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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Monday 27 May 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 27 mai 2019

The House met at 1030.

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

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It is with pleasure that I introduce brothers and sisters from USW from across district 6: Tony DePaulo, Chad Machum, Chris Ramsay, Émilie Chatelain, Bob Gallagher, Kim Hume, Jana Papuckoski, Jason McDonnell, Jordan Rego, Lena Sutton, Bob Sutton, Mary Lou Scott, Mike Williams, Roopchand Doon, Myles Sullivan and Wayland Fenton.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'm honoured to rise in the Legislature today to introduce my friends from CJPAC, the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee. CJPAC is a national, independent, multi-partisan organization with a mandate to engage Jewish and pro-Israel Canadians in the democratic process. Please join me in welcoming their summer interns, Joshua Finklestein, Jared Forman and Arina Dmitrenko, along with their staff, Jaime Reich. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome Rob Brady and Nathan Hendriks in the members' gallery. They're from Brady's Meat and Deli in my riding, and they worked to raise over \$5,600 for Mike Farwell and Cystic Fibrosis Canada over the past month. Great work, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I would like to introduce a legislative page from my riding of Kanata-Carleton, Alexis Kam. Several members of Alexis's family are in the gallery here today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Miss Monique Taylor: Once again, I would like to welcome back our autism parents and advocates. We have Faith Munoz and her son, Jeremy Changoo; Amanda Mooyer and her son, Izak Lynch; and Stacy Kennedy, Michau van Speyk, Kowthar Dore, Jonathan Abdilla, Antonio Stravato, Amy Moledzki, Esther Tang, Charlie Li and Jayana Dhatigara. Welcome back to Queen's Park.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased to introduce Andrea Shaw, the executive director of the Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre. Andrea is retiring on June 14 after 22 years of tireless service.

Mr. Joel Harden: I'm very honoured to be in the great honourable company of a number of disability rights activists this morning: Am Row, Bill Hitz, Joyce Balaz and my friend Neil, sitting right over there in the members' gallery. Welcome to your House today, Neil. Take care.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Once again, the member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a real honour—and I hope I don't steal your thunder here—to introduce senior administrators from the University of Guelph who are here today: Franco Vaccarino, the president; Charlotte Yates, provost and vice-president, academic; Daniel Atlin, vice-president, external; Malcolm Campbell, vice-president, research; and Mellissa McDonald, director of government relations and community engagement. They are here for U of G advocacy day. Everyone in this House is welcome to join them and meet Canada's food university at 5 to 7:30 p.m. tonight in rooms 228 and 230.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I thank the member for Guelph for introducing the guests to the Speaker's gallery.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's my pleasure today to welcome to Queen's Park for maybe the first time Bill and Cindy Esser from Sarnia-Lambton, my riding, also parents of my parliamentary assistant, Andrew Esser. Welcome.

Miss Monique Taylor: I see some guests from my hometown of Hamilton up in the gallery—they're steelworkers: Tony DePaulo, Bob Sutton, Lena Sutton and Myles Sullivan. I don't know everybody else's name, but welcome back to your Legislature.

Ms. Jane McKenna: They just came in: Burlington Central high school, grade 10. It's near and dear to my heart. We have wonderful schools, but I went there as a youngster many, many years ago, and two of my five kids did. Welcome today, and have a wonderful time.

Mrs. Belinda Karahalios: It is my honour to introduce Luis Jiménez, and, from the riding of Cambridge, it's my honour to introduce and welcome Barry Green, the Special Olympics winner of one gold, one silver and the sixth-place ribbon in 10-pin bowling. Congratulations, Barry, and welcome to the House.

Applause.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Jay McDonnell from London, a steelworker. Welcome to all of the steelworkers here at Queen's Park today.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: It is my honour to introduce Martin Haynes, who is here. He's a chief corporate officer at Medavie Inc. They are also hosting a reception tonight from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the legislative dining room. Thank you very much for being here.

Mr. John Fraser: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Speaker, I'm seeking unanimous consent to ask a question on behalf of the member for Thunder Bay-Superior North.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to ask a question on behalf of the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North. Agreed? Agreed.

I think we still have a couple of introductions.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: I am very excited to welcome my Girls' Government group from Margaret Avenue senior public school. They are running through security right now. Thank you to their teachers Emma Galbraith and Olivia Cummings Galbraith, and also to my daughters, Sofia and Danica, who are on their way.

Mr. Mike Harris: Last but not least, I'd love to welcome page Sadee Zister to the House. She's going to be with us until we end and break for summer. I'd like to welcome her from the great riding of Kitchener–Conestoga.

1040

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I would like to welcome the independent pharmacists' groups who are going to be in Queen's Park today. There are five of them going to be representing today in the reception time. I would encourage all the members to attend.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I would just like to acknowledge our group from the University of Guelph—my daughter's alma mater, as well—and welcome them to Queen's Park. I look forward to meeting with you later.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our introduction of visitors, except for the next very important one.

I want to acknowledge the presence in the House of the family of the late Walter George Pitman, who was the MPP for Peterborough during the 28th Parliament. I want to introduce his family who are here: son Wade Pitman and his spouse Mary; daughter Cynthia Lynn Loucks and partner Don; son Mark Pitman and spouse Jeanne-Marie; daughter Anne Pitman-Davidson; grandchildren Jared, Matthew, Lisa, Dan and Jeremy; great-grandchildren Sebastian, Callista, Xavier, Keagan, Mackenzie, Dexter, Walter, Julian, Isla and Kai; and many cherished family members.

Also in the Speaker's gallery, I understand, are Mr. David Warner, Speaker during the 35th Parliament, and Mr. Patrick Reid, member for Rainy River during the 28th to 32nd Parliaments. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature. We're delighted to have you here.

WALTER PITMAN

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Todd Smith: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent for tributes honouring the late Walter Pitman, member for Peterborough in the 28th Parliament, with up to five minutes allotted for the independent members, five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's government and five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's loyal opposition.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to provide a tribute honouring the late Walter Pitman,

member for Peterborough in the 28th Parliament, with up to five minutes allotted to the independent members, five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's government and five minutes allotted to Her Majesty's loyal opposition. Agreed? Agreed.

We'll begin with the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: On behalf of the Liberal caucus and John Fraser, the interim leader, I'm happy to celebrate the wonderful legacy of Walter Pitman. I will be sharing my time with the member from Guelph.

In the biography that he wrote of the Canadian composer and art administrator Louis Applebaum, Walter Pitman writes, "Intellectual focus and moral direction typified his work.... Louis Applebaum was very much a man of the world he inhabited. [He believed] people could be inspired to be collectively conscious; to create beauty for each other; and to be attracted to the values of justice and compassion." We might be tempted to think that Walter Pitman was writing a little bit about himself because, indeed, he had strong intellectual focus, moral direction, loved the arts, and was passionate about justice.

I never met Walter Pitman myself, but my predecessor at the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Alan Borovoy, revered the man, so I heard a lot about him. Walter Pitman, among the many hats that he had, had been president of the board of the CCLA, and Alan had continued to seek his advice throughout the years. Walter Pitman was generous with his time, wise with his counsel and always thoughtful about our society's tribulations.

Walter Pitman had multiple careers and multiple passions. He was a runner. He was a skier. He was a history teacher, a dean, an MP, an MPP who left politics to join a university—those things happen—and he continued his public service at Ryerson and also made his mark with the council of arts of Ontario. He was an environmentalist, a writer of biographies, a husband, a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather, and a great supporter of the arts and of so many worthwhile causes.

He writes about Louis Applebaum's passing, "His loss could not be measured; it could only be deeply felt"—words that apply here as well. Ontario says thank you, Walter Pitman, for a life in which you did so much for us. We are the better for it. We will continue to feel the loss very deeply and continue to be inspired by your legacy. Merci.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll recognize the member for Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise in this House today on behalf of the Green Party and pay tribute to the inspiring person, educator and politician in Walter Pitman. I believe it is truly a testament to how he touched his family's lives and the lives of those around him to have so many friends and family here in the members' gallery today to remember and honour Mr. Pitman's legacy.

He made history in 1960 when he was elected as a New Party MPP, which later became the NDP. I can certainly relate to being a new member of a new party in this House and what Mr. Pitman must have been like to walk in here for the first time.

His commitment to public service, arts and the environment is truly inspiring, and I especially want to thank you for all the ways in which Mr. Pitman volunteered so actively to fight for the causes he believed in so deeply.

In 1992, he was made an Officer of the Order of Canada. He was also awarded the Order of Ontario. I was looking through a lot of what has been written about Mr. Pitman, and I thought that his Order of Canada citation seemed to sum up so many of his contributions. I want to quote from that:

“Throughout his life as a politician, educator and civil libertarian, he has demonstrated a profound commitment to social change. In a remarkably diverse career he has served as executive director of the Ontario Arts Council, director of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and chairman of Elderhostel Canada. In addition to his professional commitments, he is a dedicated volunteer, working with a host of community, cultural and educational groups.”

It is so clear that Walter Pitman's contributions were immense in this House but even more so outside of this House, and I just want to say my deep thanks to his family and friends being here today to honour a life well lived.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll recognize the member for Peterborough–Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Walter Pitman was born in Toronto in 1929. In 1952, at the age of 23, he married Ida, a woman who, by all accounts, was the love of his life.

If you search online for his bio, many sites will tell us that he was a history teacher at Kenner Collegiate in Peterborough, and that in 1960 he won a federal by-election in Peterborough to become the first-ever federal member of the New Democratic Party. They were a newly formed party, and at the time of the election were simply called the New Party. He served federally until the 1963 general election.

After leaving federal politics, he returned to Peterborough and in 1967 re-entered politics, this time winning the provincial seat for the NDP. Walter holds the unique distinction of being the only person to represent Peterborough in opposition, both federally and provincially. When elected in 1967, he was the first person that Peterborough had ever elected provincially in opposition.

After leaving provincial politics, he became the dean of arts and science at Trent University in 1972.

Walter also has the very rare distinction of being both a member of the Order of Ontario and an Officer of the Order of Canada.

I didn't know Walter, so I can't tell you about any personal experiences that I had with him, but I did reach out to some people who knew him very well. Tom Symons, the founding president of Trent University, was a lifelong friend of Walter's. Tom and Walter had gone to high school together. Tom described Walter as the man who defined what the word “integrity” truly means. He was a gentleman through and through. And Tom told me that the greatest compliment that he could use to describe Walter was that Walter described Tom as his friend. Although the

two of them were on opposite sides of the political spectrum, they could have such meaningful discussions that an outside observer would never know which political allegiances either of them had.

1050

David Morrison, the vice-president of Trent when I attended Trent, had Walter as a professor in the early years. David described Walter as a fiscal-objective socialist. When Walter was dean, he shared some office space with the registrar's office at Trent, and rather than tie up a classroom that could be used by someone else, Walter would hold his tutorials in the shared space with the registrar. Not only did this prove to be a practical use of the space, but it also provided an intimacy for the students at Trent who attended his classes. Walter gave the students the opportunity to see staff and senior administrators at Trent as regular people who actually cared about the success of those students. It also provided the administration with a weekly reminder of why they were building that new university.

Sylvia Sutherland described Walter as a man who was born to be a public servant. In Sylvia's words, “He didn't just see it as his calling but really as his entire existence. Helping others was as natural to Walter as breathing is to you and I.”

Walter and Ida owned a property in the UK, and I've been told that he regularly let his friends in Peterborough come and use it for vacation. Not only was his home in Peterborough always open for friends to come and visit, but his family's property in England was as welcoming and open as well.

Perhaps this down-to-earth approach was why Ryerson recruited him at a crucial time in their existence to become their president. I have been told that Walter's consensus-building, collaboration skills and love for education was a key factor in Ryerson's success.

Walter had already accomplished so much, and after leaving Ryerson it would be understandable if he decided to retire, but retirement was something that would have to wait. His passion for education would take him to OISE, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, where he served as director from 1986 until 1992.

It's difficult to capture all of the intricacies of a man as accomplished as Walter was in just five minutes, so I'll leave you with these words from someone else who knew him very well: “He was the greatest of gentlemen to have walked shoulder to shoulder with some of the greatest gentlemen Ontario has ever seen.”

Thank you, Walter, for leaving such a meaningful legacy in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I recognize the member for Oshawa.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Thank you, Speaker. It is my sincere honour to pay tribute to the life of service of Walter George Pitman on behalf of Ontario's New Democrats and the leader of the official opposition, Andrea Horwath.

As we can all appreciate from the filled-to-overflowing guest gallery, there are many who have appreciated Walter's contributions to this Legislature and far beyond.

We are pleased to welcome Walter Pitman's family and friends to Queen's Park. We welcome you, and we're very glad to have this opportunity to share a bit about Walter Pitman's life and legacy.

Speaker, it has been my privilege to learn about Walter Pitman, who was a lifelong educator, arts and culture enthusiast and advocate, and vibrant public servant.

Walter George Pitman was born in Toronto in 1929. He began his career as a high school teacher in Peterborough, where he and the love of his life, Florence Ida Collinge, made their first family home. He made history when he became the first New Democrat member of Parliament for Peterborough and Ottawa from 1960 to 1962. He was always active and committed to education and became the dean of arts and science at the then new Trent University.

He was elected in 1967 as the member of provincial Parliament for Peterborough and served in this House until 1971. During his time at Queen's Park, Walter was a dynamic education critic and chair of the NDP caucus, and became deputy leader. However, in 1971 he headed back to education and became president of Ryerson Polytechnic Institute.

Walter and Ida brought the penthouse office of the president down to the ground floor to be more accessible to students. Pitman Hall Residence is named after Walter and Ida. Their impact and memory are found in many places.

Walter Pitman was well regarded for his integrity and his passionate commitment to equality and justice. While president of Ryerson, Walter Pitman was appointed by the Metro Toronto chairman to be a one-man task force to probe the issue of racism in Metropolitan Toronto. The Walter Pitman report was widely considered, debated, challenged and applauded in 1978.

During an address to the Empire Club of Canada in 1978, Walter delved into the findings of the task force. A few highlights that he shared, so I could bring his voice into this space:

"The task force did find a disconcerting degree of racial tension emanating from a good deal of racial prejudice expressing itself in Toronto in many different ways....

"The title of the task force report is *Now Is Not Too Late*, and it was our very considered view that it was not too late—that in fact with a certain amount of adjustment, with a certain raising of awareness and consciousness, with a certain reallocation of the already existing resources, both monetary and human, that Toronto could cope with the large number of people who had come from other lands and other traditions. I think this is important because it is in essence the title which I believe to be relevant in addressing all the problems of human relationship throughout our nation. I believe now is not too late in other contexts of relationship."

Speaker, as his family shared in their tribute in the Toronto Star, "Walter was a remarkable man who led a remarkable life. Keen, vibrant and insatiably curious, he supported the arts, social justice, environment, and education—everything that is good and right." Friends describe him as "ethical and capable in everything he did."

It was his lifetime of regard for arts and culture that led him to be the executive director of the Ontario Arts Council. Many of us in this Legislature have served with former PC member Julia Munro, and Ms. Munro had this to say in this Legislature in 1986:

"In his six years with the council, Walter has done a great deal for culture in Ontario. He has appeared in every part of the province inspiring and encouraging the arts community and the general public. To a large degree, we can thank Walter Pitman for the flourishing cultural life we enjoy in Ontario today.... Walter Pitman's incredibly detailed knowledge of arts in this province and, I might add, his wonderful sense of humour have been invaluable....

"Some of the members on the opposition benches will remember him well as a scrappy young NDP education critic back in 1968-69. It is to education that Walter returns.... I can only say that if the arts must lose Walter, then I can think of nowhere I would rather he use his talents than in education."

And, Speaker, he did just that. He was the director of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. It was in this capacity that he came here, before committee, to be considered for a task force to envision and create a way for our colleges and universities and technical institutions to best serve Ontario's students. In 1992, his thoughts to this House were:

"We have certainly a different world, a world of high technology, a world in which jobs are changing very quickly, in which individuals will have perhaps to retrain seven or eight times in a lifetime....

"What we are really trying to find out is how we can create a different mesh that will allow us to produce the kinds of young people who can not just compete in the new global economy ... but ... can be in the forefront of a number of areas in making a contribution to, for example, the environmental well-being of the planet."

Walter's friend of 70 years, Tom Symons, said that Walter was "a person of extraordinary talent," and that, "He did an enormous amount of good without making much fuss about it.... It was a life of almost total service."

Walter George Pitman was a member of the Order of Ontario and an Officer of the Order of Canada. He was involved in many arts organizations and in 2006 was one of the founders of For Our Grandchildren, an organization to connect and empower grandparents who are concerned about the impending effects of climate change so that they might counter and prepare for these effects on behalf of all of our children and grandchildren.

We have a lot of grandchildren here today. Walter and Ida had four children, 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. He wanted to leave the world better, brighter, kinder, more joyful, and responsible to the children of this province and planet.

Walter believed in the power of the arts. He believed in the power of community and relationships. He was always active and on the go, and went from one endeavour to the next with purpose, joy and conviction. Whether it was serving on the board of the National Ballet of Canada, the Campaign Against Child Poverty, Project Ploughshares or

writing for the Peterborough Examiner and regularly for the Toronto Star, Walter was inspired to make a difference, and he never stopped. He even authored five books in his “retirement.”

He was involved in far more than we could fit into a tribute, but suffice it to say that he was accomplished, appreciated and that he loved the journey and he loved his family. For any of us to be able to serve well, we must be well supported. This Legislature and the province of Ontario are grateful to Walter’s family and friends for sharing him with us. Ontario is a better place because of Walter Pitman’s love and lifetime of public service. Thank you.

Applause.

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The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I want to thank the members for their eloquent tributes, and say to the family that, as you’ve heard, Walter Pitman’s outstanding public service to the people of Peterborough, to the province and to the country will never be forgotten. Thank you again for joining us this morning.

WEARING OF BASKETBALL JERSEYS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand that the member for Toronto Centre has a point of order.

Ms. Suze Morrison: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to allow members to wear Raptors jerseys, or red and black, to commemorate the Raptors’ historic victory last Saturday night and their first-ever trip to the NBA finals.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would hate to pre-judge the mood of the House, but I have a feeling that this might get unanimous consent. Are we agreed that we can wear Raptors jerseys in the House today? Agreed.

I think we have to pause for a moment.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Okay. I’m going to call the House to order. It is now time for oral questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question this morning is to the Acting Premier. Earlier this morning, the Premier announced that he would be forced to back away from his “cut first, plan later” strategy of retroactive cuts to municipalities across Ontario. The Premier also confirmed that he was not cancelling the cuts, just delaying them.

Whether this is an admission of incompetence or ignorance, if the Premier is now admitting that the cuts were a bad idea for this year, what makes the government think it was a good idea for next year?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: The announcement that the Premier and I made this morning was very important. It was very important to Ontario’s 444 municipalities that we maintain

the pre-budget allocations for land ambulance, public health and child care services.

This has been an ongoing conversation that we’ve had with our municipal partners. As most members in this House know, I had a very good meeting with mayors from LUMCO. These are the mayors from large urban municipalities in our province. Our municipal partners, I think, because of this conversation, all agree that there is only one taxpayer, and the job of finding savings and protecting what matters most is a shared responsibility among every elected politician in this province.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, any government worth its salt would have the conversation with partners in advance of massive cuts retroactive to their budgets.

For weeks and weeks on end, this Premier has blustered in this Legislature and on any talk radio program that would have him, insisting that deep cuts to public health, to child care, to emergency services and to libraries wouldn’t hit families hard. Now he’s finally admitting that he and every Conservative in this chamber that voted for his budget was wrong.

Is the government willing to consider that it’s not just the timing of these cuts but the cuts themselves that may be the problem here?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to remind the honourable member that we have a number of municipalities that are very interested in our audit and accountability fund. This is a \$7.35-million fund that will go line by line in those municipal budgets looking for a possible 4% savings.

The other issue is the \$200 million that we gave the smallest and most rural communities in our province. We gave them a \$200-million boost to help with modernization. Make no mistake, Speaker. We’ve listened to municipalities. Our government is being responsive to municipalities, and we want to work with them. We want to work with them, and I think it’s very reassuring that the two levels of government are moving forward on trying to find those efficiencies together, in a collaborative manner.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, with all due respect, I’d like to remind this honourable minister that he used to be a municipal politician and a mayor and should never have let these cuts go forward in the first place.

Once again, this government has been forced to go back to the drawing board after cutting first and planning after. Mayors and municipal leaders across Ontario have been very clear that they’re ready to work with the government, but not if the plan is unilateral cuts to the services that families in this province rely on, whether it’s public health and emergency services or child care and planning.

Is this Premier—is this government—actually going to sit down and listen and work with municipal leaders or is the Premier going to keep playing “my way or the highway” with Ontario?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, what the honourable member doesn’t remember is the fact that our government inherited a fiscal mess in this province. We inherited a

\$15-billion deficit from the previous government, often supported by her party and the members of her benches.

Again, what we're moving forward with is a collaborative approach with Ontario's municipalities. They asked us for time to be able to work with us to find efficiencies, to find the savings. I think most municipal leaders that I've spoken to over the weekend, and certainly at LUMCO on Friday, want to work with us. They want to use the tools that our government is providing, whether it be the audit and accountability fund or the municipal modernization fund. There's tremendous political will out there, Speaker, at the municipal level to work with our government to try to find those efficiencies and those fiscal constraints and try to relieve those constraints from our government. We're going to work co-operatively with Ontario's—

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

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Acting Premier. Two years ago, I had the opportunity to meet a gentleman named Leon “Pops” Alward. He was one of the many people suffering from opioid addiction who was fighting for overdose prevention sites back in the day. Friends informed us that he died this weekend—the latest victim in this crisis.

This morning, the government went to the Westin Harbour Castle to discuss their plans for mental health and addictions. Will they be reversing their decision to close six overdose prevention sites?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Labour, please.

Hon. Laurie Scott: Of course, we're very saddened to hear of the passing of the individual.

We made a commitment to invest in mental health and addictions by \$3.8 billion over 10 years. The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has been a strong advocate on mental health issues. She has looked at the best ways to approach this, and we continue to look at the best ways, working with community organizations.

We realize the opioid crisis is a critical situation. The minister has addressed those issues, and we will be making more comments soon, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon, that will also give more information to the opposition.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, one of the first acts of the Ford government upon coming into office was to cut \$330 million a year from mental health and addictions funding. So following today's announcement, will the government be reversing that cut?

Hon. Laurie Scott: This is not one easy fix. We have to work with our partners in the communities. Mr. Speaker, there has been an increase in funding in health. Mental health and addictions, and health in general, have had an increase. The minister has worked very strongly with the community groups. This is a long-term approach that we

have to take; we can't flip a switch and make it all better. There have to be communications with community services.

1110

When we've increased our budget \$1.3 billion this year, that is an investment that is going to strengthen our health in our province and strengthen the health teams on the ground. Our commitment to mental health, our commitment to health in the province of Ontario, is strong, and we will continue to work with everyone. I hope the NDP will join us in helping to solve—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Response.

Hon. Laurie Scott:—this multi-pronged health care approach that needs to be addressed.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, for people struggling with mental illness, for people literally dying every day from addictions, this government's concern is welcome, but only if it's matched with an actual commitment to undo the damage that they have already done and undo the damage that they continue to do through callous cuts and policies that ignore the opioid crisis destroying families and taking lives across Ontario.

If the government is serious about a “commitment”—a word this minister used several times in her most recent response—if they are serious about a commitment to addressing mental health and addictions, will they recognize that the first step is undoing the serious damage that they have already caused?

Hon. Laurie Scott: Again, we've increased the health budget by \$1.3 billion. We've doubled the number of consumption sites. Community mental health services, including priority populations, including francophones, by \$23.5 million; mental health and justice services, including mobile teams, safe beds and court support workers, by \$18.33 million; supportive houses by \$15.2 million; children and youth mental health services, including in-school and on-campus supports, by \$58.6 million; Indigenous mental health and addictions services by \$12.77 million; community and residential addictions, including opioids, by \$33.13 million; in-patient hospital beds by \$12 million; data and quality supports by \$500,000—that's a long list of improvements that the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and we on this side of the government have made. Mr. Speaker, the opposition—

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

ONTARIO CHILD BENEFIT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is to the Acting Premier, but the minister might want to correct her record. They did not double the number of safe injection sites; they cut them by six.

The Ford government has claimed that their budget protects the services that people rely on the most. We hear this ad nauseam around the House. Can the Acting Premier explain why the government is ending the Transition Child Benefit, which provides supports to Ontario's most vulnerable children?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I appreciate the opportunity. Let's be clear: There will be a slow and gradual wind-down of the Transition Child Benefit, and the recipients will be notified directly, well in advance of the implementation date. We are one of only a few provinces that have implemented this Transition Child Benefit.

But I ask the member opposite back: Is it fair to give a taxpayer subsidy to those who are crossing the border illegally and will likely be deported? Is it fair to provide a taxpayer subsidy to those who do not file—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I apologize to the minister for having to interrupt. The opposition must come to order so that I can hear the minister respond to the question.

Back to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Our government believes that all Ontarians should have equal access and fair access to Ontario's children's benefits, which is why we're actually increasing the Ontario Child Benefit to well over \$1.2 billion a year. But we do take exception to those who do not file taxes, and that is why we are making this move on a gradual and transitional basis.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, our party, the official opposition, believes that every child deserves the necessities of life. That's what we believe: Every child deserves the necessities of life. This is a benefit that provides support to single mothers—single mothers who may not be, for example, putting a tax return in. So they didn't put their tax return in; this is a supplement that helps them to feed their kids. Often, yes, refugees who fled their countries to make a new life in Canada are also folks who rely on this benefit.

This is a province filled with immigrants and refugees, Speaker. That's how this province was built. And to suggest that the government should not be responsible for making sure that every child can at least have a meal and a roof over their head is a disgraceful place for this government to be proud of. It is absolutely shameful.

These single mothers, one agency said, are the hardest hit, with "children they have to look after. And without daycare subsidies"—that are also being cut by the province—"they won't be able to work. They are not going to be able to go to school."

Has the government given any consideration to the implications of this cut and how—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The minister to reply.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Let me be perfectly clear: Refugee claimants will continue to receive support through the Ontario social assistance system. The Transition Child Benefit is provided to recipients who already receive social assistance but do not qualify for the Ontario Child Benefit.

Primarily, they are refugee claimants and illegal border crossers. They are those who have not filed their income taxes, and those whose income is too high—

Interjections.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. I'm going to let the member conclude her response.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I have been in this House for 11 months calling on Justin Trudeau to repay the \$90 million in social assistance costs that have been caused by his failed border policies. Why won't the NDP stand up with the Ontario Progressive Conservative government and every other—

Interjections.

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

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: Don't stand up for Ontario. Don't bother doing that.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, come to order.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Roman Baber: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Our government made an historic announcement unveiling a transit plan that will reduce congestion and get the people of Ontario moving. It's a \$28.5-billion vision to expand our subway network by 50%. This is the most money ever invested to get shovels into the ground to get new subways built.

People waited long enough for an integrated, regional transit system that extends outside of Toronto city limits to serve the growing communities across the region. Tens of thousands of people transfer between the TTC and GO Transit every day. It's time to start treating the TTC like the vital service that it is.

Could the Minister of Transportation expand more on the benefits of this historic announcement?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I would like to thank the member from York Centre for that great question. As he says, we're going to build, build, build, Mr. Speaker.

Just as he mentioned, the Premier last month announced a plan for the 21st century. It's a plan that will get Ontarians moving and ensure that these new transit lines are indeed built. The new Ontario Line will provide real relief for congestion on Line 1. It will be twice as long, move twice as many people, and, compared to the original line, it will cost about the same amount in price. That's great news for Ontario and our Treasury Board.

Not only will we build at almost the same price; the city had previously wanted the relief line built by 2029. We're going to get the Ontario Line built by 2027, two years ahead of schedule. It's an incredible project, Mr. Speaker. It's going to reduce overcrowding on the line, make it safer for people, and get people home that much quicker.

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

Mr. Roman Baber: Thank you to the minister for that response. There is no doubt that people across Ontario and the region will be pleased with the benefits of the Ontario Line once it is built. It's an incredible project that will relieve overcrowding on the Yonge-University-Spadina line and connect new neighbourhoods.

Speaker, this is one of the most important transit projects in Toronto right now. Relief is needed, and it's needed immediately. With only one extension built in 15 years, commuters using the TTC have been waiting for this for years, with no results or action.

Will the minister please inform the House of our firm and concrete commitment to get shovels on the Ontario Line into the ground?

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Hon. Jeff Yurek: Thank you again for the follow-up question. That member is absolutely correct. This project has taken far too long to get started. Unfortunately the previous Liberal government, supported by the NDP, did not make much ground with regard to transit files, and the city of Toronto simply doesn't have the capacity to ensure that these lines are built. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure if they did, Mayor John Tory would have the shovels in the ground already. But we are going to help the city. We're going to help the province. We're going to upload the subway system if the bill passes in the next week and a half, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to ensure that these subways are built.

Mr. Speaker, for years everyone has challenged the provincial government to step up in a leadership role. Our government has done so. That's why we are going to work to continue to upload the subway system, and that's why we've allocated \$11.2 billion on a firm, concrete commitment to get the Ontario Line built. Mr. Speaker, we are going to bring relief to this system. We're going to bring relief to Ontarians. We're going to build a regional integrated transit network and we're going to do it during our term.

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is to the Acting Premier. This government is cutting \$84 million for children and youth at risk, including cuts to children's aid societies that are already stretched to the limit. Speaker, we know that the children's aid societies could use improvement to better protect vulnerable children. But instead of making things better, this Premier is once again forcing Ontario's most vulnerable to bear the burden of his cuts. How exactly do these cuts improve the lives of vulnerable children and keep them safe?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I had the opportunity last week to address this issue. We're not cutting \$84 million from Ontario's children's aid societies. In fact, what we're

doing is we're working with the children's aid societies right across the province to ensure that we have a better back office system. We're working with them, and we're excited about that. I'm looking forward this week to visiting some of those children's aid societies.

But let me be perfectly clear where that number comes from. We have a number of youth detention facilities in the province of Ontario that are underutilized. In fact, many of these facilities are utilized only at 29% capacity. I personally don't believe children should be jailed. I think that we need to put front-line investment in to making sure that they have a hand up and a greater deal of success. I ask the member opposite: Does she believe that we should put money into preventing kids from being in youth detention facilities, or does she think we should lock them up?

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

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, time and time again, this government has made cuts on the backs of vulnerable children. The ultimate test for any change that affects children should be: Does this keep our kids safe? Will it improve the well-being of children?

But this government's \$84-million cut from children and youth at risk fails this test. It puts children served by children's aid societies and children experiencing the justice system further at risk. Why does this government think that it is acceptable to put the safety and livelihood of our most vulnerable children at risk once again?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: The member opposite simply did not listen to my initial response. Let me be clear: The government is not cutting \$84 million from the child welfare system. The figure in the estimates includes changes in the youth justice system and community prevention and largely reflect that the government will be spending less money on jailing kids. I ask the member opposite again: Is that what she would prefer? Would she prefer to see children locked up rather than being part of a preventative approach within our community?

One of the biggest things that we're working on as a government is to prevent the guns and gangs challenges that we face in our largest cities like Ottawa and Toronto. That's why one of the first announcements I made as minister was to ensure that we had greater youth prevention supports in place in the city of Ottawa. I'm going to continue to do that.

But let me be perfectly clear: I don't think we need jails for children that are operating at 29%. We need to give them a hand up, not lock them up.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the finance minister. This morning we've heard the response of the minister about the Transition Child Benefit that's being taken away. My question is really simple: Why does the finance minister think that taking this transitional child benefit away from some of the most vulnerable children and families in this province is a good idea?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: As the member opposite well knows, our government made a decision early on in our mandate that we would be reforming social assistance. Right now, we have a \$10-billion program where a million people are relying on social assistance, yet still one in seven live in poverty. We have invested a historic amount of money into the Ontario Child Benefit—over \$1.2 million. We're going to continue with those approaches. We're continuing to work with our municipal partners to ensure that we have an effective approach moving forward, so we have less people relying on a government cheque and more people looking toward self-reliance as their goal, toward a more dignified approach in the province of Ontario.

That's what we're doing with respect to social assistance. That's what we're going to continue to do as a government. We want to make sure that not only are people working, but they're contributing to our society in other ways as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. John Fraser: Mr. Speaker, that didn't answer the question, and the minister's earlier response was shocking to me, because I can't believe that children would be a pawn in their support of Andrew Scheer in the federal election. It's incredible. I can't believe it.

Let's look at the government record, Mr. Speaker. They have made OHIP+ into "OHIP-minus." They have cancelled the Basic Income Pilot with no notice or consultation. They have halved the increase to families on social assistance. They fired the child advocate. They put families of children with autism through hell with the new OAP. They have cut funding for children's aid societies. They're increasing class sizes in our schools. They have cut OSAP. They froze wait-lists and funding for SSAH, Passport and autism, and the list goes on and on. Who knows what's next?

So, through you, Mr. Speaker, to the finance minister or the minister of children: Have they declared war on children and families in this province?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I recognize that most of the government members were listening to the question, and I could hear most of what the member for Ottawa South said, but about three or four members were screaming at the tops of their lungs across the House. It's not acceptable behaviour in the Parliament of Ontario. Think about it.

Start the clock. The minister can reply.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I'll tell you what we have a war on in this government: It is the \$1 billion a month they left us for the children of the next generation, our children, our grandchildren. That's what the Liberal Party left us: a \$15-billion deficit that ensured that we have compromised our core and value public services like health care, like education, like social services. They bankrupted the province of Ontario. They've bankrupted the Ontario Autism Program. They left the province bankrupt of ideas. If anyone

has anything to answer on in this chamber, it is the Liberal Party of Ontario.

Interjections.

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

When I was reminding the members that you can't yell across the House, I was looking at the government side; the same remarks apply to the members on this side of the House—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): —including the member for Don Valley East.

Next question. Start the clock.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: My question is for the Minister of Labour. Since taking over this crucial file, the minister has helped make Ontario open for business and open for jobs by repealing the job-killing aspects of Bill 148 and modernizing health and safety training and employment standards.

Last week, the minister announced that our government for the people is conducting an operational review of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, or WSIB. The WSIB plays a key role in protecting Ontario workers, families and employers by providing financial support and return-to-work programs for people who are injured on the job. Can the minister inform the House about how this review is going to help the WSIB continue to provide sustainable services to the workers, families and job creators it serves?

Hon. Laurie Scott: I want to thank the member for Oakville North–Burlington for the question and the great work she does in her riding.

1130

Last Thursday, I had the honour of keeping a key commitment of our fall economic statement by announcing an operational review of the WSIB. The review will focus on administration and operations, including:

—financial oversight: sustainability and controls;

—administration: the effectiveness of the current WSIB governance and executive management structure; and

—efficiency: the cost efficiency and effectiveness of operations, including comparisons to other jurisdictions and private sector insurers.

The review will help ensure the long-term success of the WSIB and will provide our government with timely advice to ensure a sustainable system based on industry best practices. Reviewing and improving the WSIB is one of the many ways that our government is ensuring that Ontario can continue to attract investment and good jobs.

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

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: Thank you, Minister. I know that our government for the people is currently conducting MPP-led reviews of all provincial agencies to ensure we are providing the best services and value for Ontario families. We are also committed to helping

people, job creators and municipalities save money, like the Ministry of Labour did with Bill 66, which will allow municipalities like the city of Toronto to save nearly half a billion dollars a year by accepting open tendering.

Could the minister share more information about the independent experts named to the review panel and how the people of Ontario can give their feedback and suggestions to improve the operations of the WSIB?

Hon. Laurie Scott: I thank the member, again, for the excellent question. The review will be conducted by Linda Regner Dykeman, the head of MidCorp Canada, who has more than 25 years of experience in field insurance, leadership and business strategy, and Sean Speer, a senior fellow in public policy at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. These professionals were selected based on their respective areas of expertise to cover the unique mandate of the WSIB. We're actively seeking public input on this review over the next two months.

Finally, while I am confident that areas of improvement can always be found, I want to point out that the WSIB is currently managed very well. In fact, last September, they retired their unfunded liability 10 years ahead of schedule, which allowed us to reduce rates by an average of 30%—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Laurie Scott:—giving a \$1.45-billion boost back into our economy. This helps employers save money, increases investment and makes Ontario open for business and open for jobs.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Acting Premier. Last week, we learned that the PC government plans to launch a review of WSIB. This government has already slashed employer contributions, which means less compensation for injured workers who are already struggling.

In Ontario, a workplace injury or illness often means that workers and their families are forced to live in poverty. Now this government plans to alter WSIB and appears to open the door for privatization. Will the Acting Premier tell us: Does this government want to privatize WSIB?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of Labour.

Hon. Laurie Scott: No, Mr. Speaker. We are not privatizing WSIB.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: Mr. Speaker, back to the Acting Premier: Workers in this province deserve a government that protects and supports their rights, not one intent on clawing back the compensation they are owed. I want to be clear in this: No injured worker in the province of Ontario should live in poverty because of a workplace injury or an illness.

Will this PC government stop talking about it and actually stand up for working people in this province, or are

they going to continue to help their millionaire friends save a quick buck on the backs of workers in the province of Ontario?

Hon. Laurie Scott: I do strongly object to the question that has been answered, and I'm saddened but not surprised to hear about the continued fearmongering from the opposition and the attitude that they have, throwing around words like "privatization" and "cutting benefits." It's capitalizing on and politicizing worker injuries. Frankly, that is beneath the member opposite.

When we speak about reviewing WSIB, we want to make sure it's running well. When we say that the unfunded liability was paid off 10 years earlier than it was supposed to, that provides sustainability for injured workers that may have to access WSIB. We want businesses to invest not only in their businesses but in their workers. Providing a sustainable WSIB is going to help everybody involved. So no to privatization and yes—

Interjections.

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

OPIOID ABUSE

ABUS D'OPIOÏDES

Mrs. Amy Fee: My question is for the Attorney General. Our government was elected to protect what matters most to the people of Ontario, including ending hallway medicine and building a connected mental health and addictions system.

In my riding of Kitchener South–Hespeler, my constituents have witnessed first-hand the devastation of the opioid crisis. It has cost the people of Ontario tremendously both in terms of lives lost and its impact on the front lines of our health care system. Would the Attorney General please tell us how our government is working to address the concerns of the people of Ontario with regard to the opioid crisis?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The member for Don Valley East and the member for King–Vaughan will come to order.

Interjection: York Centre.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): York Centre. I apologize to the member for King–Vaughan; it was an honest mistake.

The member for Don Valley East will come to order. The member for York Centre will come to order.

I believe it's the Auditor General's turn. Start the clock.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I would like to thank the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler for her question and for the great work that she does on behalf of her constituents.

This morning, we announced how Ontario is protecting what matters most by taking action to improve quality mental health and addictions services and to recover health care costs due to the opioid crisis. Today, our government will propose a bill that stands up for the people of Ontario

and holds opioid manufacturers and wholesalers accountable. If passed, the bill would support Ontario's participation in the class-action lawsuit that British Columbia launched last year against more than 40 opioid manufacturers and wholesalers. We intend to invest any proceeds awarded as a result of this litigation back into front-line mental health and addictions services in the province of Ontario.

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. Supplementary question.

Mrs. Amy Fee: Back to the Attorney General. The opioid crisis has cost the people of this province a great deal, both in terms of, again, those lives lost and the impact that it has had on our front-line health care workers. Could the Attorney General tell us more about that class-action lawsuit brought by British Columbia and the importance of our government's proposed support for this lawsuit on behalf of the provincial, territorial and federal governments against those 40 manufacturers and wholesalers involved in the sale and distribution of opioids?

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je remercie la députée de sa question. Il est important que les fabricants et les grossistes soient tenus responsables de leurs actes répréhensibles présumés afin de recouvrir les coûts relatifs aux soins de santé passés et présents qui sont assumés par les contribuables ontariens, qu'il s'agisse de coûts liés aux maladies, aux blessures ou aux problèmes liés aux opioïdes.

De plus, si nous participons à ce recours collectif, nous ne serons pas responsables des frais judiciaires initiaux, étant donné que les avocats du secteur privé seront payés à même les sommes versées à la suite du règlement judiciaire. Notre gouvernement entend investir toute somme reçue dans le cadre du règlement de cette poursuite directement dans les soins de premières lignes en santé mentale et pour le traitement des dépendances en Ontario.

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ABORTION

Ms. Suze Morrison: My question is to the Attorney General. Women across Ontario were concerned weeks ago when Conservative MPPs joined anti-choice protesters on the lawn and pledged to make abortion unthinkable in our lifetime. They were even more concerned when the Premier declined an opportunity here in the Legislature to distance himself from those remarks.

Now Radio Canada is reporting that the Ford government has ignored requests from a dozen health facilities seeking protections from anti-choice protestors who harass and intimidate women seeking services. The right to a protection zone is a legal right established in this Legislature.

Why is the government ignoring organizations that are desperately asking for their protection zones to be approved?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: First of all, our government has been very clear that we are not reopening the debate on the question of abortion in Ontario.

With respect to safe zones around abortion clinics, eight clinics have applied and been approved for those zones to be respected. An independent committee reviews all future applications. There are applications that are currently under consideration by that independent committee. There are privacy concerns and there is currently litigation ongoing, so I can't comment specifically on applications that are under review, but the safe bubble zone system is in place in the province of Ontario and we will continue to respect it.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: Back to the Attorney General: We're asking for the bubble zones to be approved. Quite frankly, you're not doing your job. The Premier may say he's not reopening the debate, but we see Conservative MPPs on the lawn promising to make abortion unthinkable while this government is literally ignoring women seeking the protections that they're promised under law. For women across Ontario, it seems like the debate hasn't gone away and the Premier is siding with forces that would chip away at women's hard-earned rights.

Will the Attorney General commit—do your job and commit—to protecting legal rights and ensuring access to abortion services for women who need them?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, as I made clear in my previous answer, it is the job of an independent committee to review the applications for those zones. It is our job to ensure that we uphold the laws and regulations of this land, and we continue to do that.

But, Mr. Speaker, we've been clear. We are not reopening the debate on the question of abortion. Clinics that wish to apply for zones can do so to an independent committee, and we abide by the reports and the decisions of that committee.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr. Stan Cho: Ontario finds itself in a fiscal nightmare. For the past 15 years, the previous Liberal government, propped up by the NDP, put off making tough decisions. Speaker, leadership is about making those tough decisions—the tough decisions required to turn this province around. My constituents sent our Premier and our team to Queen's Park to clean up this mess, and that's exactly what we're doing. It started with a line-by-line audit of the previous government's waste and mismanagement, and it culminated in a budget and a year of an aggressive legislative agenda.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing please share with this House what our government is doing to find efficiencies across the board to help bring Ontario's finances back under control?

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the member for Willowdale for that question and his comments.

Speaker, I've heard from mayors and councillors across this province. The Premier also knows, from the time he spent at city council here in Toronto, that municipalities need not just the time but also the flexibility to find

savings. That's why our government announced this morning that we would be pausing this year's cost-sharing changes to land ambulance, to public health and to the child care sector. The changes are going to allow municipalities to do a number of things, Speaker. It's going to allow them to be able to leverage the \$7.35 million we've put forward for an audit and accountability fund. It will allow Ontario's smallest municipalities to deal with the \$200 million of modernization funds that we gave them in the last fiscal year. More importantly, Speaker, it also allows us to work together. Ontarians face a fiscal challenge together. It's most important that we work on it—

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

Mr. Stan Cho: It's very clear that there are plenty of examples of waste and mismanagement across the province, so it's really reassuring to see that our government is acting to tackle those issues.

Our Premier promised that the party with the taxpayers' money is over. The Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing announced some new changes this morning. Could the minister please outline how our government's plans to work collaboratively with our municipal partners to restore trust and accountability to Ontario's finances will work?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, I want to thank the member. As I was saying in my first answer, Ontarians face a fiscal challenge and we want to face it together with our municipal partners. In providing this opportunity to pause some of those in-budget changes, we can now sit down with our municipal partners. Really, I believe and I think most in this House will believe that because there is only one taxpayer, we have to work collaboratively and co-operatively with Ontario's municipalities.

I mentioned the two funds, the \$7.35 million of the audit and accountability fund. I had a number of mayors express their interest in using that fund to try to find four cents on the dollar. But we've also heard, Speaker, through you to the members of this House, a lot of great suggestions from those small communities, given that we've been able to present them with that \$200 million of the municipal modernization fund. There are a lot of good suggestions. There's a great political will to work with our government to ensure that they can find the efficiencies to help us meet our fiscal challenge and to protect what matters most—

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

CURRICULUM

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Mr. Speaker. My question this morning is for the Acting Premier.

Last week, this government announced the new curriculum for Indigenous studies, after abruptly cancelling the Indigenous curriculum-writing sessions last summer. But Indigenous leaders like Nishnawbe Aski Nation were not met with prior to the release of the curriculum. Updating the Indigenous curriculum was a recommendation from

the TRC. It should have been developed by Indigenous communities.

But to make matters worse, Mr. Speaker, the government is making the new Indigenous curriculum an elective, not a mandatory, course. Why does the government think that Ontario students do not need to learn about residential schools or First Nations treaty rights?

Hon. Todd Smith: The Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: You know, I very much appreciated the opportunity to be in Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout this past week. I was pleased to join the member opposite at the opening of Sioux North, as well. It was a great celebration. The whole week was really about celebration, because the fact of the matter is, this is the first time ever there has been an absolutely dedicated effort to make sure that an Indigenous curriculum is developed. I have to impress upon the fact that we have given students the opportunity to take many of our new courses. They'll take them, and they'll be counted as compulsory studies required to graduate. In talking to the director of education, as well, he agreed that many of the courses that are offered are mandatory.

It's a celebration that we have finally brought forward a suite of 10 courses that touch on the realities of Indigenous—

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Last week, also, Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler stated, "Learning about the colonial history of this country should not be optional," and, "As long as we make these courses as electives ... the system will continue to fail our students."

As a First Nations person, it's hard for me to accept that this government is committed to meaningful reconciliation when they have cut funding to Indigenous culture and arts, significantly cut the budget of the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs and cancelled the Indigenous curriculum writing sessions.

1150

Will the government today make an appropriate curriculum on residential schools, treaties and Indigenous peoples' contributions a mandatory educational requirement in Ontario, as stated in the TRC call to action number 62? I need a simple answer, please.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Speaker, our new courses that have been introduced as of last week, again, are going to be counted as compulsory studies in literature, in law, in humanities, politics and history.

You know, when I was up north, I heard a lot of support for the decision I made to expand the grad coach program as well. People are very much absolutely applauding the fact that we actually expanded our graduation coach program so that we can ensure our Indigenous students are graduating and having a great pathway forward. Also, like I said last week—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Opposition come to order.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Like I said last week, if the opposition cared to listen, I heard—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Why is the truth optional for you?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The opposition will come to order. The member for Waterloo has to come to order. Allow the minister to finish her reply.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If the opposition would listen, they would hear loud and clear that I had a great week up north. Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler and I had a wonderful discussion at the airport. I'm pleased to say that, starting in June, we'll be meeting with our Indigenous partners and working with them on an approach that could include future curriculum revisions. This is good news.

We had a great trip last week. We're looking forward to what we're doing in the future. The fact of the matter is, we're getting it right. People know I care and I—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. The member for Mississauga East–Cooksville.

IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: My question is to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. For months now, you have been a steadfast advocate for Ontario's taxpayers by standing up to Justin Trudeau and his government's failed border policies. You have told us how the federal government's inaction has driven up costs for Ontario's taxpayers, with \$200 million in added costs to our social assistance, education and legal systems.

Months later, the federal government still hasn't fully reimbursed taxpayers, and our government has been forced to protect what matters most. Speaker, can the minister please tell us how our government is protecting all children from Justin Trudeau's failed border policies?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I appreciate his activism not only on behalf of the children of Ontario but certainly his local Raptors basketball team.

For months now—since last August—he knows that our government has called on the Trudeau Liberals to reimburse Ontario taxpayers for \$200 million in added costs, including \$90 million in our social assistance system. Ontario taxpayers cannot continue to afford to pay for the crisis at our border through the added costs to our social assistance system to support illegal border-crossers who are making those claims.

We believe all Ontarians should have equal access to children's benefits, regardless of whether they are or are not receiving social assistance. We are going to be winding down the Transition Child Benefit and investing nearly \$1.2 billion in the Ontario Child Benefit to provide equal support to all low-income Ontarians who require assistance.

The federal government, however, I reiterate today, must take action to stem the flow of the illegal border-crossers and clear the backlog—

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

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Thank you for your response, Minister. An article in the Toronto Sun last week detailed

how nearly 4,000 people had crossed into the country illegally through the unofficial port of entry at Roxham Road. We know that a significant number of refugee claimants and illegal border-crossers then travelled to Ontario, where they are entitled to social assistance while they wait to have their refugee claim heard by a federal immigration board. This wait can take upwards of two years.

Minister, it's unacceptable that these people are left in limbo while they wait for the federal government to show some leadership. Can the minister please tell us how Ontario supports refugee claimants?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Okay. I'm going to ask the—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The opposition must come to order. The member for Brampton Centre must come to order.

Interjection.

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

To the minister to reply.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: All Ontarians should have equal access to children's benefits, regardless of whether or not they are or are not receiving social assistance. The truth is, we are removing duplicate programs that add costs and red tape. We have a program to deliver child benefits. Everyone should file their taxes, however, Speaker. Does the member opposite not agree with that? Yes or no?

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Jeff Burch: Speaker, through you to the Acting Premier: In a letter to the Premier last week, the mayors of Ontario's 28 largest cities expressed serious concerns about Bill 108, the Ford government's plan to tilt the playing field in favour of developers, at the expense of the environment, families and municipalities.

The government plans to ram this bill through committee hearings this week, with just a single day for public comment. These 28 mayors have asked for an extension to September 30. Will the government listen and grant this extension? Yes or no?

Hon. Todd Smith: The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I was at LUMCO on Friday, and I explained, to some of the concerns that some of the mayors had expressed—they had expressed a concern regarding the creation of the new community benefits charge, and I made it very clear to them that the announcements that we've made as part of Bill 108 for a community benefits charge—we announced a consultation, and that we would continue to consult with Ontario's municipalities about the new development charges regime, as confirmed in community benefits.

I believe exactly what those mayors were asking, that we have some consultation, is what I delivered. The difference is that the bill can still continue through the legislative process. It does not need to be stopped or halted. Clearly, we said we would consult on that section.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Well, I'll take that as a no, Speaker. It's a good sign that a government bill won't stand up to scrutiny when the government refuses to let people scrutinize it.

These mayors, elected by millions of Ontarians, are raising serious concerns about the government's scheme. They warn that Bill 108 could put at risk cities' finances and their ability to provide parkland, community facilities and well-planned neighbourhoods.

The Premier is finally learning to admit when he is wrong. Why is the government so afraid of taking time to hear the concerns of citizens, mayors and city councillors?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, again, through you to the honourable member: I was very clear on Friday at LUMCO. Our proposed community benefits charge and the formula that it would create maintain the position of "growth pays for growth." Libraries will continue to be built. Parkland will continue to be open. Community centres will still be opened under the new proposed regime.

We announced as part of Bill 108 that we would consult with municipalities on this new formula. That's exactly what we're going to do.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is to the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. Last week, Speaker, our government for the people announced a very special partnership with one of the most well-known accessibility organizations in the country. Our great Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, along with the founder of the Rick Hansen Foundation, were at the MaRS Discovery District to announce the launch of the Rick Hansen Foundation's accessibility certification program in Ontario.

Can the minister share with this House the importance of this program and what it means to both people with disabilities and seniors?

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I'd like to thank the very hard-working member from Whitby for the important question. Our government is focusing on what matters most to people with disabilities and seniors by helping to remove barriers in buildings and making communities more accessible. This is why our government is investing \$1.3 million over two years through a new partnership with Rick Hansen Foundation. The certification program will provide accessibility ratings of businesses and public buildings by trained professionals and determine ways to remove identified barriers. This will help make communities and businesses become more accessible, and open for jobs and open for business.

1200

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: When our buildings are not accessible, Ontarians with disabilities are prevented from fully

participating in everyday life and businesses fail to reach their full potential. We must strive, Speaker, to make our communities as accessible as possible, to accommodate every individual in our province. The third legislative review of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act by David Onley stated that there are "soul-crushing barriers" in our communities. Could the minister please explain how our recent announcement will contribute to the government's commitment to enhancing accessibility across Ontario?

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: As the member mentioned, the Honourable David Onley's report made it clear that the building environment is a significant challenge in our province. This \$1.3-million investment will provide an innovative, Ontario-focused, low-burden accessibility certification program. They will encourage organizations to become more accessible. Through this investment, the Rick Hansen Foundation will undertake ratings of over 250 facilities in select communities across Ontario. This is our small step to help remove accessibility barriers. This program will ensure that people with disabilities and seniors can participate in daily life and help business grow: a win-win for all Ontarians.

SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is for the Acting Premier. Acting Premier, the school board that represents the area for Muskoka all the way up to Timmins, Kapuskasing and beyond, the District School Board Ontario North East, sent your Minister of Education a letter signed by Bob Brush, the chair of that particular school board. I'm going to send this over after the question, but here's the nub of it: "Your government has cut funding to autism services. We have 48 IBI spaces available within the system in that entire area. Our school board, which covers the same area, is now faced with having to take all of these students into the school system and having to try to provide services to those children," and they don't have the money to do it.

So my question to you is as simple as this: You made a decision this morning to reverse some of the possible cuts that you're making to the municipalities—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the member to make his comments through the Chair. Conclude the question.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking you the question: Are you prepared to do the same and reverse your cuts for children with autism?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Again, I would ask the members to make their comments through the Chair.

Response?

Hon. Todd Smith: Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to share with the member opposite and everyone in the House today that we're moving very thoughtfully and measuredly towards a proper manner in which to have our children with autism enter into the education system. We've been having very good meetings with

our autism partners. We're listening and we're going to get it right.

In terms of the manner in which we've invested in autism services, I need to remind the member opposite that we have taken unprecedented steps to increase funding to support children and students with autism. One example, just to name one, is doubling the amount of money that's going to the Geneva Centre for Autism. That's just one example. I certainly would be pleased to talk about more. There are so many more examples in terms of the increased support that we can give. I look—

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, to the minister again: You have cut funding to children that need services to deal with autism. IBI therapy is being reduced. In our area, there are 48 spots that are available, and there are going to be probably very few left by the time this is all over. School boards, like this particular school board, are having to deal with what to do when those kids hit the classroom and they don't have the resources to be able to provide the services.

I ask you again: What do you plan on doing to help students in this province get the funding through the school boards that they need to make sure that kids with IBI needs are met?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Once again, I'd ask members to make their comments through the Chair.

Minister of Education to reply.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, Speaker, I want to remind the member opposite that we're a government and a ministry that work with our partners, and we're going to be very careful to make sure we get it right. If he wants specific examples—I look forward to receiving that letter from his local school board, as well as working with him so he fully comprehends, once and for all, how we're investing in children with autism.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. That concludes our question period, but I, once again, want to apologize to the member for King–Vaughan, the member for Brampton Centre and the member for Whitby for mixing up their riding names.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Points of order. First of all, the member for Milton.

Mr. Parm Gill: On a point of order, I'd like to recognize and welcome my constituent, supporter and a great community leader, Balwinder Singh Soor. He also has a couple of relatives who are visiting all the way from India: Baljeet Singh and Gurjit Kaur. Welcome to Canada.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek.

Mr. Paul Miller: I would like to welcome all the steelworkers from Hamilton and Ontario. It's great to have you here, and we'll be seeing you later. Thank you for coming.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines.

Hon. Greg Rickford: My amazing wife, Janet, is here, and a special family member from Florida, Sarah Etzkorn. We welcome them to this magnificent place.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: I neglected to welcome earlier our friend Emily Daigle from Mississauga Centre. She is an accessibility rights leader. Thank you, Emily, for being in your House. Thank you for coming here for National AccessAbility Week.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Labour.

Hon. Laurie Scott: I want to correct my record from earlier. In fact, we have more than doubled the funding for the consumption and treatment sites, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Mississauga–Erin Mills.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I would just like to correct my record. The reception for the independent pharmacists will be in room 230, not 220. Thank you.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I want to remind members that the appropriate time for introductions is when I ask for introductions right before question period and at the start of the afternoon.

TABLING OF SESSIONAL PAPERS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that during the adjournment the following documents were tabled:

—a report entitled Economic and Budget Outlook, Spring 2019, from the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario;

—a report concerning the review of cabinet ministers' and opposition leaders' expense claims, complete as of May 17, 2019, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario; and

—a report concerning the Honourable Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, from the Office of the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario.

There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1208 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Lorne Coe: It's my pleasure to introduce Andrea Shaw, the executive director of the Hearth Place Cancer Support Centre in Durham region. Welcome, Andrea. She's accompanied by two of her colleagues.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Welcome.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

INVASIVE SPECIES

CANADIAN SOLDIERS

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Good afternoon, Speaker. I have a history lesson for you today. Steve Byrne gave his grade 11 class at St. Anne high school a special assignment. Students were given the names of the members of the Essex Scottish Regiment from Windsor who signed up for military service during the Second World War. Then they had to research their military history. They came up with the home mailing addresses of those soldiers when they enlisted more than 75 years ago. They wrote letters to those old addresses. The letters informed the current owners that, at one time, one of the people who lived in their home was a young soldier fighting for Canada in the Second World War.

One of those letters reached Patricia Murphy at 733 Niagara Street. That's where Samuel Berger used to live. He enlisted in 1940 and was killed at Dieppe on August 19, 1942. It was his first battle and he was just shy of his 23rd birthday. Ms. Murphy was so impressed and intrigued by the letter that she had a memorial plaque made up and put it up by her front door. It reads:

"In memory of Samuel Berger

"1919-1942

"Samuel was a brave, young soldier who fought and died for Canada during WWII.

"He enlisted while living here, at 733 Niagara St. Windsor Ont."

Speaker, the plaque has a red poppy and the final words "Lest we forget."

So I say thank you to Patricia Murphy, thank you to history teacher Steve Byrne at St. Anne and a big thank you to students Brayden Tessier and Riley Carmichael for doing the research and writing the letter. Speaker, this is a history lesson for us all, lest we forget.

ANDREA SHAW

Mr. Lorne Coe: I stand today to pay tribute to Andrea Shaw, executive director of Hearth Place, the only cancer support centre in Durham region. Andrea, who is with us this afternoon, is retiring on June 14, 2019, after 22 and a half years of tireless service.

Speaker, initially she was the only employee at the centre when it was established in 1997, but in the years since, it has grown to a staff of 13, signifying just how important Hearth Place has become in Durham region.

Andrea is a dedicated and passionate leader who has positively impacted thousands of lives of those living with cancer. She's been the heart and soul of Hearth Place since it was conceived. She's a community leader, sought after and a valuable resource person in the broader community. Durham region residents are privileged to have witnessed the impact Andrea has made on the lives of so many in our communities, including mine.

We can never repay you, Andrea, fully, for your sacrifices and dedication. God bless you in your retirement.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: On Friday, May 10, I had the amazing opportunity to join forces with my community and the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, also known as CLOCA, at Purple Woods Conservation Area in Oshawa. We put on our boots and gloves, headed into the woods and learned how to identify and remove garlic mustard, an invasive plant species that has the ability to inhibit native plants.

After some time in the forest, we headed indoors to Heritage Hall to make some garlic mustard pesto. Speaker, I'm not sure that you can eat all invasive species—I'm fairly certain you can't—but I must admit that garlic mustard was absolutely delicious. We made a salad and even put it on our pizza. To beat it, we eat it.

Speaker, do you know what garlic mustard actually does to other plants? It depletes nutrients and slows growth. Originally brought to North America in the 1800s by well-intentioned folks, this invasive species has evolved into a cruel plague.

An invasive species is characterized as almost impossible to get rid of, causing damage that we can never repair. An invasive species is defined on the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry website as a menace to our environment, our economy and even our health.

Alas, garlic mustard is not the worst of the invasive species in this province. Ontarians can prevent the arrival and survival of invasive species by slowing or reversing the spread, which will reduce its harmful impact.

I applaud our conservation authorities like CLOCA for the work they do and I encourage everyone to get involved, take action and stop invasive species of all kinds from taking over this province.

VETERANS

Mr. Billy Pang: Recently I had the privilege of attending the final veterans' employment initiative session hosted by IBM Canada in Markham. For many veterans, transitioning from service into the civilian workforce poses its challenges, and the skills that these veterans acquire during their time in service may not always be recognized either by themselves or by their potential employers. Subsequently, IBM responded to this by initiating the veterans' employment initiative. This program serves the purpose of assisting and teaching a selected group of local veterans the tech skills necessary to excel in the cyber security field.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the efforts of this program and of IBM Canada in assisting our veterans. I am honoured also to serve in a government that has vowed to support and make life easier for our veterans. Some of the steps we have taken to achieve this are exempting Ontario Royal Legion branches from a property tax, providing free fishing licences for our veterans and their families, and more.

Supporting our veterans is not simply a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, but a civic duty for all of society to uphold.

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: May 28 is Menstrual Hygiene Day, a day to highlight the importance of good menstrual hygiene and raise awareness about menstrual inequities.

Many people don't think of period poverty as an issue here in Canada, but, in fact, there are many who struggle to access menstrual products, which can cost anywhere from \$76 to \$153 per year. This may not seem like a lot of money, but for many it's the difference between eating or buying necessary supplies. You also need access to clean water, which means period poverty has the greatest impact on low-income, homeless, Indigenous and young people who menstruate. When people are unable to afford a consistent supply of products, they may resort to unhygienic solutions such as reusing or overusing products that can lead to an increase in the risk for reproductive tract infections. It also means missing school or work, missing participating in social activities, and experiencing social isolation and also violence perpetrated against them. Period poverty is both a health and a social equity issue.

I want to recognize a few key people who are leading on this file: Jana Girdeuskas, founder of the Period Purse and now a 2019 YWCA Woman of Distinction; and Halima Al-Hatimy, founder of FemCare Community Health Initiative. Both women are making menstrual products available for free and changing the conversation on menstrual equity. The 10 girls from Parkdale public school who are participating in my Girls Government program are working to have menstrual products available in all public schools.

Speaker, I call on this government to recognize May 28 as Menstrual Hygiene Day and to work towards making menstrual products freely available for all Ontarians starting right here in our province with our public schools.

Finally, to all menstruators out there, this is a day for us.

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MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Mr. Randy Hillier: Last Friday, I was pleased to meet with the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus, along with other MPPs. Our discussions were very productive. Members of the EOWC identified areas of concern, including the uncertainty over many provincial transfer payments that they rely on to run healthy, vibrant communities.

However, other significant concerns were also apparent. There is an absence of detail and direction from the government, and a default reliance on consolidation and amalgamation schemes without supporting evidence. We heard from our county wardens that they face a budgetary shortfall of over \$30 million.

My greatest concern is that while the government demands efficiencies, it fails to understand that most municipal expenditures are statutory obligations imposed by Queen's Park legislation. The government, on one hand, can't demand that local governments spend less while at the same time imposing more obligations and

prescribing the means by which they must implement them.

I was pleased with the minister's announcement today. However, it does demonstrate this government's proclivity to act first and think later.

It is my hope the government will remain engaged with our municipal partners and work with them to improve the quality of life for the people of rural eastern Ontario.

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FAIR

Ms. Christine Hogarth: This coming weekend I, along with the member from Etobicoke Centre, am hosting a government and community services fair in order to showcase the incredible and vital services that shape our communities. These organizations work tirelessly to help serve and support our residents.

I'd like to give some examples of the over 55 organizations that will be showcasing their services this weekend:

The Daily Bread Food Bank is one of Canada's largest food banks. With over 10,000 volunteers and 50 staff, it feeds tens of thousands of hungry households annually.

The Young Professionals and Skilled Workers Association offers networking opportunities for, and advocates on behalf of, emerging professional leaders and their economic well-being.

LAMP Community Health Centre provides constituents of Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Etobicoke Centre and beyond with countless programs and services to help further our community. These services include diabetes education, mental health support and adult learning programs—and just a shout-out to Jasmin for all her hard work that she does every day.

I'd like to encourage all residents in Etobicoke to join myself and the member from Etobicoke Centre this Saturday from 10 to 3 p.m. at Cloverdale Mall in order to meet with and learn from organizations that make living in Etobicoke so incredible.

GOVERNMENT FISCAL POLICIES

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Speaker, I'd like to take this time to congratulate London city council, past and present, for their shrewd fiscal stewardship. London's credit rating has been AAA for over 40 years—a record, I'm sure.

This government could learn from London city council about responsible fiscal management and excellent credit ratings. Ontario's shameful and disastrous credit rating spiralled down the toilet after the Conservative Party took power and started cutting without thinking.

Ministers compare the province's budget to a household—a simplistic comparison, but let's apply that flawed logic for a moment. When money is tight, children come first, health comes first, education comes first. But all we see from this government are cuts.

Clearly, there are still some outstanding questions: What is the return on investment for the Premier's personal pleasure wagon? Do households in debt buy a

tricked-out camper van or do they manage with what they have? What is the ROI for ridiculous gas pump stickers? Do households in debt blame others for their debt or do they look honestly at their own expenses and actions?

Through you, Speaker: When is the Premier going to wake up, put the brakes on his gravy train, park his personal pleasure wagon and realize that his cuts hurt everyone in Ontario except his inner circle?

AL-NADWA EDUCATIONAL ISLAMIC CENTRE IFTAR

Mrs. Gila Martow: I just want to talk a little bit about an event I was at last night. It was hosted by the Al-Nadwa Islamic centre, which is in Richmond Hill, and was established in 2002. Together with York Regional Police and the chief, Eric Jolliffe, they hosted an iftar dinner. Iftar means “breaking of the fast,” and of course it’s breaking the fast of Ramadan, when those in our communities of the Muslim faith don’t eat during daylight hours; they eat from when the sun sets until the sun rises. It goes on for the whole month of Ramadan.

What I saw at the event was the value of children and youth in the community by the organization. We all see that in our communities—that all the different organizations, the different faith groups, understand that the children are the future for all of us here in the province of Ontario.

The organization’s general secretary, Aslam Badat, explained to me that they’re working very hard to bridge the gap between multicultural communities, breaking down silos, partnering with York Regional Police to engage in dialogue and bring about learning and understanding, and of course we all applaud that.

The event took place at the Bayview Community Centre in Richmond Hill. It was attended by politicians from all levels of government, from all parties.

I just want to mention that Mr. Badat sits on the York Regional Police recruitment advisory committee, and I want to thank one of his volunteers who took pictures for me.

Ramadan Mubarak.

MISSISSAUGA FOOD BANK

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: Today, I’m honoured to stand in this House and tell you about the wonderful work that the Mississauga Food Bank in my riding of Mississauga East–Cooksville does for our community.

Last year, the Mississauga Food Bank received a seed grant of \$75,000 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their ReclaimFRESH initiative. The program, the first of its kind in the city, partners with local grocery stores to prevent edible healthy food from being thrown away prematurely. The food bank then freezes, refrigerates or distributes these groceries on the same day to clients of the food bank. In the coming year, ReclaimFRESH will be piloted in 10 grocery stores across Mississauga. The

program will significantly cut down food waste at stores in the community.

The new initiative raises the bar, and I’m proud that our province is helping fund such great initiatives as ReclaimFRESH through the Ontario Trillium Foundation. In the next four years, the food bank projects the program will help source food for over five million meals.

I look forward to working alongside the Mississauga Food Bank and the Ontario Trillium Foundation to make sure poverty is basically eradicated in our province.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say, “We the North.”

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. That concludes our members’ statements for this afternoon.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BRINGING CHOICE AND FAIRNESS TO THE PEOPLE ACT (BEVERAGE ALCOHOL RETAIL SALES), 2019

LOI DE 2019 VISANT À OFFRIR À LA POPULATION PLUS DE CHOIX ET UN ACCÈS ÉQUITABLE EN MATIÈRE DE VENTE AU DÉTAIL DE BOISSONS ALCOOLIQUES

Mr. Fedeli moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 115, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act with respect to the termination of a specified agreement / *Projet de loi 115, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les alcools en ce qui concerne la résiliation d’un accord particulier.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): 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.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On division.

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

First reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

During the last election, we promised to put the people first, including by growing jobs and expanding convenience for Ontario consumers. The province’s current beer distribution system is owned by three global giants who were handed a sweetheart deal by the previous government and who are more interested in protecting profits than providing convenience or choice for average people. It’s a monopoly that’s a bad deal for consumers and businesses and is deeply unfair to the people of Ontario.

We’re introducing legislation today to terminate the previous government’s terrible deal with the Beer Store by putting multinational profits ahead of consumers. Speaker, we plan to make good on our promise to put the people first with this Bringing Choice and Fairness to the People Act.

1320

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I appreciate the minister's explanation of his bill, but I'll remind all members of the House that the explanations of the bill are supposed to be non-partisan.

FOUNDATIONS FOR PROMOTING
AND PROTECTING MENTAL HEALTH
AND ADDICTIONS SERVICES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LES BASES
NÉCESSAIRES À LA PROMOTION
ET À LA PROTECTION DES SERVICES
DE SANTÉ MENTALE ET DE LUTTE
CONTRE LES DÉPENDANCES

Mr. Todd Smith, on behalf of Ms. Elliott, moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 116, An Act to enact the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence Act, 2019 and the Opioid Damages and Health Costs Recovery Act, 2019 / Projet de loi 116, Loi édictant la Loi de 2019 sur le Centre d'excellence pour la santé mentale et la lutte contre les dépendances et la Loi de 2019 sur le recouvrement des dommages-intérêts et du coût des soins de santé imputables aux opioïdes.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader can explain the bill.

Hon. Todd Smith: I'll have more to say during ministerial statements.

ONTARIO SOCIETY
FOR THE PREVENTION
OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
AMENDMENT ACT
(INTERIM PERIOD), 2019

LOI DE 2019 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION
DES ANIMAUX DE L'ONTARIO
(PÉRIODE INTERMÉDIAIRE)

Ms. Jones moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 117, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act / Projet de loi 117, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll ask the Solicitor General to explain the bill.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: During ministerial statements, Speaker.

OCCUPIERS' LIABILITY
AMENDMENT ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 MODIFIANT
LA LOI SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ
DES OCCUPANTS

Mr. Norman Miller moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 118, An Act to amend the Occupiers' Liability Act / Projet de loi 118, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants.

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

First reading agreed to.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I ask the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka to introduce his bill, I'm going to ask the member for Timmins to come to order.

Would the member for Parry Sound–Muskoka like to explain his bill?

Mr. Norman Miller: The bill amends the Occupiers' Liability Act to provide that no action shall be brought for the recovery of damages for personal injury caused by snow or ice against an occupier, an independent contractor employed by the occupier or, in the case of a tenancy described in subsection 8(1) of the act, a landlord, unless, within 10 days after the occurrence of the injury, written notice of the claim and of the injury are served. The bill also sets out exceptions to this rule.

RESPECTING INJURED WORKERS ACT
(WORKPLACE SAFETY
AND INSURANCE AMENDMENT), 2019

LOI DE 2019 SUR LE RESPECT
DES TRAVAILLEURS BLESSÉS
(MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ
PROFESSIONNELLE ET L'ASSURANCE
CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL)

Mr. Gates moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 119, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 in respect of compensation for loss of earnings / Projet de loi 119, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail en ce qui concerne l'indemnité pour pertes de gains.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the member for Niagara Falls care to explain his bill?

Mr. Wayne Gates: In calculating the amount of payments to an injured worker, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997, considers the earnings that a worker is able to earn in suitable and available work. Currently, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board may decide that a worker is able to earn amounts that they are not

actually earning, on the basis of suitable and available work they do not actually have. The amendments would prevent that from happening, unless the worker refuses employment in bad faith.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Todd Smith: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the notice date for private member's ballot item number 76.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the notice date for private member's ballot item number 76. Agreed? Agreed.

Hon. Todd Smith: Mr. Speaker, I move that the notice for ballot item 76, standing in the name of Mr. Miller, Parry Sound–Muskoka, be waived.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader is moving that the notice for ballot item number 76, standing in the name of Mr. Miller, Parry Sound–Muskoka, be waived. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Hon. Todd Smith: Today it's my pleasure to rise on behalf of Christine Elliott, Ontario's Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, for the introduction of the Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act, 2019. If passed, this act would enable the government to build a world-class mental health and addictions system, while protecting our province's most vulnerable by holding opioid manufacturers and wholesalers accountable for their role in the ongoing opioid crisis.

Earlier this year, Minister Elliott and Parliamentary Assistant Robin Martin travelled the province to hear about the changes Ontarians expect to see in our mental health and addictions system. They talked to first responders, primary care providers, community agencies and, most importantly, people with lived experience, their families and caregivers. They heard too many stories about how families are left waiting for long periods of time to get the care they need. They were told our mental health and addictions system is disconnected from the rest of the care they had received.

Most importantly, people told them that simply putting more money into the system isn't enough. Ontario's mental health and addictions system, they were told, needs a central engine to standardize and organize the sector.

What those in need are confronted with now is a fragmented, disconnected system that is not centred around the patients.

When Minister Elliott introduced Bill 74 in this House, The People's Health Care Act, she talked a lot about how our health care system is uneven. Our health care system produced an excellent, high-quality system of care for cancer patients, for example, while at the same time leaving the mental health and addictions system without structure, without standards, and most importantly, without connecting patients to care.

With the introduction of this legislation, our government is taking a major step forward in acknowledging mental health and addictions as a formal part of our health care system.

If passed, this bill would establish a mental health and addictions centre of excellence within Ontario Health. This is exactly the kind of central engine our mental health and addictions sector needs. This new centre would lay the strong foundation the province needs to implement our mental health and addictions system transformation strategy. The goal of the provincial strategy will be to standardize the quality and delivery of mental health and addictions services across Ontario with a mandate to provide better and more consistent services and supports.

This is our first opportunity to take the best practices from other areas of the health system—for example, as I mentioned, cancer care—and bring a world-class approach to mental health and addictions services.

Together, we will create a connected system of care with comprehensive, wraparound services to ensure every Ontarian is fully supported in their journey toward mental wellness.

The legislation we're proposing would put people and families at the centre of the mental health and addictions care they need, so services are more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

1330

Speaker, I want to point out that this legislation would deliver on a key recommendation from Minister Elliott's work with the all-party Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions from way back in 2010. The select committee called for the creation of a central engine responsible to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to manage and coordinate Ontario's mental health and addictions service system and to act as a single provincial point of oversight to ensure consistency in the delivery and quality of services across Ontario. As Minister Elliott has said on numerous occasions, she is proud to have worked alongside all parties, in particular the now Solicitor General as well as the member for Nickel Belt, to come forward with these recommendations.

As we begin this important work, our government will also be looking to see if there are ways to work smarter with our partners who deliver services and supports to Ontarians through community mental health and addictions agencies. We also want to streamline supports and provide better-connected and comprehensive care to patients so that we might make our mental health and addictions investments go even further.

I want to acknowledge that this bill would also assist Ontario in its continuing battle with the ongoing opioid crisis. That's why we're proposing to take action to hold opioid manufacturers and wholesalers accountable for their role in this crisis and to recover health care costs paid by the province due to opioid-related disease, injury or illness. If passed, this act would give Ontario the right to sue opioid manufacturers and wholesalers for their alleged wrongdoing in order to recover health care costs paid by the province due to opioid-related disease, injury or illness. It would also support Ontario's participation in the national class-action lawsuit that British Columbia launched last year against more than 40 opioid manufacturers and wholesalers on behalf of the provincial, territorial and federal governments.

Speaker, our government believes that we need to protect what matters most, especially our province's most vulnerable citizens. If passed, the Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act, 2019, will empower us to do just that.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm pleased to introduce interim measures designed to ensure that animals remain protected as we work towards a better animal protection enforcement system in Ontario, one that is more robust, transparent and accountable.

After 100 years of enforcing animal welfare law in the province, the OPSCA has chosen to block our efforts to minimize gaps in enforcement after they withdraw from their role as of June 28, 2019. Last week, we empowered local OSPCA affiliates who indicated a willingness to assist in the transition to continue protecting animals during the interim period. Unfortunately, the OSPCA has attempted to block these committed humane societies by contravening existing legislation.

In their letter to me, the OSPCA's chief executive officer indicated that the OSPCA would not have a chief inspector in place, even though section 6.1(1) of the OSPCA Act expressly provides that, "The society shall appoint an employee of the society as the chief inspector." This step is an attempt to block our efforts to allow willing humane societies to help minimize gaps in enforcement. This is extremely disappointing. Frankly, it puts animals in harm's way, and it's why our government is taking decisive action to ensure that animals remain protected while we design a better system.

The legislation, if passed, would allow the province to appoint a chief inspector, who could in turn appoint qualified local inspectors, including local humane societies, to ensure that animal protection enforcement continues. The Solicitor General would be able to appoint a chief inspector who would have the authority to appoint qualified inspectors to enforce the act, as OSPCA inspectors have done for over 100 years.

This is only temporary, Speaker. These amendments are a bridge between the existing OSPCA Act and a new animal welfare enforcement model that our government plans to introduce later this year.

A number of local humane societies have already stepped forward to ask the province to help support their continued enforcement role during this transition period. These amendments would allow them to do so.

Allowing animals to go unprotected is simply unacceptable. I know that the people of Ontario support our government's commitment to developing a better animal protection enforcement system. We are going to deliver on our promise to improve the system, and we'll take the time to ensure we reflect the ideas that come forward from people across Ontario.

Building the first new enforcement system in 100 years will take time, but we're going to ensure that we get it right. While work is already under way to help develop a better long-term system, we are seeking public feedback through an online survey to ensure the people of Ontario have the opportunity to share their thoughts on how to help improve animal protection. This feedback will directly inform Ontario's new animal protection model. I encourage citizens to log on to Ontario.ca to have their say.

Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank local humane societies who stepped up to the plate and offered their assistance to minimize gaps in the interim period. On behalf of our government, I'd like to thank them for putting animals first.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: As the minister responsible for women's issues, as well as the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, I rise today to recognize the month of May as Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario, and the first week of June as Sexual Harassment Awareness Week.

We know that here and around the world, people are struggling in silence with the pain and trauma of sexual violence. For many reasons, they may not want to come forward. That is why it's important that this month, and always, we shine a light on the problems of sexual assault and harassment and their devastating impacts on our society as a whole.

Speaker, earlier this month I met with the chairs and co-chairs of our province's violence-against-women coordinating committees because we, as a government, believe that collaborating with leaders in the sector and personally getting involved in the discussions with local experts, practitioners and service providers is the way forward. With the chairs and co-chairs, we discussed where our violence-against-women services are succeeding and where we still have barriers and gaps. Their insight is invaluable. They are on the front lines and work every single day to support survivors. It's only through these frank conversations that we can truly work toward ending violence, including sexual violence, against women in our province.

Speaker, throughout the month of May, women's shelters, sexual assault centres and advocates have been adding their voices to the conversation about sexual abuse.

They will build on this momentum into the first week of June, when we recognize Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. Ontario first declared Sexual Harassment Awareness Week in 2007. For over a decade now, we have used this week to increase understanding of the negative, painful impact of sexual harassment.

It's important at this time to honour and recognize women and girls who have lived through this traumatic experience. Speaker, a few weeks ago I learned of a three-year-old girl in eastern Ontario who recently was diagnosed with gonorrhoea after having been sexually assaulted by her father. This is the real face. We can turn a blind eye, we can pretend it doesn't exist, but as long as I am a minister responsible here, we will talk about these important issues. We will talk about spousal sexual assault of women who have come here from other countries and believe it is their obligation to have sex with their husband, and we will talk about women in our school system and in our universities who right now are being preyed upon, traumatized, and may endure a lifetime of PTSD as well as other mental health issues.

Speaker, almost every day we hear of women and girls who have survived sexual violence and harassment—

Interjections.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: You guys okay over there? Important issue.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: It's an important issue, Speaker, and for every story that we do hear—and we must listen to these stories—there are many more incidents that go unreported. The statistics are chilling. One in three women in Canada will experience some form of sexual assault in their lifetime. That is one in three. There are 49 women in this Legislature, a historic high for the province of Ontario. Look around: One in three of the women in this chamber today have been sexually assaulted. They could be your seatmate. They could be a cabinet minister. They could be a leader or a former leader of a political party. Look around. That is the face of who we stand up for here today. At least 16 strong women in this assembly have had some form of sexual advance that they did not want.

Sexual assault victimization rates are higher for young women. In 2014, nearly half of all self-reported sexual assault incidents—47% of them—were committed against girls aged 15 to 24.

1340

The rate of violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls in Canada is especially devastating. Indigenous women are three times more likely to be a victim of violent crime than non-Indigenous women and are 12 times more likely to go missing or be murdered than non-Indigenous women. We will recognize that next Monday on Parliament Hill.

This cannot and will not be tolerated. Ontarians can rest assured that while I'm the minister responsible for women's issues, I will continue to work tirelessly alongside all of my colleagues to confront the root causes of this and work toward eliminating violence against women, particularly Indigenous women.

All Ontarians deserve to feel safe from sexual violence and harassment in their communities, workplaces, homes and schools, but unfortunately, that's not always the case. The occurrences of sex trafficking are higher in Ontario than in any other province in this country. I call sex trafficking Ontario's dirty little secret because I'm always shocked at how many people throughout Ontario are unaware of this happening—unaware that it targets girls as young as 11, unaware of how covert traffickers have become, unaware of how silence on the subject allows it to continue. Sex trafficking crosses every socio-economic boundary and it occurs in communities of all sizes—rural and urban, small and large. We need to take action and we need to do something about it now.

Sex trafficking is far too complex for one person, organization or government to solve. It's going to take all of us working together. That's why I've asked my parliamentary assistant, Belinda Karahalios, MPP for Cambridge, as well as Natalia Kusendova, MPP for Mississauga Centre, to lead a series of round-table meetings across the province, starting next month, so we can hear from survivors of sex trafficking and from those fighting this issue on the front lines.

I want to thank all individuals, communities and organizations across Ontario who are already working hard to put an end to sexual violence against women and who tirelessly support the survivors. I want all survivors in Ontario to know that we stand with you this and every month, and will continue to work to end sexual violence against women.

Speaker, I'll conclude on something I say almost weekly in this Legislature: Although we're talking about victims who are women, and it will continue to take strong women to support vulnerable women, just as importantly, it takes strong men to support these vulnerable women.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Responses?

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Does Ontario need a mental health and substance use strategy? Absolutely. We need to build quality standards and solid foundations. But the reality right now is that we're also facing a capacity crisis in children and youth mental health.

Children and youth are unable to access the mental health and substance use services when and where they need them. There are over 12,000 children waiting up to 18 months to access the services they need. When we talk to anyone—experts, those with lived experience—and ask them, "What is it that you need to enable you to provide more services or to access better services," they will tell you, "Investments—investments to address our wait-lists, resources in capacity-building and quality care."

My bill, the Right to Timely Mental Health and Addiction Care for Children and Youth Act, would cap wait times at 30 days. Like children and youth left waiting for services, my bill is waiting for committee hearings. This government could start the committee hearings and pass

my bill into law, which would require an investment of \$150 million to address the wait times for children and youth. Instead, this government is only allocating \$174 million this year—and I'd like to remind the House that's \$174 million of federal money. There are zero provincial dollars being invested into mental health and addictions this year. Where is the government's commitment to match the federal dollars, like they promised?

And where is the government on the opioid crisis? We're in the midst of a public health emergency and the government has repeatedly refused to declare one. Instead, they have created barriers for organizations to deliver OPS, they have defunded overdose prevention sites and put an arbitrary 21-site cap.

Just this weekend, we lost Leon "Pops" Alward, a harm reduction hero. Pops's death, like thousands of Ontarians', was preventable.

If this government were serious about addressing the overdose crisis, they would also reconvene regular meetings on the opioid emergency task force and listen to experts.

What I want to see from this government is meaningful action on both mental health and the opioid crisis.

ANIMAL PROTECTION

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Animal welfare is important. We need to, and we should, do all in our power to protect our pets. This problem has been around for a while, and this government has been ignoring it. We heard last fall that OSPCA would no longer be enforcing the act to protect our animals. The government got an extension with the OSPCA and still did not act to fix the problem.

This 11th-hour legislation that we've heard today demonstrates this government's terrible priorities and their general incompetence. This band-aid solution after months of neglect is unacceptable for animals. The government should have taken the opportunity over the last few months to bring in legislation to shape the animal welfare enforcement plan. Over the last few months, they haven't been doing it. They've been trying to do it over the last few weeks and trying to do it before the House rises for the summer.

It should never have come to this. The rights of animals and the people who care for them can't be left to chance. The jobs and the safety of animals, and their welfare, as well as for enforcement officers—this needs to be taken care of. Unfortunately, this government is trying to do everything at the eleventh hour.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Ms. Suze Morrison: We know that gender-based violence does not exist in a vacuum; rather, it is a symptom of patriarchy that is rampant in our society—patriarchy that makes men feel it's appropriate to police women's bodies, from the clothes that we wear to the choices that

we can make about our bodies; patriarchy that makes men, and especially men in positions of power, feel okay to say that abortions should be "unthinkable"; patriarchy that places the emphasis of blame from the aggressor to the survivor.

Speaker, as a sexual assault survivor, and as a woman, I find the actions of this government shameful. After the election, the Attorney General spent months dodging phone calls and meeting requests from rape crisis centres—centres that provide vital front-line services for women who experience gender-based violence.

In Toronto, the average wait time for counselling at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape is still 18 months, yet the Attorney General felt that it was appropriate to cut the very first sectoral increase that rape crisis centres were promised in a decade.

And that's not all. Last week, we heard from a Radio-Canada reporter that the Attorney General's office is sitting on multiple requests from abortion clinics to establish safe zones around them, a protection that was legislated months ago.

Again, gender-based violence is not a stand-alone issue. It persists too often because we give passes for bad behaviour. Speaker, gender-based violence is a systemic problem, and I suggest that this government take a long, hard look in the mirror.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

LA VIOLENCE ET LE HARCÈLEMENT À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL

M^{me} Nathalie Des Rosiers: It's very humbling to stand here today to speak about and acknowledge Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario.

Vendredi dernier, j'étais avec les bénévoles et les clientes du CALACS, un centre de prévention de la violence à Ottawa, qui démontraient sur le parc Riverain et donnaient voix aux survivantes, qui avaient étendu des t-shirts avec leurs mots de résistance, leurs mots de résilience. It was quite moving to see all of these T-shirts flying in the wind that spoke to the pain and the desire of these women to be abilitated to speak about the violence that they've experienced.

Earlier in my life, I had the chance of working on issues of violence against women and participated in a very telling colloquium that was called Private Violence, Public Harm. Violence that is experienced privately has public repercussions. Women who experience violence are less likely to be themselves in the workplace, to go as far as they would want in their lives, and they continue to carry within themselves the hurt and the pain that they've experienced. When we fail to address violence against women and sexual assault, we prevent women to actually achieve their potential, and this costs all Ontarians.

1350

We know that one in three women will experience sexual violence during their lifetime, and we know that

young women, Indigenous women and women with disabilities are more likely than others to experience that violence. When we recognize that, it's incumbent upon us to do several things.

I first want to thank and congratulate everyone who for decades has been at the forefront of raising the alarm on violence against women. Many of the precursors were some of my colleagues, and I want to just salute their groundbreaking work over the decades. I also want to acknowledge the more recent women who have come to challenge us about the way in which we need to act in multiple ways.

Let me just talk a little bit first about their plan to continue to have a good health and physical education curriculum that speaks to consent and that puts consent first and foremost in the way in which we address physical education.

Secondly, men must be able to take a stand when they see their peers do something that's inappropriate. Silence is condoning the violence.

Every person who experiences sexual violence is one too many, and we know that it will continue to take activists and educators who work every day to make this stop.

I want to acknowledge as well the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, which pushed the government forward to create sexual assault prevention strategies on university campuses and continues to advocate for the release of full data so that campuses can generate evidence-based strategies to end sexual violence. More recently, they are in a campaign to ensure that Smart Serve also accredits the role of servers to recognize the indicia of sexual violence. I think this is an opportunity for us to move forward and continue to be innovative in the way we address sexual violence.

I also want to talk about the Gender Equality Advisory Council for Canada's G7 Presidency. There are a lot of good recommendations in this, and we should all pay attention to them as we are moving forward on our policy.

Finally, let me speak about one case that I brought forward in this Legislature, the case of Kathleen Finlay, who experienced sexual harassment and sexual abuse in her employment. She asked for a protocol of all of our offices, including the Premier's office, to have processes that are victim empowering.

I urge people to look at their own processes in their own office, to train their workers, train their people to know how to respond adequately to allegations and disclosure. Because we are in a position of power—all of us—we owe a particular responsibility to respond adequately when disclosures are made. So I urge all of us to listen to these recommendations and continue.

I want to be part of a generation that will end violence against women, and I'm doing this pour ma fille, pour mes filles, pour mes nièces. J'espère qu'elles vont pouvoir continuer d'aller aussi loin qu'elles le veulent dans leur vie sans avoir—

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Thank you. It's now time for petitions.

PETITIONS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: These petitions were gathered by the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and by my friend Sara Williamson.

“Petition to the Ontario Legislative Assembly:

“Support People to Participate in Their Communities and the Labour Market.

“Whereas all parties agree that Ontario's social assistance system doesn't work, that too many people are trapped in poverty and that ensuring stability and providing support are what's needed in a new system;

“Whereas a report, *Income Security: A Roadmap For Change*, with recommendations from a full review of income security was completed in 2017 by representatives from community organizations, the private sector, Indigenous representatives, policy experts and administrators;

“Whereas the recommendations are based on six principles: adequacy rights, reconciliation, access to services, promoting social and economic inclusion, equity and fairness, sustainability, respect and dignity;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement the principles and recommendations of the report *Income Security: A Road Map for Change*, beginning with:

“—increasing OW and ODSP to reflect the real cost of living;

“—not increasing the OW and ODSP earnings clawback;

“—ensure enough funding for promised wraparound services in Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program; and

“We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

“—hire 175 more employment standards officers and fund a communications and education plan for employers' and workers' employment standards rights and responsibilities;

“—reinstate paid personal emergency leave days;

“—remove the requirement to provide a doctor's note when sick; and

“We petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to collect more tax from big corporations and invest in people.”

I gladly sign this petition and submit it to the Clerk. I give it to page Jack to bring to the table.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Rick Nicholls: This particular petition is pertaining to Bill 88.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas property owners spend unnecessary time and money dealing with complex rules in the Planning Act; and

“Whereas increased costs and red tape for lenders are passed on to consumers; and

“Whereas municipalities currently need to charge for and deal with inadvertent joining of properties upon the death of one joint owner; and

“Whereas Bill 88, a proposed amendment to the Planning Act, will reduce red tape and regulatory requirements; and

“Whereas Bill 88 will leave more money in people’s pockets; and

“Whereas Bill 88, the amendment to the Planning Act, will enhance transparency and predictability in the Planning Act;

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

“That the government of Ontario implement the amendments in Bill 88.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition, and will sign it and pass it to Aaryan.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Doly Begum: I have over 900 signatures here from parents across the city of Toronto opposing the child care cuts.

“Petition to Stop the Cuts to Ontario Child Care

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas cuts to provincial child care funding will raise child care fees and freeze child care subsidies for low-income parents;

“Whereas over 400,000 Ontario families rely on licensed child care every day to work and study;

“Whereas over 100,000 families use child care fee subsidy;

“Whereas licensed child care supports Ontario’s families, communities and economy;

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

“Stop the provincial child care cuts and restore child care funding.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Patrick.

HOMEOPATHY

Mr. Toby Barrett: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government is creating a new super Ontario health system;

“Whereas the College of Physicians and Surgeons state, in increasing numbers, patients are looking to complementary medicine for answers to complex medical problems, strategies for improved wellness, or relief from acute medical symptoms. Patients may seek advice or treatment from Ontario physicians, or from other health care providers. Patients have the right to make health care decisions that accord with their own values, wishes and preferences. This includes decisions to pursue complementary/alternative medicine either as an adjunct to conventional medicine, or instead of conventional medicine;

“Whereas the results demonstrate that homeopathy can effectively integrate or, in some cases, substitute allopathic medicine;

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

“Petition in support of homeopaths, regulated health professionals mandated to be included in each and every team being created for the new Ontario health system.”

I affix my signature.

1400

CHILD CARE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank Jade Armstrong, registered early childhood educator with Junction Daycare, for her organizing work on the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care day of action last week. I’d also like to thank the over 200 people in Parkdale–High Park who signed the petition that morning. It reads as follows:

“Petition to Stop the Cuts to Ontario Child Care

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas cuts to provincial child care funding will raise child care fees and freeze child care subsidies for low-income parents;

“Whereas over 400,000 Ontario families rely on licensed child care every day to work and study;

“Whereas over 100,000 families use child care fee subsidy;

“Whereas licensed child care supports Ontario’s families, communities and economy;

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

“Stop the provincial child care cuts and restore child care funding.”

I fully support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario has announced a review of Ontario’s eight regional municipalities, the county of Simcoe, and their lower-tier municipalities, including Halton region and the city of Burlington; and

“Whereas municipal governments are responsible for funding and delivering the important local services residents rely on every day; and

“Whereas Halton region has maintained a AAA credit rating for 30 consecutive years due to effective governance and prudent fiscal policies; and

“Whereas the town of Oakville is recognized as Canada’s best place to live;

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

“That the city of Burlington remain a distinct municipality within a two-tier region of Halton municipal governance structure.”

I affix my signature to this petition and provide it to our page Monica.

VETERANS MEMORIAL

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

“Whereas during the war in Afghanistan, Canada lost 159 military personnel;

“Whereas those brave souls were driven along the Highway of Heroes between CFB Trenton and the coroner’s office in Toronto;

“Whereas since Confederation, 117,000 Canadian lives have been lost in military conflict;

“Whereas there is a recognized and celebrated plan to transform the Highway of Heroes into a living tribute that honours all of Canada’s war dead;

“Whereas that plan calls for the planting of two million trees, including 117,000 beautiful commemorative trees adjacent to Highway 401 along the Highway of Heroes;

“Whereas this effort would provide an inspired drive along an otherwise pedestrian stretch of asphalt;

“Whereas the two million trees will recognize all Canadians who have served during times of war;

“Whereas over three million tonnes of CO₂ will be sequestered, over 500 million pounds of oxygen will be produced and 200 million gallons of water will be released into the air each day, benefiting all Ontarians in the name of those who served our country and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice; and

“Whereas there is a fundraising goal of \$10 million;

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

“That the current government of Ontario put its financial support behind this fundraising effort for the Highway of Heroes Tree campaign.”

Speaker, I agree 100%. I’m going to pass this along to page Amelia. I’ll sign it, and she’ll bring it down to the officers at the table.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Roman Baber: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas property owners spend unnecessary time and money dealing with complex rules in the Planning Act; and

“Whereas increased costs and red tape for lenders are passed on to consumers; and

“Whereas municipalities currently need to charge for and deal with inadvertent joining of properties upon the death of one joint owner; and

“Whereas Bill 88, a proposed amendment to the Planning Act, will reduce red tape and regulatory requirements; and

“Whereas Bill 88 will leave more money in people’s pockets; and

“Whereas Bill 88, the amendment to the Planning Act, will enhance transparency and predictability in the Planning Act;

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

“That the government of Ontario implement the amendments in Bill 88.”

I wholly support this petition. I have affixed my signature thereto, and I’ll pass it to page Liam.

DIABETES TREATMENT

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that was signed by 984 people living with diabetes and their families. It reads as follows:

“Whereas 50% of Canadians do not take their medication as prescribed...;

“Whereas medication-related problems and complications can be identified, addressed and prevented with patient-pharmacist interventions such as the MedsCheck for diabetes and its education follow-up, the MedsCheck annual and follow-up and the MedsCheck at home; and

“Whereas a significant percentage of hospitalizations are due to poorly managed chronic and acute conditions...;

“Whereas diabetes is a growing burden for Ontario in particular...;

“Whereas people with type 2 diabetes have an increased risk of developing cardiovascular complications, including those leading to emergency room visits and hospitalization; and

“Whereas preventive health measures lead to clinically better outcomes sooner...;

“Whereas Health Quality Ontario is currently working on quality standards for diabetes...;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Please keep (refrain from discontinuing) the MedsCheck for diabetes annual and its education follow-up, the MedsCheck annual and its follow-up, and the MedsCheck at home, as these provide medication education, training, assessments and medication therapy management services that help Ontarians with self-management of their conditions, improved health outcomes and prevention of ER visits and hospitalization.”

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

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario has announced a review of Ontario’s eight regional municipalities, the county of Simcoe, and their lower-tier municipalities, including Halton region and the town of Oakville; and

“Whereas municipal governments are responsible for funding and delivering the important local services residents rely on every day; and

“Whereas Halton region has maintained a AAA credit rating for 30 consecutive years due to effective governance and prudent fiscal policies; and

“Whereas the town of Oakville is recognized as Canada’s best place to live;

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

“That the town of Oakville remain a distinct municipality within a two-tier region of Halton municipal governance structure.”

I affix my signature and provide this petition to page Jack.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Suze Morrison: I would like to table a petition entitled “Increase Grants Not Loans, Access for All, Protect Student Rights.” It comes from students at OCAD. It reads:

“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.”

I fully support this petition. I will be signing it and providing it to page Declan to deliver to the table.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Catherine Fife: This petition is entitled “Support Ontario Families with Autism,” and it’s from parents from the riding of Cambridge.

“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 fully support this petition and will affix my signature and give it to page Julien.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TIME ALLOCATION

Hon. Bill Walker: I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 108, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing, other development and various other matters, when the bill is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

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

That the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be authorized to meet on Friday, May 31, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. for public hearings on the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 108:

—That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29, 2019; and

—That the Clerk of the Committee provide a list of all interested presenters to each member of the subcommittee and their designate following the deadline for requests to appear by 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29, 2019; and

—That each member of the subcommittee or their designate provide the Clerk of the Committee with a prioritized list of presenters to be scheduled, chosen from the list of all interested presenters received by the Clerk, by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29, 2019; and

—That each witness will receive up to six minutes for their presentation followed by 14 minutes for questioning, with two minutes allotted to the independent Liberal member and 12 minutes divided equally amongst the recognized parties for questioning; and

That the deadline for filing written submissions be 5 p.m. on Friday, May 31, 2019; and

That the deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 6 p.m. on Friday, May 31, 2019; and

That the Standing Committee on Justice Policy shall be authorized to meet on Monday, June 3, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. and 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That on Monday, June 3, 2019, at 5:30 p.m., those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the Committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

That the committee shall report the bill to the House no later than Tuesday, June 4, 2019. In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on that day, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House; and

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

That when the order for third reading of the bill is called, three hours of debate shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, with one hour and 15 minutes allotted to the government, one hour and 15 minutes allotted to Her Majesty's loyal opposition, 20 minutes to the independent Liberal members and 10 minutes allotted to the independent Green member; and

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

That in the event of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to 20 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Walker has moved government notice of motion number 62. Further debate?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I recognize the member for Timmins—James Bay.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That was my old riding. It was a wonderful riding, but it's now the riding of Timmins.

I wish—well, I'm not going to say, "I wish I could say that I'm happy to be in this debate," because, obviously, when it comes to time allocation, this is not something that is good for the Legislature, it is not good for members, and it's certainly not good for the public. Yet again, the government, like on every bill they've brought into this House, has taken the time to draft a time allocation motion and to send the motion in such a way that the public is not going to have their say.

It seems to me that a government in power, especially a majority government, if you're introducing legislation that you think is good and you're proud of and you've worked hard on, and you want to be able to say, "We are doing the greatest things for Ontario since the beginning of man," would have no difficulty in allowing a bill like this to be scrutinized by the public.

The time for my debate and your debate in this Legislature, as members, is a whole different issue. I'm not going to sit here and argue that this is just about MPPs

being able to speak at second or third reading. The true issue for me—and I think it's the same for my colleagues, and it used to be the same for the Conservatives, when they were on this side of the House—is to give the opportunity to the public to have their say. If it's such a great bill, and you're so proud of it, and you think it's such a great thing, and that you're doing wonderful things for Ontario—I'll say it like Brian Mulroney: What are you afraid of? Why aren't you prepared to allow the bill to go into committee to be heard by the public, and to have them debate at committee when it comes to what they think about the bill?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Stand up and be proud.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Stand up and be proud, as my good friend says. Stand up and be proud. Allow the public to have its say. If it's so good, there should be no fear about allowing these bills to be in committee for sufficient time and to go from place to place, not just the city of Toronto. I've got nothing against the city of Toronto; let me tell you, it's a wonderful city, best city in the world. I have travelled to Europe, and I've been to Africa, South America, Asia and different points in between, and Toronto is pretty hard to beat as a city. But you know what? I hate to tell you this, but Ontario is a little bit bigger than that. It's got communities in places like Kitchener-Waterloo, Brampton, Hamilton, Timmins—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Ahem, ahem.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —Windsor, ahem, ahem. Just across this province, there are all kinds of municipalities that are there and reserves that want to have their say as well.

Now, am I arguing that this particular bill should go into committee for a long period of time and just be given forever and ever—

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, I'm going to do that a bit later—forever and ever in committee and travel it across the entire province? No. Certainly there are some bills that need more scrutiny and need more public input than others, and this bill may be one of those or may not be one of those, but the point that I make is this: If a government is afraid to bring their legislation before the people of Ontario, where they live, in their backyard, how then can a government say they're for the people? They're not for the people. You're just for some of the people, the people that you want to help, which is not the people living in those communities.

We saw this afternoon, Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance got up and introduced a bill, and his bill—I just have to say, I was actually a bit surprised when they did it: Bringing Choice and Fairness to the People Act. Madam Speaker—

Ms. Catherine Fife: They hired the Liberal writers.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Exactly. The same people that used to write the titles for the Liberals have now been hired by the Conservatives, and they're doing exactly, exactly the same thing. You've got to sit here more often. That's good. Keep 'em coming. Those are good.

My point is, this particular bill is a bill that amends the Liquor Control Act to provide for the termination of an

agreement entitled the master framework agreement. Madam Speaker, do you know what this does? It's just like the bill we have before us that we're talking about today and other bills they've done before. The government is making decisions that undo agreements that were signed between the province of Ontario and organizations and businesses in this province—legal agreements that were signed, where people sat down and negotiated an agreement, and they signed an agreement and said, "This is how we're going to deal with this." And the government comes with legislation that says, "I'm like King John. I don't have to listen to what those barons have to say. I'm just going to do what I want."

Do you know what happened to King John? The barons revolted, and the people of Ontario are revolting today. You're seeing it—never mind just in the polling numbers, but you're seeing it when a government comes to the House, as it did today, and says, "We're reversing ourselves" on one of the major initiatives they had in the budget. The government knows it's vastly unpopular. It's so unpopular and their decisions so bad, even they can't stand behind them. They had to stand outside of the House today, outside of question period, the Minister of Municipal Affairs along with the Premier, to say, "Oh, we're going to change our minds on the download to municipalities."

I say bravo for them, but as the leader of my party said this morning, we would never have been in this position if they would have talked to municipalities in the first place, because they would have never done it. That's the problem with this time allocation motion.

This time allocation motion says essentially that they are not going to listen to the people of Ontario when it comes to this bill and they don't care about what they have to say, good or bad, about the bill. Then they're going to run up against the same problem as they did with the budget, the parts that were repealed this morning by decision of the Premier and the cabinet. They're going to be in a situation where the public is going to say, "Well, this is no good," and what are they going to do?

You should take the time to properly consult the people of Ontario through our committee process, and if you do it properly, you will never put yourself in the position you did with the decision that you had to make this morning.

1420

Madam Speaker, they never learn. Was it Einstein who said that if you keep on repeating the same mistake over and over again and expect a different result—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Insanity.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —it's kind of insanity? That's what you're doing. All the bills that have been brought to the House since this government was elected, oh, a little bit less than a year ago have been passed by time allocation. They don't trust their own members as a government, because any government worth its salt knows that, with a majority government, they can control how long they're going to be in the House and they can control how long they are going to be in committee by use of the majority,

without time allocation. Yes, it means that the government, once it sends its bill into committee, may have a bit of a fight with the opposition. On certain bills we will fight you and we will make sure that the public has their say, because our job as the official opposition we take seriously—as you do as government, I hope—and that is to make sure that you're properly scrutinized.

With a majority, you can go to committee and you can decide how long the bill is going to be in committee and how long it's going to travel. Nonetheless, they will have to travel, Madam Speaker, and they will have to have some time in committee. But this government's saying, "I don't even want to do that." "I'm either incompetent or lazy," says the government, "because I'm not going to take the time to manage this through the House, and I'm not going to take the time to manage this in committee because I'm either incompetent"—right?—"or maybe arrogant." It could be arrogant; I never thought of that one.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Could be hubris.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Or they're lazy or it's hubris. Who knows? They've got to bring a time allocation motion in in order to deal with every piece of legislation.

Now, I remember the cabinet ministers of today who were here in the opposition. Do you remember the wonderful speeches they used to give, Madam Speaker?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Eloquent.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: They were so eloquent speaking against time allocation.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Passionate.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Passionate and reasonable.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Fighting for democracy.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Fighting for democracy. Yes, you're pretty good. You stay here more often.

But I've got to say, I remember the current Minister of Municipal Affairs getting up and waxing eloquently on why time allocation was a bad idea. And do you know what? I have a lot of respect—I had a lot more respect before he became cabinet, but I had a lot of respect for him then. I used to think, "Pretty good arguments." He put together good arguments why time allocation is a tool that, if used, should only be used very rarely. I'm not saying a government at times may not have to use it. I hope when we're government, we never have to use it. Only if you're at an impasse and you can't get anything done, maybe you can make an argument. But this is not an impasse. Six and a half hours of debate—oh, my God, the world's coming to the end. Madam Speaker, did you know they had six and a half hours of debate on this bill? Oh, my God, terrible. Imagine that. Democracy trying to flap its wings and spread itself out and to be out there speaking on a bill. Imagine that, the public having their say.

This government time-allocates everything after six and a half hours because the standing orders allow them to do it, and I'm just saying this government is not doing themselves or democracy any favour—themselves first, because the government will be judged by its actions, and if you look at the actions of this government, they are being judged. They are unhappy with what's happening on the autism file. They're unhappy with what's happening

with municipal downloading. They are unhappy with what's happening on the environment. They are unhappy with what's happening in education and health care and others, because this government is not only going in the wrong direction; they are not giving the people their say.

A democracy is kind of funny that way, Madam Speaker. A democracy—it's like people want to be heard. Can you imagine? "I take my responsibility as a citizen seriously," says about 50% of the population, and they go out and vote, but elections are not the end of the process. Elections are the beginning—and you wonder why we only have 50% of the population voting? You only have 50% because people look at, "Once I elect them, they become a bunch of tyrants and they just do what they want to do for four years. They don't take into account what I, the public, have to say."

Ms. Catherine Fife: Tyranny of the majority.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Listen, it's a tyranny of the majority, as my colleague just said.

Municipalities across this province are hopping mad at you, because they'd established their budgets. They made their decisions about how they were going to budget for the year when it came to providing services to municipalities: ambulances, public health, public works, transit—all of it. They decided what their mill rate was going to be, if they had any. A lot of municipalities didn't do tax increases, and if they did, they were pretty minimal.

Municipalities, by law, have to balance their budgets. School boards have to balance their budgets—

Ms. Catherine Fife: By law.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —by law. They're doing what the law tells them to do, Madam Speaker, and they're pretty frugal. You sat on school boards; you well understand. You were the chair of the Ontario school boards' association, if I remember correctly.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Frugal?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Frugal are the school boards. There, the cat's out of the bag, Madam Speaker. The kitten just spoke.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Meow.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Meow.

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I won't repeat that one.

I just have to say, Madam Speaker—

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Catherine, you know better.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I am going to go to that heckle, Madam Speaker, because I think it speaks to what this is all about: This government thinks they're the only ones who know what's going on and what has to be done. All of the elected school board trustees in Ontario are wrong; all of the municipal aldermen and mayors in this province are wrong; and only Mr. Ford, the Premier of Ontario, and his cabinet ministers know what has to be done. They tap you on the head and say, "Now, now, now, little children, let us tell you what has to be done."

The reality is, municipal councils are a responsible level of government who are elected by the people in their municipalities, just like school boards, and they have to

balance their budgets by law. For the province to come in and to say, "You know what? We know better. We're going to tell you what you have to do, and we're going to change the inputs to your budget halfway through the budget year"—it doesn't make any sense. It doesn't stand up.

This government says, "But what they're doing is fearmongering." The opposition, when it gets up in the House and asks questions about its own laws and its own bills—they call us fearmongers. Fearmongering? We're talking about their legislation. That's what truly is fearful. It's preposterous, when you've got to listen to it.

This government uses time allocation—and I'll go back to what I was going to say a little while ago. When the government was in opposition, I would listen to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Natural Resources, the Minister of Community and Social Services, the current government House leader, the current government whip—and the list goes on. They were so good when it came to defending the rights of democracy that I actually started to think they might have believed it, and that certainly, when they became a government, if that was the case, they would not use time allocation in the same way that the Liberals did. I guess, to an extent, that is true: They're worse. We've gone from bad to worse. The government previously used time allocation, except they waited a little bit longer to pull the trigger. They'd let us get to maybe eight or nine hours. These guys call time allocation, the same as the Liberals, on every bill, except that they do it quicker, because the rules allow them to.

Rules: We understand the rules, but you have to have a certain amount of—how would I say it?—

Interjection: Respect.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: —respect for people when it comes to how you apply those rules. When the public gets frozen out of the very legislation that is going to affect their lives, the public should have the right to know, and the public should have the right to have their say.

Madam Speaker, I know that most people here are not geeky like I am when it comes to reading history. I don't pretend, and I don't profess, that everybody should read history. But I love reading history; that's the only reading I do. One of my favourite subjects of history is how the parliamentary system evolved, and it goes on before King John. The parliamentary system pre-dates King John—the 1240s or whatever it was. But one of the things that happened is that because a tyrant—in that case, King John—decided to hold, how would you say, extra power and extra authority over the barons—because back then, the public had no say. Back then, Madam Speaker, the public were essentially serfs, and it was really the barons and their entourage who essentially had any power. But the King of the day, King John, decided that he was going to rule in such a way that, no matter what he agreed to with them, he would not respect that and would just do what he wanted. And guess what happened to King John? There was a revolt. Eventually, he died. They don't know if he was actually poisoned or if he died of an actual disease. There's still a debate about that. But the point is, the barons revolted, and they were at war with the King over the

whole issue that the King couldn't just do what he wanted. Once he had an agreement with the barons, he had to respect it the same way they had to respect their loyalty to the crown.

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This is essentially what the government is doing. When you look at it from the perspective of the evolution of Parliament, what we now have is an absolute dictatorship on the part of the Premier. That's what it is. The Premier decides. A couple of his unelected officials in the Premier's office, on his staff, decide what we're going to do. They walk into a cabinet meeting, they tell cabinet what they're doing, and they all go, "Oh, that's good stuff. Premier, keep me in cabinet. Yes."

Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: That's pretty well what goes on. Come on; I've been around.

Ms. Jane McKenna: You don't know that.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I do know. Don't worry; I do know.

Mr. Deepak Anand: He has secret cameras there.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: The secret is out. You found out. I left it there.

The point is that even cabinet really doesn't have a say because there's a power that the Premier has which is greater than that of King John's—or equal to King John's, is what I should say. He gets to appoint cabinet and he gets to fire cabinet. If a cabinet minister doesn't agree with the Premier, guess what? That minister is no longer in cabinet. So what you end up with is essentially a Premier who holds all the cards and has all the power.

We understand why that is. It can work. There have been instances in the history of Ontario, as across Canada, where the way that parliamentary democracy has evolved has actually worked, but it has worked best when the Premier of the day respects the House and respects the public, when the Premier says, "You know what? I'm going to trust the House and its wisdom when it comes to how we're going to move stuff through the legislative process in this chamber but, more importantly, when it gets into committee, and allow committee members on both sides of the aisle, government members and opposition members, to decide how we're going to deal with bills."

When I first got here, Madam Speaker, you did not time-allocate committee. That just didn't happen. The way it worked was, you had to negotiate—the government with the opposition—how a bill was going to move its way through committee. In some cases, the opposition was pretty darned tough. I remember a certain opposition leader—I think his name was Mike Harris, when we were in government—who was deathly opposed to our first budget. Fair enough. He had his reasons. I'm not going to argue if his reasons were right or wrong. He wanted that bill to go to committee and he wanted it to travel, and he wanted it to travel, I think, for three or four weeks. We were prepared to do a week or two, and he wanted double. He used every trick in the book that he could—which was all within his right; I don't argue for two seconds that he

didn't have the right to do that—to give the public its say. Guess what? As a government, we did.

Did we get beaten up somewhat? Yes, we got beaten up on that first budget somewhat. But the point was that the public got a chance to have a say. I sat on that committee that travelled around to some of the communities. I didn't do the whole committee, but I did some of them. There were people who came before the committee who had good things to say about the budget, and some came and said bad things about the budget. But here's the thing: People who did come forward actually came with ideas—because what they also got was just not the budget speech, but they knew about the budget bills. They were able to look at the budget bills because that was the subject of the committee. They made recommendations about, "Oh, if you drafted this bill in a certain way and changed that section in this way, you would accomplish your goal in a much better way."

So the government of the day, as with every government preceding, would amend its legislation based on what we heard from the public. If we wonder why, Madam Speaker, the public is—how would you say?—disconnected from politics, and why the public is not only—how would you say?—disconnected but, quite frankly, mad at what governments are doing, it's because of this, because they don't feel as if they're being engaged, taken seriously and listened to.

For example, the government made a very controversial decision on the autism file. Now, the government has its defence. I disagree with their defence, but they have their defence. Why is it, if the government felt so strongly that it was the right thing to do, that they did not travel that issue by way of a committee? The government might have been able to get to where it wants to go on a fiscal point of view by listening to the public and amending what they were doing in a way that the public could have said, "Hmm, I can buy that." What would end up happening is that you'd have a better end result as a government, as far as policy and how to deal with the autism file, but more importantly, the public would feel as if they'd been engaged and listened to.

But when you use time allocation, Madam Speaker, in the way that this government is—they're essentially saying to the public, "I don't care. I don't have to listen to what you have to say. In fact, I'm not even going to go to your community and hear you." We have not travelled one bill since we've been here, and it's almost a year now. It has become the norm of this place. The Liberals really accelerated this. The Liberals can sit here and try to pretend: "Oh, yes, if we were government again, we'd never do that." Well, we were there. The Liberals did the same thing.

The Liberals and the Conservatives, on time allocation—I'll tell you, they were not bashful. That's for sure. They wanted what they wanted, and they just did it, and they didn't listen to the public. They didn't give a chance for the public to have its say. Liberal, Tory, same old story; right? Same, same thing. And we think we're going to get a different result? The only way you get a different result

is to vote for another party, such as ourselves. At least then you can try something different.

But the government has decided that it's going to time-allocate every piece of legislation, without giving anybody the ability to have their say. I think that's just the wrong way to go.

In order to make sure that we have some time in committee, Madam Speaker, I'd like to move the following amendment to the main motion—oops, got to get my glasses. It reads as follows, an amendment from ourselves:

I move that the motion be amended by deleting all of the words following the word “meet” in the third paragraph and replacing them with “anywhere in the province during the summer recess for the purpose of public hearings on Bill 108 and that the subcommittee should meet to organize all deadlines related to committee business for Bill 108.”

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Bisson has moved an amendment to the time allocation motion, so now we will debate the amendment. Mr. Bisson?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I wanted to put a couple of words on the record as we were on the general bill and on the amendment, but we can still speak to the bill, because this actually speaks to changing the time allocation motion. What this motion essentially does is it gives the ability for the committee to decide how it's going to order up its business.

This way here, when the bill gets referred to the committee, after the second reading vote, the bill would be referred to the committee and the subcommittee, and then the general committee would decide how to deal with it. If there has to be one week of hearings, that would be up to them. If they decide it has to be two weeks of hearings, that would be up to them. If they decide that the bill should travel to some communities across Ontario, that would be up to them. The House would give the committee, as we normally did in the past, the ability to have their say, so that the public can actually come before the committee and speak to Bill 108, and do it in such a way that, in fact, the government is listening to what the public has to say in regard to this particular bill.

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I see that my good friend the Minister of Natural Resources is crossing the floor. I just want you to know that we won't take you. Just teasing.

Anyway, the idea would be that you empower the committee in order to make its decisions about how it hears this bill. I don't think that's an unreasonable thing for the opposition to ask for. Is it without precedent? There are all kinds of precedents, Madam Speaker; that's how the House worked for over a century. We used to allow our bills to go into committee, and it was up to the subcommittees and the general committee to decide when and where they would meet and for how long. That's how the system worked, and it worked well.

I say again to the ministers across the way, and to the government members on the backbench: It is only right, if you're proud of a bill and you think you're doing a great job, for you to go and get to hear what the public has to say. What's wrong with that? Isn't it sort of the objective

of any government, if they're doing something they like and something they're proud of, to go out there and to shop it around and to say, “Hey, everybody, look at what we're doing; this is a great thing”?

The fact that they don't want to bring this bill, as they haven't wanted to bring any bill, before the public and have it travelled by committee to communities across Ontario tells me they can't be very proud of what it is they're introducing, because they're trying to do it by stealth. They're trying to do it in the dark. They're trying to keep the public away. They have public hearings for a day or two here in Toronto, and that's it.

What's worse is, the way that these motions are all written, the time allocation motion gets passed, let's say, on a Tuesday or a Wednesday, and by Thursday or Friday, you have to have applied to stand before the committee in order to make a presentation. Well, you can't advertise in the major papers or radio or TV in such a way that people will know in time.

We had an incident where there was a health bill—there were how many requests for proposals?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Over 1,000.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: There were over 1,000 people who applied to go before committee to have their say. I think we ended up with two days. I might be wrong, but I think it was two days of public hearings.

And then, when it came to doing the amendments, we ended up with how many thousands of submissions?

Interjection: Tens of thousands.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Tens of thousands of submissions were given, just before the deadline, and more came after. The committee didn't even have time to read the submissions. So somebody out there—over 10,000—wrote their views as to what was good with the bill and what was bad with the bill, and they sent it to the committee so that the committee members could be aware of what their thoughts were, so that could be taken into consideration when writing amendments.

Guess what? The government admitted here in the House at question period that the committee never got a chance to read all of the submissions. Well, what are you saying to the public? “Don't write to us, because we don't read your emails or letters”? That's what you're essentially saying.

They're saying the government doesn't want to listen. I think that when you do that, you run the risk, quite frankly, of disengaging a whole group of voters, because they say, “What's the difference?” I think that's really sad for democracy.

If this government is dropping in the polls like a rock, this is part of the reason why. It's not just that their policies are bad. It's not just that their tone is awful. The tone is terrible in this House when it comes to how they attack municipalities and how they attack school boards. They get into this fight and this fallacy that the municipalities don't know what they're doing, and school boards don't know what they're doing, and only the government knows what it's doing, and therefore, “We're going to do it, no matter what.” And you wonder why you're dropping in the polls?

It's pretty unusual for a government to drop as quickly as it has so fast, and for the sitting Premier to be more unpopular than the most unfavourable Premier that we've had in the history of Ontario, which was Kathleen Wynne, in a period of less than a year. It took her six years to get there.

Ms. Catherine Fife: You're overachieving.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You're overachieving, yes.

It really speaks to what the problem is. I'm no fan of Kathleen Wynne and the Liberals, please understand. I thought that the way that this particular government in the past, under the Liberals, did things—they would say one thing and do quite the opposite. “Oh, we believe in public services,” and then they privatized half of the health care system. “We believe in hydro and the public system,” and then they privatized most of the hydro system. They would say one thing and do the opposite. At least these guys aren't trying to pretend. We know how bad you are because you say it right off the bat.

Ms. Catherine Fife: By mistake, sometimes.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Sometimes, by mistake, but also by policy.

My point is that this government is, quite frankly, doing itself and the public a disservice by doing time allocation in the way that they are. I know that there are other members in our caucus who want to speak to this, so I'm going to make sure we leave them time, because I'm sure my friend here would like to have some time too.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd love it.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: She'd love some.

I'll just end on this point: What are you afraid of? Why are you as a government afraid to listen to the public when it comes to your very own legislation? When a government is not prepared to listen to the public, then I say, Madam Speaker, the government will pay the ultimate price.

Our amendment to this motion speaks to allowing the committee to decide for itself how the bill should be treated once it gets into committee, how long it should be there and where it needs to travel, if it needs to travel at all. I trust that members of the committee would do the right thing if given the opportunity.

With that, I would be very interested to see what the government has to say in its defence of this time allocation motion.

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

I'm sorry, just before the member starts, I want to remind everyone that you're debating the amendment to the time allocation motion.

Mr. Toby Barrett: We certainly are, Speaker, and I appreciate you recognizing me and letting me know that it's my turn to speak. Having said that, it does give me a great deal of pleasure to rise to speak to this time allocation motion, as we know, with respect to Bill 108—

Mrs. Gila Martow: Are you sharing your time with anyone?

Mr. Toby Barrett: No, I'm not sharing my time.

Bill 108: The bill itself is titled More Homes, More Choice Act. It's legislation that supports Ontario's comprehensive Housing Supply Action Plan. It's also designed to transform Ontario's housing development system. In my view, it's a system that's broken. When something is broken, it's incumbent that it be fixed.

To speak kind of bluntly, Speaker, Ontario has faced a housing crisis for a while now. It continues to face a housing crisis. The municipalities right across this great province have been subject to one of the major reasons for this housing crisis, in my view: the plethora of rules, regulations and red tape and forms to fill out and the delays that come along with that under these kinds of administrative burdens—administrative burdens that make no sense and that really shouldn't be there at all.

The cost of housing, whether you're a renter or whether you're purchasing a house, has been rising. It's been rising for far too long, and it puts our constituents and so many people across the province of Ontario in a pretty tough position.

I had a constituent call my office concerned with the availability and the affordability of housing. He had received notice to move because the building had changed ownership. So they had to move; they had to find a new place to live. In our office—just this one case alone—we were shocked, really, to learn that they weren't able to find any housing that fit within their budget—and they have a budget. This person has a job—he makes about \$50,000 a year—and could not find a place to rent that was affordable. Here's someone working full-time, they earn a reasonable income, and they can't find a place to stay, a place to live, in a riding like mine that's rural, small, certainly with less of the population pressures that we see elsewhere in the province. So there's a local example.

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It's a clear indication that there's not only a shortage of available housing; there's a lack of affordable housing for people that have jobs and normally, you would expect can afford these kind of places to live. It seems to me that there is a plethora of all sorts of people working in housing programs, but there's no housing. There are many people in an office. They're working at a desk. Obviously, they're not out there with a tape measure and a two-by-six. They're not out there actually building a house.

I will mention, Speaker, now that I look at the clock, that I did not realize I had one hour to speak, so I will be sharing my time with one of my colleagues—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Or more.

Mr. Toby Barrett: —perhaps—the names to be known shortly.

It really seems to me that there's a plethora of all sorts of people working in housing programs, but no housing. We need to turn things around, and sooner rather than later; hence, one reason that we have brought forward this time allocation motion on this particular bill. But we need to bring in more housing and we've got to bring it in more quickly; hence, our proposed changes to the Planning Act and the Development Charges Act, along with a suite of legislative, policy and regulatory changes to support a very

robust—if I can use that word—effort to address some of the challenges before us.

There is a plan, as I mentioned, and it's a plan to add 100 housing starts each year. That will be a boost, obviously, to our GDP, our gross domestic product. A 0.3% increase in GDP is estimated as a result of these housing starts, resulting in 15,000 new jobs over three years.

This legislation has been time-allocated. The More Homes, More Choice Act is about unlocking the construction of all kinds of housing, from ownership to rental housing—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I recognize the member from Timmins on a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On a point of order: I realize sometimes we can stray a little bit. But we put an amendment, and I'm still trying to hear what the government has to say about our amendment to allow the committee to make the decision. I understand that we all stray a bit, but I would love to hear something about the amendment.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): I'm going to caution the member to make sure that he is talking to the amendment to the time allocation, not the actual time allocation.

Back to the member from Haldimand–Norfolk.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I did just mention this time allocation, and I mentioned it in the context of the legislation that will be time-allocated, if that is passed by this House, that particular piece of legislation, Bill 108. But my concern—and I have to speak on behalf of that constituent, the example that I just gave: the concern not only of the lack of rental housing but the lack of brand new housing, the lack of people out there renovating apartments, renovating existing stock, let alone pouring new footings, pouring concrete.

I can read in part the motion that was put forward by the opposition, although I think this is already on the record. I don't know. I was just handed this. I can certainly take a bit of time to read this. It's the motion from the opposition: “that the motion be amended by deleting all of the words following the word ‘meet’ in the third paragraph and replacing them with”—and I quote if anybody doesn't exactly remember the wording—“anywhere in the province during the summer recess for the purpose of public hearings on Bill 108 and that the subcommittee should meet to organize all deadlines related to committee business for Bill 108.”

With respect to Bill 108 and the time allocation thereof—based on a plan that is complemented by a housing strategy. Part of that is a community housing strategy—

Interjection.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I've been handed—I just ask a question. Is this another amendment that I should be reading in? I'm unclear. I think I just read this in.

Part of that is a community housing strategy, a housing strategy to help people with low and moderate incomes who can't afford today's high rents to find affordable

housing. We have to transform a fragmented and inefficient system into one that is more streamlined, sustainable and ready to help people who need it most.

Speaker, about a year and a half ago, I was on a bit of a travelling show. I ended up in Kansas City in January, and I had an opportunity to visit a community housing project. It was a renewal strategy. It was on social media quite recently. Basically, what they were doing was they were building tiny houses, miniature houses. These houses were being constructed and the project was just starting. I had an opportunity to see it right in its nascent stage: putting together very tiny houses to assist war veterans who had no place to stay, other than on the street or in jail. It was about two years in the planning stage—I think they were about into year one when I was there—to assist homeless veterans in Kansas City, Missouri, to finally have a place to call home. It's known as the Veterans Community Project. They were building 13 tiny homes—I think they built one or two when I was there; I was in them—and four slightly larger buildings, four family unit buildings, in addition to that, all fully functional. Wired, plumbed—everything was there. Not only would these veterans have a place to call home, but they would have a community, and I was so impressed with that. As the member opposite would know, I spent a very brief time with the militia—certainly not as long as at least one person in this Legislature. The setting was a bit of a military setting, because these war veterans who had returned were comfortable with that. They needed that kind of structure.

In addition to having access to one of these very tiny, brand new wooden structures, they would also have access to classes on how to manage their finances, how to cook, stay healthy and overcome substance abuse—again, all run within a military setting. What was the alternative? Being on the street or being in jail.

Late last year, our government launched a housing supply consultation. Something like 2,000 submissions came in. Over 85% were from the general public. We heard some great ideas, some new ways of doing things, some innovative ways to overcome so many of the barriers that I'm sure we'll be discussing during this debate. Through these public consultations, we really did get a good range of ideas, and that has assisted with our Housing Supply Action Plan.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Then send it to committee. If it's good, then send it to committee.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Some of the things that we heard—I don't know whether somebody just asked what we found out, but our housing development system is broken. It 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 who are actually doing the building or doing the renovating, those who are putting the shovels on the end of excavators into the ground.

With Bill 108, our government is exploring options designed to make use of hundreds of unused acres of vacant land—the vacant properties, surplus properties that

are out there. We're committed to handing this over to build not only homes, but also long-term-care facilities and other forms of affordable housing.

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As people may know, locally in my riding, we have what was at one time labelled the city of Townsend—which actually didn't happen. It was a residential acreage that was supposed to be a planned community for 100,000 people. This was back when it took 10,000 people to run a steel mill. All this land was assembled by the province of Ontario 50 years ago, originally 14,000 acres. This is half an hour south of Hamilton. Most of it has been sold back to farmers, but today there remains 1,400 acres of Ontario government-owned residential land that's available for housing. It's within the greater Golden Horseshoe region. It's about 10 miles north of Lake Erie and about 10 miles over from the gigantic Nanticoke industrial park. Some 1,400 acres: It has an existing, very large water tower and three sewage treatment lagoons. It has parks and walking trails. There's a four-lane highway going into what essentially is a modern ghost town. This land is sitting available here, owned by the Ontario government. I would hope that this would be part of the plan as an opportunity to make land available to build houses.

So many areas in our province have problems, unique challenges. In the north, construction is more expensive for various reasons—obviously, the cold; the building season is shorter—and the planning approval process, in many ways, does not take this into consideration.

Again, going back to the myriad of rules and regulations, the excessive red tape and the administrative burdens that are so time-consuming really have to be changed. I'll use an example. I built my own house on my farm. That was 35 years ago. There weren't the rules and regulations back then. For some reason, government trusted people to do things on their own. I know the day we started excavating—back then that excavator was costing me about a dollar a minute—he shut it down for a minute and he said, “Did you get all the permits?” Well, I had forgotten to get permits, and here we were building the basement. Things were different then. I drove over to Townsend, the community that I just mentioned—that was the municipal seat, that was the headquarters' buildings for the Haldimand–Norfolk regional government. So I ran over, and I explained, “I'm building a house. I'm already digging the basement, and I don't have one permit yet.” It took me two hours to get the permits—only two hours. I think it cost me a couple hundred dollars. Then I could go back. By then, much of the basement had already been excavated.

Look at what we have today. In today's light, that may have appeared to be almost a lack of oversight or a lack of regulation—although the houses built back then aren't falling down, to my knowledge. But today we have a situation where it can add, actually, years to a construction project—the layers of permits and government approvals and the charges by municipalities, the additional costs for building a new home or just about any structure, for that matter. I just say, it doesn't seem that long ago that I built

my house. It took me two hours to wait for the permits and a few hundred dollars.

We have a five-point plan. I don't know whether I have time to—

Mr. Percy Hatfield: No.

Mr. Toby Barrett: Someone said no. Did I hear a no? I'm not asking for unanimous consent to continue here. I will be handing the reins over to somebody shortly.

We do have a five-point plan, and time will not permit me to walk through in detail with respect to that particular five-point plan.

Interjection.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I know there is a call from across the way to continue with some of my captivating remarks, but I'll just leave everybody here with: Our goal is to help spur construction, new construction. Let's spur renovation. Let's give people more housing choices. Let's reduce the cost of housing, and let's help taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned dollars.

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

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaking to a time allocation motion can be challenging; speaking to an amendment to a time allocation motion is somewhat like watching paint dry at times.

Some people in some professions, I think, don't do themselves any favours. I want to point a finger at my friends on the government benches. I've only been here six years: one year with the Conservatives, four years in a majority Liberal government and one year in a Liberal minority government. But my friends, and many of them are now in cabinet or in senior roles on the government side—my friend from Timmins mentioned this a little while ago, how our Conservative friends used to rail against time allocation. When we're talking about time allocation, I'd like to just refer to Hansard for a moment, if I could, Speaker.

My good friend from Whitby, the chief government whip, one year and one month ago, on April 19, was pleased to join the debate on time allocation. The quotation, as I read it, is, “Yet again, this is an example of the government using a motion to stifle debate and push through their agenda.... What's particularly disturbing about the motion are the comments of former and current members of the Liberal government....” My friend from Whitby, now the Conservative government whip, was speaking to a time allocation motion—it could have been an amendment—and referring to comments made by the Liberals when they used to rail against time allocation; he says, “current members of the Liberal government related to time allocation motions when they were the official opposition 15 years ago.”

My friend from Whitby has taken us back on a time travel. He quotes Hansard from December 19, 2000, and he quotes the former Premier and member from Ottawa South, Mr. McGuinty, who said, “For a government that promised to be open, this ... action is the height of arrogance, the height of exactly everything you campaigned against and ... said you were for.” He was throwing at that

time the words of a former Liberal Premier back at the Premier who replaced him on a time allocation motion, saying that in opposition the Liberals were against time allocation; now the Liberal government was bringing in time allocation.

My friend from Whitby also used another quote from December 4, 2002, in Hansard when he was quoting the member from Eglinton–Lawrence—not the current member, but a former member from Eglinton–Lawrence—who said, “I’m ... saddened to stand up again and speak to another motion by this government to shut down debate.... They just ram this through like they’ve rammed everything else through.” My friend from Whitby was saying that this is a terrible thing for you to be doing—just terrible. He went on to say, “We know now why they like these ... motions. Because they don’t want the public to know what they’re doing.” Go figure; you don’t want the public to know what you’re doing. That’s what he was saying then.

Now my friend Mr. Coe, the member from Whitby, concluded with, “Ontarians can no longer trust this government. The people of this province know they only care about their own political survival. The Ontario Progressive Conservatives are the only ones who respect the people, the only ones who will stand up for people.” How the world turns, Speaker. In one year, we’ve gone from our best buddies—we used to sit alongside them, fighting together, propping each other up. Now they’re in government, and they’re saying, “Oh, we don’t want to listen to anybody but ourselves, so we’re going to time-allocate.”

I see my good friend the Minister of Natural Resources here, so I’ll just conclude, Speaker, with a quote from my good friend from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, who says—when was this? Oh, let me see. This was May 1, a year ago. Minister Yakabuski—what does he say? “We want the people to have something to say about the legislation.... The time allocation motion, in so many ways, Speaker, talks about the actions of a democratic institution and an undemocratic government that has turned it into a dictatorship. I believe it is my right to talk about their actions in this House.”

I believe it is our right to talk about your actions in this House, Minister. I believe we have that right. You used to believe that too. You don’t believe it anymore, but at one time, your principles on this side of the House—oh, he would slam his hand down—

Interjection.

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Mr. Percy Hatfield: Thank you, Minister. He would slam his hand down and hit the table—

Mr. Rick Nicholls: To the Speaker.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: You’re right. Thank you for that, sir. I have to address the Speaker.

Speaker, as you know, the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, every time there was a time allocation vote, would slam his hand—he hurt his hand. It ruined his golf game. He would slam his hand down on the table as if it were a guillotine, saying they’d cut off debate.

Now what do we have? Guillotine, guillotine, guillotine. Every motion that’s been brought to this House, every motion this government has brought before us, every bill has been time-allocated—time allocated. Shame on you all.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Just for the sake of those who might be watching, we’re debating Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act, and the amendment to the time allocation motion on it.

Now, not unlike many of my colleagues here on this side and in the official opposition—there’s been a lot of discussion with constituents about this particular legislation. We’ve heard loud and clear from families, both in Whitby and adjoining municipalities in the region, that finding housing that is affordable takes too long and it costs too much. After years of neglect by the Liberal government, there’s now a housing crisis in Ontario, and the dream of ownership, the dream of many young people in this province, is out of reach; it’s out of their reach.

The government’s plan will make it easier to build the right type of homes in the right places, giving Ontarians and their families more flexibility when looking for a home that they can afford. Speaker, what’s clear out of this debate is that the Housing Supply Action Plan will require a province-wide effort that includes the interaction of many of the partners: private industry, non-profits and others.

Part of this action plan includes the regular engagement with those partners. I went through that process this past week, constituency week. I talked about some of the features of the housing plan. I talked about more choice for all sectors of our community, whether it be young people, whether it be seniors, whether it be others involved in that process. I also talked about the new measures that are embodied within that policy framework of more homes, more choice. I talked about the focus on five themes—speed, cost, mix, rent and innovation—that will improve housing supply and affordability while protecting health and safety and the environment, including the greenbelt.

That process of talking about more homes and more choice is also underpinned by an ongoing process of engagement across all sectors in the region of Durham. Whether you’re a first-time homebuyer, a family looking for an apartment to rent or a senior hoping to downsize, our action plan never loses sight of putting people first. Combined with the government’s investment in renewed community housing, the Housing Supply Action Plan is sending a clear message, a very clear message, that no matter what your situation—no matter what your situation—you can count on the government to always put people first.

It’s important to remember that the province sets the broad planning framework here in the province of Ontario. My colleague opposite who just spoke, as a former councillor, understands that. The province sets the broad planning framework here in the province, and municipal

councils, whether it's the one I served on for 13 years or others, approve the official plans that guide local development.

This is a feature of what we're talking about: more homes, more choice. Local politicians set the development rules, so if they follow them, they should have no trouble in defending decisions at the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. Speaker, we can make it easier to bring housing to market with proposed changes that would accelerate local planning decisions and put in place a more efficient appeals process.

Within the context of planning, changes to the Planning Act will also allow homeowners to create an additional residential unit in their main residence and another unit in another building on the same property, such as above garages or laneways.

Speaker, I have two other speakers who will be speaking on this topic and talking to the amendment to the time allocation motion.

But in closing, I want to say this: It's possible—it's absolutely possible—to build a brighter future while protecting our proud past. Consequently, we're working with property owners and communities to protect heritage properties while managing change and allowing for development that makes sense in specific areas, to make sure new homes can be built and Ontario's most valuable sites are protected as well.

Affordable, accessible and suitable housing is essential—absolutely essential—for healthy communities and strong and vibrant neighbourhoods. We all want that. It underpins the quality of life for people that I have the privilege of representing in the town of Whitby and for adjoining ridings in the region of Durham at every stage of their lives.

I look forward, Speaker, to continued collaboration with the local municipalities in the region of Durham as we work to achieve the goals of the proposed legislation, but underpinning all that process is ongoing consultation and collaboration. Together, we can ensure that Durham region continues to be a safe, healthy, caring, inclusive region that will be sustainable for future generations.

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

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: On behalf of my constituents of Parkdale–High Park, I rise to speak to the NDP amendment to the time allocation motion on Bill 108. Speaker, the reason we have put forward the amendment to the time allocation motion is because the people of Ontario want to have a say, and it is the responsibility of the government to listen to the voices of the people.

We are, right now, in the middle of an affordable housing crisis. The affordable housing crisis demands the attention of the Legislature now, yet the government is speeding up and ramming through their own so-called housing legislation—and a bit later I'll get to why I call this a "so-called housing bill."

This bill amends 13 different pieces of legislation. We could be reviewing these changes, listening to the people of Ontario, but instead we are shutting down public

comment. If it isn't already obvious, I don't support the government's use of time allocation motions because my approach, as an elected person, to politics in general is to amplify the voices of the people in my riding, not to silence them. I'm not surprised that instead of debating the content of the bill and talking about our vision for Ontario, we're back to a time allocation motion yet again. This government has repeatedly attempted to silence opposition members of the House—even the members of their own side—with every bill that they've put forward by time-allocating them.

Speaker, what a time allocation motion says is that the government not only doesn't want to listen to the opposition, but the government also doesn't want to listen to their own members and the constituents of their own ridings. The time allocation motion is asking the members of the House to be in agreement that it is in the best interests of Ontarians to limit committee hearings. That is not correct. This is not what the Legislature is about. The Legislature belongs to the people of Ontario. It's a place where members of the assembly bring their thoughts and ideas, their suggestions, their hopes, their dreams, what their constituents want and the members' support, or opposition, to the discussion of the policy being debated. Debates result in better legislation.

Here we are now, amending the time allocation motion because the time allocation motion diminishes the role of elected members and is truly an affront to the democratic legislative process.

1520

If the bill was properly debated in committee, the government would hear recommendations from the public and the experts. But I guess the government doesn't want to listen to them. The government is once again refusing to listen to the people of Ontario, which is highly problematic because the government hides behind every procedure of this House that is supposed to be open and transparent.

Public consultation and the use of committee is a democratic process that has long been cherished, but not under this government. This government has trounced the democratic process by making unilateral decisions, such as to slash Toronto city council, with no real public consultation. They also rushed through their health care privatization plan, the largest restriction of our health care system since OHIP, without genuinely consulting the people of the province. Now they're using yet another time allocation motion in their so-called housing bill.

This government is trying to turn the people of Ontario off politics by making them feel like their voices don't matter. But I can tell you, Speaker, the people of Parkdale–High Park aren't losing confidence in politics and aren't losing confidence in what our province can achieve; the only thing they don't have confidence in is in this government to do the right thing. In this case, it is to truly address the affordable housing crisis. On this side of the House, we believe that it is the role of the government, but that's not what the government is doing in their so-called housing legislation.

Now, I keep saying "so-called" housing legislation because this is not a housing bill, and it's certainly not an

affordable housing bill. What it is is a government deregulation bill, because instead of protecting tenants or making housing more affordable, what this government is doing is rolling out the red carpet for their developer friends. Toronto city council unanimously also voted to get rid of the OMB, because what it did was take away power from families and municipalities and it gave it to the developers. Now, as a favour to the developers, this government is bringing the OMB back.

We know that too many families are struggling under the weight of skyrocketing rents and too many are seeing the dream of home ownership slip further and further away. Tenants are living in constant fear of above-guideline rent increases and renovations. Young couples are stuck in cramped apartments as they have kids, all because they cannot afford housing.

Housing affordability has reached a crisis level in Ontario after 15 long years of inaction under the Liberals, but now this Conservative government is making matters much worse. First, this government took away rent control from Ontarians. Then, it made it easier for landlords to evict tenants. Now, this government is handing power back to the Ontario Municipal Board, which is now called the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, and undermining the control municipalities have over their own planning. The system was a bad one under the Liberal government, and this government is dragging Ontario backwards by making things worse.

This bill also attacks protections for heritage buildings and the environment. It takes away all the tools that are needed to build infrastructure, like schools and community centres. Families in Ontario deserve so much better than to worry about how they will afford to keep a roof over their head. We should be investing in affordable housing, not rolling out the red carpet for their developer friends.

The mayors of large urban centres themselves have asked for more time, because they are worried that these funding cuts will change how municipalities can impose development charges. So we ask the government, why are you rushing through this bill? Support our amendment to make sure that “anywhere in the province during the summer recess for the purpose of public hearings on Bill 108 ... the subcommittee should meet to organize all deadlines related to committee business for Bill 108.”

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: It's a pleasure to be able to speak on Bill 108 today and the NDP amendment to the motion on time allocation. Before I start, certainly, I think it's good to recognize, and I think all people here in this House recognize, that there has been a lot of inaction over the last 15 years in housing. We do have a crisis. I think the issue of concern with the NDP amendment on time allocation is that it's basically working harder to get nothing done. We need to get something done. Nothing has been done for 15 years.

With that, I think that this legislation, if passed, will help people struggling to find affordable housing, lay the groundwork needed to tackle Ontario's housing crisis, and

help build more homes that meet the needs of people in every part of our province.

The proposed changes in Bill 108 are intended to eliminate unnecessary steps, duplication and barriers to support the development of housing that Ontarians need. These changes will reduce red tape but they will not reduce the government's commitment to maintaining protections for health, safety, the environment, the greenbelt, agricultural lands and our rich natural heritage.

Access to affordable housing has become a challenge, as we all know, in this province. Whether you live in rural, suburban or urban Ontario, there are very important housing challenges which need to be addressed.

Halton region—and the riding of Oakville—is one of the fastest-growing communities in Ontario. Our population is currently around 550,000. That has grown from 200,000 just 40 years ago, but it's expected to double to one million people in the year 2041. That's 22 short years. Mr. Speaker, we know where this growth is going to occur. The growth spans across all municipalities in the Halton region. It's going to require careful planning to make sure that we have a way to pay for the infrastructure needed in a more efficient way than the current process that the province allows.

The vast number of Halton residents, like many other GTA residents, commute to work. For these residents, there are two main options: You can drive your car to work—I'm sure all of you driving the 400 series of highways can see the congestion we currently have in the morning. There is no way these highways are going to be able to handle twice as many people on the road.

An alternative means for people to get to work in the morning is by public transit. This takes the form of the GO bus or GO Transit. I myself take the GO train to work almost every day. Metrolinx and the government have done a great job to ensure that commuters across the GTA are able to more efficiently and effectively move within this region.

As our population grows, we need to consider how to build our communities around core transit areas like the train stations. For my riding, this means building high-density residential, office and commercial space immediately adjacent to the two different GO stations in my riding, which are the Oakville and Bronte GO stations. By doing this, people will not have to rely on driving or take public transit to get on a train. Not only will this reduce the environmental impact of commuters but it will also save people money and reduce congestion on arterial roads in the morning.

Timing on these changes is absolutely critical to get this province moving and to get business back in this province. Every single day counts. That's why we need a time allocation motion on Bill 108 and why I have such difficulty with the NDP proposed amendment to it.

This bill, however, is not just about transit-oriented housing in our suburban and urban areas. It will also bring forward changes that will help make housing more affordable. I know that we are all familiar with the growing pressures our young people face as they go and

purchase their first house. Ironically, this week I had several people visit me in my constituency office with these exact concerns. We talked about this particular bill, and they were excited.

People want to live close to where they work; however, there are fewer and fewer options to do that because the price of housing in our largest cities has increased dramatically over the last five, 10 or 15 years. This increase in prices is driving new families and recent graduates out of our cities because the cost of entering the housing market is simply too high. In fact, Toronto is not only one of the most expensive cities in Canada but in North America. That needs to change.

Young families and recent graduates are not the only people having challenges, however. More than anyone else, the least fortunate in our society are not able to find the housing that they can afford. The current building approval process costs more and more money, and the developers of these affordable housing units have to pass that cost along to consumers. That does not help people whom we are trying to help, which is why, if this bill is passed, it would allow for development charges for rental housing and not-for-profit housing to be paid over a five-year period.

Reducing the upfront cost will incentivize the construction of more affordable housing and rental housing. Very little rental housing has been built over the last five to 10 years in Toronto, yet the vacancy rate in Toronto is under 2%, which is considered an emergency. I think we would all agree with that. We don't have time to debate and debate and debate after we've already had such extensive consultation on this bill. We've had thousands of submissions from across the province.

1530

The changes that are posted on the Environmental Registry—and I would encourage everybody to consider submitting a proposal as well and submitting their feedback, if they haven't already done so. These changes will have a huge impact in Ontario, and that is why we need to proceed with our government time allocation for this bill.

But perhaps the most important aspect of this bill is aimed to reduce the time it takes to build a home in Ontario. From permitting and approvals, every step of the home construction industry takes far too long to get final approval to put shovels in the ground and begin building these homes. This is not just for residential areas but for countless affordable housing projects in the province.

Minister Clark highlighted earlier this month the example of a not-for-profit housing project in Hamilton that required just a very minor change. When they submitted this very minor change, what happened? The time it took to build that unit—it took an additional two years to get the changes approved so it could be built. Mr. Speaker, the cost of that unit had risen between 20% and 25% in those two years, making it unaffordable. Can you believe that? It's no wonder there are never enough housing units for the people in this province. It takes too long to build and people know it's not even worth their time anymore. This needs to change, and Bill 108 will help bring forward that change.

This would not only affect affordable housing, but all housing in general. Can you imagine the impact it would have if this housing was needed in a small town to accommodate a new mine that opened up? I know our government has been very committed to getting the mining industry revived in this province after years in the dark, in the wilderness—projects such as the Ring of Fire. In all likelihood, there would have been not enough houses for them to live in, so some of them would have had to wait two or more years before they would have a place to call home.

By cutting red tape, this bill will ensure that housing can be built on time and not hung up for years in paperwork. It is, again, why we need to proceed with the government time allocation motion on Bill 108 and reject the NDP's stalling.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to recap again what our plan will do. First, we want to address how long it takes to build a home for the people in Ontario. We are in a housing crisis that demands we act now or the outcomes for everyone affected will be significantly worse. It currently takes years to get projects started and we need to change that. That is why this bill should proceed in an orderly fashion. Red tape and regulations are adding needless years to construction projects and the previous government did nothing to help this.

Second, we need to address the inflated high costs of new housing in the province. At the end of the day, Ontario is an expensive place to build a home. Why? One reason is because of the endless layers of government permitting and approvals that add to the cost of homes. It is a priority of this government to reduce the cost of living, and housing is no exception. We are determined to make these costs more predictable, to encourage home builders to build more housing and to make housing more affordable for home buyers and for renters.

Third, we want to make it easier to build different types of homes, to fit different needs while also ensuring there's more variety of housing throughout the province, whether it's second residences within existing infrastructure or additional rental units, which we need to build very badly in this province. It could be townhouses, family-sized condos, midrise apartments, basement apartments in a home. We know the people of Ontario need more choice, not just in one region in specific, but across the whole province.

Fourth, renters are also facing huge challenges. We need more rental units in general. That's quite clear. There are more and more people out there looking for homes than there are places to rent. With a 1.8% rental vacancy rate in the city of Toronto, we have an emergency for rental vacancies in this city. In some areas of the province, the situation has reached its peak. This plan will protect tenants and make it easier to build rental housing.

Last fall, the government 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 our government made, to protect existing tenants. When we look across Canada, new rental units in Manitoba accounted for 22% of new

housing—22%. Imagine that. We're not even close to that in Ontario. That's compared to when only 10% of new building in Manitoba was rental units, when they had strict rental control. So it's pretty clear to me and, I think, pretty clear to this government and the people of Ontario that having those restrictions impeded development for the people who needed housing the most. We need to make changes, and we're proceeding.

We want to ensure that all families can find a good place to live at a price they can afford. We are making sure that we're doing this by facilitating the building of a variety of homes.

The fifth item I'd like to touch on 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: We will protect the greenbelt in all its beauty.

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, and 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."

Clearly, with Bill 108, we are proceeding with the promise the Premier made and our government has stated. We need to do something urgently, and we need to have Bill 108 proceed as quickly as possible.

This promise was close to the hearts of many Ontarians, and this bill addresses those challenges. To begin to change, we need to begin working right away, which is why I support the time allocation motion the government introduced, and reject the NDP's political ploy in trying to drag this out and get nothing done.

Our government is about working smarter and harder, and not just for the sake of working—we want to get things done. It takes approximately 10 years to build a high-rise project in the GTA today and, actually, 11 years for a mid-rise project. Can you imagine what kind of business people and developers want to actually go ahead and proceed and build something if it's going to take that long to get the building completed?

We have a crisis right now. We have 100,000 units of housing currently in the LPAT system—which has been logjammed—and that cannot be built. We need these houses to get on the market as quickly as possible, to help solve part of this crisis.

And 100,000 units being stuck in a bureaucratic system is simply unacceptable. There needs to be a system in place which people have the right to question and challenge, but we also need a system that is going to be able to proceed and get housing developed for people who need it in the province of Ontario.

As I mentioned, the demand in the GTA in particular, and in the province of Ontario—the growth over the next 10, 15 years is unprecedented. Some 85% of the growth in Ontario is in the GTA. This housing crisis cannot be put

on the side burner for 15 more years, like it was in the last 15 years, with the Liberals, and the NDP supporting them, helping further this crisis that we are in today. We need to take action now. That's why the people of Ontario elected this government: to make changes to the housing supply in this province.

The people can't wait anymore. I'm excited to support Bill 108. As I mentioned, I think it's time for the NDP to put politics aside and support us, help us get more affordable housing in the province of Ontario, help us get more rental housing and help us get more community housing. We need your support. Please, reconsider this motion and support the government.

1540

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's quite something to hear a member in this House describe our party, when we are trying to address the overuse of time allocation in this House. We're trying to ensure that the people of this province have their voice heard at committee, because Bill 108 has only seen six and a half hours of debate. It will be very limited going forward, and the member opposite just said that what we're trying to do is a political ploy.

Madam Speaker, the people of this province have a right to speak to legislation that will be affecting their lives and their businesses and their environments. It is not a political ploy. We're trying to help you develop legislation that will actually be better and stronger legislation by having the people's voice reflected in that legislation. That is what we are trying to do, because we are Her Majesty's official opposition. Our job is to make sure that the voices of the people of this province are still heard in this majority government, which seems convinced that shutting down debate, limiting access to this House—this is the people's House, Madam Speaker. It is their House. It is their democracy. To date, this government is shutting down the debate. It is limiting the access that the people of this province have around legislation that will directly affect their lives.

Who doesn't want to make sure a piece of legislation is better? They don't have a very good track record. This government has had to renege on parts of Bill 66—schedule 10, to be specific. Just this morning, the Premier of the province and the Minister of Municipal Affairs had to call a very short, timely press conference to say that they're going to be rolling back their retroactive, regressive plans around municipal budgets—municipal budgets that have actually already been passed, so they were retroactively going into municipalities and trying to pull money out of those budgets. How is that a respectful relationship with our partners in our municipalities? And they're going to be doing the same to school boards as well.

In some regards, we still come to work every single day here and try to hold this government to account. Some days, it's a very frustrating process—in fact, of late, very frustrating—because the government feels that they know best. For some of us who have been here, we already went

through this when the Liberals had a majority government and they passed legislation that was deeply flawed.

Bill 108 does not meet the goals and objectives of creating more housing in the province of Ontario. Every stakeholder who is invested in housing—because housing is the great stabilizer; it is an economic stabilizer and it is a job creator, if you're doing it right. Getting housing right is very, very important, but Bill 108, as it is currently constructed, does not do that, so it needs to go to committee. Stakeholders from across the province, citizens who have the lived experience of being homeless, need to be heard on Bill 108. And what is this government doing?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Shutting it down. Shutting them out.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Shutting them down. That is not how you create progressive, strong legislation that serves the needs of the people of this province.

I have to say, it is shocking—our House leader talked about this a little bit—how people have changed, how leaders who were once on this side of the House, who spoke so passionately about using time allocation as a tool to shut down democracy—when the Liberals did this, and they did it a fair amount as things got very uncomfortable for them in the last four years, I have to say. Things have gotten very uncomfortable for this government as well in the last nine months.

But the Minister of Labour said on April 10, 2018—really, just over a year ago. This is Laurie Scott, now the Minister of Labour: “We’re debating yet another time allocation motion on a government bill. Again and again, the government has shown disrespect for the democratic process by cutting short debate in the House.” We agree with the minister. We agree.

She goes on to say, “We’ve seen this act play out so many times. It’s actually quite irresponsible”—irresponsible—“when the government introduces the bill and then time-allocates it a few short weeks later.”

The Liberals used to wait a couple of weeks; this government waits six and a half hours and they shut down debate.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: That’s progress.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Oh, that is progress, eh? Your knuckles are dragging on the ground, I’m telling you, right now—just dragging on the ground. That is a regressive statement. It is a regressive statement to shut down.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Todd Smith—this is the Minister of Economic Development—says, “You are”—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Stop the clock, please. The member for Chatham-Kent-Leamington will come to order.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: It’s unacceptable.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): The member for Chatham-Kent-Leamington is warned.

Back to the member for Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: The Minister of Economic Development—this is May 2017—says, “You are being used by a Premier who has hit rock bottom.” This is the

Minister of Economic Development in 2017 describing the then Premier. “Every piece of government legislation being debated will also be time-allocated. The government has decided that the House is only necessary insofar as it can use the willing votes of its own backbenchers to shut down debate and prove that the House really isn’t necessary.”

There was a time and a place, Madam Speaker, when the ministers that I’ve just quoted respected this Legislature. They respected the responsibility that we have as legislators to ensure that the voices of the citizens of this province are heard. When a member says that limiting debate is called progress, that is a fairly strong indicator of how little respect they have for our democracy. It is very clear to us on this side of the House.

The member from Whitby has already been quoted.

Now, the Solicitor General. This is from November 26, from Hansard. “That’s what we do in opposition,” says Sylvia Jones. “So by the very fact that within the same seven-day period we are actually talking about time allocation and shutting down the debate on Bill 144, you have eliminated our opportunity to reach out to our constituents and to reach out to our stakeholders. It speaks to the lack of regard that the government of the day is showing for the opposition’s role and what we are here to do.”

The work that we have is to ensure that legislation actually works. Bill 108, as it is constructed, will not address the housing crisis in this province. Every stakeholder across this great province has told the government this. The only opportunity for us on this side of the House to bring those informed voices into committee is to ensure that they have the time at committee, and not just here in Toronto, Madam Speaker, but across this province. Rural communities and northern communities have unique challenges in creating housing. This is a bill, if there ever was a bill, that should travel. Bill 108 should travel to southwestern Ontario. It should go to the eastern townships. It should go everywhere.

What we have seen is that there’s a very controlling sense from this Premier—right from the Premier’s office on every piece of legislation—and his unelected staff, who have an astounding amount of control and power in this Legislature and how laws are created. But even when Bill 66 went to committee, that was a day—I have to say, as a committee member, I’ve never had a Chair deal with this, but we introduced amendments in committee. So even when we’re successfully trying to ensure that this place is working and that committees are working, because that is really where true consensus and collaboration should be happening, this happened with the Chair, who is the member from Peterborough here. This is Sabrina Nanji. She tweeted out: “I haven’t had much chance to sit in on many committees lately. I haven’t seen anything like this. PC MPPs don’t speak at all to any amendments, even their own. Chair Dave Smith is raising his voice as NDP MPP Catherine Fife asks him to call for order when PCs chat during debate.”

It speaks to the lack of respect that members are displaying towards our responsibility. Remember, Madam

Speaker, we take an oath in this place. We take a solemn oath to serve the people of this province. When the government says that you're open for business and then you actually bring in legislation which will compromise trust in the economy in the province of Ontario, this is just one of the many examples that we've seen in this Legislature in the short nine months since this particular Premier has held the power. Since all of the power now comes from the Premier's office apparently, we have seen a degradation of our democratic rights and civil liberties in the province of Ontario.

1550

We've never seen so many people, so many protesters come here. To the new members of this Ontario Legislature: In the last seven years—I've only been here for seven years—maybe I can count on one hand the time that people were removed from this Legislature. In the last session we had, every single day, lawyers, doctors, nurses, parents with children on the autism spectrum, health care advocates come to this place and be shut down.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Municipal councillors.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And municipal councillors. Soon, it will be trustees because the education concerns are real.

There's obviously a concerted effort on behalf of this government to create chaos because there are distractions, so that takes our attention away from a piece of legislation like Bill 108.

Two weeks ago, I was fighting for a six-year-old girl who had stage 4 cancer to receive funding for her feeding supplements. How can any government of any stripe expect a six-year-old girl to successfully fight cancer if she doesn't have the appropriate nutrition to fight cancer? There's a lot of effort on behalf of this government to create fires and, to our credit, I think we're pretty good at trying to put out those fires and serve the people of the province that we serve.

But at the end of the day, time-allocating and limiting debate on legislation in this place is a betrayal of trust. The Liberals did it, and they paid the price. You're doing it and, mark my words, you also will pay the price by the people of this province.

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

Mr. Norman Miller: I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak to Bill 108, which is An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing, other development and various other matters, put forward by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Minister Clark. In fact, it's actually an amendment to that. I'm speaking to the NDP amendment to the time allocation motion with regard to Bill 108.

I'm pleased to have the opportunity. I think there is an urgent need to get moving with some action on housing. The bill that this time allocation motion relates to is the More Homes, More Choice Act. Certainly, speaking for my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka, there is an urgent need for housing of all types and, in particular, affordable housing. I believe this bill is an effective way to address Ontario's problem with affordable housing by clearing red

tape and other hurdles. It focuses on expanding supply, the main cause of the lack of affordable housing.

Before I get too much into my speech, Madam Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to Minister Steve Clark and his ministry for their attention and assistance during this spring's historic flooding throughout Parry Sound–Muskoka. The minister has remained fully open and accessible throughout this period. I know many of the municipal leaders—he's been in direct contact with them and they're very thankful for his support. He was very quick under Ontario's disaster program to designate communities, sending municipal folks to look at the actual damage being done and really quickly to designate communities as having had a disaster. I know he was very fast to do that for Mayor Graydon Smith in Bracebridge and Mayor Scott Aitchison in Huntsville, and also in Armour township north of Huntsville, Ryerson, Burk's Falls and also in Muskoka Lakes township. So I thank the minister for his quick action as it turns to recovery in the flood season that we had in Parry Sound–Muskoka. The high-water mark on Lake Muskoka, the biggest body of water in the area, was May 4, and since then it has been trending down but very slowly because we still continue to have quite a bit of rain and there's a lot of work to repair homes and businesses that have been damaged by the unprecedented flooding.

But to get to the matter at hand, the minister and everyone at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing should also be commended for their hard work and dedication in delivering this comprehensive legislation. Ontario is facing a huge shortage in affordable housing of all types. All across the province, individuals and families have struggled to find suitable places to live in a timely and cost-effective manner. Community housing programs have been chronically underfunded, leaving families on long waiting lists and those in community housing often dealing with leaky and crumbling buildings.

In Parry Sound–Muskoka, businesses face a particular challenge finding staff because workers are having difficulty finding places to live. I've heard that from owners of all types of businesses, from large to small, year-round and seasonal businesses. As a former resort owner, these are issues I completely understand.

One of the largest employers in the Huntsville area is Deerhurst Resort. They're a year-round resort, but they hire a lot more people through the summer season, which is still one of the most popular times in Parry Sound–Muskoka. They have about 700 people working at Deerhurst. They have great challenges, particularly for the people working through the summer season, then fall and spring, finding places to stay. They've had to resort to buying trailers and getting a special exit for an area to keep the trailers to house staff. I've heard of other resorts buying motels to provide accommodation for people working at the properties.

A lack of affordable housing for workers means they cannot work the jobs available for them in Parry Sound–Muskoka. I know there's a business in the Parry Sound area that would like to set up a new flight school at the Parry Sound airport for people coming from other

countries to learn to fly, to fill that huge demand for pilots. That's one of their big challenges: Where will these students and the people who work at this flight school actually live?

We've seen in the past year a huge success in the province of Ontario in creating jobs. I think it's 170,000 jobs in the province of Ontario—47,000 just in the month of April alone. But people need a place to live, an affordable place to live. It's great that we have the jobs, but they need a place to live. This is incredibly frustrating for the entrepreneurs who are trying to build businesses in the area and it goes directly against our government's mandate to make Ontario open for business and open for jobs. I think that's why this legislation is critically needed. It needs to be moved forward quickly so we can address this issue of having more housing. That's why there is an urgency to it.

Just a few weeks ago, I attended the West Parry Sound Housing Summit that was organized for business and non-profit leaders to find solutions to this very issue. The invitation to this event stated, "Join us for a full-day event aimed to stimulate thought, discussion, and solutions that may be initiated to provide rental accommodation for employees ... across our rural and urban municipalities." The attendance of over 60 individuals from a diverse set of industries was a good indication of just how big and far-reaching an issue this really is. It was great to see people from so many parts of my community of Parry Sound–Muskoka get together to discuss this important issue, and I want to recognize the efforts of Glen Barnden from the Parry Sound Area Community Business and Development Centre in putting this event together.

Most of the problems the attendees identified were based on the supply side of housing, the very issue that this legislation is trying to address—more precisely that potential builders and landowners are unnecessarily burdened by overly complex regulations and red tape. This makes it difficult to build effective housing in an efficient time period.

I have some of the survey results from that day. It was April 24 that it actually happened. Looking at individual comments—and I'm reading from the survey results that the regional economic development office provided on the West Parry Sound Housing Summit:

"Question #8: Please identify any hurdles your organization is facing in regard to housing....

"Provincial regulations—Ontario building code overly complex and provincial planning regulations need to be changed for northern Ontario.

"Red-tape regulations and proper zoning....

"Red tape, too many fiefdoms. 'Amalgamation' needed.

"Costs, red-tape, regulations.

"Red-tape regulations, more owners unable to navigate the system....

"Length of time for septic/sewer approvals—specifically in town....

"Regulation.

"Costs, red-tape, regulations....

"Red-tape, approvals."

This is many people voicing the same concerns to do with the time it takes to build housing in the Parry Sound area.

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"Timing to approvals....

"Red-tape regulations, municipal, provincial, conversation authority....

"Red-tape regulations, lack of co-operation from townships/planning committees....

"Permit process."

So it demonstrates that what this legislation is trying to do, which is trying to reduce the red tape and regulations, is something that's really needed, and it's needed urgently because we have an urgent issue of affordable housing. It's something that our government recognizes. From day one, we've made it a priority.

It's clear that in order for Parry Sound–Muskoka and the rest of Ontario to be open for business, we need affordable places for people to live. Already, Minister Clark has announced the Community Housing Renewal Strategy and the investment of more than \$1 billion to help sustain, repair and grow community housing. In Parry Sound–Muskoka, this has meant that \$1.1 million is going to the Parry Sound District Social Services Administration Board and \$1.9 million to the district of Muskoka.

In February of last year, I visited a community housing building run by the Parry Sound District Social Services Administration Board. From that visit, I know they will put this money to good use to maintain their properties and hopefully open some more units.

The shortage of community housing and affordable, privately owned rental housing gets a lot of attention in the city of Toronto, but it's an issue beyond Toronto as well. On the Muskoka side of my riding, community housing is managed by the district of Muskoka. This is what the district's website has to say about the social housing waiting list: "The length of time before a unit becomes available will vary depending on the locations and buildings you choose. It could take four to six years for a unit to become available." Obviously, that's not a reasonable length of time for somebody looking for housing.

Beyond social housing, there is an overall shortage of affordable rental housing. As of last October, apartment vacancy rates in Muskoka ranged from 0% in Gravenhurst to 0.7% in Huntsville and 1.2% in Bracebridge, and there are very few purpose-built rental units anywhere in my riding. I know this legislation is also geared towards trying to get more purpose-built rental housing built in the province of Ontario, as I say, adjusting the supply side and getting more supply of housing.

As of April 1 of this year, one building in Bracebridge was declared unsafe, displacing the residents of 19 units. And of course, the recent flooding is only making the situation worse, with many people forced out of their homes and needing temporary accommodations. The bottom line is, we need more housing, both affordable rental housing and reasonably priced homes for families to purchase.

Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act, addresses this shortage of housing. It's an ambitious piece of legislation, amending 13 acts. These measures, if successfully passed, would simplify and streamline the overly complex development approvals process, remove unnecessary duplication and barriers and make costs and timelines more predictable—just the sort of the thing that that housing conference in west Parry Sound said needs to happen.

It addresses and will improve the supply side of housing, which is the central problem in affordable housing. For too long, the previous government had created a complex housing development system that had made it impossible for builders to navigate, much less individual homeowners. Red tape and government fees added years of paperwork and thousands of dollars to the cost of an average home, driving up prices for renters and buyers alike.

Madam Speaker, I want to share one example of the delays and red tape. Just last week, I got an email from a constituent, an individual who is trying to sever two lots off his property near Gravenhurst. This isn't a big developer or a big development; it's an individual trying to sever two lots from his own property. He got approval from the town in June of last year, but that decision was appealed to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal. It went to a hearing. Notice of the hearing was given last September. The hearing was last October, but he has yet to receive a decision. It's just taking far, far too long to be able to create a couple of lots in Gravenhurst. It should not take eight months for a simple decision on a simple matter of severing off two lots.

I'm pleased that the minister has recognized this problem, and I look forward to seeing additional adjudicators appointed to reduce the backlog of cases and decisions as has been put forward in this legislation.

I'm confident that this proposed legislation will help to address the shortage of housing in Parry Sound–Muskoka and across Ontario. It will soon be easier for business owners and municipal authorities across the riding to invest in and construct safe and affordable housing for residents and for our influx of seasonal workers. This plan will make it easier to build the right types of homes in the right places at prices people can afford, whether they rent or own. This bill streamlines the overly complicated approvals process, and it does that while protecting health and safety and the environment, including the greenbelt.

Our government puts people first in all our decisions. This bill is the product of a broad public consultation that has included feedback from the public, the business community, the development sector, municipalities and the environmental sector, among others.

Government cannot fix the housing shortage on its own, so we've called on all of these groups to work together. The plan lays the foundation and encourages our partners to do their part to build more housing that meets the needs of people in every part of Ontario.

Over the years, I've heard many complaints about Tarion, as I'm sure most MPPs have. This bill addresses

concerns about Tarion by improving transparency so homeowners can access information about the track record of builders and by enhancing the dispute resolution system to allow for quick, fair and consistent decisions.

In addition to improving Parry Sound–Muskoka's specific set of housing challenges, this bill also includes aspects that target other regions of Ontario. In particular, an update to A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe will give people in that region more housing choices, shorten commute times and reduce gridlock by making it faster and easier to build housing near transit.

While this will not impact my riding directly, many residents of Parry Sound–Muskoka are concerned about housing for their family members and friends in the greater Golden Horseshoe area, and an indirect benefit of more development anywhere in Ontario is the greater use of timber by home builders. This will provide greater support to the forestry industry, an important economic sector in Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Madam Speaker, there's an article here from the London Free Press that does a good job of highlighting this bill. It reads, "Ontario's 'Fresh New Thinking' on Housing the Obvious Answer...."

"Increasing supply is an obvious solution to the province's desperate housing shortage, but in Ontario it qualifies as fresh new thinking. For too long, housing development has been delayed or blocked by municipal politicians and community groups who will do everything they can to prevent other people getting houses or apartments.

"Certain types of Ontarians routinely describe new suburban development as appalling sprawl, even when it's denser than older suburbs in city centres. Intensification is acceptable in theory, so long as it is not in the neighbourhoods of those comfortably housed. Housing developers are typically depicted as greedy because they seek to make a profit, unlike all those other business owners who operate solely for the public good.

"These are views one can reasonably hold, as long as one believes that young people should sleep in their cars and that the border should be closed to stop the immigration that is driving housing demand in Ontario, particularly in Toronto."

Speaker, I see I'm getting close to being out of time, so I'll try to wrap up.

"Realistically, housing is a necessity, whether it is rented or owned. One would hope that governments would do what they could to make housing available and affordable for all. Instead, Ontarians" seeking "housing have had to contend with bad government policies stacked higher than a Queen's Quay condo tower.

"All three levels of government are guilty of hammering new apartment and housing developments with ... taxes, fees and charges.

"With apartment vacancy rates in Ontario at a 16-year low, the previous Liberal government discouraged new building by extending rent controls and presided over a planning approval process that could hold up new buildings for years."

The article goes on to say, “The PCs will” let “developers of new apartment buildings ... spread development charges over five years, remove development charges from secondary units like basement apartments and support increased density near public transit. They’re also tackling a maze-like approval process, giving municipalities less time to say yes or no to proposed developments and speeding appeals by increasing the number of arbitrators by 40%”—all things that make a great deal of sense.

In conclusion, we’ve introduced More Homes, More Choice: Ontario’s Housing Supply Action Plan to address Ontario’s housing crisis and to help build more homes that are affordable in our province. We want to put affordable home ownership in reach of more Ontario families and provide more people with the opportunity to live closer to their work. Our plan is called More Homes, More Choice. It will address people’s concerns about affordability by cutting red tape, making costs for homeownership more predictable, making it easier to build different types of housing, including rental housing, encouraging innovative approaches to housing design and home ownership and maintaining responsible environmental stewardship, including respecting Ontario’s agricultural sector.

Madam Speaker, I can see I’m out of time, so I will wrap up and say I’m going to be supporting the legislation, though we’re of course just speaking to the amendment at this point. Thank you for the opportunity.

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

Mr. Wayne Gates: I’ve only got a minute and 48; that was all that was left to me. I wanted to do the top-10 list of PC members and what they’ve said about time allocation, but I can only do the top four.

The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services—this is what she said: “I would encourage the government to allow us to do that and stop these time allocation, closure, guillotine motions. Free us; let us speak. That would be my one ask of the government.”

Then the Minister of Infrastructure: “We keep seeing these time allocation motions in this House. The ministers are taking turns to stand and insist that there is a pressing need to cut off debate and move the legislation of the day forward with all urgency. The truth is, this is either a case of the government wanting to stifle debate in this House or it’s a case of poor planning” on the part of the government. You guys are saying this.

My good friend right across from me, the Minister of Government and Consumer Services—

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Number three.

Mr. Wayne Gates: That’s number three. I might not get to four; I talk too much.

“That’s the struggle I have with time allocation in this House. We should be able to bring those valid points up. We should be able to talk about issues in this House and do our job, as I said earlier, which the member from St. Catharines”—who isn’t here now—“has truly shared with me: ‘That is your job, to hold the government to account. That’s” our “opposition’s job. You’re the Queen’s loyal opposition. Your job is to stand in this House and hold the government to account.’ I will continue to do that, regardless of whether they try to time-allocate or not. We’ll utilize the time now about time allocation, about the democratic principle.”

I’ve not got enough time to do number four. I’ll save that for the next time.

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

Pursuant to standing order 47(b), I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Bisson has moved an amendment to government notice of motion number 62, relating to allocation of time on Bill 108, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing, other development and various other matters. Is it the pleasure of the House that Mr. Bisson’s motion carry? I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I respectfully request that the vote for the amendment to government notice of motion 62 be deferred until deferred votes on Tuesday May 28, 2019.

Vote deferred.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Orders of the day?

Hon. Bill Walker: Speaker, I make a motion that we adjourn the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Mr. Walker has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On division.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Lisa Gretzky): Carried, on division.

There being no further business, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1614.

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