armed Forces, worked with UBC to create the national organization, the Veterans Transition Network.

He came to Kitchener from BC to talk to the PSWs about how they are uniquely positioned to support military veterans. He explained to the PSWs the military culture our soldiers become accustomed to and just how vital it is to help them break their silence and get at their stories by breaking through their feelings of, sometimes, shame and isolation. Not only did his presentation bring more awareness and understanding to myself, but many of the PSWs in attendance said they are now feeling more confident in supporting veterans and are looking forward to learning more from the team at UBC in the future.

ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

Ms. Sara Singh: Last week, I had the absolute pleasure of attending the premiere screening of a short series on CBC Gem entitled *The 410* which actually was shot,

written and directed in Brampton. It was a great delight to be able to see shots of our community, but also stories of our community being shared around trucking and the trucking industry. It was a great experience.

But, Mr. Speaker, I really want to highlight how much art and culture we have in the city of Brampton, and in particular my riding of Brampton Centre. Actually, Brampton is home to some very notable artists and creators, like Rupi Kaur, who is actually a New York Times bestselling author. We have Alessia Cara, who hails from Brampton and is a Grammy Award-winning singer. We also have Michael Cera and so many others, including Director X and Alan Thicke, all hailing from Brampton, and who all believe that arts and culture do contribute to our economy.

Actually, the creative economy contributes \$54.6 billion to our provincial GDP. That's quite a staggering number, and so it's astonishing to me that this government would choose to cut funding to arts programs and support that is so needed to help develop those creative economies. We learned through the budget that this government is cutting \$5 million from the base funding of the Ontario Arts Council. They're also cutting the funding to the Ontario Music Fund from \$15 million to \$7 million. So, Mr. Speaker, I wonder where the next generation of artists are going to get the support they need to help contribute to the economic growth that we know the creative industries do here in our province.

MOVE TO GIVE

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Last month, I participated in a two-hour Zumbathon at the Innisfil YMCA in support of their fifth annual Move to Give.

Move to Give is a fundraiser run by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka to raise money through a wide variety of physical activities and for a wide variety of physical activities. Through these different events, the YMCA had a goal to raise \$100,000 in support of the Y's efforts to build healthy communities. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to announce that not only did they hit their goal, but they doubled it. Through the eight-location participation in this fundraiser, the YMCA raised a grand total of—wait for it, Mr. Speaker—\$201,000.

I would like to congratulate all those involved with organizing and, of course, everyone who came out to move and to give.

BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I just want to take a moment to acknowledge that today, May 8, is the 74th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest military engagement of the Second World War, lasting almost five years. The Canadian Merchant Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force played a vital role in the Allied efforts. Today, we recognize the more than 4,600 courageous Canadians who lost their lives at sea during those years.

On Sunday, May 5, I had the privilege of attending a beautiful memorial ceremony held at Navy Hall in Niagara-on-the-Lake. I was honoured to recite the official naval poem, remembering Canada's fallen heroes who sacrificed themselves for our freedom, fair winds and calm seas.

Lastly, I would like to wish all of the mothers across this great province an early happy Mother's Day. The work, dedication, unconditional love and sacrifices we exhibit as mothers have often gone unrecognized. Mother's Day is a time to pay respects and say thank you to the women who do it all, so a special thank you to my mother. I love you and appreciate all that you do and have done for me and continue to do.

A happy special first Mother's Day to my daughter, Charlotte, and wishing my daughter-in-law, Sarah, a very happy Mother's Day.

To all of the mothers in Ontario, celebrate this weekend. You most definitely deserve it. Happy Mother's Day.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members' statements? The member for Don Valley West.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to make a statement in the place of my colleague from Ottawa South.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Don Valley West is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to make a statement in place of the member for Ottawa South. Agreed? Agreed.

VOLUNTEERS

BÉNÉVOLES

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Last night in my community of Don Valley West, I had the privilege of acknowledging over 30 community volunteers at my annual volunteer appreciation event. These fine people give their time and their love to the organizations and the people in their neighbourhoods.

Just a few examples:

Talha Malik works with youth in Flemingdon Park, coaching cricket and mentoring young leaders.

Susan Lipchak has been a master gardener at the Toronto Botanical Garden for more than a decade.

1510

Yukiko Ichihara, Ester Abisai and Isabel Murambiwa have helped hundreds of tenants to understand their rights and take action against unresponsive landlords.

In every community across this province there are unsung heroes who deserve our thanks. They work quietly and steadily every single day. Some of them are spending hours every week looking after an aging or ill family member. Some of them are delivering meals to shut-ins, providing support to newcomers, digging community gardens, raising money to help people in need through churches, mosques, synagogues and temples, volunteering in hospitals, or helping out with a neighbour's kids after school.

Thank you to each one of you. The 30+ award recipients in Don Valley West are part of a very large army of

volunteers who make our community stronger. You are the heart of our society. Merci à tous les bénévoles en Ontario pour votre travail et votre compassion. Vous êtes le coeur de notre société. Merci. Meegwetch.

EARTH WEEK

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: Our government knows that as we open Ontario up for business, building affordable housing, growing our economy and creating jobs, we must do so in a sustainable way. As a society, we need to think globally while acting locally.

People in my riding deserve to control how we regulate and manage our unique environmental needs. That is why last week I was pleased to join with residents in my community of Oakville North–Burlington and Oakville-green to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Week. My volunteers and I started in Arbourview park, in Oakville, and finished in Tansley Woods Park, in Burlington, for a community trash pickup. Later in the week, we all planted trees native to the Halton region, enhancing its biodiversity while helping to improve water quality in the regional watershed.

We need more grassroots events such as this which can help climate change. We need to help Ontario businesses do better for our environment.

Our government is investing \$400 million in an emissions reduction fund to encourage private investments in clean technologies to help our province achieve an additional 8% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. What we do not need is a federally imposed carbon tax that kills jobs, increases costs on goods and services and takes more money out of the hands of hard-working Ontarians.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Ms. Marit Stiles: Today in my riding of Davenport, students at General Mercer Junior Public School are able to learn on a full stomach, thanks to the student nutrition program. At Stella Maris Catholic School kids are protected from communicable diseases, thanks to the school immunization program. And over at the Davenport-Perth community health centre, people are benefiting from diabetes prevention programs. This morning people felt confident dropping off their kids at child care centres in my community because those centres passed the city's inspection program.

Every day millions of people are kept safe and healthy thanks to public health programs and the workers, agencies and volunteers who deliver them. But these programs and hundreds of others in Davenport are at risk in the wake of this government's massive cuts to Toronto Public Health. Some \$1 billion will be cut over the next 10 years, compromising everything from food inspection to newborn screening, vaccine distribution and sexual health clinics.

It is said that for every dollar invested in public health our overall health care system saves \$16. But this is about more than dollars and cents. Lives in my community and in communities across Ontario are quite literally at risk.

I'm calling on all members of this House to stand up for their constituents and join Ontario's mayors, 12 boards of health, nurses, pediatricians, school boards and everyday citizens who are calling on the government to reverse these cuts.

BLENHEIM YOUTH CENTRE

Mr. Rick Nicholls: I was honoured this past Saturday to address the Blenheim Youth Centre, a safe place for area students to hang out with friends and engage in many fun-filled activities.

This past weekend they celebrated their 13th year, and it was nice to see the group's founder, Jay Denoer, as well as their executive director, Ms. Emily Robert, and volunteers. They were all gathered to accept new grants from the Ontario Trillium Foundation totalling \$244,100. These grants will do wonders in expanding the great work that the centre does. This work includes youth in our community who face barriers to becoming more positively engaged in the community—by getting youth more engaged by facilitating volunteering, youth-led programming and representing the youth population within the community.

A key initiative of the Blenheim Youth Centre is the Youth Action Team, consisting of four local high school youth and six elementary students. These youth will be the core team of leaders influencing the remaining youth who utilize the Blenheim Youth Centre's facilities and volunteering opportunities. By providing programming for youth, these participants gain a sense of respect and belonging. They also learn to engage in positive social behaviours, spend more time volunteering in areas of interest to them, and become more aware of local resources and opportunities.

I cannot think of a more worthy recipient of these two Trillium grants. I wish the Blenheim Youth Centre continued success.

On a side note, I would like to wish my wife of 42 years, Dianne, a happy anniversary.

JEAN VANIER

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: Yesterday, the world lost a true champion. Jean Vanier, the beloved founder of L'Arche, passed away at the age of 90. He leaves behind an enormous legacy.

Vanier's story is known to many. In 1964, he invited two individuals with intellectual disabilities into his home. From there was born an idea that grew into a movement.

Vanier recognized that sharing life with individuals with developmental disabilities was not a burden but instead something that could have a profoundly positive impact on anyone. You can learn much from sharing a life and a space with a person with a developmental disability. I often say that hearing my brother laugh or seeing him smile is one of the most joyful experiences that one can have because it's born of a truly pure innocence and happiness. Jean Vanier recognized this as well, and he

sought to spread the word. Today, there are close to 150 L'Arche communities around the world in 35 countries and five continents. In these communities, individuals with developmental disabilities and others come together for a shared experience to learn from one another.

While we mourn his loss today, I remain inspired by the legacy that Mr. Vanier left behind. I encourage everyone to take the time to get to know an individual with a developmental disability. I know that they will find their lives immeasurably enriched by the experience.

MOTIONS

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

Hon. Todd Smith: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the parliamentary assistant responding to the late show scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to put forward a motion without notice regarding the parliamentary assistant responding to the late show scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Todd Smith: I move that, notwithstanding standing order 38(b), the parliamentary assistant for the Minister of Finance may respond to the late show scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019, in place of the parliamentary assistant to the Premier.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is moving that, notwithstanding standing order 38(b), the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance may respond to the late show scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019, in place of the parliamentary assistant to the Premier. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to stand in the House to mark Emergency Preparedness Week in the province of Ontario.

No one likes to imagine that they may someday be affected by an emergency that could affect their family, their home or their community. But, unfortunately, as we know too well, emergencies do happen. They can happen anywhere to anyone. Many of our constituents know this because many of them have been impacted in some way by ice storms, floods, forest fires or other types of emergencies. In fact, as we say these words today, there are people in both northern and southern Ontario who are dealing with the consequences of spring flooding:

impacted infrastructure, road closures and, in some cases, even being displaced from their homes.

1520

Emergency Preparedness Week is a time to prepare so that if something bad happens, we are calm and ready. We should all take some time to think through what types of emergencies may in fact affect us and what we would do, where we would go, how we would stay in contact with loved ones and what we would bring with us.

The ministry's office of emergency management thinks about these situations every day and how each of us can be prepared to handle an emergency, and they have developed some very useful materials available at Ontario.ca/beprepared. These include activities for children, resources for high-rise residents, an emergency preparedness pocket guide and much more. The materials also focus on some specific concerns that may not first come to people's minds or what we think about, like caring for pets in an emergency and the unique needs of seniors and people with disabilities. There's also information about how to pack an emergency kit, because everyone should have a bag packed with essential items in case they have to leave their home quickly.

Emergency Preparedness Week has a different theme every year, and this year's theme is simply "Are You Ready?" As our residents and communities, as well as our businesses, take on the task of making sure they are ready, we all will become more resilient and better able to deal with emergency situations.

There are three steps that I hope everyone takes in this Emergency Preparedness Week: make an emergency plan, pack an emergency kit and stay informed. Speaker, I urge all members of this House to spread this message to their constituencies and in their families. Your support and interest will help promote safer communities for all Ontario residents.

Finally, on behalf of our government, I express my appreciation and thanks to our fellow citizens who respond when emergencies happen. To the police, paramedics, firefighters, members of the Canadian Forces, staff in the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management, municipalities and their staff, and, most importantly, the hundreds of volunteers who step up, our message today is a simple thank you.

In particular, I'd like to express my gratitude and appreciation to General Paul and the Canadian Forces regular and reserve troops who have come to Ontario's aid during the recent flooding in eastern Ontario. They are doing their part; let's do our part by being prepared.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Responses?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank the Solicitor General for her comments on Emergency Preparedness Week. On behalf of the New Democratic caucus, I am pleased to respond to some of the comments made today by the minister and to speak to emergency preparedness in Ontario.

I'd like to begin by thanking all of our emergency service workers in our province for doing a fine job. Whether they're volunteers or whether they're in direct professional service, they're all valued workers here in

Ontario. The work that our fire, police, ambulance and other first responders do to keep us safe in this province is next to none. I tip my cap to all those volunteers and professionals serving to keep our great province safe.

But for our first responders to do their job in an effective manner, we need to give them the proper resources and tools, the sorts of constant wraparound supports they need in order to act decisively when called upon when an emergency breaks out. If public safety is paramount, then we should make investments to strengthen our services and prepare for any future emergencies. Instead, this government is making cuts to some of these services to supposedly streamline these services.

One thing that I am really concerned about is the merging and consolidation of paramedic and health services in this province. This government is moving forward with a plan according to which 59 operators of paramedic and emergency health services will be consolidated into just 10.

There are some real concerns around this move in communities across Ontario. Ontario Health Coalition has publicly stated that they are “concerned that already there are problems of slower response times in rural areas due to long travel distances, and inadequate numbers of ambulances available in urban centres due to crisis-level hospital overcrowding and paramedics stuck in long off-load delays.” In Hamilton, for instance, there have been not one but an increasing number of code zero events, where there aren’t any ambulances available to respond to calls. This government’s “restructuring plan does not address any of the causes of too-long EMS response time; it does not ameliorate services even where there is evidence of significant need.”

Continuing along, they say, “Cutting and centralizing the ambulance services down to 10 giant regions means that smaller rural and northern communities will be lesser priorities and risks their service levels.”

So what happens in one of these rural areas, who now face routine longer wait times, when something profound happens in the community that requires a coordinated approach? How can we seriously sit here, Mr. Speaker, and talk about public safety when we are endangering our citizens and making it difficult for our first responders to respond to emergencies big and small? Again, we should be making it easier for our first responders to do this job, not making it more difficult.

The 2018 Auditor General’s report made it alarmingly clear that the previous Liberal government was not prepared to manage a major emergency in this province. Can this government honestly say that they are? Where is the proof, Mr. Speaker?

I also want to take this opportunity to address another issue in regard to emergency preparedness.

The best way to save lives and avoid pain and suffering is to invest in programs and projects which focus on prevention. But this government made massive cuts to public health funding. That is of concern for me, given how important the job and responsibility of public health is in our society. These cuts are going to have an impact

on immunization programs, public awareness programs, and general health policies in the province.

Public health works silently in the background to ensure that people are safe when they eat, when they drink, when they breathe and that right now, public health emergencies aren’t called such as in Walkerton. We all remember that.

Public health does not want to have these things changed. A lot of things happen that we don’t even realize, Mr. Speaker.

Currently, we are witnessing historic levels of flooding in this province. Health units across the board are concerned about their ability to deal with emergencies such as government slashing, or restructuring, public health in Ontario. Just recently, the board of the Eastern Ontario Health Unit warned that public health cuts and restructuring could make it more difficult to respond to local emergencies such as flooding.

PETITIONS

WASTE REDUCTION

Ms. Jill Andrew: I proudly rise in support of this petition, which will be tabled. Its title is “It’s Time to Ban the Production and Sale of Single-Use Disposable Plastic Water Bottles.” Once again, this is the work of Dr. Caroline Newman, an advocate in Toronto–St. Paul’s for the environment.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the production and sale of bottled municipal water has resulted in” significant “environmental harm, with little or no benefit to the” communities with access to safe drinking water “from municipal taps and fountains. The production of the bottles harms nearby communities with toxic effluent. The unfettered, free harvesting of municipal groundwater is lowering the water tables in communities” across Ontario. “The profiteering from a life source, that ... should free for all, is unethical...” Microplastics are increasingly found in humans and in our food supply. “The pollution ... from single-use disposable plastic water bottles” is disastrous to the environment...;

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“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario” to ban the production and distribution of bottled waters in communities where safe tap water is available and educate the public on the benefits of tap water over bottled water.

I proudly support the petition, sign it and table it with Kate.

VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mrs. Amy Fee: I have a “Petition in Support of Constructing a Memorial to Honour Our Heroes.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“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 wholeheartedly support this petition, Mr. Speaker, and I will be affixing my name to it and handing it to page Rishi to bring to the table.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: I’ve been getting thousands of signatures, and this group of signatures is from people from Alexandria, Cornwall, Avonmore, Astorville, North Bay, Trout Creek and Williamstown.

“Support Ontario’s Public Libraries.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas, according to the statement of public library funding dated Thursday, April 18, 2019, by the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, the Honourable Michael Tibollo, we appreciate that base funding for public libraries will be maintained, we call into question the statement that the Ontario Library Service agencies ‘have no involvement in day-to-day operations of Ontario’s public libraries’;

“Whereas Ontario Library Service—North and Southern Ontario Library Service provide the support for inter-library loan, staff and board training, bulk purchasing, collaborative programming, technological supports, our shared electronic book collection and our shared catalogue database itself;

“Whereas we question how involved the agencies need to be in order to be considered crucial for the day-to-day operations of all provincial libraries, but even more specifically for small, northern ... and rural libraries;

“Whereas value for money and respect for taxpayer dollars are the umbrella under which the agencies operate—allowing libraries to share resources and expertise in an efficient and cost-effective manner—while also allowing them to best serve their individual communities;

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

“—for the reinstatement of funding to the Ontario Library Service (north and south) agencies to, at minimum, the 2017-18 funding levels, in order for these agencies to continue the day-to-day support of Ontario public library services;

“—to continue to maintain base funding for Ontario public libraries.”

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

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the ban on hunting and trapping in sections of Ontario to protect the eastern hybrid wolf was put in place without regard for the overall ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban has adversely affected the ability of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), hunters and trappers to properly manage animal populations and Ontario’s ecosystem;

“Whereas this ban is no longer needed and is in fact causing more damage to Ontario’s ecosystem and increasing unnecessary encounters between wildlife and Ontarians;

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

“That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry immediately lift the ban on hunting and trapping set in place to protect the eastern hybrid wolf.”

I affix my name to this petition and am handing to page Helen.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Jeff Burch: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the PC government of Ontario recently announced plans to overhaul the Ontario Autism Program, implementing a two-tiered age- and income-based funding model, and effectively removing funding for any significant duration of comprehensive applied behavioural analysis (ABA) from all children living with the autism spectrum disorder (ASD); and...

“Whereas ABA is not a therapy, but a science, upon which interventions including comprehensive treatment is founded and duration and intensity of treatment are the key components in predicting outcomes—not age; and

“Whereas accredited peer-reviewed empirical evidence in the treatment of children with ASD has repeatedly shown that for some children with ASD, comprehensive ABA therapy is best practice and the only suitable intervention; and

“Whereas wait-lists for services have increased in length as a result of the 66% increase in costs to administer direct service compared to direct funding, as reported by the Auditor General in 2013, and with the direct service model being eliminated with the Ontario Autism Program reforms, the PC government has a chance to build a needs-based system that will help every child reach their full potential; and

“Whereas it is unacceptable for the Premier of Ontario or his government to drastically reduce essential supports

for some of the province's most vulnerable children without consideration of their individualized needs;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the government to immediately reassess the changes to the Ontario Autism Program and redesign the direct funding model to be administered with a needs-based approach in order to ensure that all children with ASD for whom continuous or comprehensive therapy has been prescribed by a qualified clinician are able to obtain these services in a timely manner regardless of their age or family income."

I affix my name and hand it to page Tabitha.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. I'd just like to remind all members that you can paraphrase a petition. You don't have to read it word for word. That way we can get more petitions in.

Further petitions.

HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

Miss Monique Taylor: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas paid parking at Ontario hospitals contravenes the Canada Health Act objective 'to facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers'; and

"Whereas many patients who have diseases such as cancer and diabetes must go to hospitals for care; and

"Whereas many patients require frequent and regular hospital care including dialysis; and

"Whereas paid parking at hospitals is a financial barrier to Ontario citizens' access to health services;

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

"To reduce the financial burden on Ontario families who require access to hospital services by developing a program to compensate patients for their hospital parking costs at the time of service."

I fully agree with this, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Kate to bring to the table.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm pleased to rise to present the following petition initiated by Rachel Little, submitted by Bryan Smith and signed by hundreds of residents of beautiful Oxford county, Ontario.

"Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

"Whereas the Ontario provincial government has announced a significant class size increase for grades 4 through 12, mandatory e-learning and other detrimental changes to our public education;

"Whereas cutting the number of teachers in the classroom and increasing the number of students is not in the best interest of our children's education and will lead to less one-on-one support for students;

"Whereas mandatory e-learning for students will further reduce one-on-one and face-to-face support while

also neglecting different learning styles and underprivileged groups;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to oppose these damaging cuts and implementation:

"—a fully-funded public education system that includes no increases to class average caps or that otherwise increases the number of students per class;

"—excellent needs-support for all students;

"—no mandatory e-learning;

"—thorough and transparent consultations with board trustees, educators and Ontario families."

I'm very supportive of this petition. I'll be affixing my signature and handing it to page Helen to table with the Clerks. Thank you, Helen.

AUTISM TREATMENT

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

"Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

"Whereas the Ontario Autism Program was badly broken under the Liberals, and the changes introduced by the Conservatives have made it worse;

"Whereas the new funding caps are based on age and income, and not the clinical needs of the child;

"Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them."

I will affix my name. I fully, heartily support this petition, and I will be handing it to page Cameron to take to the table.

1540

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It's my pleasure to read a petition on behalf of post-secondary student entitled "Increase Grants Not Loans, Access for All, Protect Student Rights.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas students in Ontario pay some of the highest tuition fees in the country and carry the heaviest debt loads, even with the recently announced 10% reduction; and

"Whereas many students will now be forced to take on more loans rather than previously available non-repayable grants; and

"Whereas the Ontario government has failed to take action on the chronic underfunding of colleges and universities; and

"Whereas students must have an autonomous voice that is independent of administration and government to advocate on our behalf; and

“Whereas the proposed ‘Student Choice Initiative’ undermines students’ ability to take collective action;

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

- “—provide more grants, not loans;
- “—eliminate tuition fees for all students;
- “—increase public funding for public education;
- “—protect students’ independent voices; and
- “—defend the right to organize” on campus.

On behalf of the over 600 students at the University of Windsor, I will sign this petition with full support and send it to the table with page Emily.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mrs. Amy Fee: My petition to the Parliament of Ontario is “To Ensure the Safety of Residents of Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I support this petition. I will be affixing my name to it and handing it to page Jedd to bring to the table.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Brenda Missen, Nancy Beverly and Lynne Missen Jolly, who have collected these signatures from across Ontario in memory of their sister, Kathryn Missen. I also want to thank her daughter, Harriet Clunie, and the extended family.

“911 Emergency Response....

“Whereas, when we face an emergency we all know to dial 911 for help; and

“Whereas access to emergency services through 911 is not available in all regions of Ontario but most Ontarians believe that it is; and

“Whereas many Ontarians have discovered that 911 was not available while they faced an emergency; and

“Whereas all Ontarians expect and deserve access to 911 service throughout our province;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly:

“To provide 911 emergency response everywhere in Ontario by land line or cellphone.”

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GETTING ONTARIO MOVING ACT (TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT), 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR UN ONTARIO EN MOUVEMENT (MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE TRANSPORT)

Mr. Yurek moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to amend the Highway Traffic Act and various other statutes in respect of transportation-related matters / Projet de loi 107, Loi modifiant le Code de la route et diverses autres lois à l’égard de questions relatives au transport.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Mr. Speaker, I’ll be sharing my time with the Minister of Infrastructure and my amazing parliamentary assistant, the member from Etobicoke Centre.

Before I begin, Mr. Speaker, I’d like to take the opportunity to thank the staff of the Ministry of Transportation and my staff for working hard on this piece of legislation. They’ve been hard at work at putting this together over the last few months, especially Nick—I’m going to mispronounce your name—Cunha, who is here. Nick has been new to my office for a few months, but he kind of coordinated this. He’s a singer, he’s a dancer, he’s an actor, and now he’s creating legislation for the province of Ontario. I’m glad he’s part of the team.

We’re here to discuss our proposed measures that, if passed, will cut red tape for our province’s job creators, help keep our roads safe and enable the province to upload responsibility for new subway projects from the city of Toronto. We are proposing changes that will build much-needed transit, reduce congestion and get commuters moving again.

We all know that when people get to work sooner, home faster and to family and friends quicker, they live a better life. We’ll be doing this through our historic \$28.5-billion plan for transit expansion in our province.

In addition, we're proposing to cut red tape for job creators, reducing burdens so that they can get on with what they know how to do best, and that's to create jobs—jobs that will sustain our economy and sustain growth in our province. These measures will support a range of industry sectors, from tourism to commercial trucking to railways.

Our government is fully committed to making life easier for Ontarians, saving taxpayers time and money. We're taking bold action to get rid of old-fashioned, out-of-date, inefficient ways of doing business. But at the same time, we're doing what Ontarians expect us to do, and that's to keep our roads safe.

We're moving forward with measures that will protect some of the most vulnerable on our roads, like hard-working men and women on the front lines, construction workers and first responders. We're helping municipalities get a lot tougher with drivers who blow by school buses. Mr. Speaker, you know a little about that one yourself. It's inexcusable, the threat they pose to our kids going to and from school. It's unheard of that somebody would not have the patience or not understand that when the bus arm is out and the lights are flashing, you don't blow by them. You put our kids at risk. We're taking measures where, if the legislation is passed, we're going to end that, and those reckless drivers will pay the fines they need to pay, and hopefully change the way they're driving.

Last month, we unveiled a bold vision for transit, a plan for the 21st century. It's a \$28.5-billion transit vision to expand the province's subway network by 50%. This is the most money ever invested to get shovels in the ground and to get new subways built. It's time to start treating subways like they are a vital service.

Tens of thousands of people transfer between the TTC and GO Transit every day. People have waited long enough for an integrated regional transit system that extends outside the Toronto city limits to the growing communities across the region, such as the cities of Markham or Richmond Hill. The new Ontario Line will provide real relief from congestion of Line 1. It will be twice as long and move twice as many people as the original relief line was projected to, but we'll get it done at the same cost. We know we can get this built well before 2029. That target was set by the city. Mr. Speaker, we're going to deliver the Ontario Line by 2027.

The Yonge North extension will connect the subway to one of the region's largest employment centres. It should be open soon after the Ontario Line is up and running.

We will build the long-awaited three-stop Scarborough subway extension to better serve communities in the east end of the city, and we'll deliver before 2030 on that promise. This will turn a one-stop subway proposal into a three-stop subway solution for the people of Scarborough in connecting a community that has waited for over 30 years to do so.

We'll add the Eglinton Crosstown west extension through Etobicoke. A large portion of it is going to be built underground to keep people and goods moving on our

roadway. We also plan for it to connect to Pearson airport, which will link Ontarians further to the world. This will be delivered before 2031.

1550

Mr. Speaker, our legislation, if approved, will give us the legislative tools to enable us to upload ownership of future subway expansion projects to the province so that we can get them built faster. It is time now to get serious and improve the lives of transit users who are on the transit lines every single day going to work, going to school, getting to anywhere they need, but most importantly, getting home to their families. If passed, the proposed legislation would amend the Metrolinx Act to give the province increased authority over new subway projects, either through taking on sole responsibility for the planning, design and delivery of the specified project or decision-making authority for projects that the province would not fully control. It would also include the ability to scope the city and TTC's role with respect to these projects and ensure that work already under way, along with these key assets, will be transferred to the province. We want to get Ontarians moving and believe that, if passed, these proposals will allow the province to build transit infrastructure more efficiently, reduce project costs, leverage potential new delivery models, and support business growth and investment in Ontario.

We are proposing to simplify how businesses and people interact with the Ministry of Transportation to transform the MTO functions in order to reduce costs, to reduce burdens, to save hard-working taxpayers time and money, to meet the needs of both industry and individuals, and to get rid of old, inefficient ways of doing business. We propose to do this by enabling digital delivery of some programs, by leveraging partnerships across government to deliver services more efficiently, and by embracing new advanced technologies to keep Ontario open for business. For example, we will reduce the burden on the short-line railway industry through amendments to better monitor safety performance.

We're also proposing to eliminate the inefficient, outdated enhanced driver's licence program, because today we have more effective products with improved technology providing greater flexibility for land, water and air travel: NEXUS, ePassport, and FAST programs. In proposing this, we'll also reduce government cost and cut off a potential deficit in 2021-22.

We would also amend the vehicle weights and dimensions regulation to allow for the use of advanced technology like wide-based single tires, with the benefits of reduced fuel consumption, lower emissions and improved industry productivity.

We will also make it easier for charter buses to travel in Ontario through amendments that would align with requirements under the International Registration Plan, as well as make it easier for small commercial trucks travelling from the United States.

We're also proposing to make life easier and expand consumer choice by exempting people with personal-use pickups from burdensome annual inspections and updating requirements for off-road vehicles. This is in

response to a request from the sector to support the expansion of the off-road ATV tourism sector and industry in Ontario and allow motorcyclists to have high-styled handlebars.

We also want to improve the customer experience at car dealerships by launching a digital dealer registration project. This would allow businesses to apply for needed permits, plates and stickers online without having to attend at ServiceOntario. This would allow customers to drive away with their vehicles much sooner.

Mr. Speaker, safety on our roads is our top priority. Ontario's roads are among the safest in North America and have been ranked either first or second for the past 17 years. Simply put, careless, dangerous and impaired driving puts lives at risk. It's a serious and increased trend that must be addressed. We are going to target those who threaten to pose serious risk to the safety of others on our roads, and remain vigilant in our efforts to protect some of the most vulnerable road users.

That is why we're proposing to increase the safety of children and drivers on school buses by introducing a new administrative monetary penalty framework for improperly passing a school bus. The measure may make it less costly—or will make it less costly, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker—for municipalities to implement a school bus camera framework, saving the province and municipalities time and money, all while increasing safety in communities throughout the province. The fines generated from the passing of school buses that we're allowing municipalities to collect can be used to work with the school bus operators who have pledged and want to add these cameras to their school buses. They can use those funds from those fines, working it out with the municipalities, to expand the amount of cameras on our school buses. That's the way forward, and we're going to provide the path for them to take.

Mr. Speaker, we intend to better protect maintenance and construction workers, tow truck operators and recovery workers from dangerous drivers. Recovery workers are basically anybody working along the highways during any type of issue, whether it be the EMS, the fire, the police, or a mechanic working on a car. We are going to better protect those workers on the roads. These workers are amongst the most vulnerable on our roads and are the very front lines of keeping the roads safe every single day.

We are proposing to allow single-occupant motorcycles to use high-occupancy lanes to separate them from general traffic to increase safety for the 64,000 motorcyclists in Ontario. This would follow the experience of other jurisdictions and respond to industry and stakeholder requests.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know how often you've driven on Highway 401 in your travels from Chatham all the way—
Interruption.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I think the song is going off there. The House leader of the opposition may have just lost his phone, Mr. Speaker. It was a cheery song supporting this legislation. I couldn't believe it myself. There was something happy coming from the other side of the House there, and I just really enjoyed that.

You've taken me off course. I'm coming back. I'm getting back on track—back on the rails, as they say.

How many times, Mr. Speaker, have you travelled from Chatham to this great place of work and back home only to be frustrated that somebody driving in the left lane as you zoomed down—I know you probably travel the speed limit, but I'm pretty sure that the odd time you'd like to pass a couple of vehicles. However, you're in that left lane and you just can't get by because somebody is driving slowly in the left lane—the frustration you must feel. I know you're a person who controls themselves and keeps calm in all situations, but there are others out there who don't. That's why those driving slowly in the left lane are a hazard and that's why this legislation, if passed, would increase penalties for driving too slowly in the left-hand lane. This in itself would improve road safety.

In addition, we're proposing a zero blood alcohol/drug concentration for driving instructors because we're holding those who instruct our young and novice drivers to the highest standard. As a father of a 15-year-old who will be 16 next January—believe me, she has already mapped out how quickly she's going to obtain that driver's licence. If passed, this legislation provides that extra bit of safety—knowing that that driving instructor works day in and day out to ensure she learns how to drive properly—and ensures that people throughout this riding like my daughter will have the safety to know that we have zero tolerance on alcohol and/or drug use with these driving instructors.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank God, because you're making it a lot more available.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Sorry?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank God; you're making it a lot more available.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: Yes. Well, Mr. Speaker, we do believe in freedom. Not only does this government believe in freedom of choice and freedom of opportunity throughout this province, but we also believe in responsibility, and we need to make sure that the rules we're proposing in this legislation are going to hold those responsible for their acts on one another. But we don't want to take people's freedoms away because we're afraid of holding people responsible; we're just making sure that, as we're adding freedoms to people throughout this province, we're also ensuring there are responsibilities for those who put other people's lives in jeopardy. That's a tenet of this government.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we are proposing to find efficiencies and streamline the way we do business by amending the Highway Traffic Act to make sure they match those of the Criminal Code of Canada. If passed, these changes would allow temporary alterations to special-use lanes within designated construction zones. This would assist industry to help keep traffic flow moving, allow construction and maintenance activities to occur more efficiently, and reduce government burden by eliminating the need for a regulatory amendment every time a special-use lane needs to be altered for construction or maintenance.

That's important because currently, right now, if there's construction going on and they need to close a lane or

move a lane over, the process that these individual construction agencies have to go through in order to make that happen is unheard of. What we're doing is, we're allowing the local MTO regional offices to make sure these lane changes can occur expeditiously without having to come here to Queen's Park and have me view that issue.

1600

So, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be improving traffic flow, improving individual riders' and commuters' time on the road, but also helping the industry out by ensuring that they get these projects done on time.

The updating of the transportation improvement act is also going to occur for above-ground and below-ground structure changes. It's a measure intended to ensure the safety and integrity of Ontario's highway infrastructure, while updating the regarding permits for stand-alone earthworks that would help businesses by reducing barriers on developers and other industry to allow for timely project starts.

Mr. Speaker, this is an addition. We've been speaking with the stakeholders in law enforcement. We are going to be creating an offence for defacing or removing traffic signs that support both road safety and our enforcement partners. Right now there's only a criminal charge with regard to defacing or removing traffic signs. There's no middle ground. This will be giving the law enforcement agencies options on how to proceed with regard to those who vandalize, deface or remove traffic signs.

We are also going to be working continuously at aligning some of our federal measures by introducing some of the legislation that pulls in those people who are breaking the law while under the influence of cannabis. The federal government has given us a certain time period to add these new charges into our Ontario laws, and this legislation, of course, takes care of that.

The policy measures we're proposing today will give long-awaited relief to communities, help make our communities safer, and open Ontario up for business and jobs once again.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are just beginning debate. I sat in the opposition for seven years. Being part of this opening debate, I look forward to hearing what the opposition has to say. I look forward to committee work that will come forward. But I know that this piece of legislation is going to improve the safety of Ontarians, it's going to reduce the unnecessary, outdated, inefficient regulations on businesses and individuals, and it's going to open up Ontario for business. The opposition, of course, will play a part in their critique and participation and amendments, but I hope they can see themselves supporting this piece of legislation after they've read it and understood it. I get that they voted against it last week without seeing the legislation, but there is so much safety involved in this piece of legislation. It's something that should have been done decades ago. We're getting it done today.

I know we have great words coming from the Minister of Infrastructure and my parliamentary assistant, Kinga Surma, so I will give the floor to whoever is up next. I look forward to hearing their comments.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Continuing along the same line of debate, I recognize the Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: It's truly a pleasure to rise today to participate in the debate on Bill 107, the proposed Getting Ontario Moving Act, introduced by, I would say, Ontario's greatest Minister of Transportation ever, the member from Elgin–Middlesex–London, who is doing a tremendous job leading this project and many others right across the province.

But, Mr. Speaker, with Mother's Day approaching, I do want to take 30 seconds to introduce to everyone in the House my mom, Susan McNaughton, who is visiting Queen's Park today. I know that many members of our caucus have had a chance to talk to her. This isn't her first time here, actually. Her first time here was in 1991, when I was a legislative page, sitting on the steps in front of the Speaker back then, who was David Warner. In fact, I believe the member from Timmins was here. I used to serve him water back then—not so much anymore.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the member for Timmins on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: And he was a great page. He should have continued.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I might add that that's not a point of order, but it's accepted.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I wanted to let you know.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. Back to the Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Thank you very much. So welcome, Mom, to Queen's Park today. I'm looking forward to the next couple of days around here.

As my cabinet colleague mentioned, part of Bill 107 is focused on our work to improve transit in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, or the GTHA. I also, as the Minister of Transportation pointed out, wanted to thank his parliamentary assistant, the MPP for Etobicoke Centre, for her leadership on a number of initiatives that our government is taking on as well.

We promised to build better transit for the GTHA that makes getting around easier for people and just makes life easier for families in our province. Amendments proposed in this bill would mean that Ontario can take control of the planning, design and delivery of priority rapid transit extensions and new lines, and it is about time. The GTHA has to endure decades of transit projects that are routinely delayed and routinely over budget. Congestion in the GTHA alone is an \$11-billion problem. It's not just public transit; it's our roads, and it's our daily commutes. Our Premier, Premier Ford, and our government were elected on a plan to get Ontario moving, and we're going to do just that.

With Bill 107, the province would be able to build transit infrastructure more efficiently. The province also has opportunities to reduce the costs of these projects. In fact, the expected benefits of the proposed Bill 107 are many. As announced on April 10, 2019, by the Premier and in our government's 2019 budget, the province has

committed to a new rapid transit plan for the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. This would involve four priority projects at a total capital construction cost of \$28.5 billion.

The legislation we are proposing will support this vision by letting the province have control over the planning, design and delivery of priority rapid transit extensions and new lines, which is a first stage of the province's upload initiative. The amendments are structured to enable the province to either take full control over a project or give us the ability to shape key aspects of a project where the province does not wish to assume full control and responsibility. For projects over which the province has full control, Metrolinx will work in close partnership with Infrastructure Ontario on project design and delivery. Having these two groups or agencies involved is a very good thing, and I'm going to add more about this a little later. The key objective of the proposed legislation is to let the province align both the design and delivery of new projects with our provincial interests. Otherwise, new projects could continue being developed and delivered by the city, but the province would have no final say on these.

We're going to talk a lot about the financing of infrastructure projects. On the traditional side of financing projects, or with traditional models, there would be no guarantee when it comes to the outcome or the timing of these projects. With the province taking on the control of planning, design and delivery of priority rapid transit extensions and new lines, we will be able to get more infrastructure built and we will be able to get it built more efficiently. As I said, Mr. Speaker, we were together on April 10—the Premier, the Minister of Transportation, myself, the PA, members from Etobicoke—to announce a \$28.5-billion expansion to Ontario's transit network, the most money ever invested to get shovels in the ground and get new subways built. On that day, the Premier said that the provincial government is best positioned to build transit.

In addition to the benefits of putting more control in the hands of the province, we can also leverage the Ministry of Infrastructure's agency, Infrastructure Ontario. I can tell you that Infrastructure Ontario has a track record of delivering projects on time and on budget. Public-private partnerships, or P3s, can unlock the private sector's ability to maximize return on investment. They operate on the principle of "build better, build faster and build for the best value." The model of building through public-private partnerships offers the best chance of timely, on-budget delivery.

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Many members of the opposition, of course, have been vocal in their criticism of the P3 model, but let's actually look at the facts. I can tell you that the world of large construction projects is a very complex one, and it is not perfect, by any means. You don't have to look much further than the GTHA to see why that is.

Here are just some examples of how easily things can go wrong.

The Toronto-York Spadina subway extension was delivered with more than two years' delay, and hundreds of millions of dollars over budget. A project that broke ground in 2009, meant to be completed in 2015, ended up opening in December 2017. From its initial budget announcement in 2006 to its opening in 2017 took 11 years.

In 1986, Metro council, with political support from North York mayor Mel Lastman, voted to build a new subway line on Sheppard Avenue from Yonge Street to Victoria Park. With an NDP government—when I was a page—under Bob Rae—I'm not sure what they were expecting, but after numerous delays and setbacks, the subway was completed for November 2002—so, 1986 to 2002. From the initial vote to completion, it took 16 years to complete this project.

Who in Toronto hasn't complained about automatic train control signalling upgrades? I happen to be a user, almost on a daily basis, of the subway system here in Toronto, so I understand these concerns first-hand. In fact, the TTC is planning 73 subway closures, 31 of which are full-weekend shutdowns.

Mr. Roman Baber: Shame.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I hear the member from York Centre.

When you use the subway, you know, almost every single weekend, when you get on that there's going to be a stoppage somewhere, and you'll have to get off and take a bus or walk the rest of the journey.

This project has been in the works since 2008, with targeted completion for late 2019, within a budget of \$563 million. The new estimated completion date is now September 2022, at a cost of \$661 million. That's three years later than promised and almost \$100 million over budget. That's three extra years of frustration, closures and inconvenience.

These are just some examples in the GTHA alone. People really have a right to be frustrated.

Well, we understand. Infrastructure projects of this magnitude, as I said earlier, are not easy. I often compare it to a home kitchen renovation. When you're bringing dozens of moving parts together, trying to integrate them, they're very complex and it can take longer than one anticipates. Try multiplying that complexity by 100 or maybe 1,000 or 10,000. These are major projects. Then add boring machines, traffic disruptions, buried utility lines, cross a municipal boundary or two, and now you've got a multi-billion-dollar transit project.

That's why it's imperative to find the best tools to get the job done quickly, on time and on budget, which brings us back to public-private partnerships, or P3s.

We see what happens. The Minister of Transportation and I have said that the TTC does a great job operating the line, but when it comes to building the lines, we think there is a better way. I highlighted that traffic signal project that was done through the TTC. But I know for a fact that delivering these projects provincially through our agency will increase best value for taxpayer dollars and ensure that these projects are built on time.

P3s put responsibility for many common causes of delays onto private sector contractors. They must take ownership for design flaws.

At the same time, because the private sector partner is responsible for financing, it motivates them to finish on time. Delays cost them money, and money, quite frankly, is a very strong motivator.

Infrastructure Ontario has brought 109 public-private-partnership projects to market. These projects were worth about \$50 billion. Of completed projects, about 95% of them were delivered on budget. That is an outstanding track record.

It's a record that is a model of consistency. In other words, it's no fluke that they keep hitting their numbers and doing great work. That's why, as I mentioned earlier, I find it baffling when members of the opposition claim, which they do in question period quite often, that—

Interjection.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: No, I find it baffling when members of the opposition claim that this plan was drawn on the back of a napkin. That's verbatim what they often say.

With success stories like this I'll put Infrastructure Ontario's track record up against any plan of the opposition any day.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: What plan?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: In fact, the Minister of Transportation is right: We have yet, in the eight years that I've been here, to see a plan brought forward by the NDP. Whether it's transportation and transit in rural Ontario or the GTHA, they've never, ever brought forward a plan. Well, Mr. Speaker, this government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, is going to get thing done for the people of our province.

Transit is about more than just taking people from point A to point B, although that's extremely important. The right transit investments can offer an entire host of other solutions for the GTHA and for our entire province. This can be done through a holistic approach that leverages transit corridors to enable complete communities through land use planning.

Again, if we get this right we have an opportunity to shift towards leveraging land value capture and transit-oriented development. I have to commend the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, who has championed bringing Ontario into the modern age when it comes to getting maximum value and leading this charge on land value capture.

This actually isn't new ground in the global perspective. It's obviously a new, modern, aggressive approach here in Ontario, but this is actually a model followed in places like London, Tokyo and Hong Kong, with much success.

If we build communities around transit, this means housing development, business development and much more. York region recently passed a resolution highlighting their commitment to working with the province to leverage this sort of transit-oriented development along the Yonge subway extension corridor. There is an appetite

for such sensible solutions in Ontario. It's our job to move this conversation forward and take action.

This is especially relevant with the recent announcement by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I'd like to add a few relevant details from his ministry's recently proposed legislation. "The comprehensive legislation is central to More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan, which outlines a suite of legislative, regulatory and policy changes across multiple ministries" within government. "The proposed changes are intended to eliminate unnecessary steps, duplication and barriers to creating the housing" the people of Ontario need. "While cutting red tape, the government is holding firm to our commitment to maintain protections for health and safety, the environment, the greenbelt, agricultural lands and our rich natural heritage."

For our purposes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk specifically about that legislation's proposed changes to the Planning Act. There are several changes proposed that could cut red tape and bring benefits to communities and help get infrastructure built more quickly.

First, there is an opportunity to make it easier to bring housing to market by speeding up local planning decisions while putting in place a more efficient appeals process. Changes to the act would also allow homeowners to add an additional residential unit in their main residence and another unit in another building on the same property, such as above garages or in laneways.

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Importantly, changes would also allow municipalities to collect funds from developers to cover the capital costs of community benefits like libraries and daycare facilities—local infrastructure that are worthy of provincial support. Specifically around development for transit infrastructure, proposed Planning Act changes would help municipalities address local affordable housing needs around major transit station areas.

These proposed transit-related changes reflect feedback from broad, online public consultation in late 2018 and early 2019—and also through sector-specific discussions with municipalities, developers, ratepayer groups and others. Mr. Speaker, the government is consulting on proposed legislative changes and intends to consult on proposed regulatory approaches to implementation. We take transit infrastructure investment seriously. It has to be done right.

I'd like to end, Mr. Speaker, by explaining to you and members of the House why we're on the right track to doing things right on transit infrastructure investment. As I said earlier, Infrastructure Ontario and public-private partnerships are a big part of the solution. We know that P3s are a good way of transferring risk from the public sector to the private sector. Of course, that doesn't mean that P3s in Ontario can't be better. We want to learn from other experiences around the world, which is why, shortly after becoming Minister of Infrastructure, I launched a market-sounding initiative. We have been asking industry leaders how to improve infrastructure delivery in Ontario. We have been exploring how we can attract increased competition to the marketplace.

We want to send a message to firms around the world that our province is a welcoming jurisdiction. Ontario is interested in looking externally to increase innovation and competition in the P3 market. In March, I was in Germany when I announced that Infrastructure Ontario is ready to expand its reach beyond Ontario. Legislation is being introduced that, if passed, would allow IO to build relationships that could open Ontario for international business.

New measures will soon be launched to attract international investment from firms looking to participate in Ontario's P3 market. We are going to create new opportunities for P3 competition by accounting for international experience. Additionally, folks are working to rebalance the IO bid evaluation criteria to better reward design innovation and make output specifications less prescriptive.

We're always looking for new opportunities to showcase the province on the world stage. We want people to know that our government is serious when we say that Ontario is open for business and open for jobs. When members of the opposition and other critics accuse us of having drawn out a plan on the back of a napkin, it's not just unfounded; it is actually completely absurd. Our plans for transit in the GTHA are well consulted, building upon the city's work, including the relief line south for our Ontario Line. Now we're maximizing—

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order. The member from Essex, come to order.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: —the capabilities of Infrastructure Ontario, drawing on global expertise and using models that work.

Mr. Speaker, let's not forget the disastrous plans of the previous Liberal government for the Scarborough extension line. When former mayor—one of my mentors and I know the PA's mentor—Rob Ford sought to extend this line by three stops, the previous Liberal government was there to stop it every single step of the way. I even recall the remarks by the member from Scarborough—Guildwood. Prior to being a self-proclaimed subway champion, she advocated for light rail in Scarborough.

Subways, unaffected by the elements and all the other pitfalls of light rail, catalyze development, grow communities and offer greater convenience for transit users. Mr. Speaker, our priorities are in order. At the same time, we are getting our fiscal house in order and working to balance the budget in a responsible, sustainable way. It is critical that we make the most out of our existing infrastructure, taking every opportunity to maximize use of these assets before we go and build new projects. We are going to continue thinking about the long term, ensuring that taxpayers are getting value for money and ensuring that we get value for our investments. We look forward, over the next number of months, to taking decisive action to get these projects built as quickly as possible.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Continuing along the line of debate, I recognize the member from Etobicoke Centre.

Miss Kinga Surma: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank Minister Yurek and Minister McNaughton for their presentations.

I would like to talk about the Getting Ontario Moving Act. This comprehensive piece of legislation was introduced on May 2. It includes our proposed measures to invest in the largest expansion of Ontario's transit network in our province's history.

We're committed to building much-needed transit and getting millions of commuters moving again. We want to deliver on our promise to upload the subway and other priority projects. This will be a historic \$28.4-billion expansion, the most money ever invested to get shovels in the ground and to get new subways built. This legislation will kick-start our plan to build more transit and serve more people. We will get it done faster and build it more cost-effectively.

The changes we're proposing include much more than just subways. If passed, this legislation will help our government cut red tape, reduce unnecessary costly burdens on businesses and people, save taxpayers time and money, and keep Ontario roads among the safest in North America.

People have waited long enough for an integrated regional transit system, one that extends outside of Toronto's city limits to the growing communities across the region and to new employment centres.

This draft legislation, if approved, delivers much-needed new subway projects. It includes plans for both the Ontario Line and the Scarborough subway extension, as outlined in the greater Toronto and Hamilton area transit plan.

If approved, the proposed legislation would amend the Metrolinx Act to give the province increased authority over new subway projects, either through taking on sole responsibility for the planning, design and delivery of the specified project, or decision-making authority for projects that the province would not fully control. If passed, these proposals will allow the province to build transit infrastructure more efficiently, reduce costs and potentially leverage new delivery models that support business growth and investment in Ontario.

We are proposing to simplify how businesses and people interact with the Ministry of Transportation. Currently, the needs of industry and individuals are not being met with antiquated, time-consuming ways of doing business. We will reduce costs by transforming how the ministry functions and reduce unnecessary burdens on business to once more make Ontario open for business and allow for better, newer, faster ways to conduct business, live and play in our province.

One way that we intend on doing this is to allow for digital delivery of some of the programs and advance new technologies that work best for Ontarians. We are making amendments that will better monitor safety performance and reduce the burden on the short-line railway industry with the anticipated benefits of better safety and industry advancements. This measure would also support the government's Digital First initiative.

We're proposing to eliminate the enhanced driver's licence program because this program is outdated and has become obsolete with the advent of new, improved technology, providing greater flexibility for land, water and air travel in today's world, such as Nexus, ePassport and FAST programs. Of no small consequence, this measure would cut off a potential program deficit looming ahead in 2021-22.

We also want to make it easier for the thriving charter buses that travel in our great province, so we're proposing amendments that would align with requirements under the International Registration Plan. In addition to the changes that, if passed, would make it easier for small commercial trucks travelling from the United States, we're proposing to make life easier for everyone in Ontario who drives a pickup truck or trailer for personal use by exempting them from the costly, burdensome annual inspection requirements for commercial vehicles.

In response to requests from the tourism and off-road vehicle sectors, we're proposing to further cut red tape and support expansion in these vital arenas, because without this change, current rules prohibit the use of off-road vehicles on municipal roads unless the municipality passes a new bylaw to allow for their use. We've heard that this is a real inconvenience for people and a nuisance for tour operators offering excursions, so we are simplifying the rules around off-road vehicles to allow them to operate on municipal roads unless specifically prohibited.

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We also want to improve customer experience at car dealerships by launching a digital dealer registration pilot. Businesses would then be able to pay for the proper permits, plates and stickers online, allowing customers to drive away with their vehicles sooner and not waste time, and potentially missed business, attending a Service-Ontario centre in person.

We would also amend the vehicle weights and dimensions regulation to allow for the use of advanced technology like wide-based single tires, which would translate in reduced fuel consumption, lower emissions and improved industry productivity.

In support of customer choice, we would also allow motorcyclists to have high-styled handlebars.

Ontario's roads are among the safest in North America, and we intend to keep them that way. You've heard it over and over again: We take the safety of our roads very, very seriously. So we are taking action.

Careless, dangerous and impaired drivers have no place on our roads. These drivers are putting lives at risk, and we are addressing them. We will target those who threaten or pose serious risks to the safety of others on our roads, and we will be steadfast in our efforts to protect some of our most vulnerable road users.

This is why we are proposing to increase the safety of children and drivers on school buses by introducing a new administrative monetary penalty framework for improperly passing a school bus. The measure may make it less costly for municipalities to implement a school bus camera framework, saving the province and municipality time and

money while increasing the safety of over 800,000 children who travel on those buses to and from school every single day.

We intend to better protect maintenance, construction, tow truck and recovery workers from dangerous drivers because those workers are among the most vulnerable on our roads, on the very front lines, and are keeping our roads safe.

We are also proposing to allow single-occupant motorcycles to use high-occupancy lanes, a much safer lane for the over 64,000 motorcyclists in our province. I note that this proposal is in direct response to industry and stakeholder requests and follows the experience of other jurisdictions to help keep motorcyclists safe.

Mr. Speaker, the safety of our highways is also of great concern. Our highways are the lifeline of our economy. People and businesses rely on them each day to get to work, to move goods and to keep the economy going. Our highway system was built to keep vehicles moving quickly and efficiently. Gridlock on our highways puts a drag on people and businesses. One of the causes of gridlock is slow-moving traffic that impedes traffic flow. We are proposing changes that would increase fines for slow-moving drivers who travel in the left-hand lane. This is expected to reduce gridlock, increase road safety and support enforcement.

We are going to make learning to drive safer—and reaffirming to new drivers that it is never safe to drive under the influence—by proposing a zero blood alcohol/drug concentration for driving instructors. We're holding those who instruct our young and novice drivers to the highest standards.

Finally, we are proposing to find efficiencies and transform and streamline the way we do business by amending Highway Traffic Act references to the Criminal Code of Canada and allowing temporary alterations to special-use lanes within designated construction zones to assist industry and keep traffic moving. By allowing construction and maintenance activities to occur more efficiently, we can reduce government burden and eliminate the need for a regulatory amendment every time a special-use lane needs to be altered for construction or maintenance.

In addition, we propose to update the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act for above-ground and below-ground structures, a measure that's intended to ensure the safety and integrity of Ontario's highway infrastructure.

We'll also update permits for stand-alone earthworks, to help businesses by reducing burdens on builders and allowing for timely project starts.

We're proposing to create an offence for defacing or removing traffic signs, in support of both road safety and our enforcement partners.

The policy measures we are proposing today will give long-needed relief to commuters, help to make our communities safer, and open Ontario for business.

There's one thing that I would like to just speak a little bit further to—it is a big part of this bill—and that is uploading the subway.

I have been a resident of this great city for a very long time, and I've also had the opportunity to work at Toronto city council. So I can, myself, explain to you and all the members here in this House how many times the transit plans have flip-flopped and gone back and forth. It's many a time.

As the Minister of Infrastructure mentioned earlier, the only mayor who really stood up for building subways in the city was Mayor Rob Ford. I am so honoured to be a part of a team, a part of a government, that is taking transportation very seriously and that finally, after so many years, showed leadership.

I just want to reiterate to the members opposite that we have been working on this plan for the last nine months. This was not drawn on a napkin. This is a plan that we have worked on for a very long period of time. We've worked with advisers and with Metrolinx. We've had the great Minister of Transportation show leadership, and I am just extremely proud.

On behalf of the residents of Etobicoke Centre, Minister Yurek, I just want to thank you for supporting the tunnelling option on Eglinton. I cannot tell you how ecstatic my constituents are. So, I just want to thank you again.

I want to thank the Premier and my team for their support.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Questions and comments? I recognize the member from Essex.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you very much, Speaker, for cueing that up for me. I appreciate the opportunity, as always.

Speaker, I listened intently, and I appreciate the information that was delivered by the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Infrastructure. I take issue with a couple of the portions of it. I do wish them well in this endeavour, because we all know how important infrastructure and transportation are.

Some of the other tidbits in this bill, we could probably live with, for sure, although the bigger-ticket items around the uploading of transit costs to the province are very concerning to us.

The criticism that the government has levied against New Democrats is that we've challenged them that they don't have a plan. I don't recall us ever saying that you don't have a plan. In fact, we think we see your plan quite clearly, because we've seen it over the last 14 years here at Queen's Park as the Liberals embarked on a massive exercise of privatization and the use of P3s.

Speaker, don't take my word for it. Take the word of our Auditor General, Bonnie Lysyk, who did a comprehensive review of the use of P3s in this province. In 2014, she reviewed 74 P3 projects delivered through IO, Infrastructure Ontario, and found that we overpaid, as a province, to the tune of \$8 billion.

The government claims, and rightfully so, that this province is in a deficit position because of the failures of the Liberal government. Well, it's right here in front of you. Here is a failure that you can avoid making yourselves. God bless you for going ahead with it, but it has

been proven that we overpaid for P3s in this province, and it has added to our deficit. Some \$6.5 billion of that \$8 billion was due solely to private sector financing costs.

When we are the province of Ontario and we can access preferential lending rates, why would they handcuff themselves to a model that has certainly proven to handcuff the taxpayers of the province and put us into deficit after deficit?

I appreciate the time. Thank you, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments? The member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker. I'd certainly like to thank all of the people who spoke today, because it really makes real, for us here in Ontario, how important transit is to all of us.

Growing up in the UK and in England, and learning to drive over there, it made a significant difference when I came over to Canada. Not only do we drive on the different side of the road, but the road manners that are involved—when I drive here and I see, in the fast lane, how some vehicles are driving significantly slowly, slowing down traffic and then people having to drive around them, it's dangerous. As an insurance broker, I saw many times where clients would come in, and on their motor vehicle record they would have unsafe lane changes, careless driving, incorrect U-turns. We have to make sure, as a government, that we provide the conditions so that people here can drive safely, so that pedestrians can walk across the street without fear of being hit by a vehicle, that bicycles can also drive fairly. We need to make sure that we here make a better system for all Ontarians.

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I also want to talk a little bit about the subway system. In England, in London, they have an amazing underground system. When I came to Canada and I saw what our subway system looked like—such a small system—I thought, "You know what? Canada's a new country. I'm sure we will grow." Well, 34 years later, there has not been too much change, which is really sad, because I believe we can do so much more here in Canada to build better subways, better light-rail transit, better ways that we can drive, so that all Ontarians can thrive. And that helps the economy; it helps businesses grow. We can do better and we are doing better.

Thank you to the Minister of Infrastructure, the Minister of Transportation and our great parliamentary assistant here from Etobicoke Centre.

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

Ms. Jill Andrew: It's my honour to join the conversation today and add a few words in reference to the government's bill, Getting Ontario Moving. It's rather an ironic title, considering none of my constituents are moving with this plan, Bill 107.

First, I'd like to give a shout-out to TTCriders, a non-profit organization here locally that is really a voice for the people and is really working to keep our transit public, to keep our transit accessible and usable so we can actually get to work.

I would love to know how often some of the members on the government side are at Yonge and Eglinton or are trying to get from point A to B on Eglinton West or at Dufferin and Eglinton or at Kennedy station or anywhere even around Bloor. The congestion is stifling. You're unable to travel. What I'm not understanding is if the government has actually consulted with TTC users, with people who use public transit as their main way to get to work, to get home, to pick the kids up from daycare.

What I'm seeing here is a plan that has been dreamt up. Once again, this is an egotistical plan. We've got a plan. There are plans that were already in motion. Instead of sticking with the plan and maybe editing it here and there, what the government has decided to do is rip up the plan, stick a big Ford sticker on it and say, "Hey, it's the government's plan." Well, I don't think it's about being the government's plan. It's got to be the plan for Ontarians. It's got to be the plan for Torontonians. It's got to be the plan for people in St. Paul's who are stifled with density at Yonge and Eglinton, for goodness' sake. I can tell you, our community is not happy, so we need you to go back to the drawing board ASAP.

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

Mr. Ross Romano: I'm happy to rise and speak to Bill 107. Just quickly, in response to the member from Toronto–St. Paul's, I'm not sure what her plan is. I'm not sure what her party's plan is. As per usual, all their plan is is just to complain about everybody else's plan and to ridicule, really, the hard work of other groups and the work that has been done by so many. Once again, they criticize the work done by our people in the public sector who have done great work on preparing a plan to get the GTHA moving again. Again, they criticize the people at places like Metrolinx for the great work they've been doing. It's really interesting that while they claim to be defending people, they criticize some of the best people we have in the province working on these projects and doing their utmost best to try to help a disastrous mess.

I don't ride the subway, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, I don't use it. I walk to work essentially every morning and back home while I'm in the Toronto area. I've ridden the subway a few times, though, and what I did see is a lot of congestion. I saw a lot of people clamouring, trying to get to places. I have family in the area, and you hear from them.

Let me talk about the northern Ontario aspect of this. I questioned about this, and of course the NDP got all fired up that day in question period when I posed the question to our great Minister of Transportation. We're talking about a landmark investment. I don't want to be quoted on this—I may be incorrect—but this is probably the largest infrastructure investment ever, I would think, or certainly one of the biggest, and do you know what? This is going to create a lot of jobs. This is going to require a lot of materials. I'm really excited by the opportunity of being able to supply all the steel from our manufacturing mill in Sault Ste. Marie for these subways. This is good for everybody.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Now I return to the Minister of Transportation for his final comments.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I appreciate those that participated in the speeches this afternoon. The Minister of Infrastructure and the PA, Kinga Surma of Etobicoke Centre: great words spoken today on our plan for getting Ontario moving.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition in their responses has laid out the reasons why we need to go forward with this plan. They speak of congestion. They speak of people not being able to move. They speak of how it has been stagnant in our transit system. We're going to get this province going. We're going to get these subways built.

We heard from the opposition talking about how they didn't like our plans; they didn't like the relief that we're bringing to Ontario, to the GTHA, to the TTC subway system. The Ontario Line: The Ontario Line is the relief line that has been studied over and over for decades, that has been unable to be built because the system is not working anymore. The opposition is saying that they don't believe in a relief line for the people of the TTC. They don't want that built for the people of the TTC.

Not only are we going to build the relief line; we're going to make it twice as long and connect the Ontario Science Centre to Ontario Place. We're going to build it twice as long for the same price and have it done two years sooner.

This opposition: All they're talking about is, "We like the way the system goes. We don't believe in helping the people of the TTC. We don't believe in an integrated transit network." It's time to stop the rhetoric over there, Mr. Speaker. It's time to get the job done. The best way to do it is to enable us to upload the new projects from the TTC to the province and get all four expansions going and deliver results to the people of Toronto. They've waited long enough. It's stagnant over there. It's stagnant on the subway system. We're bringing change to this province and we're going to get Ontario moving again.

Interjection.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Member from York Centre, please come to order. Thank you very much.

Now, further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm very proud to be rising today to speak on the government's bill, the Getting Ontario Moving Act. I listened very carefully to the members opposite, including the Minister of Transportation, the Minister of Infrastructure, and the member for Etobicoke Centre.

You know, no one disagrees with the fact that our transit system within the GTHA has a lot of problems. No one disagrees with that fact. I sympathize with you. I'm a daily transit rider; I've been a transit rider my entire life. I can see first-hand the consequences of having a transit system that could be so much better. When I look at what is happening in Toronto and the problems that we face, I can see so many different issues.

One of the big issues that I see is the high cost of fares. We have some of the highest fares in Canada. We've got

the highest monthly Metropass in Canada. We've got the cost of fares going up \$60 to \$100 a year. That is a real concern.

When I was the executive director of TTCriders, we would regularly meet people who would tell us very sad stories about the consequences of high fares and how it affects their life. For instance, there was one senior who was a member of the Toronto Chinese seniors association who walked an eight-kilometre round trip to visit her friends because she couldn't afford the cost of a seniors' ticket.

There was also a lady who studied at the University of Toronto Scarborough who shared three Metropasses with her family of five, and they would coordinate their lives—what shifts she had at work, what courses she could take at the University of Toronto Scarborough—so that they could transfer the Metropasses between the five of them because it was simply too expensive to have five Metropasses in a family, because it would be in excess of \$5,000 a year or more. That's the daily reality for a lot of people in Toronto who are really struggling to make ends meet, who don't earn the kind of high figures that we see here, that are earning far less—\$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year.

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I also see the lack of fare integration in the GTHA. Right now, you travel from Toronto to York or from Brampton to Toronto and you're paying double fare. That has real implications on people who cannot afford to ride GO and who need to take a very long hour or hour-and-a-half bus trip simply to get to work. I remember meeting people in the airport who quite simply couldn't afford to go back and forth in between shifts, so they'd sleep in their friend's car in the Pearson airport after their shift finished at 12 o'clock at night. They'd sleep in their friend's car so that they could be back at work as a baggage handler at 4:55 a.m., so they could start putting the baggage on and getting people ready to get on the planes. I think that's a real problem, the lack of fare integration.

Then, the big issue that this government has said time and time again, which I 100% agree with, is that the quality of the service that we are currently experiencing in this region today is not good enough. All the buses within Scarborough, Etobicoke and Weston and these transit-desert neighbourhoods, low-income neighbourhoods, often racialized neighbourhoods—you're waiting 20 minutes for a bus, and then it is full, so you're waiting another 20 minutes more. That's simply unacceptable when you're trying to get home to your family, you've got kids and you've got to pick them up from daycare. That is a really hard burden on someone. Then we have the delays and the breakdowns which, when you look at the TTC statistics, are not improving. They're not tackling and getting that number down. The delays and breakdowns are very common. Then the overcrowding is chronic. It's not just on the subway's Line 2 and Line 1; it's also on the buses and the streetcars. So many of you already know that. You take the TTC when you're working in Toronto. You know what it's like to catch the College streetcar. You

know what it's like to take the bus in Etobicoke. It can be very, very busy. It can be uncomfortable, undignified and stressful. I think we can do a whole lot better.

What I have noticed is that, unfortunately, even though our region is increasing—the number of people that are moving into the GTHA is rising—unfortunately, ridership on the TTC is not. The reason is that people—

Miss Kinga Surma: Because we're not building anything.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for your comment, the member for Etobicoke Centre, but I don't actually think that that is true. When I look at the statistics and if you talk to people, you see that the service quality, the day-to-day service quality, is not improving and the fares are going up. When you increase fares, it has an immediate impact on ridership because people turn away.

Then, as the Minister of Infrastructure spoke about earlier, there is a very tangible cost to the impact of having the kind of congestion that we're experiencing in our region. It is a cost in terms of our lives. We have the longest commutes on average in North America and, actually, some of the longest commutes in the Western world, which is a huge problem. Then, that has a real drain on our economy, where the board of trade estimates that we're losing \$6 billion a year because, instead of being at work or instead of goods getting to their business on time, people are sitting on the 401 in traffic, frustrated. I think that's pretty unacceptable.

This government has decided to move forward on fixing the many problems that I'm sure you and I agree on. This government has chosen to address this problem with the Getting Ontario Moving Act. There are numerous schedules in this bill. I'm going to spend the majority of my time on the subway-upload aspect of it. I think that that is the essence of the bill here, and it's the one I certainly want to speak about. Then, if I have time, I will spend a little bit more time on the need to make roads safer for vulnerable road users, which is addressed in that bill. Then, there will be other speakers in the coming weeks who will address some additional elements of that bill, particularly related to road safety.

Going back to the subway-upload section: What this bill in layperson's terms essentially does is it gives the Minister of Transportation the power to take over and control any part of a rapid transit project or an extension, and the minister can do so without any compensation to the city, which is a concern because it is Torontonians, through their fares and through their taxpayer dollars, who built the TTC in the first place. In other words, the Premier gets to decide how and when new transit projects are built, maintained and operated.

From our reading of the bill, the Premier could be able to set fare levels, especially on new transit projects, and station location. The Premier can decide whether the project is financed, built and designed by the private sector, whether the operations are privatized or not and whether the maintenance is privatized or not.

After speaking to legal counsel, there is a concerning element of the bill, which is what is commonly known as

the Henry VIII clause. It's an amendment that the Harris government used frequently, and it seems like that amendment has been inserted into this bill as well. What the Henry VIII clause does, essentially, is—it means that the minister can exempt these transit projects from important bills without going back to the Legislature. One of the concerns people have is that it could mean the exemption of these transit projects from the Labour Relations Act without going back to the Legislature, and there are very serious consequences to that.

The second thing that is important to mention about this bill, as I go about describing it, is that it also means that the city can no longer act or make decisions on planning on new transit projects without the permission of the minister.

That's essentially a summary of the bill, with a focus on the schedule on the subway upload.

Now I want to speak a little bit about why this bill is not going to address the many problems that are facing the GTHA and the issues that we face in terms of getting around our city and getting our region moving.

The first element I want to talk about is the fact that taking the subway system and the right to build new transit projects from Toronto is extraordinarily bad process. I feel very comfortable saying that it's a hostile takeover for numerous reasons. Number one, the government, during the entire election cycle, never said that they were going to take the subway from Toronto. This government had a five-point plan, but nothing in there was talked about for subway upload. The second thing the government likes to say is that they're working collaboratively with the city. I take issue with that; I don't believe that is true. The city has made it very, very clear, and they did so in a motion in December, that they are opposed to the subway takeover. I have been canvassing on this issue in multiple ridings across this region and I have not met many people who said, "Yay, gung-ho, let's have the Ford government take over the subway."

I don't think that you have the support of Toronto city council to do this. They certainly did agree to communicate with you on the terms of reference; there's no doubt about that. One of the reasons why the city decided to do that is because we've just gone through a horrendous process where you, this government, interfered in our election in the middle of an election and then threatened to use the "notwithstanding" clause when a judge ruled that you could be wrong. So you can see why they felt they had a gun to their head.

What I find so surprising is that even the mayor of Toronto, a man who is not easily rattled, someone who very rarely takes leadership on an issue and gets angry, is mad. That's a real sign: A card-carrying member of the Conservative Party is mad about this.

Why I find it also problematic that this government has chosen to use this process is because when it comes to building transit projects, it actually helps to have a city on board with you; it actually helps to work with all levels of government to move forward on transit projects; it doesn't help to alienate a very critical player in this process. There

are two reasons why. Number one, this government has chosen to put forward approximately \$11.1 billion of a \$28.5-billion project. You want the feds and the city to cough up their fair share. That is one of your stated goals. If you want the city and the feds to cough up their fair share, it certainly helps to play nice, because you're going to be going back to them and saying, "Can you please pay your fair share for a transit project?" that you didn't even see until the media saw it. That's number one.

1700

The second thing is that Metrolinx and this government want to build the lines, but the reality is that it's going to be the TTC—at least, going by what this government is saying now—that operates the lines. It is important that the provincial government works well with the agency that is going to be operating the lines, so that things get done right.

The reason why it is important is—well, there are two reasons that I think are worthwhile for you to consider as you move forward on this plan. One is that in the case of the Eglinton Crosstown, the consortium that built the Eglinton Crosstown sometimes didn't collaborate well with the TTC when they were moving forward with their project design and their plan. They would come up with plans and begin moving on it, particularly around vehicles and what they were going to look like, but they didn't properly consult with the TTC. When they went to the TTC, the TTC said to them, "Actually, those designs are not going to work with the rest of the system, so you're going to have to go back to the drawing board." And it's taxpayers who foot the bill when that kind of collaboration doesn't work very well.

That's one piece of it.

The second piece of it is that it costs money to operate TTC lines. Even the Yonge line barely breaks even, and that is the only line in the system that breaks even. So when you're thinking about what new lines to build, it's very, very important that you factor in how much it is actually going to cost to run the line once it is built. For an example, on the Sheppard subway, it costs about \$10 per person, in terms of money, to have someone use that line. It's about as much as a taxi.

So, when you're factoring how you're going to collaborate with the city, I recommend that you think very carefully and work together, in order to do proper calculations on what the operating costs are going to be.

The additional point that I want to bring up is the fact that I have some concerns about what it will mean to transit if we have the subway system run by the province and Metrolinx. I have some concerns about that—not just about the process, but also about who's going to be running it when it's done.

The first thing I do want to mention is that the TTC gets a lot of criticism, but it is important to remember that the TTC is the most efficient transit system in North America, and it carries more people than any other city in North America except for New York City and Mexico City. It is a system that does a lot with very little. So it's important to remember that the way the TTC is currently running and

a lot of the problems that people are facing on the TTC often have a lot to do with the lack of funding that goes into the TTC—and I'm not saying they're perfect—and not so much to do with the governance of it. That's an important piece to remember.

What is also important, and, I think, one of the benefits of having the TTC run and maintain our system, is that the TTC is fairly accountable. It's not perfect, but it's fairly accountable to the people of Toronto. When I was the executive director of TTCriders, one of the things we advocated for, after talking to residents and small business associations, was the need to have a two-hour fare transfer system, similar to what every other jurisdiction around the GTHA has. The TTC agencies and the councillors who sit on the TTC board, as well as John Tory, listened to us and they eventually, after a little bit of advocacy, implemented it. That goes to show that the TTC is at least somewhat accountable to the people of Toronto and the people who use the TTC. That's also important to remember.

When we take governance of the TTC and the buildout of new transit lines away from the people who are accountable to the people of Toronto and the people who use the TTC, and we hand it over to people who are spread out all across the province, we create this problem. The problem is this: People who represent communities in Barrie or Sudbury or Ottawa are less interested in the day-to-day realities of what happens in Toronto, because you are not accountable to them. What it means is that things can go downhill in terms of transit in Toronto and it doesn't affect you politically, so you are less concerned about the quality of it.

That is actually what is happening in New York City right now. New York City has an issue where it's actually the state government that runs the New York City transit system. The New York City transit system is actually going through a whole series of crises right now because the governor is not listening to the people of New York City, who are saying, "Hey, our transit system desperately needs funding," and the people in Albany are not listening. I fear that if we move the control of the TTC around new builds away from the people of Toronto and away from a system that is not perfect but does a good job with what it's got to the people who don't live in Toronto, then we're going to face a whole host of long-term problems. I really urge you to reconsider the governance element of that.

The additional thing I would like to talk about is Metrolinx. Now, Metrolinx, going by the many people I've talked to and worked with, is not a great transit agency. It's secretive, the Auditor General has criticized it on many occasions in many reports and, unfortunately, it does have a track record in moving forward on transit delivery and having results that are not so crash-hot. I think there are a few reasons for this, and I urge you to look at these examples and make sure this doesn't happen with our subway system in Toronto.

Just to summarize, then, I think one of the reasons why Metrolinx does not have the best track record when it comes to moving forward on new transit projects is because Metrolinx—and this province shares it—has a

fascination with the idea of privatized delivery. The problem with privatized delivery is that it means you are giving a consortium a profit—they need to make a profit; okay—and then they are also given a premium. They are given a premium in order to deliver the transit project on time and on budget. So they're paid extra cash, as well as the profit, in order to deliver the transit project on time and on budget.

Okay, that's the theory. But when you actually speak to Infrastructure Ontario or when you speak to the people who run Metrolinx, they will tell you, "Well, actually, we don't transfer all the risk." And you know this too. Not all the risk is transferred over. The consequences of not transferring that risk over mean that taxpayers foot the bill in cost overruns and delays. This is not theory that I'm talking about; there are actual examples in Toronto and the GTHA that I would like to refer to.

The first one I would like to talk about is Presto. Presto was forced on the TTC by the provincial government. So this is an example of the provincial government meddling in the affairs of transit in Toronto, with the idea of saving money and moving forward with privatization. They forced the TTC to accept Presto by saying, "If you don't take Presto, we're going to take the gas tax funding away from you." So the TTC said, "Okay, we will take it."

The Auditor General, even five years ago, said that Presto may be the most expensive fare card system in the world. A private company is essentially running Presto now, making a profit out of it, and five years ago the Auditor General said that it could be the most expensive fare card system in the world. What is so disturbing is that, talking to transit agencies, Presto is going to get even more expensive, because you're increasing the rate that transit agencies are going to pay to about 9% of the fare price. The technology is already outdated—it doesn't work properly—and we have the most expensive fare card system in the world. We've signed a contract that makes it very, very difficult to get out of.

I fear that that example of Presto is what is going to happen when you move down the path of privatized delivery for new transit projects, and it's going to hurt our subway system for years to come. I fear that the example of Presto is going to be the case with the Toronto subway system as well, and I'm very worried about that.

1710

I'm also very worried about the Union Pearson Express, which is another cautionary tale of what can happen if this government moves forward with its plans to have privatized delivery of transit lines.

The Union Pearson Express is going from Union Station to the second-biggest employment hub in the GTHA, the Pearson airport. The Liberal government thought it would be a really wonderful idea to privatize that line: privatize the delivery, privatize the finance, and privatize the maintenance and the operations. That was the goal of it.

They shopped it around to a whole a lot of companies, but no one would bite. So the Liberal government turned around and said, "Okay. We'll do it ourselves, and then

we'll try and sell it later." They built it, and then once it was built, in time for the Pan Am Games, the cloth was ripped off and all of a sudden, people realized that they had these dinky, small trains and it cost \$27.50 to ride the train. Ed Keenan calculated that it was cheaper to rent a Jaguar to drive from downtown Toronto to Pearson airport than it was to take that train. That's a shame. Luckily, the public got wind of this, and eventually the Liberal government learned its lesson and lowered the price, and now that line is much more popular.

The problem, however, is that the Conservative government is now subsidizing that line at astronomical amounts, in terms of operations. You ordered trains that were so small, they only fit about 200 people, so the opportunity to have a mass transit line fully integrated into the TTC, that would actually get very close to operating-subsidy-par, is gone; it's lost.

Part of that is because the Liberal government had, and now this government has, a fascination with privatized transit delivery. I'm very, very scared about the cautionary tale of the Union Pearson Express being played out on the relief line, the Eglinton East line, the Eglinton West line and the other lines this government is moving forward on. I urge you not to go down that path.

Finally, there's the Eglinton Crosstown project. I had the privilege to sit in on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and question the CEO of Infrastructure Ontario and the CEO of Metrolinx about the Eglinton Crosstown project. What I learned is that this exposes the myth of the public-privatization theory, because this is an example of the company promising that they were going to build it on time and delivery. But they didn't—they were late—and it resulted in taxpayers paying \$237 million, the highest payout to a P3 in Ontario's history, to the Eglinton consortium to complete the line roughly to the schedule that they originally intended to, even though they were making a profit off the delivery and even though they were paid a premium to take on that risk in the first place. Quite frankly, that is a waste of money, and I don't want that kind of waste of money to happen with this new transit project.

One thing that I am also concerned about is that we've heard all these examples of what can go wrong when you meddle in Toronto's transit projects and operations and when you throw in the myth of privatized delivery. What I think is even worse is that this government's plans in terms of transit delivery, I fear, will be even worse than the Liberal government's.

There are a few—

Interjection.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yes. I couldn't believe it.

There are a few reasons for this. One is, the changes to how decisions will be made around transit have been made more secret in the fall economic statement. Whereas before, there was a pretense that Metrolinx was somewhat an arm's-length independent agency from the provincial government, now that's gone. Now any decisions that Metrolinx makes can be overruled or amended by the Minister of Transportation or the Premier, and there's no

longer any requirement for public consultation. So that whole process of going out to experts, talking to the public, improving the designs that you want to move forward on—there's no longer any requirement for that. All the potential holes and conflicts that you don't see yet, that this government doesn't see yet—you're not going to be able to get good-quality feedback, because there is no longer any requirement for public consultation. That wastes money.

Metrolinx is no longer required to consider the climate change impacts of the transit planning that it does, which I think is deeply concerning, because one of the reasons why we invest in transit is to build a sustainable province.

Then this government is moving forward, quite frankly—you state it on your slide shows—to a developer-first approach to transit. What that means is that developers can pitch Metrolinx and say, "We really want to build a station here. The reason why we want to build a station here is because we own all this farmland around the station. We're going to spend \$100 million on this station, and maybe you'll give us a little bit of a kickback, and then we can sell all these houses for a whole lot more, and it will all work out for everyone." That's the idea behind it.

That kind of logic, I fear, is going to influence the plans that you have. The problem with that logic is that when we build transit, we can't just think about how much money a developer is going to make. We need to factor in a whole lot of things. Some of the big things include: Will this benefit the most number of Ontarians, and will this increase ridership in the most significant way? Is this a value-for-money project? Will this help low-income people get access to cheap transit? There are all these other factors that need to be considered when we're building new transit projects. It can't just be about helping the people who contributed to your election campaign. That is not the way to build transit that is going to last for a generation or more. It's just not.

I fear that that focus is going to really impact the quality of the transit projects that this government wants to move forward on. I really hope that that's a lesson that we don't have to learn again, because the Liberals had to learn that the hard way as well.

I also want to turn a little bit to the actual plan itself.

Not all the lines on the map are bad. It's not my interest to go into the nitty-gritty of that line and that line and that line. I actually see a lot of merit in the Eglinton West LRT or subway plan. I'm a little bit confused about why you'd want to tunnel a new line on a road that is as exceptionally wide as Eglinton is. I have some concerns about that. But the concepts of the lines, some of them, are not so bad.

What I'm concerned about is that so much work has already gone into moving forward on transit lines which are, in some ways, at least roughly similar to what you're moving forward on. Quite frankly, I don't understand why you would want to rip up those transit plans, say goodbye to the \$200 million that the city of Toronto has spent on planning, and start again from scratch. I don't understand why this government would want to do that.

I also have some concerns about the quality of thought that has gone into the detail about these transit lines. The

city, for instance, has a lot of questions about the relative merit of these transit lines. I'm not talking about the big picture here, which is what I started with, but about what engineers and designers and transit operators and mechanics and urban planners need to know when they move forward and start making these lines a reality. On that level, I have a lot of concerns, and so does the city. The city actually had—how many questions?—61 questions to the province about its plan, which it did essentially find out. Most of the city councillors—I would say, all of them—maybe you told Mayor Tory the night before, but the rest of the councillors, to all intents and purposes, didn't know about this plan until it was announced to the media. I very much doubt the city planners at the city of Toronto knew about this plan as well.

1720

They had a list of 61 questions for the province about the transit plan, and they're very sensible questions. Some of them include:

—How much is it going to cost to operate the lines?

—What is the life cycle of each project?

—What is the cost and schedule estimate classification of each project?

—How exactly did you come up with \$28.5 billion? All we've got right now is a five-page document. That's all we've got. So how exactly did you come up with the \$28.5 billion?

—Who did you talk to? What stakeholders did you talk to? I've met with the TTC, I've met with York transit, and they had not seen that plan. So who did you talk to? I'm sure you talked to Infrastructure Ontario, but who else did you talk to?

—What is the province's plan for public consultation? That's a very reasonable question. I guess this is it.

—One of the biggest issues the TTC has is that it's not accessible, it's not yet accessible, so what are the accessibility features of these proposed vehicles and infrastructure? How are you going to make it accessible to everyone? I really caution this government to give a lot of thought to that. In the case of the TTC, when they built and ordered the new subway trains for Line 1, the ones where you can walk from end to end with no doors in between, unfortunately, they didn't do enough due diligence around the accessibility issues. What they didn't realize is that the gap between the station and the train is sometimes too big because trains go up and down, depending on how many people are on them. There has to be that flexibility there, and sometimes, when ridership was really high or really low, people in wheelchairs could not go on. Those kinds of small details actually really matter when you're thinking about how we're going to make the TTC and our transit system accessible to everyone. That's a genuine question that the city of Toronto has.

—Will the province adhere to city permits and approvals, or are you just going to run over them?

Then they had a lot of questions about the Ontario Line. I also share a lot of these very reasonable questions about the Ontario Line because, let's not forget, when this

actually began, there was talk about this being new technology and above ground, but where? Let's not forget that the areas along the relief line and then along Queen are some of the most heavily populated areas in Canada. Building above or building below—there are very different consequences to doing that.

There is extensive consultation that needs to happen. There is expropriation of houses that needs to happen. There are changes to the kind of noise that people are going to be experiencing on a daily basis. All those things need to be thought through, because if you bought a house or you're renting near where this proposed relief line or Ontario Line is, and all of a sudden the train is going to go above, what does that mean to your quality of life if you're looking at starting the trains at 5:30 a.m., which is when they do, and finishing them at 1:30 a.m., which is currently what Line 1 and Line 2 run on? That kind of public consultation and those kinds of questions around the relief line, around the Ontario Line, really do need to be thought through.

Another question that I think is very important about the Ontario Line is the actual number of people who can fit on these trains. In the original estimate I got, the Minister of Transportation said that maybe 400,000 people can use this train a day, I think. I'm not 100% sure, but what I do know is that it was roughly the amount of ridership on Line 2. That's a lot of people. Those trains on Line 2 are very crowded and those trains are massive. They can fit 1,000 people at a time. So when this government is talking about going above ground or using smaller trains or lighter trains, I begin to seriously question how many people can actually fit on those trains. Unless they're as long as the Line 2 trains or the Line 1 trains, I don't think you're going to get to that 400,000 figure, unless they're all connected together. I don't know. But I don't think you're going to get to that 400,000 figure. If you don't get to that 400,000 figure, then the whole purpose of the relief line comes into question, because part of the purpose of the relief line is to relieve overcrowding on the Yonge line. The member for Eglinton–Lawrence: You know full well what it's like to have residents contact you and say, "I can't get on the Yonge line because it's too overcrowded."

I really do hope that this government really thinks very carefully and looks very, very carefully at the 61 questions the city of Toronto has asked this government so that the transit plans that you build work well on a high level, they work well on a medium level and they work well on that very granular, day-to-day level. Can the person in the wheelchair get on the train? Is the Ontario Line going to be carrying as many people as is needed so that the Yonge line extension can happen without a crisis happening from Lawrence down? I really encourage you to think that through.

What I also find very concerning about the plan is what is not there. What is not there is the waterfront LRT. The waterfront LRT is a very, very good project. In fact, it would be going to the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore's line, and she has talked a lot about the need for transit to

reach her riding. I share her sympathies. Better transit does need to reach her riding. But unfortunately, the waterfront LRT no longer goes to the Etobicoke–Lakeshore area, so that is very concerning.

The second thing that I find very concerning is that there's no longer any mention of the Eglinton East line to the University of Toronto Scarborough campus. Why this line is so important is because there are some people in Scarborough who do travel downtown—there's no doubt about it, and they do need to be served better—but there are a lot of people in Scarborough who intend to stay in Scarborough, and they need LRT service or bus service or some kind of service that stops frequently and that can take them from one end of Scarborough to the other end of Scarborough, so that they can get around, go to school, go to their part-time jobs, pick up their kids and go home. It was a very, very sensible project. It's a very, very cheap project: \$1.6 billion, and it would take four years to build. That project is not here. That project is not in the Ontario government's plan. I urge you to go back and reconsider that plan, because it is an important one. I think it is very unfortunate that it is not there.

I want to move now to some of the potential solutions. This government likes to throw out words like, “You don't have a plan,” or, “You don't know what you're talking about.” I do want to talk a little bit about some of the potential solutions that we can move forward on, or this government can move forward on, to address many of the issues that we face in terms of congestion and high fares and overcrowding and poor service that I mentioned earlier in this speech.

One is that you don't need to upload the subway to build transit. This government does not need to upload the subway to build transit. I'll tell you why: Every project that the TTC has built, except for the Eglinton Crosstown, has been done with the city of Toronto taking the lead. That includes Line 1, Line 2, the Sheppard East project and the King Street pilot, which is now permanent. So there are some examples of what can be done when the TTC leads the project.

What I can also say is this—

Interjection.

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm having difficulty concentrating because the member from Etobicoke Centre keeps shouting at me. I actually listened very carefully to when you were talking—

Interjection.

Ms. Jessica Bell: —not often—so I would appreciate it if you could allow me to finish my speech. I'm actually having difficulty, so I would appreciate that. Thank you.

Then we've got what the Auditor General says about projects that are publicly delivered. Here we go, Canadian Press: The Auditor General said that, “Public-private partnerships have cost Ontario taxpayers ... \$8 billion more on infrastructure over the past nine years than if the government had successfully built the projects itself.”

1730

This is the Auditor General. It's not just cherry-picking some small examples that the Minister of Infrastructure did; it's the Auditor General.

Then she said, “If the public sector could manage projects successfully, on time and on budget, there is taxpayer money to be saved.” Her audit didn't just cherry-pick a few, but it looked at 74 projects, including several hospitals, the Eglinton light-rail line and different public-private partnerships. She did her assessment, and that was her conclusion. I think that that's a very reasonable conclusion to make. So when you are talking about saving money, it does seem that having the public sector move forward on these projects makes a lot of sense.

Oh, and then there were two that the Minister of Infrastructure mentioned as being late. One of them was the Line 1 extension to Vaughan. Some of the reasons why that project was late—I did look into that—are that the transfer of money from the city and the province to that project was delayed and, reasonably, the TTC and the companies that they hired to build the project didn't want to move forward until the money had been handed over.

Then the second thing that the Minister of Infrastructure mentioned was the automatic train control issue and the need for subway lines to be closed on multiple weekends. I did actually speak to former mayor David Miller about this, and I did look into the issue as well. One of the reasons why automatic train control is taking such a long time is because multiple governments, including this government, are choosing not to fund state-of-good-repair and capital maintenance, which is how you fund automatic train control. So you have just delayed automatic train control a little bit longer by no longer moving forward with a gas tax transfer and by allowing the TTC to have a \$24-billion unfunded capital maintenance backlog. That is totally on you and the Liberal government, so don't you go blaming the TTC on this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): To the Speaker, please. Thank you very much.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Okay. This goes into the big reasons why transit projects don't often proceed at the pace that they are supposed to, as well as sticking within the funding envelope that they're supposed to—particularly the pace, however—and one is that there is a genuine lack of political will to pay for transit. It is very, very easy to make announcements. Excuse me for my cynicism, but I have seen so many elected officials move forward with big announcements saying that this is what they're going to build, and then years go by and nothing happens. This is another example of that. I fear that this is another example of that.

What I find very concerning is that we just confirmed with the Ministry of Transportation today that the \$11.2 billion that will be going toward these transit projects is currently—the Ministry of Transportation confirmed that it is currently not in the budget. So maybe it's in the infrastructure budget or maybe we're going to find out more in estimates, which I hear are coming out tomorrow, and then we will go back through those numbers and see. But right now, it does just look like a map with no clear funding attached. But correct me if I'm wrong; if you want to approach me afterwards and show me the details and show me the paper, I'm all for it. But right now, that's

what I'm seeing and that's what I'm hearing from your own ministry.

The second element of this is that transit projects don't often proceed. This is the root cause now. This is when you take it from a map to an actual plan to actual construction. One of the big reasons why they don't proceed is because they are not very well thought out. One of the challenges I see with this plan—you've spoken to Infrastructure Ontario; you maybe have spoken to a few Metrolinx folks. One of the challenges with this plan is that there are a whole lot of questions that need to be answered in order for this plan to go from a map into an excellent plan.

You are falling into the trap. This government is falling into the trap of getting into a situation where you are not going to be able to build these transit projects because you haven't thought it through and, at this point, as of today, 5:35, I haven't seen the details yet about where the money is coming from. That's not even including the feds' money and the city's money, which you still apparently need to get, so you'd better start playing nice with them.

What I also find interesting—and I guess maybe this government is going to find this out the hard way—is that when you promise transit projects and then you don't deliver, there is a political price that is paid, because this government loses trust.

What I find very telling, and something that you might want to think about, is that what you are tapping into—there is a very real frustration on transit, particularly in Etobicoke, particularly in Scarborough, particularly in Weston. There is a very real frustration about transit. That transit is experienced on a daily level. People get to the bus stop and their bus isn't there. The vast majority of transit users take the bus. Or they finally get to the subway station, and an announcement over the loudspeaker tells them that the train is delayed. That's the very real reality. That's the frustration that this government and the opposition and maybe even the independents want to tackle.

What this government should be mindful of is that these lines that you're promising to build with money that isn't even in the budget yet—maybe it is; correct me if I'm wrong—are going to take more than four years. It's going to take longer than the next election to build them. So when the next election rolls around, people in your riding are still going to be going down to the bus in the middle of winter, and the bus is going to be overcrowded and the bus is going to be late. If they get on, they're going to have that same undignified, sweaty, uncomfortable feeling, because these lines aren't going to be built yet. So that frustration that they feel is still going to exist on election day three or so years from now.

Even if everything goes right, and you find those international investors who come in; and the relief line or the Ontario Line can be built for half the price, with trains that are half the size but can carry just as many people as Line 2 and are fully accessible; and everyone in the east is absolutely fine with a train going above their homes, or whatever you want to do—let's say everything goes fine

and they get built. They're not going to be built before the next election. There is going to be a reckoning there, because your voters are still going to be getting on the TTC and are still going to be having the same below-standard service that they don't deserve, and they're still going to be having high fares.

What I recommend is that this bill move forward on sensible transit solutions that will actually improve people's daily commute soon, like two months from now, and it is completely doable.

One of the pieces of our platform was to have the provincial government move forward with matching the operating and the maintenance costs of the TTC, as well as other transit systems across Ontario, benefiting everyone in your riding. It's an operations and maintenance issue and a state-of-good-repair issue. That's how you tackle the daily frustration that transit riders feel. That's how you would move forward with better service on every single bus route all across the TTC and York region. You'd have better service all across Etobicoke, Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Scarborough and Weston. You would have immediate better service. That is what is so interesting about that solution. Not only that, but you could move forward with signalling upgrades and ATC upgrades at a far quicker pace than you're currently doing it.

When the Minister of Infrastructure talked about the number of weekends that the train lines are going to be closed, the reason for that is because the TTC doesn't have the money to pay overtime to allow the ATC to happen at night, like it used to. If the TTC was actually properly funded by the province, that work could happen at night, and the trains would run during the weekend and we wouldn't have all these delays. It would allow us to have more affordable fares, which is actually a crushing issue for many people who don't earn a lot of money—\$20,000, \$30,000 or \$50,000 a year. That will have a tangible impact on their lives.

It would allow us to move forward with dedicated bus and streetcar routes, which has tangible, immediate improvements to the number of people who can be moved along any kind of road very quickly.

1740

I'll give you an example: the King streetcar. The King streetcar actually carries about 175,000 people a day. That's a lot of people. Compare that to the Sheppard East subway, which carries about 50,000 people. So we've got a project, super cheap, the King streetcar, which just needs a little bit more operations and maintenance money and all of a sudden you've got all the people on King Street—the vast majority are transit riders—moving a lot more quickly.

New York has seen the light on this, too. They have numerous bus rapid transit lines. It doesn't have the same kind of hot-button controversy, the same kind of division that is deliberately created with the divide between transit riders and cars downtown. They're very sensibly moving forward on that in a very sensible way. That could happen elsewhere. It doesn't have to stop at King Street.

If we had proper funding for the TTC—and for all transit systems across Ontario, including in your riding—

we would be able to have proper air conditioning in the summer on Line 1 and Line 2. John Tory, the mayor, got to experience that when he very unwisely took a dare from someone who rode the TTC during that long, hot summer and said, “Hey, John Tory, why don’t you come down and experience what it’s like to ride in a subway car that is no longer properly maintained?” The TTC doesn’t have the money to maintain it because the province isn’t properly funding the TTC. “Why don’t you come down, John Tory, and experience what it’s like?” John Tory did, and he had a very, very, very hot subway car ride. He came out of that and he was sweating. Out of that experience, he realized that maintenance actually does matter; it has a real impact on transit riders’ experience. And whoa, what do you know? Air conditioning was actually fixed, and those Line 2 cars went back and they prioritized upgrading them.

That kind of thing happens when you properly fund the TTC. That is the way to actually get people moving from A to B quickly, and it’s the way that we can actually get this region moving.

What I find very concerning is that this government’s track record on improving transit over the last—how long has it been? Nine months? Ten months?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It feels like forever.

Ms. Jessica Bell: It feels like forever.

This government’s track record over the last nine or so months when it comes to actually improving people’s daily experience in the GTHA has not been so great.

What we have seen is a decision to cut the planned gas tax transfer increase. What that means is that \$1.1 billion that should have gone to the TTC to improve the TTC, make the TTC more accessible, actually get more people to their destination on time—that money is gone, and that has a real impact on people’s lives.

What I’m also concerned about is rumours that I hear—and please, if one of you wants to talk to me afterwards and tell me I’m completely wrong, I would love that—around this government’s interest in moving forward with fare by distance. Fare by distance is not good. Fare by distance will hurt people in Etobicoke and Scarborough and Weston more than it will hurt people downtown. It will affect low-income riders. It will affect people who cannot afford to live near where they work—to be having a double penalty of needing to have an excessively long commute and then having to pay a whole lot more for it than someone who is privileged enough and who can afford to live near their place of work. I’m very concerned about the rumours that I hear about that. That’s not going to help people’s daily commute.

What those examples of cutting funding to the TTC and potentially moving forward on fare by distance provide—it really makes me question how serious this government is around actually getting Ontario moving and actually improving people’s daily commutes and making their lives a little bit better, because your track record so far suggests anything but.

With the few minutes that I have left, I want to address just briefly the changes to the vulnerable road users definition so that it would include emergency road workers. I

support that. It’s a good thing. The Ontario Good Roads Association supports it. They approached me immediately after I introduced the vulnerable road users law and said, “That’s great.” So I support that decision too. What I encourage this government to do is to expand it a little bit more. The way that you can expand it is not only to just include who is classified as a vulnerable road user but actually toughen the penalties for people who are breaking the law when they injure or kill a vulnerable road user. Okay? Tougher penalties, because I have met many people, pedestrians, seniors and cyclists, who have been injured on the road by a driver who was breaking the law—the vast majority of accidents happen when someone is breaking the law: texting, distracted driving, under the influence—and their stories are heartbreaking. People are in permanent pain for the rest of their life.

One brother tells the story of his sister, whose son had just gone to hospital for a third-degree burn. She was travelling to visit him and she got hit by a car on the way to the hospital, and she died. The driver got a few-hundred-dollars fine. We can do better than that. This bill sucks. Add a little bit of sugar into it. Increase the penalties for people who are breaking the law when they injure or kill a vulnerable road user. Make sure that they have to do a driver re-education course before they get their licence again. Require them to listen to a victim’s impact statement so that they understand the consequences of their actions. Just introduce those tougher penalties, because law and order is something you folks believe in, and having consequences for your actions is something that I think all of us can agree on as well.

I want to conclude: We are opposed to this piece of legislation. I don’t know if you’re in doubt, but I’m not. We are opposed to this Getting Ontario Moving Act legislation, because it won’t. I’m concerned that this bill gives this government control over when and where and how we build transit lines, and quite frankly, I don’t think that’s going to help. That’s not going to help transit riders, certainly not in the short term and I fear not in the long term as well. I don’t think it’s going to save Ontario taxpayers money, because we have seen, with the Auditor General, that when you hand over delivery to the private sector, you are paying them a premium, and then taxpayers have to pay the cost overruns and the delays as well. I fear that it won’t lead to transit lines being built that will benefit the most number of people. That is really critical, because the public’s appetite for new transit lines and the construction and the consequences of that is not great, so don’t get it wrong. Please, please, just don’t get it wrong. Do your due diligence. I fear that it’s going to lead to a transit system that might benefit some developers but isn’t going to benefit Ontarians, and it’s not going to help our region really get moving.

I encourage you to do your evidence—I encourage you to oppose this bill. And I encourage you to focus on improving service now by properly funding the TTC and all transit systems across Ontario and making it accessible, affordable and getting people to work on time.

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

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: It couldn't be more clear that Ontario needed a solution to transit. In the last election, Ontario voters chose the Progressive Conservative Party. They chose us because we're not only mentioning subways in our platform once, which the NDP did—they wrote, "Oh, we need to build subways ASAP." I don't know how to quantify ASAP, but perhaps that's why they had a \$1.4-billion hole in their platform.

Our platform was very responsible, and it was costed. In fact, by uploading the TTC, we're taking that burden off of the shoulders of the taxpayer, we're working with partners and we're getting people to work. We're getting people to work, like my residents in Innisfil who are actually going to benefit from the subway and the GO train investments by this government. In fact, 11,915 people commute from my riding, the Innisfil portion specifically; that's 82%. And 3,000 people commute into Innisfil for work. So we're connecting the dots, Mr. Speaker.

We've created, and we have invested in, the largest GO train service increase in five years. We've enhanced GO train transit. We've enhanced subways. Mr. Speaker, we are connecting the dots, and we're not going to create policies in silos. We're going to make sure that we connect the Ontario Line, the Yonge North subway extension, the Scarborough subway extension, the Eglinton Crosstown west extension. Many of these places don't currently have transit, and we're bringing transit to them. We're connecting the dots.

1750

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to begin by congratulating our colleague the member from University–Rosedale. That was her first one-hour lead, and I think she did a tremendous job in this House. You would think she'd been here for a decade or so, but I think that's what she brings to the debate: years of knowledge about transit in the city and dialogue with daily riders and common people, everyday people who rely on a robust transit system that works for cities like Toronto.

Speaker, you've got to look at the eagle and the owl, reminding this government to be wise in their governance and reminding the opposition to be vigilant in their criticism. I think the member from University–Rosedale did that. She offered some constructive criticism. I think she was unbiased about her approach around what could be better, what has worked, and some cautionary tales about where this government is heading with this plan.

One of them certainly is the fare by distance. That's something that raises some serious alarms for those low-income riders who, as the member said, can't afford to live in close proximity to where they work and who rely on a system that is affordable for them. Another one is the maintenance. John Tory experienced first-hand that maintenance is an integral component of a system that works for everybody. And the \$200 million in planning the city of Toronto has already spent will now be vaporized under this government because they've got a brand new, fresh plan that spreads the system all over the place.

Finally, as I touched on in my first two-minute hit at the start of the debate, the use of public-private partnerships has been criticized by not only this Auditor General but many around the country. We've seen them being more expensive, less accountable, and the vast majority of those profits that are being made are by foreign conglomerates and consortiums that take that money and move it out of the country. We can do better in a public regime where we can afford to access financing at an affordable rate for the taxpayers of the province.

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

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: We need to do massive investments in subways, and that's what we're doing. You look at Toronto—we're the largest city in Canada—and look at our subway system. We have two lines. Let's look at New York; let's look at London, England; let's look at Moscow; look at Mexico. They have larger subway systems than we do. Why would we not invest in subways?

And guess what? The subway does not just service Toronto. I live in Cambridge. I drive in every single day. I say this multiple times, Mr. Speaker. I am on four highways every day to get to work and to get home. I spend two to three hours on the road in the morning and the same amount to get back home. I understand what that commute is like. Investment in transit is important not just for me, but for my constituents in Cambridge and in North Dumfries who brave those highways five days a week, every single week. I'm only doing it four days; we do Monday to Thursday here. I'm thankful for that. We also use the subway system. If I can't drive in, I'm taking the Lakeshore line; I'm taking the subway.

We need investments in our subway. We are investing \$1.3 billion, the infrastructure renewal fund, which is going to help fund repairs. We've committed to \$28.5 billion in transit funding: huge investments which are necessary. If we want to be the world-class city in Toronto that it needs to be, we need to have good transit. It's as simple as that.

Thank you, again, to that member for that full hour. I know that can be challenging, so good job. But she talked about fear that we will be worse than the Liberal government. That is very hard to do. The PC government has typically been the clean-up crew, Mr. Speaker. When Rae days happened, we had to come in and clean it up, and then the Liberals came in and they did 15 years of terror, and we're cleaning it up again. We're on board to get things moving for this city, for this province and for all those outside of Toronto, because Ontario is so much more than Toronto.

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

Ms. Jill Andrew: I wanted to say congratulations as well to my colleague and friend the member for University–Rosedale, who did such an excellent job talking about why we are opposing Bill 107, the Getting Ontario Moving Act.

I just wanted to share a little joke here. My friends and I often say that there are four occasions that we won't use

public transit for, particularly the subways, and that's weddings, funerals, job interviews and trips to the airport. The reason for that is because oftentimes there are delays. I see riders who get very angry, and they swear and sometimes they litter, even, as some sort of form of resistance or whatnot, and they really take out their anger on the drivers. The reality is, our drivers are doing the best they can with the little bit that they've got.

I want to say, as a person who has been frustrated myself in the past—you leave early and you're still late, or you leave late and you're early—we have to remember that in order for our transit to operate the way we want it to, it needs to be funded properly. It needs to have a real plan to make it reasonable, to make it accessible so that wheelchairs don't have a problem getting on, and so that you don't have to walk with an extra suit in case you sweat through your original suit by the time you get to work, like Mayor John Tory did.

We certainly need a plan that is longer than five pages, as my colleague mentioned. I think that \$28.5 billion is certainly worth more than a five-page so-called plan.

Really, what we need is more consultation, we need maybe more transparency, and we need a government that's actually going to listen to the people who are using transit every day, not just to their developer friends.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Now back to the member from University–Rosedale for her final comments.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Only two minutes—woohoo. Thank you to the member for Barrie–Innisfil, the member for Essex, the member for Cambridge and the member for St. Paul's for your feedback and comments.

I agree with you, member for Essex. I do think we need to take a good, hard look at P3s. The numbers don't add up, and a whole additional element of it is that when we hand it over to the private sector, we lose control. This means that when we have issues like what is happening at Eglinton–Bathurst right now—Metrolinx wanted to close the whole intersection down in order for the consortium to meet its deadline, and it took a long time for local community concerns to be heard. That's what happens when you hand it over to the private sector: You lose the very real community input. So I thank you for bringing that up.

Thank you to the member for Cambridge for sharing her commute. The very few times I have been to Cambridge, it has been a terrible commute, so I'm sorry that you have to experience that four times a week. I do share with you a very real need to improve transit, not just downtown and not just in the GTHA but all across Ontario as well.

Quite frankly, I have been told by the Ministry of Transportation that the money is not there yet. It can't be just a plan. The money has to be there as well. Maybe it's in the transportation budget, maybe it's in the infrastructure budget, but it has to be there as well.

You know what? Get it right. Get it right. Do your due diligence. Use the public sector. Respect the plans that have already been done. Invest in service now, so that

riders can get to work on time while they're waiting for the best transit lines to be built.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made to the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Mr. Harden assumes ballot item number 73 and Ms. Fife assumes ballot item number 97.

Pursuant to standing order 38, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

FUNDRAISING

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member from Ottawa South has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Premier. The member from Ottawa South has up to five minutes to make his point, and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance may reply for up to five minutes.

I now turn it over to the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to be here with my colleague again. I won't belabour the point tonight, but I think it's important that I restate some of the things that I stated in the question. Again, I was not very satisfied with the answer.

The whole point behind this is that in this Legislature, we're all supposed to be relatively equal. We make laws to make sure that we're all treated equally here. The intent of allowing leadership candidates to continue to raise money after their leadership campaign is so they can pay down their debt, so we can have as many people as possible running for the leadership of the Conservative Party, the NDP, the Liberal Party, the Green Party—any party in this Legislature, any party that becomes an official party with Elections Ontario.

1800

What's happening right now is that the Premier finished his leadership campaign debt-free—I congratulate him on that—last May, and since then, he has raised approximately \$650,000. What's happening with that money, though, if you look at this year alone, is that there are people who are doubling up on the contribution limit. They contribute \$1,600 to a leadership campaign and to the party, and no other party in here can do that. If it was an overage that was, “Oh, we went \$50,000 over, \$30,000 over, \$80,000 over,” you could understand that, but almost \$700,000?

My point in bringing forward the private member's bill which I brought forward the week before—about ending the practice of raising money after your debt is paid—is that it creates an unfair advantage, unfair to every other

member of this Legislature who's not a member of that party. I think that the Premier knows this. I think that the members on the other side know this.

If you look at some of the numbers around this year alone, it's close to \$300,000. I think in my question I mentioned, on Tuesday—I have another late show right after this one for it—that on top of the \$221,000 that had already been raised this year, there was another \$85,000, and there were 35 people earlier this year who doubled up on their donations, who gave to the leadership campaign and the party. Then that happened again, inside that \$85,000.

What's happening is that the Premier and his colleagues, because he may not be the only one, are using this loophole in legislation to create an unfair advantage. I think it's important to call it out. I think it's important. The Premier said in response to one of the questions, "We're charging \$25 for spaghetti dinners." Well, do you want to know how many donations in the last year you've had to the Conservative Party of Ontario for \$25? It's 127, about 2.5%. You've had almost 42% of your donations to the leadership campaign or to your party that have been over \$1,000, including the leadership campaign, so let's not pretend that somehow you're out there raising money in \$30 chunks by going to spaghetti dinners.

So what I'd ask the member opposite is that I think it's very clear, and with all due respect—I do respect the member opposite. I think the member opposite knows that this is taking advantage, and that it's not right, and that it should stop. That's the answer that I believe I should have heard from the other side, whether it be from the Premier or someone that he delegated that question to.

Hon. Todd Smith: Did the Liberals ever do it, John?

Mr. John Fraser: No. No, actually. When I found this out, I asked leadership candidates if that happened, and that's not the case. We never used the leadership campaigns to continue to raise donations.

My point is that you know that it's wrong, so why do you keep doing it? That's the question that I have: Are you going to stop doing it? Yes or no? If you think it's right, tell me why you think it's right. I appreciate the member's time—and your time, Mr. Speaker—and I look forward to his response.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance may reply for up to five minutes, but I would also ask all members in here to be respectful of speakers speaking. I know you might like to get out early, but I can arrange it even earlier, so I would ask that we maintain order.

Now we will turn it over to the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Doug Downey: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and—

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I have a point of order from the member from—

Mr. John Fraser: I don't have any hecklers, so—I mean, it's a bit late.

I'm sitting down.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): That's not a point of order.

Mr. Doug Downey: And to the member opposite, in fact, I don't know if we can sit further away; we're pretty far away. But we're close in our hearts.

Look, Mr. Speaker, the member is suggesting that there's something inappropriate about taking donations into the party, and he was suggesting in his question during the day that it had something to do with influence. I want to talk about access. I want to talk about access, because when the leader goes to these \$25 spaghetti dinners, and he's been to Mildmay and Ottawa and Muskoka and Kitchener—I don't have the whole list—he's connecting with people of all backgrounds. He's connecting with people from all corners of our province. That's the kind of access that our leader is providing hundreds of Ontarians every day.

It's funny when members of the House try to call out the leader for doing phone calls at 11:30 at night—that's access—because he gives out his phone number. He gave his phone number. The member from Essex gave out his phone number. I remember that at the LIUNA rally out front, he stood up on stage and gave out his phone number. That's the kind of access that the people of Ontario have with our leader.

Our message is resonating with people who are excited that Ontario is open for business and open for jobs. They're excited about the fact that we're turning Ontario around. They're not excited about the \$15-billion debt that we got left with by the previous Liberal government, Mr. Speaker. We can talk about access to the Premier; we can talk about access to the leader. It's pretty obvious that our leader is open and he gives out his number. He returns calls to ordinary citizens to have normal conversations. He knows he's getting recorded sometimes. He takes that chance. He takes that chance and puts himself out there.

If we want to talk about principles and access, look, a two-minute Google search will tell you about principles and access with the previous Liberal government. We don't have to drag names through the mud. It's pretty straightforward. But this government is different. This government is open. And just in the spirit of that—it's already out there—the Premier's number is 416-805-2156. If anybody doesn't want to go to a fundraiser, that's fine. If they want access, there you go. But it's already out there; I'm not doing anything new with that.

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why the member opposite is suggesting that anything untoward is happening. We're going to continue to be open, and if people want access, then it's one phone call away. Let your fingers do the walking.

FUNDRAISING

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): And now the member for Ottawa South has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Premier. This is going to be déjà vu all over again.

The member from Ottawa South does have up to five minutes to debate the matter, and in this case the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance may reply for up to five minutes.

I now turn it back over to the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: With all due respect to my colleague, I actually didn't say anything about access or undue influence. What I was saying is that you are using a loophole to have a greater advantage over us in the Legislature here.

But here's what's most important. You know, when I did the question on Tuesday, I went home on Tuesday night and I thought, "Why did I ask that question?" Part of that was because I wanted to ask a question to another member about developmental services, but I found this and I felt obligated to do it. On Tuesday night, do you know what I thought? It's not the most important question to Ontario families. What the most important question was that day, one that I should have asked, was: What is the government doing about developmental services? What are they doing about Passport? What are they doing about Special Services at Home? What are they doing about the 2018 commitment to residential care for families with children with developmental disabilities? What's happening with families with autism?

Speaker, what's more important—election finances or those things? You know what? Those are the things that are more important. What's more important? Is making sure that we have a good, solid public health system more important? Yes, it is. Is making sure that our hospitals get enough money so they can continue to operate more important than election finances? Yes, it is. Is a clean environment more important than election finances—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me.

1810

I am having difficulty hearing the member because he's at the far end. Even though his voice is amplified through special systems, yours doesn't need to be amplified. I can hear you too loudly. I would ask that we just bring it under control, please, so that we extend the courtesy to the member from Ottawa South to be heard on his point.

I will now turn it back over.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you, Speaker.

I don't want to go back and forth about this. I don't want to waste any more time on this. What it's creating is an unfair advantage here, and if you can't see that, then there's nothing I can do about that. I can't change it. I can't force you to do it. It's not right. You all know it. If you're going to do nothing about it, that's your problem; it's not mine. I've pointed it out to you. I've given you the solution to that problem.

The things that are more important are the things that we should be talking about here, and I just mentioned some of them.

I wanted to let members opposite know—I'm not wagging a finger at you. I'm pointing out something that's unfair. Someone is taking advantage of that and taking advantage of us, and it's not right. We can make light of it, but if you were sitting on this side and that was happening to you, I don't think that you'd let it slide.

I think the things that are more important are that we get developmental services right; that we actually open up Special Services at Home—there's no reason that it should be closed; that we let families with autistic children know the information they need to know; that we make sure that kids have supports in classes that they need. All those things are at risk.

I really didn't want to ask that question on Tuesday, and in retrospect, the response that I got confirmed for me that I shouldn't have wasted my time asking that question, because it was falling on deaf ears.

The more important question for me to ask was the question about things that are important to families. I think one of the things that we have to get straight in this Legislature is how we're handling families who are struggling because they have children who have special needs, developmental disabilities or autism. I want to leave you with that thought.

I really appreciate the members being here and taking the time to listen, and you, Speaker, for your patience.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance may reply for up to five minutes.

Mr. Doug Downey: I'm pleased to hear that the member opposite agrees that what's most important is protecting what matters most to people. That is entirely what our government is focused on. We are focused on it.

He asked legitimate questions: What are we doing about developmental services? What are we doing about autism? We're picking up the pieces. We're picking up the pieces from a shattered system, a system that was neglected while the Minister of Finance was going to \$5,000 dinners with 22 people. We're picking up a system that was shattered while the Premier was going to \$10,000 dinners with eight people—the former Premier, of course.

It just boggles my mind that we're going to take lessons from the opposition, from the former Liberal Party, on where the line is on how you do donations. They were collecting not just \$10,000—if you go into the public database, they weren't just collecting \$10,000 at eight-person dinners. They were collecting money in the individual ridings. They were collecting money for the party. The ministers had targets. Some didn't know what their targets were. Some were sure they were over some—again, I'm not going to drag through. It's all public. It's all out there. The public was sick and tired of it, Mr. Speaker.

What we're doing is, we're focusing on the things that matter most to people, the things that happened in Ontario that were shattered and left broken and bankrupt. We're focused on that. We're not focused on fundraising like the previous party was. I'm proud to stand up and say that we're making progress. We've done over 200 significant items, and we are just coming up on one year since our election.

Mrs. Robin Martin: It's incredible.

Mr. Doug Downey: It is absolutely incredible. So I'm proud to stand and do that, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to future questions in question period that do address the important issues.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. There being no further matter to debate, I deem the motion to adjourn to have been carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned at 1815.

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Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Arthur, Ian (NDP)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Baber, Roman (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
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Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
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Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Calandra, Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Stan (PC)	Willowdale	
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Coteau, Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Downey, Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	
Dunlop, Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Parm (PC)	Milton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud- Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteuse générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Orléans	
Lecce, Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa- Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (IND)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates
Stan Cho, Jill Dunlop
Wayne Gates, Randy Hillier
Stephen Lecce, Gila Martow
Jane McKenna, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Lindsey Park, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Stephen Crawford
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts
Ian Arthur, Stephen Crawford
Doug Downey, Sol Mamakwa
David Piccini, Kaleed Rasheed
Jeremy Roberts, Sandy Shaw
Donna Skelly
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Timothy Bryan

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Président: Dave Smith
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Natalia Kusendova
Jessica Bell, Chris Glover
Christine Hogarth, Logan Kanapathi
Daryl Kramp, Natalia Kusendova
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Dave Smith, Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

Chair / Président: John Vanthof
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Roman Baber, Rudy Cuzzetto
Amy Fee, Vincent Ke
Andrea Khanjin, Marie-France Lalonde
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Jeremy Roberts, Marit Stiles
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

Chair / Président: Parm Gill
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Roman Baber, Aris Babikian
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jill Dunlop
Parm Gill, Lindsey Park
Ross Romano, Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria
Sara Singh, Monique Taylor
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Présidente: Jane McKenna
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown
Lorne Coe, Michael Coteau
Mike Harris, Faisal Hassan
Jane McKenna, Christina Maria Mitas
Sam Oosterhoff, Gurratan Singh
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Peggy Sattler
Toby Barrett, Catherine Fife
Goldie Ghamari, Michael Gravelle
Jim McDonell, Norman Miller
Christina Maria Mitas, Suze Morrison
Michael Parsa, Peggy Sattler
Kinga Surma
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Will Bouma
Will Bouma, Paul Calandra
Lorne Coe, Stephen Crawford
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo
Paul Miller, Billy Pang
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee
John Fraser, Joel Harden
Belinda Karahalios, Robin Martin
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie