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Mercredi
29 mai 2019

Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
Greffier : Todd Decker

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 29 May 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 29 mai 2019

The House met at 0900.

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

NOTICES OF REASONED
AMENDMENTS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I ask for orders of the day, I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Ottawa–Vanier has filed with the Clerk a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 115, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act with respect to the termination of a specified agreement. The order for second reading of Bill 115 may therefore not be called today.

I must also inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston has filed with the Clerk reasoned amendments to the motion for second reading of Bill 115, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act with respect to the termination of a specified agreement, and the motion for second reading of Bill 117, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The orders for second reading of Bills 115 and 117 may therefore not be called today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS MOST
ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR
PROTÉGER L'ESSENTIEL
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 28, 2019, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 100, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes / *Projet de loi 100, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter, à modifier ou à abroger diverses lois.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When we last debated this bill, the member for Kingston and the Islands had the floor. I believe he still has time. I recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Thank you, Speaker. It's a pleasure to return to the debate on this. I'm just trying to find where I left off yesterday. I was running through a list of the things that were missing from the Ontario budget, cutting what matters. I'm a little more tired than I was last night,

so it may not be quite as lively, but we're going to work through it.

If the budget is protecting what matters, you can quite simply use deductive logic to look at what's actually missing from it. And in the absence of mattering, it doesn't matter. I don't agree with the cuts. I think that they are cruel. I think that they are malicious. But this, for us, is the budget that just keeps giving. That has to be a miserable experience in the ridings of the members opposite, because it was rolled out as a good-news budget and the deep, regressive cuts that are in this budget were buried. The government didn't own up to them in the beginning. They didn't own up to them at the front of it, and instead they've allowed them to kind of trickle out as people discover them again and again, which gives us so much mileage in the press and for debate in this chamber. It really is, in the terms of fulfilling our role as the opposition, the budget that does keep giving. Unfortunately, it doesn't actually give to the people of Ontario; it takes away.

I believe I had just been asked to withdraw because I implied telling the truth to the people of Ontario didn't actually matter. So I think that's where I had left off, which I just figured out how to say again in front of you.

The reason that I had gone down that avenue of debate was that the Auditor General—and I'm going to quote a Toronto Star article here: Auditor Urges Tories to Stop 'Factually Inaccurate' Advertising:

"Ontario's independent fiscal watchdog is sounding the alarm.

"Noting the previous Liberal administration spent \$16.5 million on what she considers to be 'partisan' ads last year, Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk wants the Progressive Conservatives to strengthen the Government Advertising Act.

"The Liberal government watered down that law in 2015, and that change 'took the discretion away from the office, taking away our independence pretty much from this process and requiring us to pretty much be a rubber stamp.'"

So we're paying lip service to an idea that the government shouldn't spend partisan money on ads, but we're giving the person responsible for enforcing that no power to actually enforce it. Own up to what you're doing, because that sounds like needless red tape. If you want to spend the money on the partisan ads, then why not cut this act too? It would be politically unpopular, but it shows the selective process of figuring out which red tape is worth spending time on, and this one isn't.

I'm going to go back to quoting here: "The result is that her office now must 'approve an ad even if it's factually inaccurate,' she said.

“From my office’s perspective, that is just a paper-pushing exercise that has created additional work versus a value-add for the taxpayer.

“The act creates the optics that we are performing a useful function to save taxpayer dollars being spent on partisan advertising, but we are not” actually “doing that.”

“While in opposition, the Tories promised to return the auditor’s power to veto advertising by amending the legislation.” So it was a campaign promise, so promise made, promise broken.

“But after 11 months in office, Premier Doug Ford’s government has no immediate plans to tighten the restrictions.

“Instead, the Tories have gone on a multimillion dollar advertising blitz attacking the federal Liberal carbon-pricing measures with TV and radio commercials that Lysyk warns would not pass muster under the previous law.

“The reason we’ve continued the practice of commenting on the old rules is because ... the public ... would be assured that we would consider the issue of partisan and have discretion over that,” she told the Legislature’s Standing Committee on Public Accounts.... ‘That’s the way it had functioned for many years.’

“Lysyk said she advised the PC government that its new carbon-pricing ad, which hit airwaves last week, would not have been compliant under rules that were in place until 2015.”

For me, this is a rather remarkable turnaround from the previous respect and putting the Auditor General on a bit of a pedestal and trying to reinforce to the public how this government was actually going to listen to the Auditor General. But they’re only going to listen to them when it suits them. They’re only going to listen to them when they like what the Auditor General is saying and when it can be used as a tool against the previous Liberal government. But when it doesn’t suit this government, they don’t have time for her.

Again and again I stand up in debate, and it just reinforces that Liberal, Tory, same old story. The operating mechanisms of this government do not differ dramatically from that of the previous government. You have a different agenda and perhaps a couple of different issues, but how you choose to operate, how you choose—you’ve exaggerated the powers of the Office of the Premier. You have pushed the boundaries, or this government has pushed the boundaries, of the Office of the Premier significantly compared to the previous government. But in terms of operating mechanisms, it’s not really different. There isn’t a fundamentally different approach, despite what is told to the people of Ontario on a daily basis. There is a continuation, an exaggeration, of the worst habits of the last government. That’s not a legacy I would ever want to follow. It just isn’t.

Another article that actually just came out: “Doug Ford Is Peddling a Fiscal Fantasy.” That was a quote from the title of the article. I know I have to refer to him as the Premier when I speak. It’s from the *Globe and Mail* on May 28. This is going back to something I touched on yesterday,

that Ontario is dead last among provinces for total per capita spending.

0910

So when we’re talking about a broken health care system or a broken children’s aid system or a broken program for children with autism, we’re actually talking about chronically underfunded programs. We’re talking about \$16 billion in backlog repairs needed just to keep our public education institutions up to standards—and they are pretty low standards. They’re making sure that there isn’t snow in the gym in the winter, or that the heat turns on, or that children don’t get heatstroke in the hot months of the summer and the spring. And those hot days are coming sooner and sooner and sooner with the climate crisis.

Our total per capita spending is the least of any province in Canada, and we also have the lowest per capita revenue. So if we actually want to build a budget about what matters, we need to look at that, we need to protect it, we need to fund these programs adequately so we can be proud of what they represent in Ontario.

I thank you very much for allowing me to contribute to this debate. I wish this budget went a lot further, I wish it did more, and I wish it didn’t cut what matters to Ontarians.

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

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: This budget is about protecting what matters most. Let’s take a look at what this budget actually delivers on rather than all the fearmongering that has been going on.

An extra \$1.3 billion for health care—I think that’s the largest expenditure in health care by any government.

Let’s talk about education: an extra \$700 million into education.

When I think of how this budget impacts Brampton, I can’t help but mention auto insurance reforms. For the first time, a government is taking seriously the need to reform auto insurance. A good driver in Brampton should pay as much as a good driver anywhere else in the province. That’s why I’m so supportive of this piece of legislation, this budget, which is going to tackle an industry that has had a war on drivers. It’s very important that we take this into consideration.

Let’s talk about some of the other great things in this budget. Free dental care for low-income seniors, for the first time ever—such an important part of our health that has been ignored, increasing pressures within our emergency rooms.

It’s so important to really recognize what this budget is actually delivering on. That’s why I’m so happy to be here to support and speak in favour of this. I really hope that all of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle recognize the importance of investing in health care, the importance of investing in education, just exactly as this piece of legislation will be doing.

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

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: I’m honoured to contribute to the debate this morning.

This really is the “let them drink beer” government and the “let them drink beer” budget.

As the *Globe and Mail* argued in its editorial yesterday, the government has manufactured a deficit crisis in order to make draconian cuts in a province that already, as my colleague just said, has the least among provinces for per capita spending. It's unforgivable when the government is willing to spend \$1 billion to break a contract, which is not good for business, and untold numbers of millions of dollars for propaganda parading as news.

But the thing that I really want to talk about is that among all the cruel cuts, among the cruellest, is that which we just learned about to the Transition Child Benefit. It's a cut that affects single moms and very vulnerable children, among them refugees. I want to take a little bit of time to point out to the government that its ongoing formulation of these refugees as illegal asylum seekers or illegal border crossers is extremely racist and deeply problematic, particularly at a time of rising hate and rising white extremism. It delegitimizes them as human beings. Refugees have a legal right to seek asylum in Canada. It is extremely racist to keep doing it, and it's even more problematic when the government asks its racialized members to refer to them that way. I really think that if the government doesn't understand what I'm talking about or why this makes sense, please ask my colleague the critic for anti-racism, Dr. Laura Mae Lindo, to explain it to you. She'll be happy to do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further questions and comments. The member from Thornhill.

Mrs. Gila Martow: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know you're practising your radio announcer's voice for the Raptors game Thursday night.

We just heard the member from Kingston and the Islands speak about the budget, which is what we're debating this morning. He said that it was rolled out as a good-news budget. Actually, Ontario is in such a fiscal mess, I think the words that we used were “responsible and reasonable,” and that's what we heard from many of the experts as well.

It took 15 years to get the debt to catastrophic levels. We've had debt for a long time in Ontario, but the amount of debt that was piled on during 15 years of Liberal mismanagement, propped up by the NDP, was astronomical. I want everybody to picture their credit card statement. Most of us still get credit card statements, either on paper or, hopefully, online. They see the minimum payment. They see the interest if they aren't making their full payments, and they understand what it means to have a balance on a credit card and how the compounding interest just grows and grows and gets out of hand. I think we all know of constituents, or people in our neighbourhoods, who have had to file for bankruptcy just because credit card debt put them over the limit. All of a sudden their business wasn't doing as well.

We have to get our deficit under control so that we can even think—think—about paying down the debt. We are still growing—the amount of interest we're spending per

day, which is around \$35 million a day in Ontario, just in interest on the debt, with low interest rates.

We are in dire straits. We all have to take responsibility for it, even though we were raising the alarm about it. We're now in government and we are taking responsibility to deal with the problem that really wasn't our own making. That's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, but we're up to the task and we're going to do it.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I want to thank my colleague the member from Kingston and the Islands, who did a wonderful job really eviscerating the current government's budget and what it does to the people of this province. I think he has coined a new term that is apropos, in that it “cuts what matters most” rather than focus on what matters most.

Speaker, it focuses on beer—a-buck-a-beer—that we really didn't see transpire here. That was a big, massive campaign promise by the Premier.

But, Speaker, do you know what? I've been here for eight years. We've been in this House for just under a year. I've seen various governments and leaders come by. I'll tell you, I have yet to see a Premier or a leader of the party sink so quickly in terms of that honeymoon period. We all know that there's a honeymoon period that governments and cabinet ministers experience. I think even the finance minister is wondering if he'll ever get back to that sweet spot of a honeymoon period because we've seen this government plummet in the polls, in terms of popular support and approval ratings, faster than any government in history. It's amazing. We couldn't imagine that anyone could have been worse than the Wynne government, but the Doug Ford government has proven us wrong.

The cuts to francophone services, the cuts to child advocates, the cuts to autism services—and, Speaker, the Premier has taken it upon himself to broadcast his own cellphone, and he's taking calls and he's making calls. But now he seems very frustrated. He's calling folks up and actually starting to berate them and threaten them. I'm hearing that even Andrew Scheer is not going to take his calls anymore, he is worried so much about the Doug Ford effect and how they've plummeted.

I'm going to stop giving them advice. I think we should stop giving them advice because, at some point, they're going to actually get on the right track, and it might improve their fortunes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Kingston and the Islands for final comments.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Thank you to the members from Brampton South and Thornhill, on the government side, for contributing to this.

If I had more time I would try and talk a little bit about the rate of health care inflation, because I don't know how it is that a cook from Kingston, Ontario, needs to talk to this government about how monetary policy works. I don't really understand that—why it falls on me to try and explain why funding something under the rate of inflation is the same as a cut, and that health care inflation actually

sits around 5%, so anything below that represents a cut. So when the member for Brampton South stands up and talks about “unprecedented investment” in this budget, there is no link to reality—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order. 0920

Mr. Ian Arthur: There is no link to reality. This is the budget that will simply keep on giving. Buried in the budget’s fine print is a fiscal future hit in the form of “un-announced revenue reductions and spending measures,” hidden tax cuts in the 2021-22 that will put even more pressure on the government to reduce spending. So this government actually hasn’t had a miserable enough time yet with the backlash.

They’re going to double down on this. They’re actually going to double down on this in 2021 and face a whole other round of vitriol from the people of Ontario, who simply don’t want to see what matters to them being cut again and again and again.

This is the budget for cutting what matters. Ontarians are waking up to that reality and they’re finding it incredibly unpleasant. My voice in the Legislature is just one, but it is one that is backed by a cacophony of people who are finally standing up and saying, “No, we want to protect what matters to us, and this government is dynamically opposed to that.”

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I just want to, again, caution the members of the House. I was starting to find it very difficult to listen to the member who had the floor. He deserves to have the right to have the floor, and I, as a Speaker, deserve the right to be able to listen to what he has to say. So I’m going to ask that we keep the comments to a very, very, very dull roar. All right?

Further debate?

Mr. Doug Downey: Pursuant to standing order 48, I move that the question be now put.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Mr. Downey has moved that the question be now put. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I did hear a no.

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, this vote will be deferred until after question period today.

Vote deferred.

NOTICE OF REASONED AMENDMENT

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I also beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 71(c), the member for Timmins has filed with the Clerk a reasoned amendment to the motion for second reading of Bill 115, An Act to amend the Liquor Control Act with respect to

the termination of a specified agreement. The order for second reading of Bill 115 may therefore not be called today.

Orders of the day. I recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: No further business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): There being no further business, this House will now stand recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 0923 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I would ask for the members’ attention. We have with us in the Speaker’s gallery a delegation from the Parliament of the Czech Republic, led by the president of the Chamber of Deputies, His Excellency Radek Vondráček. Please join me in welcoming our guests from the Czech Republic.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I think they’re making their way to the Legislature right now. I would like to welcome Pascale Thibodeau from London; she is here with the Viamonde school board today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I wish to introduce a special guest who is here as well today. A former member of the Legislature who represented the riding of Sudbury in the 41st Parliament, Glenn Thibeault, is here with us today. Welcome. It’s great to have you here.

Mr. Will Bouma: It’s my great pleasure to welcome to House today Mark Baxter, a representative from the Brantford Police Service, and Gavin Jacklyn, a member of the Brantford fire service, for the passing of the budget. Welcome to the people’s House.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I’d like to wish a very happy birthday to my friend from St. Catharines, Jennie Stevens.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It’s a great pleasure to welcome two of my constituents from Guelph to Queen’s Park today: Shirley Hunt and David Cranmer are in the members’ gallery.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: It’s my pleasure to welcome to the House Barb Aabo, Jason Aabo, Annalena Seemann, Matthew Seemann and Teo Jambrosic to the Legislature today. Both the Aabo and Seemann families are avid supporters of the York 4-H club. As leaders and participants, they exemplify the motto of the 4-H philosophy. Thank you for all you do, and enjoy your day.

M. Guy Bourgouin: J’aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à M^{me} Isabelle Girard et M. Denis Chartrand de l’Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l’Ontario et à tous les conseillers scolaires et les conseillers étudiants qui sont présents aujourd’hui à Queen’s Park. Bienvenue.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: It’s my pleasure to welcome Alan Snook and Gordon Smith from Grid20/20. Today they are giving a presentation on modernizing Ontario’s energy grid. Thank you for being here. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I would like to welcome two very good friends of mine, Emily Spanton from

St. Catharines, as well as Stephanie Stenabaug from Toronto. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Jill Dunlop: I'm happy to introduce two constituents of mine from Simcoe North, Brandy and David Giffen. Thank you for being here today. Welcome to question period, and lunch and a tour later.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'd like to give a warm welcome to Diane Pagulayan and Felicia Pagulayan. Felicia is a grade 5 student. They're from Brampton. Felicia is going to be the Minister of Education one day, she tells me.

Mr. Speaker, shortly, a group of students will join us from Don Valley West, along with their teachers: students from Northern Secondary, Leaside High School, York Mills Collegiate and Milne Valley Middle School, which technically is a school from Don Valley East, but they feed into Don Valley West schools. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was unprepared for that.

I have two introductions. First, I wanted to introduce Dylan and Julie Robbescheuten. Julie is my constituency office caseworker and so she's here. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Shortly, we will see the students from Lincoln M. Alexander Secondary School's Boys and Girls Club. They will be chaperoned with Devon Hanson, Andrea Williams, Melissa Kent, Cherry Elcock and Duwayne Letts. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: Today I would like to welcome Kevin Webster and his son, Ben Webster, and Janet Daghli from Bayshore HealthCare.

Miss Monique Taylor: I'd like to welcome back autism advocates and parents. With us today we have Fernanda Perdikaris, Faith Munoz, Amy Moledzki, Michau van Speyk, Kowthar Dore, Amanda Mooyer, Bruce McIntosh, Pat McKenna, Angela Brandt and Sharon Tees. Thank you very much for coming back to Queen's Park.

Hon. Ernie Hardeman: I'd like to welcome some members of the Beef Farmers of Ontario who are here with us today: vice-president Rob Lipsett, director Don Badour and director Jason Leblond. The Beef Farmers of Ontario are here today to host their 14th annual beef barbeque outside on the front lawn of Queen's Park. I encourage everyone to join them after question period for some delicious Ontario corn-fed beef. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I'd like to welcome Jason Reid, who is here with the Beef Farmers of Ontario, from my riding in Thunder Bay. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Bill Walker: I'd like to introduce Rob Lipsett, vice-president of the Beef Farmers of Ontario, and a constituent from the great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, and remind everyone of the succulent beef that will be served on the front lawn at lunchtime.

M. Joel Harden: Je suis très heureux, aussi, comme mon collègue de Mushkegowuk—James Bay disait, de faire la connaissance de notre ami de l'ACÉPO. Je suis très heureux pour notre réunion cet après-midi.

Mr. Vincent Ke: I would like to introduce students from Seneca College in my riding of Don Valley North. They are working towards a post-graduate certificate in government relations. Welcome to Queen's Park, and I hope you enjoy your trip.

M^{me} France Gélinas: J'aimerais souhaiter la bienvenue à un bon ami à moi, M. Jean-Marc Aubin, qui est avec le Conseil scolaire public du Grand Nord de l'Ontario et également Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Pléiade. Bienvenue à Queen's Park, Jean-Marc.

L'hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Il me fait plaisir de présenter aujourd'hui à la Chambre la vice-présidente de l'Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario, Sylvie Landry. Bonjour, Sylvie, et bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Et aussi, I would like to welcome Suresh Kumar, founder and CEO of Connecting GTA, who is here today with other business owners from across Durham and the GTA. Ontario is open for business, and I welcome them today.

Ms. Donna Skelly: It's my pleasure to welcome 70 parents and children from the Ontario Christian Home Educators' Connection, who are visiting us in the Legislature today. It was great to meet with all of them this morning. I hope you enjoy your day.

Mr. Daryl Kramp: I'd like to welcome the concerned citizens for wind power, who will be hosting a reception at noon today in room 247.

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: It is with great pleasure I rise today to introduce all the business professionals from Connecting GTA to the Legislature, including, from my riding of Scarborough—Rouge Park, my friend and supporter, the CEO and founder of Connecting GTA, Suresh Kumar, as well as Keith Thurailingam, Nithiyar Thavalingam Goolam Begg and the rest of the Connecting GTA group. Welcome to Queen's Park.

1040

M. Sam Oosterhoff: C'est aussi mon grand plaisir aujourd'hui d'accueillir à Queen's Park l'ACÉPO, l'Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques de l'Ontario. Bienvenue, et merci pour votre advocacy.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I want to welcome a Nipissing constituent and director of the Beef Farmers of Ontario, my friend Jason Leblond.

M^{me} Gila Martow: Je veux donner aussi un accueil chaleureux aux conseils scolaires qui sont ici. On a quelques noms ici sur mon papier : Pierre Tessier, Marielle Godbout, Martin Bertrand, Lucille Collard et Pierre Girouard, et aussi plusieurs étudiants. J'ai parlé avec Sébastien. Bienvenue à Queen's Park, tout le monde.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'd like to welcome the children and teachers from St. Jean de Brebeuf from Vaughan-Woodbridge. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I want to take this opportunity to introduce some of our great interns who are here today watching question period: Sarah Rimbey, Marshall Darbyshire, Henry Gray and one of my best door-knockers, Sukhman Sangha.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I would like to welcome l'Association des conseils scolaires des écoles publiques

de l'Ontario, and, from the Ottawa region, Gilles Fournier and Lucille Collard and your group. Merci, et bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Mrs. Amy Fee: I'd like to welcome this morning Karen Looby from my riding, and her 17-year-old daughter, Shannon Looby. They're here visiting Queen's Park for a tour and to also learn more about their Ontario Parliament.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I would like to join my PA in offering a warm bonjour to our francophone friends. Thank you for being here today.

I'd also like to welcome the representatives of Wind Concerns from my area.

Being a proud alumnus of the Blyth-Belgrave 4-H Beef Club, I would like to give a warm welcome to our Beef Farmers of Ontario as well as the York region 4-H members who are proudly representing Minister Mulroney's area. Welcome to Queen's Park.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My first question this morning is to the Premier. In their report this week, the Financial Accountability Office revealed the deep health care cuts hidden in the Ford government budget. One of their key findings was that, despite the Premier's claims, health spending will decrease by \$2.7 billion when compared with the 2018 budget. The FAO was unable to provide details of those cuts because the Ford government wouldn't allow them to. Why is the Premier hiding the details of these health care cuts from the public?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much for the question. Today, we truly hope that your opposition party will join the government in supporting protecting what matters most. If you actually looked through the 383-page budget, you would find that the health budget has increased by \$1.3 billion. Spending for hospitals is up \$384 million. Spending in home care is up \$267 million. We are providing \$1.75 billion to build 15,000 new long-term-care beds. Many of them are already under construction. More than 7,000 of them have been announced. I would urge the Leader of the Opposition to open to any page of the 383-page budget and see what—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, everyone in Ontario knows that this finance minister tried to sell his budget as something that it completely is not. Now the FAO is laying bare the facts, because the FAO is non-partisan. He works for the people of Ontario. He is not a partisan.

His office has other insights into the deep and reckless cuts that the government has planned for our health care system. Under the Ford government's scheme, hospital funding will be effectively cut, not even keeping pace with inflation. And of the \$2.7 billion in cuts, one of the deepest

will be to children's mental health, which will be slashed by 15%.

Can the Premier provide any justification whatsoever for cuts to children's mental health while there are over 12,000 children on a wait-list for services, most waiting at least 18 months to get that service, or to hospital funding while patients continue to be stacked up in hallways, from the Liberals' scheme for health care?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: It's interesting that the Leader of the Opposition refers to the Liberals, considering they supported them all along the way on the creation of the hallway health care problem.

To help with that, as I said, we are adding \$27 billion over 10 years in new hospitals, including \$17 billion over 10 years in capital improvements. We are putting an unprecedented \$1.9 billion into mental health and addictions in the province of Ontario.

The one that I talk about almost every day—I cannot believe, as an MPP who has seniors coming into their office over and over with dental work that needs to be done, that we cannot afford—I cannot believe that this government is going to vote against giving \$90 million to 100,000 seniors on low income.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: What I can't believe is that this callous government is making yet another cut to vulnerable children in their budget. That's what I cannot believe.

Families know the Premier has no plan to cut health care wait times, but they definitely see a plan to cut health care services. The independent FAO is blunt: In 40 years—in 40 years—in this province, only one government has pulled off health care spending restraint of the kind proposed by this Ford government, and that Premier was Mike Harris, the last Conservative government, the same Mike Harris who closed 28 hospitals, fired 6,000 nurses and eliminated 7,000 hospital beds.

Why is this Premier taking us backwards to an era of deep health care cuts, putting families at risk and deepening the Liberal hallway medicine crisis?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I'm going to call the members to order. The member for King-Vaughan, come to order. The member for Kitchener-Conestoga, come to order. The member for Whitby, come to order.

Start the clock. Minister of Finance to reply.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, I've said it almost every day in this Legislature: The previous government was spending \$40 million a day more than they took in.

We are bringing, and in fact, the FAO has confirmed that our government is delivering, a measured, thoughtful and responsible path to balance. It's credible. It's a plan laid out in budget 2019. It will put the province on a sustainable footing. But it also delivers \$26 billion back to the people of Ontario.

I cannot believe that, this morning, the NDP will not support \$2 billion in CARE Tax Credits given to 300,000 low- and middle-income families. Some 300,000 families are waiting for that \$2 billion CARE Tax Credit, and

you're not going to support it. I can't believe that they will not support the \$2 billion in the Low-income Individuals and Families Tax Credit.

Speaker, there are 26 billion dollars that they're voting against.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Waterloo will come to order. The member for Davenport will come to order. The member for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek will come to order.

The next question.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is to the Premier. But I think there is nothing responsible about prioritizing beer over health care, nothing at all responsible about that.

My question is about Ontario municipalities who are fighting back against the government's Bill 108, an unbalanced scheme that gives developers the power to override everything from municipal planning to environmental regulation, and brings back the much-hated Ontario Municipal Board under a new name.

Earlier this week, the Premier finally admitted to municipalities that he had made serious mistakes, but the Ford government is still ignoring requests to give municipalities time to comment on Bill 108.

1050

Why is the government ramming this legislation through and once again ignoring serious concerns of municipalities?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the honourable member: It's very interesting that yesterday we had the Ontario Home Builders' Association here at Queen's Park. I know that members from all three parties were there—as well as my friend from the Green Party; sorry about that. Everyone on her bench acknowledged what the Ontario Home Builders' were saying yesterday: that we're going to need to build housing supply in this province. We can't wait another minute. That's exactly what we've moved forward with our Housing Supply Action Plan and Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act. That's exactly what we're doing. We've consulted widely across this province, including with our municipal partners.

But it's the will of the Legislature whether that vote after question period will carry for Bill 108. I'm sure, and we'll be watching very closely, that those same members that had the cocktails and canapés for the Ontario Home Builders' Association last night—we'll see where they stand when Bill 108 gets voted on, Speaker.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, to have a minister that doesn't understand it's about building communities, not just homes, is pretty worrisome. It's pretty troubling.

If the government really wanted to consult with municipal partners, as he likes to pretend that they are, on Bill 108, they wouldn't be scrambling to ram this bill through this Legislature. But with less than two weeks left in the Legislature, the government has only scheduled a single day of committee hearings. So they can have canapés and wine with their friends from the homebuilders' association, but they can't give municipalities the opportunity to discuss a piece of legislation—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition.

Start the clock. Conclude your question.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: —but they don't have time to spend listening to the concerns of municipalities from one end of this province to the other, on a bill that is going to have serious implications in terms of municipal planning and environmental protection? Where is their priority?

Will this government do the right thing and extend the committee hearings over the summer? They can even serve their wine and canapés, if they want. Or will they ram through yet another unworkable scheme that nobody in this province that is a municipal leader actually wants?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, through you to the Leader of the Opposition: She can talk about my friends in the development industry. I'll tell you something, her caucus looked pretty friendly with them last night at the reception downstairs. Let me tell you that, Speaker.

You know who's my friend? Any partner that wants to build more housing. I want to say to that millennial couple who don't see a path to home ownership—I want to talk to them. I want them to know that they have a government that understands that we need to build more homes and have more choice. I want to work with any partner in any industry, whether it's in the public sector or the private sector. We need friends to build more homes and to have more choice. They've got a lot of friends on this side of the House, they had them when they were in opposition, and they have them now that they're in government.

Interjections.

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

Start the clock. Final supplementary.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, this past summer the government signed an agreement with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. In it, they endorsed the principle of regular consultation with municipalities and made a commitment to co-operate with local governments when considering new legislation that would have a municipal impact. The Premier made a mockery of that commitment with his budget, and has been scrambling to undo that damage all this past week.

Municipalities have made it very clear that bringing back the OMB might be what their developer friends want in the government, but is not what is best for the communities that municipal leaders represent. Municipal councils in Grimsby, in Grey county, in Southwest Middlesex and Markham have all passed resolutions rejecting that scheme.

Will the Premier honour his commitment, admit this bill, like his budget, is not workable, and stop ramming legislation through just for their development friends?

Hon. Steve Clark: I find it very passing strange that the Leader of the Opposition continues to slag home builders and people who actually provide hope to people. Her caucus didn't seem to have any problem in meeting with these home builders yesterday, these people who are providing hope—and look them in the face and say that they agree that the elephant in the room is that we need to build a million homes to be able to satisfy demand. I just can't understand why that member is so far out of step with all of her caucus.

Speaker, I'm going to make no apologies. The first thing I did as minister was I increased the opportunity to meet with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. I moved from every two months under the previous government to every month. In fact, I meet with them a lot more than once a month. I meet with them almost on a weekly basis, and I'll continue to meet with them; I'll continue to consult with them.

But make no mistake, we're going to build more homes and provide more choice. Our government is committed to it. She can continue—

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

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. It seems appropriate at this time to remind the members that this is the Parliament of Ontario.

Start the clock. The next question.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also to the Premier. The fallout from the Ford government budget continues to have a devastating impact on students in our classrooms. Today we're learning more details of the impact on French-language school boards. The MonAvenir Catholic board says that 40 teachers will be losing positions; the Viamonde board says that they are being forced to shed 22 teaching positions. These cuts don't just mean fewer teachers, as we all know, Speaker; they mean fewer courses and educational opportunities for students.

Is the Premier still arguing that these cuts won't have an impact?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Education.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Referred to the Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much, Premier, and thank you, Speaker. I'm pleased to stand in this House today and say that we have a very good working relationship with our francophone partners. The fact of the matter is, we're working very closely to ensure that we're growing francophone education like never before. We're increasing our investments and we're working very closely with them.

The fact of the matter is, when we take a look at our overall situation in Ontario, again, we're spending \$36 million a day in interest on the money that we owe just to

make ends meet. We have to go out to the people we're transferring dollars to and say, "Please work with us." Surely—surely—school boards across this province can find one to four cents on the dollar from within as opposed to hitting the front lines, because, again, we have been told loud and clear from one end of this province to the other by teachers, parents and students that there's a lot of waste in school boards, and surely they should have been looking within first.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: These cuts are especially devastating to Franco-Ontarians who have already seen this government destroy a French-language university and the French Language Services Commissioner. Once again, the Premier is hitting this community with even more cuts. It's not fair to them, Speaker, and it's especially unfair to students who are losing teachers, watching class sizes grow and seeing course options vanish.

1100

Will the Premier admit that these cuts have consequences to French students and reverse those cuts now? Do the right thing for a change.

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, Speaker, I have to remind the Leader of the Opposition that our government understands the importance of French education for many families across this province, and we're preserving the history and the future of the French language across Ontario, as I said, in French Catholic, as well as French public, institutions.

Just this past week, my seatmate, the President of the Treasury Board, on behalf of Minister Mulroney, opened Viola-Léger near Courtice, south of Peterborough, and that's good news for Ontario.

And we're investing like never before. We're investing \$1.8 billion through the Grants for Student Needs. This represents an increase of more than \$16 million than what was committed by the Liberal government in the previous year. We're going to continue to work with our partners to ensure that French education remains an important part of our children's overall education.

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, we learned of our government's plan to begin a call for a development process to revitalize Ontario Place. After years of neglect from the previous government, it is fantastic to hear that our government is taking concrete steps to engage in a worldwide search for a partner or partners to help us make Ontario Place a world-class destination once again.

There is so much potential for a site as big as Ontario Place. Its location also means that the site could be an economic boon for both the province of Ontario and the city of Toronto. Can the Premier please let the House know what our government for the people has in store in the immediate future for the Ontario Place site?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our great MPP from the great state of Mississauga—Erin Mills.

Mr. John Fraser: It's a riding. It's called a riding.

Hon. Doug Ford: Yes, I know. You can't take a little joke. But anyway—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Doug Ford: Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, our Minister of Infrastructure and Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport made a great announcement, an absolutely incredible announcement, for a destination that this country has never seen before. We're putting proposals out for ideas across the world, and that's going to be open for the next few months. We're going to be reviewing it, but it's going to be an incredible, incredible destination for families.

Mr. Speaker, there are two things we aren't going to do at Ontario Place. The first thing we aren't going to do: We aren't building a casino. The second thing we aren't going to do is—there was a proposal from Mayor Tory that he wanted to build condominiums—

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

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Thank you—through you, Mr. Speaker—to the Premier for his response. I echo his sentiments that he shared about his experiences, and I am sure that many members of this House have fond memories of Ontario Place as well. It is a shame the current generations were not able to experience the site.

However, the site is 48 years old and needs to be reimagined for the 21st century. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a truly great attraction, one that will be something Ontarians will be proud of and will attract tourists from around the world.

Can the Premier please tell the House more about the call-for-submissions process and what our government envisions for the future of the site?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank our great MPP from Mississauga—

Interjection: Another all-star.

Hon. Doug Ford: We have so many all-stars over here, it's amazing. It is absolutely amazing—absolute champs.

We have some great ideas—a destination, again, the likes of which this province has never seen. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure you went to Ontario Place, and a lot of folks over in the opposition and in our party grew up going there. What a highlight. I know I had some great times in the summertime going to the bandshell.

It's going to consist of a destination that can be used 365 days a year, not just in the summertime, even though it's beautiful down there in the summer. We can't wait until we see the proposals. We look forward to working with the city of Toronto, making sure that Exhibition Place and Ontario Place act as one—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I say to the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, we don't need the buzzer.

Next question.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, since coming into office, the Premier has made some shocking interventions into private contracts. Who could forget when he ripped up Alykhan Velshi's contract at OPG, costing taxpayers a half a million dollars? He also ripped up contracts at Hydro One, which cost Ontario ratepayers US\$103 million in bungled contracts. Now the Premier has made it clear that his comrade the finance minister and him were just warming up. They claim they can expropriate, without compensation, whenever the glorious leader demands it. What contracts do they plan on ripping up next?

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, I'm actually having a lot of fun today.

I'm sure the MPP from Essex was talking about the Beer Store, the monopoly that we've seen since, I think—what was it?—since 1926, somewhere around there: three huge, multinational, global companies controlling the choice of the consumer in Ontario—the only place in the world, by the way. And it's not a sin, Mr. Speaker.

I'll put my bottom dollar on it that when they are in the convenience store and they're in the retail stores and it's a hot summer day—I'm looking over there—there's going to be a lot of thirsty mouths going into those convenience stores to get a cold beer. But it's also going to be available in retail stores. So just imagine, Mr. Speaker.

I had some folks from the US up here yesterday and I told them about the beer battle. They looked at us like we had three heads: “What? You can't go into a retail store and buy a steak and food and pick up”—

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Speaker, that is an unbelievable answer from the Premier—absolutely nothing of an answer.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The government side will come to order. I apologize to the member for Essex for interrupting him.

Start the clock. The member for Essex has the floor.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Trade experts and business analysts have looked at the Premier's Beer Store scheme, and the reviews are about as bad as his approval rating right now. The highlights include: “Flirting with extreme legal danger”; “a public policy gaffe of epic proportions”; a “horse-galloping-amok-in-a-hospital approach to public policy.”

Speaker, the Premier seems to forget that populists are supposed to be popular. So why is he plowing ahead with this risky and expensive scheme that could end up costing taxpayers \$1 billion? Why are you putting that on the backs of the taxpayers—your penchant for beer?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The member for Sault Ste. Marie must come to order. The member for Niagara West must come to order. The member for Markham—Stouffville must come to order.

Start the clock. Premier to reply.

1110

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Finance.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: To be clear to the people of Ontario who may not be aware, the government does not own the Beer Store, as many people believe. It is owned by three multinational, global beer companies.

Speaker, our parliamentary system, as you know, gives us the tools to get out of bad deals signed by the previous Liberal government. Our legislation ensures that we will get the best possible deal for consumers and taxpayers and we will not be held hostage by multinational companies.

This sweetheart deal that the Liberals signed is a terrible deal for Ontario consumers and small businesses. Left alone, as the NDP would want, this unfair deal would continue for six more years. You have to wonder why these multinational corporations are so opposed to us selling their products in more convenience stores—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Essex, come to order. The member for Niagara Falls, come to order. The member for Waterloo, come to order.

Next question.

EDUCATION

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. I'm joined, as I said earlier this morning, by a group of students from my community of Don Valley West and from Don Valley East. The class size changes being implemented by this government will have a direct impact on these students, who will find themselves sitting in classes with more students, in schools with fewer adults and with fewer optional courses available to them.

The minister has previously used academic outcomes in countries like China and Vietnam to justify the increase in class size. Both jurisdictions have very test-oriented, highly competitive education systems with notably high levels of student anxiety and depression. A 2019 UNICEF study points to the pressures of school in Vietnam as a major contributor to mental health problems in teenagers.

Could the minister share with us all this morning the studies that she has used that demonstrate a direct link between increased class size and improved student outcomes without accompanying deterioration in student mental health and well-being?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I look forward to continuing this discussion because, you know, I think it's rather rich hearing from the member opposite her questioning of the manner in which we based our decisions to go forward with education after the disastrous manner in which they totally derailed education in Ontario over the span of 15 years. They actually destroyed our students' opportunity to learn math in a proper way. They destroyed the atmosphere in the schools, creating mental health issue after mental health issue.

The study that has led the way and informed the policy that we're making was based on the responses of 72,000

people from across Ontario last fall. Seventy-two thousand people chose to take the time to either participate in a telephone town hall, online survey or written submissions to tell us how to fix the mess that that member opposite made to education—

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

Interjections.

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

I recognize again the member for Don Valley West to do her supplementary.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I'm interested to know how many of those people actually said "increase class size."

Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the beautiful new Sioux North High School, as the minister did, in Sioux Lookout last week. The building is impressive and it will be a community asset for years to come. Even more impressive are the staff and students of the Keewatin Patricia District School Board, and I know the minister agrees.

As she knows, Indigenous youth are the fastest growing group of young people in Ontario. We need them to be at their very best, but they face challenges that the students here today do not. They often have to travel thousands of kilometres to get to high school, where they're without the support of their community. They're dealing with the intergenerational trauma of residential schools. For all those reasons and more, they need supports in their high schools so they can graduate and go on to college, university or skilled training.

One of the brilliant supports the Keewatin Patricia board has put in place is graduation coaches. Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister had a chance to meet some of the teachers, support staff and community elders who are these grad coaches.

Mr. Speaker, given that the administration of the Keewatin Patricia board is planning for staff cuts as a result of the class size increases, can the minister today guarantee that the supports that are actually and demonstrably improving opportunity for Indigenous students will not be cut?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: It almost feels like this is a lob ball, and I appreciate the question very much.

Yes, to the member opposite: Absolutely, it was a great day at Sioux North in Sioux Lookout last week. The vice-principal of that particular school, Jenny, was almost in tears when she said, "Thank you for expanding the grad coach program." I chose to expand, out of a pilot program that the Liberals facilitated—I expanded the program to touch 37 different coaches in 31 school boards to provide support to Indigenous students as they pursue their diploma. It's something that's working incredibly well. It's something that the member opposite probably should have thought about expanding during her time over the last 15 years.

Let me tell you: We're also investing \$3.25 million to support the implementation of the newly released curriculum that we announced in Thunder Bay last week. I look forward to working with our Indigenous partners as we meet in June to talk about how else we can better support our Indigenous students across Ontario.

ONTARIO BUDGET

Mr. Michael Parsa: Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Over the past month, we've heard from people across the province about our government's plan to protect what matters most. Hearing from my constituents has made one thing very clear to me: Budget 2019 was a resounding success.

After 15 years of Liberal tax-and-spend policies, the people of Ontario were tired and wanted change. Finally, their government has put forward a plan that puts people first and will restore accountability and trust in our province's finances.

I look forward to joining all my colleagues to vote in favour of the Protecting What Matters Most Act later on today. Would the minister please tell the House the important changes that the people of Ontario can expect if the legislation passes today?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you to the member for Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill. The Protecting What Matters Most Act turns the page on 15 failed Liberal budgets, waste, mismanagement and hydro scandals. Finally, the people of Ontario have a government that is committed to being open about how we spend their money.

The proposed Fiscal Sustainability, Transparency and Accountability Act puts people first and restores accountability and trust in the province's finances once again. This is a huge step towards reducing the deficit we inherited from the previous government. As I said earlier, they were spending \$40 million a day more than they brought in. We look forward to bringing transparency to the people of Ontario, and hope that all members of this House vote in favour of protecting what matters most.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Michael Parsa: Thank you to the minister for his response. Trust, transparency and accountability have been absent for far too long in Ontario, Speaker. By reversing this trend, we can implement our plan to protect what matters most while respecting taxpayers and being fully transparent in our decisions.

We're putting people first in everything we do. We're providing relief to families and to individuals. We're making Ontario open for business and open for jobs, and we're doing it all in order to protect the essential services that the people across Ontario rely on.

Would the minister explain how the Protecting What Matters Most Act will help us fulfill these commitments, bring relief, and ensure the sustainability of our critical public services?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: We cannot wait to bring the Protecting What Matters Most Act for third reading in just a few more minutes.

It's unfortunate that the NDP have already made their opposition to this bill clear, but it's not too late for them to change their minds.

1120

It's not too late to join us in voting in favour of the CARE Tax Credit, which will provide 300,000 families with up to 75% of their eligible child care expenses. The NDP can

still vote for modernizing the skilled trades and apprenticeship act, which will make it easier for young people to get the skills they need to find a well-paying job. They can still support the PTSD Awareness Day, an important sign of progress as our government continues to make historic investments in mental health.

Speaker, the NDP have the opportunity to do the right thing now and join us in protecting what matters most.

ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ma question est pour le premier ministre. En raison des coupures draconiennes imposées par ce gouvernement, le futur de l'éducation en langue française dans le nord-est de la province est en péril. La semaine passée, j'ai eu la chance de rencontrer plusieurs enseignantes et enseignants du conseil scolaire francophone de ma région. Ces éducateurs sont venus à mon bureau partager leurs inquiétudes et leurs préoccupations par rapport aux coupures en éducation.

Ma question : est-ce l'intention de ce premier ministre de faire savoir aux francophones que l'éducation de leurs enfants n'est pas une priorité pour son gouvernement?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Education.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk about what our government is doing in support of francophone education. Again, I have to thank the member opposite for allowing us the opportunity to stand up in this House and share that over the next year, our government will be providing our French-language boards with over \$1.8 billion in grants for student needs. This represents a \$16-million increase over what was committed by the previous Liberal government.

We are absolutely on the right trajectory in terms of supporting and growing our French education in this province. We'll continue to work with our partners and do the right thing, because French education needs to be an important part of our children's education.

I have family members who actually are teaching in francophone schools, and I'm hearing first-hand the importance of making sure that people have choice. The francophone language and francophone education in Ontario are absolutely paramount in the overall successful landscape of education in this province. Again, I say "merci beaucoup" to—

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

M. Guy Bourgouin: J'apprécie la réponse de la ministre, mais allez dire ça aux 50 ou 70 enseignants qui vont perdre leur emploi cet été.

Encore au premier ministre : les coupures de cette envergure auront un effet dévastateur pour l'éducation des enfants dans mon comté. Peut-être que vous ne le savez pas, mais environ 60 % des résidents de Mushkegowuk–Baie James sont francophones. Les enseignants sont débordés. On manque d'enseignants qualifiés et on manque de suppléants.

Est-ce que le premier ministre a l'intention de démanteler le système d'éducation dans une région majoritairement francophone?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Again, Speaker, I have to share with the member opposite that “c'est dommage.” It's too bad that—it is really too bad—the people opposite in the party are fearmongering. It doesn't matter what language you speak; fearmongering is fearmongering. This party just doesn't seem to get enough of it.

The fact of the matter is, we're investing in francophone education in this province. Our education partners know that we're sincere when we say that francophone languages and francophone education are paramount in importance to making sure that we have a robust education system in this province. We're leading by example.

Again, in terms of school boards, generally speaking, I say that surely, when it comes to the waste that people are pointing to, they can find one, two or possibly four cents on the dollar within their administration as opposed to—

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

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION ÉDUCATION EN FRANÇAIS

Mr. Jeremy Roberts: My question is to my friend the Minister of Education. Mr. Speaker, through you, I know that our government has been clear about our commitment to get education in Ontario back on track. This is a key priority for many parents in my riding of Ottawa West–Nepean. For that to happen, it is clear that our students need to be prepared with the skills they require to succeed, like being able to speak French.

With over 100,000 students enrolled in French-language schools across Ontario, could the minister please tell us what she is doing to support French-language education right here in Ontario?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Merci beaucoup to the member from Ottawa West–Nepean. I know he's doing great work on behalf of his riding and as a member of our caucus. I thank you for all you do. You lead with your heart, Jeremy, and I thank you for that.

But I also want to say “merci beaucoup” to ACÉPO, who is here with us in the gallery as well. They are excellent advocates for our French public boards.

I am extremely proud of the investments our government is making to ensure the success of our French-language education system here in Ontario. I know they're leading by example. I say “merci beaucoup” again for the manner in which they're leading, cohabitating and making sure capital dollars are well invested. They're leading by example in that regard. Graduation rates are at historic highs and enrolment has increased. Our government is excited to have French-language education in Ontario not only growing, but thriving.

Just three weeks ago, my parliamentary assistant, the member from Niagara West, announced that our govern-

ment is investing almost \$20 million in projects and initiatives to support students, parents and teachers in Francophone-language schools—

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

M. Jeremy Roberts: Merci à la ministre pour cette réponse. Je suis si heureux que notre gouvernement reconnaisse l'importance de l'éducation francophone et je suis fier que notre gouvernement fasse tant de choses pour appuyer les écoliers, les élèves et les familles dans notre système d'éducation de langue française.

Monsieur le Président, je sais que cet investissement crucial fournira un appui dont la communauté francophone a besoin dans cette province, mais est-ce que la ministre pourrait nous en dire plus au sujet de ce que notre gouvernement fait pour appuyer les conseils scolaires de langue française et leurs étudiants en Ontario?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: To the ministre des Affaires francophones.

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: J'aimerais aussi encore remercier le député d'Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean pour cette question importante.

Je sais qu'aujourd'hui, dans la galerie, nous avons ici les membres de l'ACÉPO et j'espère que nous toutes et nous tous dans cette Chambre pouvons reconnaître le travail important qu'ils réalisent pour nos conseils scolaires publics de langue française. Je vous remercie.

L'an prochain, notre gouvernement va fournir aux conseils scolaires publics de langue française plus de 1,8 milliard de dollars. Cet investissement crucial représente un investissement supérieur de plus de 16 millions de dollars par rapport aux sommes engagées par le gouvernement précédent pour l'année scolaire 2018-2019.

Notre gouvernement va continuer de travailler avec nos partenaires en éducation—

Le Président (L'hon. Ted Arnott): Merci beaucoup. Next question.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Mr. Joel Harden: My question is for the Premier. This week is National AccessAbility Week. While we've made strides and progress in this province, it's thanks to disability rights activists around our towns and cities. Unfortunately, the previous government paid lip service to the goal of accessibility, and this government is on track to do the same.

During the election campaign, the Premier promised stronger enforcement of accessibility laws, a clear strategy to meet accessibility standards, examining our building code requirements for accessibility provisions and requiring design professionals to have accessibility training. But we didn't hear any announcement in the budget on this, and I'm wondering why there's no prioritization of accessibility during National AccessAbility Week for this government.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: To the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I thank the member of the opposition for raising the important question. I want to assure this House that this government takes our responsibilities for Ontarians living with disabilities very seriously.

1130

Last week, we announced further details of our plan to partner with the Rick Hansen Foundation on their building certification program. This \$1.3 million that we're investing will allow us to perform accessibility audits on over 200 buildings over the next two years.

We know there's more to do, but it's also time for real action and we are taking it right now.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: To put that in perspective, to what the minister said, \$1.3 million is less than what the Premier of this government is spending on his own personal lawyer in his office, Mr. Gavin Tighe.

People with disabilities deserve more from this government. We know that the last government talked a great talk but delivered very little. We know that Queen's Park, the very building in which you and I are working, is not fully accessible. That is true across this province: Health care, education, transportation and our spaces of recreation remain inaccessible, Speaker, and we are obliged by law to make this province fully accessible by 2025.

Tomorrow, we are going to be introducing a private member's motion that will require us, as a Legislature, to set clear targets on accessibility. I have a very clear question for the Premier or for the minister: Will you be supporting this motion tomorrow?

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I will repeat what the opposition member said. The previous government for the last 15 years did very little, like the Honourable David Onley said. The last 15 years, the NDP supported the last government, so you are on the same team.

The soul-crushing barriers Mr. Onley outlined were also highlighted in the first two AODA reviews by Charles Beer and Mayo Moran. This report is an indictment of the previous government, which your party supported for 15 years.

Our government is carefully reviewing Mr. Onley's report, which we made public faster than either previous report. I will respond to your motion tomorrow.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Ontario has a robust agriculture and agri-food sector, one that our government has long been an advocate for. Agriculture is a critical component of our province's economy, generating \$39.5 billion per year and employing over 170,000 people. Our government is committed to ensuring this sector remains viable and sustainable into the future.

This week, the minister met with the Ontario Independent Meat Processors, including processors in the north, to discuss issues facing the industry. According to the Ontario Independent Meat Processors, total meat processing sales in Ontario are valued at \$2.2 billion.

Would the minister please tell the House how our government is helping to grow Ontario's meat processing industry?

Hon. Ernie Hardeman: I thank the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka for his excellent question. This Monday, I had the pleasure of hosting a unique online round table discussion with northern Ontario meat processors to hear first-hand some of the challenges affecting the sector.

Our government is supporting meat processing to help ensure safe, high-quality foods through a recent intake we opened through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. Through a targeted intake in February for food safety improvements, 39 projects were approved to receive up to \$509,000 in cost-sharing funding. These projects will focus on food safety initiatives, while also helping processors grow and develop their business.

I'm pleased to announce that a second intake opened on May 24, 2019, which will run to August 30. I encourage meat processors from around the province to apply for the second intake and look forward to continuing to support the industry.

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

Mr. Norman Miller: I appreciate the minister's hard work advocating on behalf of Ontario's meat processors to support some of the best meat products in the world, processed right here in Ontario.

Agriculture and agri-business are of vital importance to our province's economy. Our government is committed to growing agriculture in the north and across Ontario, while ensuring Ontarians consume safe and healthy food products. I know that farmers in northern Ontario appreciate having a government that listens to them and acknowledges the unique challenges that they face.

Can the minister please tell the House how our government is supporting agriculture in the north?

Hon. Ernie Hardeman: Thanks to the member for the question.

Our government is working closely with representatives from northern Ontario to hear first-hand the ways we can work together to grow the industry and create good jobs. I want to thank the northern meat plants that took part and shared their ideas.

One of the areas that my ministry's advisory group is focusing on, led by my parliamentary assistant, is how our government can further grow agriculture in the north. Our government recently announced that we are investing more than \$350,000 in two agriculture companies in Cochrane and Timmins, supporting five full-time jobs.

I'm pleased to be working very closely on this file with the Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines and Indigenous Affairs to create and protect jobs and boost local economies in northern Ontario. We want to reinforce the north's competitive advantage and make sure northern Ontario, like the rest of the province, is equally open for business.

I'm proud of the work our government has done so far and look forward to continuing to support agriculture in northern Ontario.

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Faisal Hassan: My question is to the Premier. On May 8 I met with a group of constituents who have been suffering due to poor air quality in their neighbourhood. For years now, residents of the Stockyards neighbourhood of York South–Weston have been unable to go for walks in their neighbourhood or send their kids out to play for the toxic, noxious chemicals in the air, emitted by industry in the neighbourhood.

Can the Premier commit to finding a solution for the hard-working people of the Stockyards once and for all, beginning with the testing of the air quality in this neighbourhood?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Acting Premier.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Rod Phillips: Mr. Speaker, through you to the member—and thank you for the question—air quality is an essential, essential issue for our government and for our province. In fact, one of the matters that we put forward in our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan was to advance the cause of real-time air monitoring. As the member likely knows, much air monitoring is done through modelling, and so we have both invested in terms of the ability to have ministry resources do that monitoring but also worked with industry so that they can do real-time monitoring as opposed to the modelling in the past.

I would be open, however, to getting more details from the member about the specific situation in his neighbourhood. Obviously we want to make sure that the standards are being met and that both industry's and the neighbourhood's concerns are being covered.

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

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Again my question is to the Premier. Industries in the Stockyards area have been fined over the years, to no avail. All the while, residents have had to suffer and live in fear of the safety and well-being of their loved ones. No parent should have to explain to their children why their neighbourhood is always stinky or why they cannot go out and play with their friends.

Will the minister commit to finding an expedient and effective solution for the people of the Stockyards and to restore their pride in their neighbourhood?

Hon. Rod Phillips: Again, as I said to the member, I would be happy to meet with him to understand the specifics of this issue, but of course, air quality, water quality and the quality of our soils and land are important priorities for our government. We also believe in making sure there's pride in our communities, pride because we are making sure that we are dealing with the local environmental issues like litter, like smell, like others.

So I would be happy to sit with the member, understand the issue better and respond directly to him.

1140

CHILD CARE

Mrs. Daisy Wai: My question is for the Minister of Education. When our government introduced our first budget,

it was clear that it was designed to protect what matters most and put Ontarians first. After years of waste and mismanagement in this province, finally there is a plan that will restore people's trust in government and put money in people's pockets.

I know that some Ontarians weren't always able to access high-quality and affordable child care. Can the minister please explain how the government is bringing relief to Ontario parents and helping them to access more options when it comes to child care?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you to the amazing member from Richmond Hill. You know, Speaker, she brings a certain spark to her job as the MPP representing Richmond Hill, and she's doing a great job.

I'm happy to share with you, Speaker, that since we took office, our mandate has been very clear that we want to protect what matters most. That's why we introduced our Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses Tax Credit, or CARE for short. This tax credit will give parents—not the government—control over the child care decisions they make for their children. With this credit, families in Ontario could receive up to \$6,000 for every child under the age of seven, \$3,750 per child between the ages of seven and 16, and families who support a child with severe disabilities would be eligible for \$8,250 per child, regardless of age. This credit will allow parents to offset child care expenses they may incur when starting a new job, working longer hours or going back to school.

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

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to the minister for understanding the needs of our families. I am so glad that this government believes in empowering parents in my riding of Richmond Hill and all over the province to make the decisions that are best for children and their families.

It was always clear that the previous government simply did not listen to the people. That's why it is so pleasing to hear that finally we have a government that will support parents and put them in charge of making important decisions for their children. Could the minister please tell me more about the CARE Tax Credit and how it brings the greatest relief to parents and families in Ontario?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you for that. We're going to be putting parents first. Parents and their children need to be at the centre of every decision that gets made, and this crucial support will provide over 300,000 Ontario families with funding of up to 75% of their eligible child care expenses. Families will have the ability to choose the child care option that is best suited to their children, including care in centres, in-home care or even camps, because we know that choosing appropriate child care is one of the most important decisions a parent will ever make.

Mr. Speaker, this will make child care for Ontario families more affordable and more accessible and flexible, and this will ensure that parents, as I said, will have choice to make the best decisions for their families.

We cannot understate how important this support for lower-income families could be. In some cases, the CARE

Tax Credit might mean a parent can join the workforce or decide to work more hours—

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

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My question is to the Premier. A report was released on average monthly rental rates across Canada. This report showed that St. Catharines had moved up three spots, now making it the ninth-most-expensive city to rent in all of Canada. The cost of a one-bedroom rose 5.2%, and the cost of a two-bedroom rose 5%—well above what people's wages rose by.

It's no secret that Niagara region is facing an affordable housing crisis. An increase in rental rates will push people further into poverty and even homelessness, yet this government gutted protections for renters and removed rent controls. Why is this government making renting more unaffordable for the people in St. Catharines?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the honourable member for the question. I appreciated being in her riding on Friday. We had an exceptional opening of an affordable housing project, and I appreciate her advocacy for that project when she was on council.

Again, part of our Housing Supply Action Plan and our bill, the More Homes, More Choice Act, is that we realize that there is a record low vacancy rate in this province—probably a 17- or 18-year low. We have to have more purpose-built rental. That's why, in our fall economic statement, we announced that we would protect existing tenants but allow an environment without the rent control so that more purpose-built rental can be built in this province. We need a lot of purpose-built rentals, Speaker, to be able to have a situation where we can deal with that crisis. I appreciate the honourable member indicating that there is a problem in her riding. There's a problem, quite frankly, all across this province—

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Yes, it was Friday when we did attend the grand opening of the new affordable housing built in St. Catharines, owned and operated by Niagara Regional Housing. It was a big day for St. Catharines, as the issue of affordable housing was kind of addressed.

However, with 85 new units, only a very small dent was made in the NRH housing wait-list of 16 years, currently over 5,500 people. It has been about 40 years since the last affordable housing unit owned and operated by Niagara Regional Housing was built in St. Catharines—40 years ago was the last one.

When will this government take a hard look at the crisis happening now and allocate funding to assist the Niagara region in building more affordable housing units?

Hon. Steve Clark: That's exactly what we're doing, Speaker. On Friday, I acknowledged that one of the reasons why our government announced the Community Housing Renewal Strategy before we tabled Bill 108 was because of advocates like the ones in Niagara region, who

indicated that we needed make a clear signal right across this province that we want to leverage every single dollar in the system to build, renew and expand our community housing system. That's why we did it prior to the tabling of Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act.

Our message to our 47 service managers and our two Indigenous program administrators is, "We want to work with you. We want to work with you and leverage every dollar you have in the system," and, importantly, every dollar the federal government has in the system. We acknowledge and thank the federal government for their renewed interest on the housing file. But all three levels of government, all of our not-for-profit partners and all of our—

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

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Education has informed me she has a point of order.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I mentioned before that we just recently announced the opening of Viola-Léger. I mentioned it was in Courtice, but in actual fact, it's in Bowmanville.

DEFERRED VOTES

MORE HOMES, MORE CHOICE ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR PLUS DE LOGEMENTS ET PLUS DE CHOIX

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on the motion for second reading of Bill 108, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing, other development and various other matters.

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

The division bells rang from 1148 to 1153.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On May 8, 2019, Mr. Clark moved second reading of Bill 108. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Piccini, David
Baber, Roman	Harris, Mike	Rasheed, Kaleed
Babikian, Aris	Hogarth, Christine	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Roberts, Jeremy
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Romano, Ross
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Karahalios, Belinda C.	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Khanjin, Andrea	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kramp, Daryl	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Lecce, Stephen	Skelly, Donna

Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Martow, Gila	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	McDonell, Jim	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Thompson, Lisa M.
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fedeli, Victor	Nicholls, Rick	Wai, Daisy
Fee, Amy	Oosterhoff, Sam	Walker, Bill
Ford, Doug	Pang, Billy	Yakabuski, John
Fullerton, Merrilee	Park, Lindsey	Yurek, Jeff
Ghamari, Goldie	Parsa, Michael	
Gill, Parm	Phillips, Rod	

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 64; the nays are 41.

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

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 28, 2019, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS MOST ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2019

LOI DE 2019 POUR PROTÉGER L'ESSENTIEL (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

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

Bill 100, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes / Projet de loi 100, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter, à modifier ou à abroger diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We now have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 100, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes.

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

The division bells rang from 1157 to 1158.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On May 15, 2019, Mr. Fedeli moved third reading of Bill 100, An Act to

implement budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes.

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

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 64; the nays are 43.

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

Mr. Fedeli has moved third reading of Bill 100, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1201 to 1202.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Fedeli has moved third reading of Bill 100, An Act to implement

Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes.

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

Ayes

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

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 64; the nays are 43.

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

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1206 to 1500.

ROYAL ASSENT

SANCTION ROYALE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, the

Administrator has been pleased to assent to a certain bill in her office.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day): The following is the title of the bill to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes / Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter, à modifier ou à abroger diverses lois.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I'd like to introduce in the gallery with us today members from OPSEU. There's Denise Davis, OPSEU Local 378; Jamie Kensley, OPSEU Local 681; and Robin Reath, the president of OPSEU Local 163. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: I have some very special guests with me here today. I have Jacob, Jessica and Isaac McEvoy, as well as their mother, Stephanie McEvoy, from Munster, which is in my riding of Carleton. They are here today doing a tour. I wanted to welcome them to Queen's Park. It's been great to show you around.

I also wanted to give a shout-out to Jane Wilson from Wind Concerns Ontario, because she hails from my riding of Carleton, in North Gower.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: This morning, late in the morning, I noticed that there was a group of kids up in the gallery. They were kids from the CUPE kids' camp. The CUPE convention is happening this week in Toronto. A great friend of mine, Morgan Gibson, was up in the gallery, and she's here. It's great to see young activists come to take part in question period. I want to welcome them.

WEARING OF JERSEY

Mr. Roman Baber: Speaker, on a point of order.

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

Mr. Roman Baber: I seek unanimous consent of the House to wear my Raptors jersey until the end of routine proceedings today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for York Centre is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to wear his Raptors sweater until the end of routine proceedings today. Agreed? Agreed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

POLAR BEAR EXPRESS

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I rise in the House today to share concerns from the people of Moosonee and Moose Factory.

Last week, I attended an information session that Ontario Northland railway held in Moosonee in its attempt to reduce the frequency of the Polar Bear Express train

service. The Polar Bear Express is a magnificent ride that leaves Cochrane for Moosonee on the tip of James Bay. Not only is it a tourist attraction, but it also functions as the main port of entrance for goods and people to an otherwise isolated region. In spite of this, Ontario Northland wants to reduce the weekdays from five round trips to alternate days travelling north and south, and, on Sunday, a round trip in exchange.

Passenger rail service plays an extremely important role in the regional economy of my riding. Because of the lack of year-long road connections to the south, the train provides critical transportation options for families, elders, students and workers.

This government has committed millions to the public transit systems in southern Ontario, and rightly so, but has left northern Ontarians waiting for the return of the Northlander. Now they want to cut the Polar Bear Express. Northern Ontarians certainly want better and deserve better.

ITALIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. Robin Martin: Saturday marks the beginning of Italian Heritage Month in the province of Ontario, and Sunday, June 2, marks Italian Republic Day, or Festa della Repubblica. This day marks the decision made by the citizens of Italy in 1946 following the Second World War when they voted in a referendum to determine the form of government in their country.

Italian Heritage Month recognizes and celebrates the contributions of the Italian Canadian community—the culture, the heritage, la bella lingua and, yes, the cuisine— all month long.

Mr. Speaker, I have previously referred in this House to the Columbus Centre in my riding of Eglinton–Lawrence as the cultural hub of the Italian Canadian community. It is home to sombre observances like the Italian Fallen Workers Memorial, which I have attended for a number of years now on the international Day of Mourning, but it is also home to celebratory occasions like Italian Heritage Month. Throughout the month of June, the Columbus Centre will be hosting events to celebrate Italian heritage and showcase the talents of Italian Canadian performers.

I look forward to attending many of these events in the upcoming weeks, and I invite all members of this House to join me.

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Ms. Laura Mae Lindo: Today I would like to speak about Amy Smoke, a constituent in my riding of Kitchener Centre. Amy is an MSW student in the Indigenous field of study at Wilfrid Laurier University. She is also a powerful two-spirit Mohawk woman from the Turtle Clan. We have been blessed to have her complete her practicum placement in my community office.

I have learned a great deal from Amy, and she has taken it upon herself to teach me, my team and the members of our community about working inclusively with Indigenous communities, the First Peoples of this land. I've

learned that we must work differently if we're truly committed to reconciliation. Most importantly, we have to do more than listen. We need to hear and we need to act, because what we do in this House has a real impact. It has a real impact on Indigenous communities, and that impact extends to the work that the government fails to do and the rhetoric that the government chooses to use.

It matters when we cut funding to Indigenous culture and arts. It matters when we cut the budget of the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. It matters when we cancel the Indigenous curriculum writing sessions. And it matters when we tell our students that learning about Canada's colonial history is not important enough for it to become a mandatory course.

We must remember that learning is our responsibility, and when someone takes it upon themselves to teach us, that is their gift. The only way that we can express gratitude for their gift is to point to the important information that they have given us and put that right beside action. That is true reconciliation.

OAKVILLEGREEN CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: When it comes to protecting our natural environment, keeping our water sources clean and fighting climate change, we need everyone to get involved. Our government is taking action through measures such as our made-in-Ontario fund to develop new technologies to fight climate change.

Residents of my riding of Oakville North–Burlington know best what is needed in our communities. That is why people in my riding are so proud of the work that the Oakvillegreen Conservation Association does to preserve our environment for future generations.

Oakvillegreen is a volunteer-driven organization that focuses on practical work such as tree planting, stewardship programs for local forests, education and advocacy.

I was pleased to join them last week to celebrate the construction of a rain garden project in St. Luke's church in Oakville's Palermo community, one of four to be planted in Halton.

Oakvillegreen is planting trees in rain gardens in Oakville as part of their Ready for Rain program, looking to create more resilient neighbourhoods during heavy rainfalls. Oakvillegreen designed the program and then won a \$75,000 seed grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, demonstrating the need and the value of the program.

I'm very proud of the work of the volunteers at Oakvillegreen and the important work they are doing in our community.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: In Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario, the most vulnerable members of our community depend on the legal services of the Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic. Kinna-aweya's board and staff work

tirelessly and are gravely concerned by how this government's plans will harm the growing numbers of people they serve.

Those cruel plans include:

- \$1 billion taken away from community and social services, when so many are already suffering crushing poverty;

- the stricter definition of “disability,” leaving those with temporary or intermittent disability to be forced to try and survive on Ontario Works;

- instead of mandatory health benefits, a limited, discretionary health spending account; and

- the limiting of compensation to victims of crime.

On top of all that, legal aid clinics are facing their own funding crisis and uncertainty, all because of the Ford government's cuts, taking away the voice of the poor and their access to justice.

1510

This government is bringing back austerity, choosing to resource their rich friends. But austerity is a failed strategy. It causes real harm to vulnerable communities and it harms the economy. The IMF has said so and the Bank of Canada has predicted it, as has the Conference Board of Canada.

I encourage this government to stop the cuts and to stop making the cuts on the backs of the most vulnerable in our province.

ÉVÉNEMENTS DIVERS À ORLÉANS ET TORONTO

EVENTS IN ORLÉANS AND TORONTO

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Écoutez, c'est très important de trouver des façons d'engager les jeunes de nos communautés. Each year, I make an effort to form a youth council, speak to students in their classes, attend graduation ceremonies and sign each graduation certificate.

Recently, I joined a French immersion civics class at Gloucester High School, and I spoke to them about being the leaders of today. I was so inspired to learn that they are organizing a garage sale to support their local Boys and Girls Club. I'm very proud of our students.

Moreover, on Saturday here in Toronto, I joined Equal Voice, the Ontario chapter of Daughters of the Vote, an organization that works to empower women and allows for civic engagement opportunities. I acted as a keynote speaker, where I talked about the importance of becoming action-oriented and surrounding yourself with good mentors. I hope my message, “Actions speak louder than anything else; open yourself to possibilities and take a leap,” is able to resonate with young women across our province.

Mr. Speaker, access to housing is also an issue that is top of mind for Ontarians. J'aimerais remercier le travail de premier plan d'Habitat pour l'humanité. I was at their groundbreaking ceremony of the last phase of their 16-townhouse development in Orléans. I wish a warm welcome to all our new families moving into our community.

HOME BUILDERS

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I rise in the House today to recognize a local business. A local business in my riding has been recognized at a national level for its excellence in home building. On May 10, the Canadian Home Builders' Association held their 2019 national awards for home-building excellence. Over 700 entries from across the country were entered. I am proud to say that a business in my riding, SanDiego Homes, received an award in the new home production category, where their home “The Strathmore” won the award for the best one-storey detached bungalow in all of Canada.

SanDiego Homes brings pride to my riding and to Innisfil as a local family home-building company. They have been one of the largest home builders in Simcoe county for many years and have created more than 1,500 homes in the county. I wanted to personally congratulate them on their accomplishment and also thank them for all the work they have done in the riding, including the \$2 million that they have donated to our local health hub to make health more affordable. It is actions like these that bring our community together.

I also want to acknowledge all of the other builders in our province, as Ontario companies brought home 21 of the 40 awards at the conference—just another case for how Ontario home builders are some of the best in the country. This is why we must work to reduce red tape and allow them to continue their success like we're doing in our bill, the More Homes, More Choice Act.

ARTS AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Ms. Suze Morrison: Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to attend the end-of-the-season concert for the St. James Town Children's Choir. The choir is made up of children from grades 3 to 8 living in St. James Town, a vibrant and diverse community in my riding. I watched in awe as I was transported back to my own childhood and reflected on the impact that access to music programs had on my life.

In grade 6, I had the opportunity to learn the cello at a public school, something I otherwise would not have been able to afford to do. The music program gave me focus and drive in a time in my life when my family was struggling with deep poverty. There is no single moment in my life that I consider more pivotal to my trajectory out of generational poverty than the day that I was accepted into the music program at Etobicoke School of the Arts. I was exposed to middle-class communities for the first time and, through that, I learned the unwritten rules of that middle class that allowed me to succeed in post-secondary education and in my early career.

Access to arts programming was about more than music to me, and it's about more than music to the kids in St. James Town. It's about giving them every opportunity to succeed and feel proud of their accomplishments, no matter the socio-economic situation they were born into.

I urge the PC government to stop your callous cuts to the arts and after-school programs. Invest in programs like

the St. James Town Children's Choir and watch our children flourish.

TORONTO RAPTORS

Mr. Roman Baber: With the Toronto Raptors competing in the NBA finals, what a remarkable time to be a fan. In October 1995, a mere seven weeks after immigrating to Canada, my high-school buddy and I went to the inaugural, first-ever game in Toronto Raptors history, at \$2.50 for the nosebleed seats at the SkyDome. I was hooked for life. Because of that, when I think of the Toronto Raptors, I often think about my magical experience as a teenager of coming to Canada.

Through thick and thin, I've been a diehard fan of my beloved Raptors ever since. Between multiple losing seasons, last-minute heartbreakers, six Atlantic Division championships, New York Knicks in five, game seven against Philly, Vince Carter's miss, Lowry's three-quarter-court buzzer beater against the Heat, getting destroyed by LeBron, Drake getting mad at the refs courtside, I saw it all.

When, two weeks ago, Kawhi's first game seven buzzer-beater shot in NBA history bounced on the rim four times, time stood still. What Kawhi Leonard did for the city of Toronto will never be lost on the fan base. I'm prepared to call it now, Mr. Speaker: Kawhi Leonard is, without a doubt, the best Raptor in NBA history.

And now, with victory over the Bucks, I cannot describe the joy I have for the Raptors fans and especially for the people who make the Scotiabank Arena, to me always the Air Canada Centre, a place where magic happens.

Raptors fans are so diverse, civilized and kind. They represent a true makeup of our magnificent city of Toronto. And fans, we've earned it, we deserve it, and we're going to own it. No matter what happens, we're going to the NBA finals.

Bring on the Warriors. Let's go, Raptors. Let's go, Raptors.

TORONTO RAPTORS

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: This past Saturday, history was made. The Toronto Raptors made the NBA finals for the first time in franchise history. For long-suffering Toronto sports fans, this was one of the most gratifying and rewarding feelings. Canadians from coast to coast have joined Canada's team in cheering them on throughout the playoffs.

Our team is battle-tested. We found our focus and rhythm, defeating the Orlando Magic in five. Against the Philadelphia 76ers, Kawhi Leonard hit one of the greatest shots in NBA history in game seven to win it all and create a memory that will last forever in all Toronto sports fans.

Finally, we defeated the Milwaukee Bucks. Down 2-0, we beat them four times in a row—the best team in the regular season in the NBA.

Kawhi Leonard, who is arguably one of the best two-way players in the entire NBA, is ready to deny the Golden

State Warriors their three-peat, just like he denied LeBron James and the Miami Heat their three-peat in 2014. He's done it before; he can do it again.

I ask all Canadians from coast to coast to continue cheering our beloved Toronto Raptors, whether it's at Jurassic Park in downtown Toronto or Jurassic Square in Brampton.

And to Kawhi Leonard: We know that California winters might be a little warmer, but this city has your back and is in awe of your commitment and talents. Hopefully, you'll consider staying a little longer so we can create more memories for young basketball fans across the country.

I urge all members to join me in wishing the Toronto Raptors all the best in the NBA finals.

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

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Timmins has informed me that he has a point of order he would like to read.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Mr. Speaker, I have a very short point of order that I want to make in regard to committee hearings that are going to take place on Friday. Our difficulty is, committee ends at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Written submissions end at 5, and we have to go at 6 o'clock to have all of our amendments before the committee. It hardly gives time in order to have proper time for committee. I would ask you to take a look at if there is any way that we can get the government to actually allow us the time to be able to move properly when it comes to the construction of amendments.

1520

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is there a specific standing order that the member wants to make reference to?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes, under standing order 100.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I don't know that it's a valid point of order, but I hear the member and I've heard the point that he has made.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Mr. Stephen Lecce: Speaker, I move that the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills be authorized to meet on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for King-Vaughan has moved that the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills be authorized to meet on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

The member for Timmins wishes to respond?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Yes. Mr. Speaker, it's kind of in keeping with what I just raised as a very quick point of

order. We're dealing with committees here. Committees are the place where we do business. That's where we're able to get the public to come and hear, have their say about our bills and, at the end of the day, be able to do meaningful amendments.

In this particular case, the government is making an amendment to the schedule of committees in order to allow us to be able to meet one day sooner, which I think is a reasonable thing to do that we can also support. I would just ask the government that we could move in some way on amending your previous time allocation motion to allow the amendments that come on the bill that's before committee now, that is to be heard on Friday—because the difficulty that we have is that we're going to have people who are going to be submitting their presentations to committee by 5 o'clock. So if somebody comes in on the last rotation at, let's say, 4:40, if that person finishes at 5 o'clock and says something that is worthy of an amendment, we're not going to be able to deal with the amendment because there won't be enough time to draft it, if the government all of a sudden finds there is a difficulty with what they have done in their bill.

What's even worse is that people have until 5 o'clock on Friday to be able to draft their submissions and have them before the committee. Well, again, if somebody gives their submissions to the committee, we get them all in written form sometime before 5 o'clock, they're not going to be given to committee members until after 5, and we're in a position where we can't write any amendments. Why? Because we can't take into consequence what people have either presented at committee in person or what people have actually come to when it comes to being able to present at committee by way of a submission.

So I think that if the government is prepared to make an amendment on the scheduling of the actual committee hearings that we're going to be dealing with on another matter and move it from a Wednesday to a Tuesday, the government should be willing to amend their particular time allocation motion in order to allow proper time for the committee to be able to look at the submissions that were given during the day orally at committee by people who are coming to depute and also for those people who are going to be putting things in writing. At least in that way, if we have a day to draft up the amendments, we have a chance, both the government side and the opposition side, to be able to do proper justice when it comes to what we hear at committee.

I have to say, I'm very disappointed that the government is leaving one hour between the time we hear the deputations at committee, one hour between the time that we actually get the last of the submissions at 5 o'clock, and 6 o'clock, which is the time that we have to have all our amendments in. If the legislative process and the public is to be respected, we have to have a mechanism by which the process allows that to happen.

Clearly, the time allocation motion, as it was written, is flawed. I use this opportunity by way of this particular amendment to when this particular committee is going to meet on Tuesday to say, let's amend this particular one, if

the government is willing, or bring another motion to the House before tomorrow that allows us some proper time to be able to hear what people have to say, to take into consequence what they said, either written or what they've done in person, and then we can actually reflect that in our amendments.

The last point I want to make—and I don't want to take the full 16 minutes, although I can; I can take the full 16 minutes if I wish. I want to make this point: The government is also putting itself in a bit of a bind here, because often, when people come to present before our committee, people actually remind us of or point out discrepancies in the legislation. The government is putting itself in a box where if there is something that we find out when it comes to the presentations on the bill that is worthy of an amendment, and the government says, "Oh, we never thought of that in drafting the bill," they're going to be in a position where they themselves are not going to have the time to be able to amend the legislation.

I just think it's a very flawed way for the government to operate when it comes to being able to draft legislation and allow the process to go through the House in a way that reflects what we heard from the public. If the government is not prepared to do that, it tells me they don't want to hear what the public has to say. That's what it means. I want to believe that is not the case. I want to believe that the government wants to give the public the opportunity to have their say, and if what they said changes the minds of committee members so that there is an amendment that needs to come forward, the government will actually allow a proper amount of time for people to be able to draft their amendments, both on the government side and the opposition side.

Mr. Speaker, you've sat on committee plenty, along with myself. We both came here in 1990, so we understand this process quite well. The point I make is this: When the government does not—how do I say it?—do justice to the ability for this House and members to do their business, it's treading very closely, quite frankly, to becoming a point of privilege. Now, I'm not raising it as a point of privilege today, for reasons that you can understand, but my point is: How are we expected to do our jobs here in this House if the very motions that the government brings forward prevent us from doing so?

Privilege is normally defined as not being able to interfere with a member's ability to do their job in this chamber or within this precinct. In this particular case, by way of the motion, the government is putting us in a position where it's pretty hard to do our jobs, even if we wanted to, because the government is not providing, by way of their time allocation motions, sufficient time between the time that we hear the presentation or we get a written submission to the time that the amendment actually has to be drafted and submitted to the committee. Even if I went to legislative counsel as a committee member at 5 o'clock in the afternoon and I asked them to amend a particular section of the law, we'd be pretty hard-pressed to come up with a thoughtful amendment, given we only have one hour.

I ask the government to reflect on their responsibility as a government. You have the right to introduce legislation, and in the end you must be able to pass it. I understand that as a member of the opposition our job is to hold you to account, but when you do not allow the public and the opposition to hold you to account and have a proper process that would allow us to do our jobs, I think what you're doing is that you're making a bit of a mockery of the situation and of this House.

So I ask the government to reflect on that. They have a couple of ways to remedy it. They could decide to hold this particular motion and amend it, or they can come back with another motion tomorrow, so that we actually add time to that particular committee on Friday, so that by the time we finish—people depute at committee at 5 and we'll have our written submissions by 5—we'll have the proper time, until the next day or sometime after that, to be able to come up with our amendments.

It will also mean that if we're trying to write amendments and it's 5 o'clock in the afternoon on Friday—guess what happens at 5? People are out of this building. We're going to need to have legislative counsel around here in the event that we have to draft amendments. The government is going to have to think about that, because if you don't, you put this House in a position of not being able to do its job, and I think you're treading very closely to trampling on the rights of members when it comes to the privilege that we have of being able to do our jobs.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the response from the member across.

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

Mr. Lecce has moved that the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills be authorized to meet on Tuesday, June 4, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

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

Motion agreed to.

1530

PETITIONS

LCBO

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I rise to present a petition entitled "Support the LCBO." It says:

"Whereas the LCBO in 2017-18 transferred dividends of \$2.12 billion to the Ontario government, which were invested in the public services" that we rely on "like health care, highways and colleges...; and

"Whereas the LCBO is a socially responsible retailer that ensured the safety of our communities in 2017-18 by challenging 13.9 million transactions over concerns of intoxication, underage purchase or second-party purchase; and

"Whereas the LCBO raised \$11 million in charitable donations in 2017-18 for MADD Canada, children's hospitals, the United Way and local charities;

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

"To direct government to keep alcohol sales in public hands in order to protect our young people and communities and to ensure the profits are invested in our public services."

We have over 5,800 signatures on this, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to submit that. I heartily endorse this petition. I'm going to affix my name to it, and I'm going to ask Patrick to take this to the table.

VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mrs. Amy Fee: I have a petition this afternoon in support of constructing a memorial to honour our heroes.

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

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

"Whereas, by remembering their service and sacrifice, we recognize the values and freedoms" to honour "these men and women...; and

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

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I fully support this petition and I will be signing it and giving it to page Declan to bring to the table.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I have a petition here named "Support Ontario's Public Libraries.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

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

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

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

"—for the reinstatement of funding to the Ontario Library Service (north and south) agencies to, at minimum, the 2017-18 funding levels, in order for these

agencies to continue the day-to-day support of Ontario public library services;

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

I will sign this petition. I will give it to page Ariana to bring to the Clerks.

VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I'm pleased today to rise in the House and present a petition in support of constructing a memorial to honour our heroes.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

“Whereas the Premier made a commitment to the people of Ontario to build a memorial to honour the bravery and sacrifice of” the men and women in “our armed forces; and

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

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

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

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

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

I'm proud to sign this petition and give it to page Monica.

INDIGENOUS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I have a petition, with 460 signatures, entitled “Restore Funding to the Billy Bayou in Moose Factory.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services terminated its funding to the Billy Bayou Program for adults with intellectual disabilities;

“Whereas the Billy Bayou Program offers unique and essential services to the Moose Cree First Nation;

“Whereas the proposal will open the door for unprecedented levels of for-profit providers in our health care system;

“Whereas the Billy Bayou provides care and dignity to its clients so that they can live to their fullest potential;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services restore funding to the Billy Bayou Program for adults with intellectual disabilities.”

I am pleased to sign this petition, and I will give it to Sophia to bring to the Clerks' table.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mrs. Gila Martow: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas all levels of government should recognize that Ontario has an aging population and ought to encourage innovative and affordable solutions for seniors housing; and

“Whereas local municipalities should not deter seniors from choosing affordable housing options; and

“Whereas the Legislative Assembly of Ontario should recognize that unrelated seniors living together can reap significant health, economic and social benefits;

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

“Support the Golden Girls Act, 2019, and continue to push for bold, innovative and cost-effective solutions to the affordable housing crisis for seniors.”

Of course, I affix my signature gladly and give it to page Hillary.

CURRICULUM

Ms. Marit Stiles: I'm very pleased to present these almost 1,000 signatures on these petitions that I've been presented by my constituent Ian Finley.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the 2015 health and physical education curriculum was based on extensive province-wide consultation with parents, caregivers, educators, health and education experts;

“Whereas cancellation of the sexual health component of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum would place students at risk by withdrawing instructions on naming body parts and learning about responsible decision-making and consent, gender expression and gender identity, sexuality, sexual health, growth and development, LGBTQ issues and healthy views of body image;...

“Whereas the majority of parents support the 2015 health and physical education curriculum;

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

“That the Minister of Education not repeal the sexual health component of the 2015 health and physical education curriculum.”

I'm very supportive of this petition. I'll affix my signature and pass it to page Maisie to table with the Clerks.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I have a petition 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.

LCBO

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled, “Support the LCBO.”

“Whereas the LCBO in 2017-18 transferred dividends of \$2.12 billion to the Ontario government, which were invested in public services like health care, highways and colleges that the people of Ontario depend on; and

“Whereas the LCBO is a socially responsible retailer that ensured the safety of our communities in 2017-18 by challenging 13.9 million transactions over concerns of intoxication, underage purchase or second-party purchase; and

“Whereas the LCBO raised \$11 million in charitable donations in 2017-18 for MADD Canada, children’s hospitals, the United Way and local charities;

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

“To direct government to keep alcohol sales in public hands in order to protect our young people and communities and to ensure the profits are invested in our public services.”

I support this petition. I will affix my signature to it, and give it to page Declan to take to the Clerks.

FISH AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Mrs. Amy Fee: I have a petition on the eastern hybrid wolf.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

I support this petition. I’ll be affixing my name to it and handing it to page Alexis to bring to the table.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

Ms. Jessica Bell: “Keeping Transit Public: Saving the TTC.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the TTC has owned, operated and maintained Toronto’s public transit system since 1921; and

“Whereas the people of Toronto have paid for the TTC at the fare box and through their property taxes; and

“Whereas uploading the subway will mean higher fares, reduced service and less say for transit riders; and

“Whereas the TTC is accountable to the people of Toronto because elected Toronto city councillors sit on its board;

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

“Reject legislation that uploads any aspect of the TTC to the province of Ontario, and reject the privatization or contracting out of any part of the TTC;

“Match the city of Toronto’s financial contribution to the TTC so transit riders can have improved service and affordable fares.”

I fully support this petition, and I’ll be giving the petition to page Sam.

VETERANS MEMORIAL

Mrs. Robin Martin: “Petition in Support of Constructing a Memorial to Honour Our Heroes.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I support this petition and will give it to page Sadee after affixing my signature.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: On behalf of the good people of Richards Landing, Spanish, Elliot Lake, Thessalon, Bruce Mines, Algoma Mills, Blind River, McKellar, Massey, Killarney, Manitowaning and Tehkummah:

“Support Ontario’s Public Libraries....

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

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

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

I completely agree with this petition and pass it on to page Christopher to bring down to the Clerks’ table.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. I knew that after that introduction, there was a petition in there somewhere.

EDUCATION FUNDING

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further petitions? The member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: Thank you very much, Speaker. It’s good to have you back in the chair.

We have over 644 signatures from students from University of Toronto Scarborough campus. These are from the riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park, but as their representative in Scarborough, I will be tabling these on behalf of those students.

It’s called “Increase Grants Not Loans, Access for All, Protect Student Rights.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

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

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

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

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

“—provide more grants, not loans;

“—eliminate tuition fees for all students;

“—increase public funding for public education;

“—protect students’ independent voices; and

“—defend the right to organize.”

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

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The time for petitions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Mr. Yurek moved third reading of the following bill:

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

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Mr. Yurek?

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I’m pleased to be initiating third reading and debate on the Getting Ontario Moving Act. Mr. Speaker, this comprehensive legislation includes our proposed measures to cut red tape, cut burdensome regulations, save businesses and taxpayers time and money, and help keep Ontario’s roads among the safest in North America. Our government is making life easier for people and supporting businesses in the province by delivering simpler, faster and better government services.

We took action with the Making Ontario Open for Business Act. We took action with the Restoring Ontario’s Competitiveness Act. And we’re proposing to take more action with the Getting Ontario Moving Act. We will reduce red tape for job creators and reduce burdens so that they can get on with doing what they do best: creating and sustaining jobs for the people of Ontario.

To that end, Mr. Speaker, our proposed measures in the Getting Ontario Moving Act will support a range of industry sectors, from railways to tourism to commercial trucking. We are taking bold action to get rid of old, outdated and inefficient ways of doing business. Simply put, we want to transform how businesses and people interact with the Ministry of Transportation.

We are proposing to enable digital delivery of some programs by leveraging partnerships across government and embracing new, advanced technologies to deliver services more efficiently. We will do this by making amendments to better monitor safety performance and reduce the burden on the short-line railway industry, with the expected benefits of increased safety and industry enhancements.

We’re also proposing to eliminate the inefficient, outdated Enhanced Driver’s Licence program because

today we have better options, more effective products like Nexus, the ePassport and FAST programs that have improved technology and provide greater flexibility for land, water and air travel. In doing this, we will reduce government costs and cut off a potential deficit of the program for 2021-22.

1550

Mr. Speaker, we will also amend vehicle weights and dimensions regulations to allow for the use of advanced technology like wide-base single tires, with the benefits of reduced fuel consumption, lower emissions and improved industry productivity.

We also want to make it easier for charter buses to bring more tourists and visitors into Ontario, so we're proposing amendments that would align with requirements under the International Registration Plan. This would make it easier for small commercial trucks travelling from the United States.

We're also proposing to make life easier for everyone in Ontario who drives a pickup truck or a trailer for personal use by exempting them from burdensome annual inspection requirements.

After listening to the local tourism and off-road vehicle sectors across the entire province, we're proposing to further cut red tape to allow the use of off-road vehicles on municipal roads unless the municipality passes a bylaw to prohibit their use on their select roads.

Mr. Speaker, we're also going to improve the customer experience at car dealerships by launching a digital dealer registration pilot. Businesses and car dealers would then be able to apply for the proper permits, plates and stickers online, allowing customers to drive away with their vehicle sooner and not waste time and potentially miss business attending a ServiceOntario centre in person.

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

Ontarians also expect us to keep our roads safe. Ontario's roads are amongst the safest in North America and have been ranked either first or second for the past 17 years. We intend to keep it that way. You've heard it from us over and over again: Careless, dangerous and impaired driving has no place on our roads, and we will target those who threaten the safety of vulnerable road users.

We are proposing a new administrative monetary penalty framework to help protect the over 800,000 children who travel on school buses to and from school every day by targeting those careless drivers who put our kids at risk by improperly passing a school bus. The measure may make it less costly for municipalities to implement a school bus camera framework, saving the province and municipalities time and money. We are going to allow those municipalities to collect those fines, and then work with the school bus operators to put those cameras on buses. That should expand across the province.

Mr. Speaker, we intend to better protect maintenance, construction, tow truck and recovery workers from dangerous drivers, because those workers are among the most vulnerable on our roads and are on the front lines of keeping our roads safe every single day.

In addition, we're also proposing to allow single-occupant motorcycles to use high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, which is a much safer part of the highway for them.

Mr. Speaker, our highways were built to keep vehicles moving quickly and efficiently. However, gridlock on our highways puts a drag on people's commutes and costs businesses much, much money. So we're proposing to increase penalties for slow-moving drivers that travel in the left-hand lane, to improve traffic flow, increase road safety and support enforcement.

We're also proposing, Mr. Speaker—and this is important for me. My daughter is now 15. Next January she'll be turning 16, and she already has mapped out her road to a driver's licence. She tells me that next August sometime, she should be finishing her first road test. We're proposing a zero alcohol and drug blood concentration for driving instructors, because we're holding those that instruct our young kids and novice drivers to the highest standard. They are in a unique position to influence life-long driving behaviour, and we take that very seriously. We want to make learning to drive safer and reaffirm to all our new drivers that it's never safe to drive under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

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

Updating the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act for above-ground and below-ground structure changes is a measure intended to ensure the safety and integrity of Ontario's highway infrastructure. While updating the act regarding permits for stand-alone earthworks would help businesses by reducing burdens on developers and other industry and would allow for timely project starts, in addition, Mr. Speaker, we're going to create an offence for defacing or removing traffic signs in support of both road safety and enforcement partners.

The ministry has put forward these proposals following a review of jurisdictional best practices, evaluations of Ontario's existing policies, and collaborating with federal, provincial, territorial and municipal partners, as well as other stakeholders.

Mr. Speaker, we're moving forward to improve the safety of the highways across this province. This bill is going to work within our government policy to take us to the next step to ensure our roads are safer.

Not only are we targeting dangerous and careless drivers; this government is also investing record amounts of money throughout our highway infrastructure across the province. Whether it be the \$1.3 billion to improve our provincial roads and bridges or whether it be our investment in our highways in southern Ontario, the 401 where

you live, Mr. Speaker, the Tilbury area and Carnage Alley, or whether it be up in Minister Yakabuski's riding near Ottawa in Renfrew county, or whether it be up near Kenora, we're making those investments to ensure that our roads are safe and improved so that as our populations grow in the north, east and the south, they are able to take on the new challenges that increased population makes on the roadways.

I'm very proud to have worked on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud of our team in the ministry who worked to get this bill to fruition in early May, and I'm proud that we are already in third reading. We're looking forward to implementing many of these policies going forward.

I think the opposition has had time to take a look at this piece of legislation. It's legislation that is improving the safety of the most vulnerable on our roads. It's a piece of legislation that is protecting our children. It's legislation that is ensuring that those who instruct driving are held to a higher standard. This is the piece of legislation that is going to protect those construction workers, the tow truck operators and those recovery workers on our highways.

This is a piece of legislation that is good for Ontario, and I'm hoping after three readings of this bill, through committee, we'll have the support of the opposition because I just can't see why—voting against this piece of legislation is a vote against safety, Mr. Speaker. I know the opposition speaks a lot about safety and about improving it. These are actions that we are taking as a government to ensure that Ontario remains one of the best—with the safest highways in all of North America.

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

Miss Kinga Surma: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the minister for taking the time today to highlight the safety aspects of the legislation before us today.

I would like to focus on another component of the legislation that has been debated and spoken to many times in the House and was also discussed very heavily in committee. There are a few items that I would like to provide some clarity on.

The first one is, of course, the discussion about uploading: new expansion and new builds of our subway system here in Toronto. I'm a little bit confused and frustrated. We've heard for many years through the media, through the members opposite, previous mistakes that governments have made in terms of their complaints in reference to downloading services or assets onto municipalities. Municipalities have often declared that it was very unfair, that it made it very challenging for them to manage their fiscal budgets. And so, Mr. Speaker, we are doing the opposite here. We are uploading a service because we want to be leaders. We want to build faster. We want to expand public transit in the city but also in the region. We're looking at this from a regional perspective, and, for some reason, the members opposite oppose that as well. So if they oppose downloading, and that is wrong, and they oppose uploading so that we can build, what is the right answer, Mr. Speaker? I find that very frustrating.

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Another term that they used in committee which really frustrated me and my colleagues was that they accused us of stealing. That's a pretty harsh term. I really don't think that's accurate to what we are doing here, and I would just like to remind the members opposite that municipalities are creatures of this Legislature. I just want to be clear about that; that we are not in fact stealing anything. We are, in fact, relieving the municipality, we are providing leadership on this file and we are doing it because the Premier and our team made a commitment that we would finally expand public transit in the city of Toronto and in this region. I just want to thank my team for continuing to support us on this and in the Legislature.

Another item that I would like to discuss is the TTCriders group. A member of that group came and spoke to the committee, and I appreciate very much that they took the time to do so, but I do not believe that they truly reflect how the people of the city and how the people of different regions who rely on the TTC truly feel about the transit plan that we have proposed. I am a TTC rider and I know that many of my colleagues are, and they certainly don't represent how I feel about it, they do not represent how the residents of Etobicoke who rely on the TTC feel about our legislation and about our transit plan, and certainly don't represent how the people of Scarborough feel about our proposed three-stop subway. I know that there are millions of people in the region who take the TTC, and I truly don't think that TTCriders' opinion on uploading new expansion truly reflects how the people who take the TTC every day and are eager and hungry to see the subway expanded really feel. I just wanted to be clear about that.

Many times in committee, the members opposite—I'm not sure why they took this approach, which is just completely false and incorrect—constantly attacked former Mayor Rob Ford, saying that he was the one who actually stopped public transit, the building of subways, in Scarborough. I just want to be very clear that, unlike you, I was there throughout that term, I was there for the four-year period, and no one worked harder than Mayor Rob Ford and the councillor at the time, our Premier, to fight for subways out in Scarborough. I just want to be clear about that.

I know that members opposite like to criticize previous Conservative governments, but the previous government was in power for 15 years. That's not one term; that's not two terms; that's not even three terms. They had more than enough time to invest in public transit, to actually build something to get people moving, and they did nothing. They have no excuse whatsoever for dropping the ball on that file, so how the members opposite can criticize us for proposing legislation that will speed up the process for us to build public transit—because we know we're behind; we're so many years behind—is just incredibly frustrating for me.

I just want to reiterate to the members opposite some of the things that we can do in order to build faster. We have the capacity to finance; we can issue zoning orders, as

would be required for any project; we can compel utilities to prioritize work; and, most importantly, we have the political will.

I just want to remind everyone here today of the benefits of our upload. It is going to be the largest public transit investment in North America; it's going to increase transit lines by 50% in the city of Toronto; it's going to reduce pressure on Line 1, which is an issue that I know that the member from University–Rosedale has spoken many times about; it's going to double the distance of the previously proposed downtown relief line—it's going to have three stops, not one, in Scarborough; and finally it's going to tunnel the Eglinton Crosstown, which I know 100% that my constituents are behind. They have been fighting very hard for this. I just want to thank all the stakeholders who took the time to come to committee to express their opinions.

I am certainly very pleased with this bill. I'm happy that it's the third reading, and I want to thank my minister for his great leadership.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Further debate? The member from University–Rosedale.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate that. It's an honour to rise today to speak in opposition to Bill 107.

I want to talk about the process that took place when we were in committee for two days. This is a very significant piece of legislation, and unfortunately, we only had two days to have people speak to it.

As I recall, not one person spoke in support of the subway upload legislation, and all the groups that did come either spoke to the road safety measures, or they spoke in opposition to the subway upload.

I want to thank the groups that took the time to speak in committee. They included:

- the Ontario Safety League;
- the Avenue Road Safety Coalition;
- Walk Toronto;
- the Coalition for Vulnerable Road User Laws;
- Friends and Families for Safe Streets;
- CUPE Local 2—they're the people that do all the electrical work for the TTC;
- the Ontario Brain Injury Association;
- Scarborough Transit Action;
- ATU Local 113—they represent the 13,000 people who run the TTC and get us to work on time;
- the Ontario Traffic Council;
- Ms. Meredith Wilkinson, who is someone who tragically lost her leg as a result of a collision;
- the United Senior Citizens of Ontario, which represents 300,000 seniors in Ontario;
- CAA South Central Ontario; and
- the labour council.

I want to send a personal thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedules to come and share your expertise and your concerns to the committee on Bill 107.

There are essentially two themes to Bill 107 that I'm going to talk about today. The first one is the issue of making our roads safer, especially for vulnerable road

users. The second piece I'm going to be speaking about is the subway upload element, schedule 3 of the legislation.

I'm going to start with the first bit, which is the move to make our roads safer for vulnerable road users.

I want to give one small element of thanks before I move into the criticisms. The element of thanks is for the decision by the Ontario government to expand the definition of “vulnerable road user” to include people who are working on the highway. That would include people who might range from police officers, paramedics and firefighters as well as tow truck operators and more—people who are doing their job and putting themselves in a vulnerable situation, working next to cars going 100, 110 kilometres an hour, to make people safe. So I appreciate your decision to expand that definition.

What I noticed with many of the people who came to committee is that they talked about the need to introduce tougher penalties for drivers who are breaking the law and who injure or kill a vulnerable road user. That's where I start moving into the constructive criticism, because the changes made to Bill 107, unfortunately, leave open very large loopholes where, if someone is injured or killed, the driver receives essentially a slap on the wrist: a very little fine of \$85 to \$1,000. It does vary, but the fine is pretty small, given that we're talking about people's lives. There's no requirement to take a driver re-education course. There's no requirement to allow the judge to suspend a licence temporarily if that driver has clearly engaged in reckless driving. There's no requirement for the driver to go to court to hear a victim impact statement.

These are asks that didn't come from me. They came from the community of people who have been injured by road violence, or who have had a loved one who has been killed as a result of road violence. We did hear many of those stories in committee, and they were very upsetting.

Those stories include people like Ryan Carriere. An expert on this issue, Patrick Brown, talked about him. He was riding his bike home. A truck made an illegal right-hand turn and he was sucked under the undercarriage of that truck and he was killed. As a result of that, the driver received an \$85 fine. Ryan was on his way home to take his kids out for Halloween. That kind of situation in Ontario—I think we can do a lot better than that.

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We also heard from Heather Sim, who talked about her father, Gary Sim. Her father, Gary, who was an extra-cautious cyclist, unfortunately was killed on the road. There was very little consequence for the driver, who was breaking the law when that happened.

We also heard about Tanya Jewell, who, in her second career, is now working for the Ontario Brain Injury Association. Tanya, 14 years ago, was riding her bicycle to work just down the street from Queen's Park, where she was struck by a vehicle. As a result of her physical injuries, she says she will never be the same: “I will never not have health concerns. I live with chronic pain and fatigue. I live with depression, anxiety and PTSD.” She has an acquired brain injury. This incident only took seconds but has affected every aspect of her life since then.

I read these stories out because I think it is important to do justice and to remember and honour the many people who are impacted by road violence in Ontario. According to Patrick Brown, a lawyer—he has been an advocate on this issue for many years—20 people a day in Ontario who are vulnerable road users are injured or killed. Those kind of experiences shouldn't have to happen.

What we introduced in committee were three amendments. The first amendment was that people who are breaking the law—not just careless driving but who are breaking any of the 45 acts in the Ontario Highway Traffic Act—must go to court to hear the victim impact statement so they get to hear about the consequence of their actions. What was so telling about this amendment and its power is that we had Scott Butler from the Ontario Good Roads Association tell us what it was like to sit on the Ontario Parole Board. He talked about how victim impact statements are actually very effective in convincing people to change their minds and change their behaviour. He said that “remorse is a really sticky emotion that you can't get rid of very easily.” And “those impact statements were probably the one thing that applicants” to the parole board “found themselves speaking to more than anything else” that may be done. Scott Butler, who is part of the Ontario Good Roads Association, supports our amendment to require drivers who are breaking the law to hear a victim impact statement.

We introduced that amendment in committee and it was rejected, which is very unfortunate. I encourage this government to move forward on regulation to introduce these kinds of amendments so that we can have tougher penalties to honour and respect the people who are suffering from injuries and who have lost loved ones today on our roads.

We also introduced an amendment that would allow the judge to move forward with driver suspension until the driver has done a driver re-education course. That was rejected.

We also introduced an amendment to allow the judge to require community service on road safety for those drivers who have been convicted under the Highway Traffic Act. Once again, that amendment was rejected.

I've got to say, there's a kid at SickKids right now—a four-year-old—who is in critical condition because a motorcyclist hit him and did a hit-and-run. He's in critical condition right now and hasn't woken up. I encourage this government to think about that child and move forward on these amendments because there do need to be proper consequences and because it's affecting people here and all across Ontario. I'll give you the amendments if you need them.

The second piece on this bill that I do want to speak to is the subway upload element of the bill, which is schedule 3. Essentially, Bill 107, schedule 3, allows the province to take the right to build, construct and develop new transit projects away from the city of Toronto and upload them to the province, and then to ban Toronto from moving forward on its own transit plans if it happens to be near a transit project; so that might include SmartTrack. It also

allows the province to take away the subway without fair compensation. It's a pretty drastic bill, and I'm going to speak about that a little bit.

There is no question—and we've heard from the government opposite—that there are a lot of problems with transit in Toronto and the GTHA. No one is disagreeing with this government on that. We had many people who came to committee to speak about what it's like to be a transit rider in the GTHA and talk about their experience as a transit rider. We had people talk about how they used to go to school at the University of Toronto Scarborough and have to take transit one and a half, two hours one way to get home and to their place of work.

I've also had personal experiences working at TTCriders, the transit advocacy organization that seeks to represent our transit riders across the GTHA, and heard people talk about sleeping overnight in the Pearson airport car parking lot because there's not adequate transit for them to go home after their last shift at 1 a.m. in the morning and get back by 4:30 a.m., because they're a baggage handler and they can't afford to drive, so they sleep in a friend's car. Those kinds of experiences are happening all across the GTHA, from long commutes to not being able to afford the high cost of fares.

We agree on the problem. The issue is, we don't agree on the solution. I feel that it's pretty safe to say that this bill to upload the right to build subways as part of your long-term plan to upload the entirety of the TTC—you haven't made that a secret; this government hasn't made that a secret—is not going to be the way to fix people's commutes. That's the problem, and this is not going to allow us to achieve that.

The reason why is because there are very practical ways to improve public transit in the GTHA. One would be to continue to provide gas tax funding to transit agencies across the GTHA and across Ontario so that they can move forward with basic maintenance, state of good repair, accessibility upgrades and operations. Because, by and large, when you speak to transit agencies, the biggest issue that's stopping them from providing the quality of service that is needed all across the region—to increase service in under-served neighbourhoods, to tackle the overcrowding that is a problem all across the region, and to clamp down on the high cost of fares—the biggest thing that's stopping that is a lack of funding for operations and maintenance.

Instead of allocating money to pragmatically improving people's commutes in the near term, this government has chosen to cut \$1.1 billion of gas tax funding, of a planned increase in gas tax funding, to the TTC. What that means is that plans to upgrade stations so that they have elevators, such as Warden station or Rosedale station, will be further delayed, which means that the government will not be able to meet its AODA requirements by 2025 to make the TTC fully accessible. It means that the \$22 million that was allocated to provide Wheel-Trans buses is no longer available. That's a real tragedy, and it speaks to this government's priorities when it talks about uploading the subway, but it ignores the basic, practical, pragmatic things that we can do that will immediately improve transit

riders' commutes all across the GTHA. That, you ignore, which is very, very unfortunate.

We introduced a bunch of amendments to improve this pretty bad bill, in order to make it a little bit better, which is hard—very hard. Some of these amendments include that, before you upload assets from the city of Toronto, we need you to get the city of Toronto's permission first. If you don't get the city of Toronto's permission first, then you can kind of call that stealing. In fact, a lot of people did call that stealing, including the former mayor of Toronto John Sewell.

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The government should also give fair compensation before taking assets, which is also a fairly reasonable thing to do, given that it is Toronto taxpayers and Toronto transit riders who have paid for the TTC. And so, taking an asset without properly compensating or getting the permission from the people who paid for and built the TTC, I would say, is not very nice, and I'm pretty comfortable saying that it's an example of stealing.

In fact, John Sewell had a few words to say about that as well. John Sewell was one of the people who took time out of his busy schedule to speak to Bill 107. Just to repeat: There wasn't one deputant who came to committee who spoke strongly in support of the subway upload legislation. He was actually quite grumpy. He said, "It's really difficult to imagine that any government in Ontario would suggest that this" subway upload "is a reasonable action. It is wrong. It is morally wrong. It should not occur. Governments should never have the ability to take away the property of others without compensation and without legal recourse. We know that other governments in other parts of the world have done this"—he mentioned the Russian Revolution and the Bolsheviks. He was really mad at this point; I don't blame him—"not to great acclaim but to shame. This should not be happening. I urge the committee to remove those sections" from the legislation.

I've got to say, when you have a former mayor of the city of Toronto come forward and say that he has never seen anything like this—the taking of assets without compensation—in his 50-year history of doing city politics, I do think it is time to sit up and listen.

We did introduce some amendments to tamp down on that rather draconian bit of the legislation—get the city's permission; provide fair compensation—and this government didn't listen to John Sewell, and you rejected those amendments—not great.

Another amendment that we introduced was that it is very important that this government keep fares the same as the TTC. What that means is that if there is a plan to build a new project, the fares on that new project are the same as the TTC. The reason for this is that we actually have the highest fares in Canada. We have the highest monthly Metropass in Canada. The vast majority of people who take the TTC tend to be, on the whole, lower-income than people who drive. People are really struggling to make ends meet and to pay for the high cost of fares.

What we are very concerned about is Metrolinx's fascination with fare by distance. Metrolinx has done a

few studies on fare by distance. They refuse to release them. But what we do know is that when you introduce fare by distance, when you move away from a two-hour fare transfer system so people can do short trips, pick up their groceries, pick up their kids—it's more equitable. But when you move to fare by distance, it punishes people who cannot afford to live where they work. It punishes people who, in order to get ahead in life, might need to go to college campuses that are an hour or an hour and a half from their home, and so they've got student debt and they're paying for the high cost of fares. Fare by distance does that: It further discriminates the kind of discrimination that already exists in our transit system. It punishes low-income riders and people who do not have the privilege of living where they work and study.

We introduced this bill so that we could have the government make a commitment that they would continue on a reasonably fair fare system—a two-hour fare system—and that was rejected. That's very unfortunate. Actually, it's more than unfortunate; it's really, really, really bad—and we're going to fight you on that for a long time. It's really going to hurt your ridings in Scarborough and Etobicoke, I've got to tell you.

Another amendment that we introduced was this amendment of, don't sell off the TTC. The reason why we introduced this amendment, the don't sell off the TTC, is because this government has made many announcements that they have no plans of selling off aspects of the TTC. This government has said that again and again and again. So we introduced an amendment to ask this government to say, "Well, if you're so committed to not selling off aspects of the TTC, introduce it into the legislation. We have an amendment right here for this government to approve; make of it what you will." And what did they vote? I'll tell you what they voted. They rejected it. That sends a very bad message, and it also raises alarm bells because, in my experience, when you sell off aspects of a transit system, transit riders suffer.

An excellent example of this is happening right now in the GTHA, and that example is Presto. Presto is an example of what goes wrong when you privatize parts of a transit system and you actually separate transit agency operations and maintenance between two jurisdictions, which is the case with Presto. We've got the city doing some operations and maintenance, and then we've also got Metrolinx doing some operations and maintenance. It depends upon the repairs that need to be done and a bunch of things. What we're seeing with Presto is that the technology is now 20 years old; it's already outdated. The Auditor General, five or six years ago, called it the most expensive fare system in the western world. So we've got an outdated, very expensive fare system that, unfortunately, is plagued with errors. Fare evasion is going through the roof because Presto is plagued with errors. What that means is, you have buses in a garage that are stuck there because they have Presto machines that aren't working, or they're put out on the road and riders can get on and off and not pay because no one is making these necessary repairs.

Hon. Jeff Yurek: I agree. Presto is a mess.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Yes. We should talk after that. I've got a lot of interesting stories to tell you.

One of the biggest problems with Presto is that you've got a company like Accenture that is making a huge profit on the backs of transit riders and transit agencies—where the costs are going up and up and up for transit agencies, and they have very little control over it because long-term contracts with private companies have been set up. Quite frankly, it's not working. I don't want this example of aspects of our transit system being sold off by Metrolinx and having the quality of transit that we receive deteriorate when it doesn't have to.

So we introduced that amendment and, once again, the government rejected it.

Another amendment that we introduced is an amendment to make sure that the TTC is operated and maintained by the TTC. That seems like a no-brainer; right? This government has said again and again and again—including the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, who said in the committee that the day-to-day operations for the subway network will stay with the city. It's very clear. It has been said many times. We had presentations from CUPE Local 2—as I mentioned earlier, that's the electrical workers—as well as transit workers, ATU 113, talking about the benefits of keeping operations and maintenance in the hands of the experts, the people who have been doing it for over a hundred years, and not parcelling it off to different privatized companies. I have seen the impact of parcelling off different aspects of transit agencies to privatized companies in my experience in Australia, because we went down the P3 and the privatization route there when I was a teenager. It did create very strange situations where private operators were only willing to share maps of their section of the transit system and not other aspects of the transit system, which really did not work for riders. So I really fear the idea of anyone but the TTC operating and maintaining the TTC—and this government has said so too. So we introduced the amendment to say, "Look, you care about it. Here's the amendment. Can you introduce it into Bill 107 and make it part of the law?" You rejected it.

When this government makes a decision to reject an amendment, it tells me very clearly that the promises they're making might not be the promises they keep; they're not interested in accepting amendments that would require them to uphold their promises in legislation. That's a big concern.

Finally, we introduced an amendment—actually, we did two more; we did quite a lot—to require Metrolinx to publish information and use evidence to indicate that the upload is in the public interest. There are a few reasons. Number one, this subway upload process has been shrouded in secrecy. The city of Toronto has 61 very reasonable questions to the province, asking them basic information like ridership, growth projections, where the stations are going to be, how you came up with your cost estimates, what kind of technology you are going to use, and what kind of fare system you are going to move forward on. All of that is shrouded in secrecy. We know

nothing. The public knows nothing. The TTC knows very little. The mayor of Toronto knows very little.

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We felt it would be sensible to have Metrolinx publish information, to make it public so that we can get some kind of indication of how you made this decision, and is it in the best interests of the public? Rejected.

Then, finally, we introduced a measure to require that uploaded assets, such as the building of new transit projects, should not be delivered using a public-private partnership. The reason why we introduced that amendment is because the delivery of public-private partnership projects, particularly of transit, has not had a good track record of success in the history of Ontario.

The Auditor General, who is not the Liberal government's friend either, did a pretty comprehensive report and studied P3 projects within Ontario over the last 10 or so years, and proved pretty clearly that P3 projects tend to cost more than if they would be delivered in the public sector.

This example is also true when we actually look at specific transit projects that are being built. The classic example is the Eglinton Crosstown. The Eglinton Crosstown was a P3 project, so we gave the consortium a ton of extra money, a premium, in order to build the Eglinton Crosstown on time and on budget. If it went over and there were cost overruns, we're giving them a premium so that they take on the risk—which means that if there are cost overruns, they have to pay for it.

But what happened—and this is what is typical with P3 projects—is that the consortium came back after a period of time and said, "You know what? We are actually experiencing cost overruns, but we want the taxpayers to pay for the cost overruns." And what do you know? Metrolinx turned around and said, "Yeah, okay," and they gave this consortium the largest taxpayer-funded payout to a P3 project in Ontario's history, even though this consortium was paid a premium to deliver this project and to take on the risk. That's very unfortunate.

I did summarize the amendments that we introduced. They were rejected. So I just want to conclude that in the two days of committee hearings that we had, not one person spoke in support of the subway upload, and it's pretty obvious why. Stealing city of Toronto assets is not good practice; in fact, it's bad. Refusing to provide fair compensation to municipalities is unethical, and, to quote John Sewell, "morally wrong." Playing poorly with municipalities you expect to fund your new transit expansion project is really not going to work out well for you in the long term, and doing away with evidence-based decision-making is really not a good idea because the public only has so much appetite for new transit projects to be built and further construction.

What I'm trying to say there is that you need to get it right, and that means doing due diligence and planning. I encourage this government to move forward on a better solution: Reject this legislation, put riders first, properly fund the TTC so that we can actually improve transit riders' experience, use evidence-based decision-making

when building transit, and work with municipalities and the federal government to make that happen.

You do not need to upload a subway in order to build new transit. You need to put the money forward and you need to work collaboratively with municipalities, and I encourage you to do that.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour to rise today to contribute to the debate on Bill 107, the Getting Ontario Moving Act. I had actually hoped to vote in favour of this bill because we do need to get Ontario moving. Unfortunately, I'm worried that the government is going to fail to deliver on the title of that bill, but the one thing I agree with the government on is that previous governments have failed to build enough transit in Ontario.

This bill also misses a golden opportunity to make our roads and streets safer for all road users.

Mr. Speaker, we do need to get Ontario moving, especially in the greater Golden Horseshoe. Gridlock is damaging our quality of life, it's hurting our economy and it's contributing to the climate crisis. Gridlock costs each household in the GTA around \$125 per year. It costs the region's economy \$6 billion a year in lost productivity, and if we don't build more transit, that will rise to \$15 billion a year in the next decade. But this government's plan to rip up existing transit plans, to waste time and money that have gone into those plans, will not build more transit. Actually, it will lead to more delays.

I want to remind the members of this House and the people watching today that we've seen this act before. Right now, a seven-stop LRT could be opening in Scarborough if the Premier, when he was a member of Toronto city council, hadn't led the charge to rip up those plans—plans that were already approved by all three levels of government.

Now, once again, the people of Scarborough are getting the short end of the stick. The Premier's back-of-the-napkin transit scheme does not include the Eglinton East line into Scarborough, even though the Premier promised to build it. Promise made, promise broken.

I'm also deeply concerned that the government has only pledged to fund 40% of its \$28-billion transit plan. I ask, how does the government expect to actually secure the other 60% of the funding from other levels of government when the Premier is actively at war with them? Getting transit built hinges on working collaboratively and constructively with other orders of government, not using them as punching bags. As we've seen in the past, ripping up plans and going to war with other levels of government will not get transit built. And the people of the GTHA cannot afford more delays.

We also heard over and over again at committee from people with serious concerns about Bill 107, which seizes transit assets with or without compensation for the affected municipalities. Schedule 3 of Bill 107 sets a dangerous precedent for municipalities across Ontario, who may think twice now about putting local tax dollars into major projects, knowing that the province could just come along and seize those assets without compensation.

There may be some good arguments to upload the subway as part of a larger regional transit system, to utilize the province's fiscal tools to finance the building of transit. But in order to do that, you have to do it in consultation with affected municipalities. You need to do it with their support. It needs to be done as part of a broader regional vision for transit in the greater Golden Horseshoe, not just focused on the city of Toronto.

So, let's talk about getting moving, right now, on electrified all-day, two-way GO service along the innovation corridor between Toronto, Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo. Let's talk about service to Niagara and all parts of the greater Golden Horseshoe, and let's connect those services seamlessly and affordably with the TTC.

But, unfortunately, Bill 107 fails to deliver on this comprehensive vision. And as municipalities push back against the provincial government moving forward unilaterally, once again, it may even impede progress on this broader vision of a regional system.

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Another place where Bill 107 falls short is in keeping vulnerable road users safe. The people of Ontario deserve to have safe roads and streets, no matter what mode of transportation they choose. That's why this government has lost such a huge opportunity to include protections for vulnerable road users in schedule 1 of Bill 107.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you know this: In 2016, 6,348 vulnerable road users were injured in Ontario. Last year alone, 108 vulnerable road users were killed by drivers in Ontario. Although the rate of injuries and deaths due to traffic collisions is going down, the rate of injury and death for pedestrians and cyclists is going up. This is unacceptable. It's a problem, and it's a problem that affects seniors at an alarming rate. According to the Ontario Pedestrian Death Review conducted by the Office of the Chief Coroner, pedestrians over the age of 65 accounted for a striking disproportion of fatalities on our roads.

The coroner's report shows that we have to act now to make our roads and streets safer for vulnerable road users. And while Bill 107 takes some steps in this direction to improve road safety for people working on highways, such as tow truck drivers—and I want to compliment the government for doing that—the bill fails to provide protection, deterrence and justice for all vulnerable road users.

At committee, over and over again, we heard testimony from victims injured by drivers. We heard from families who lost loved ones while they were walking or cycling Ontario's roads. We heard how the justice system failed to provide justice for victims who were seriously injured or killed by motorists.

Meredith Wilkinson came to committee and talked about how, while she was cycling, she was struck by a garbage truck that had turned into her bike lane, pinning her leg under the truck and leading to its amputation. She lost her driver's licence for medical reasons; the person who hit her did not—received a slap on the wrist.

A true vulnerable road users act would add accountability and would deter bad, distracted and reckless drivers

who choose to break the law. That is exactly why, at committee, I put forward a number of amendments to protect vulnerable road users in this province, to expand safety in school zones for our children, to add paved shoulders to our roads—something that a member opposite has put forward in private member's bills in the past—and changes that would expand violations to all Highway Traffic Act violations and ensure victims would receive justice when they go to the courts.

Unfortunately, the government voted down each and every one of those amendments. I ask the members opposite: What do they have against standing up for victims? What do they have against making school zones safer? What do they have against making our roads and streets safer for vulnerable road users? I thought committee was the opportunity for us to have a conversation across party lines. I know my NDP colleagues also put forward amendments to make our roads and streets safer. I thought that was the place to have that conversation to improve legislation. But, instead, it was voted down each and every time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can't support Bill 107. But I look forward to the day when we can work across party lines to improve legislation so members on both sides of the aisle can vote for it.

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

Mr. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I'm very pleased to speak to this piece of legislation, the Getting Ontario Moving Act. There's a lot to be excited about here, because we knew that on May 1, when the Minister of Transportation introduced this act, it was going to be a key piece of legislation that, moving forward, was really going to get this province on the right track. Our roads are going to be safer; we're going to be protecting front-line workers, schoolchildren and motorcyclists. Our government is proposing legislative and regulatory amendments that, if passed, would upload authority of new subway projects to the province, cut red tape for our province, create jobs, and help make sure that Ontario roads remain among the safest in North America.

Today, I will be speaking about the safety and red tape measures which will make a difference for people in Brampton South. The 410, which runs through Brampton, is one of the busiest in Ontario and a huge concern when it comes to traffic gridlock. The GTA has been suffering from traffic gridlock for a long period of time, and it costs businesses across this province almost \$11 billion every single year—\$11 billion. Our government has recognized this problem, and with Bill 107 we are proposing legislative and regulatory amendments that, if passed, will help alleviate some of this gridlock.

I want to start by speaking to the uploading of Toronto's subway system. One of the government's changes in this bill is uploading the projects to the province. This means we will take over the responsibility of creating new subways in Ontario. For a very long time, the people of Ontario have demanded new improvements to transit and they have asked for subways that will make their lives

easier. The previous government hasn't done anything to address this. With Bill 107, we are amending the Metro-linx Act. That will upload the responsibility from the city of Toronto to the province. Our government is going to deliver on our promise to expand transit and make the commute of Ontarians easier.

Another part of this piece of legislation that I want to speak to is about the slow driving. All of us know that when we are driving on highways, the left lane is usually reserved for fast drivers, so one of the proposed changes in Bill 107 is to increase fines for slow-moving drivers that travel in the left-hand lane. A slow driver in the left lane creates safety issues across all of our highways and is also a large cause for traffic and gridlock across this province. Ontarians are frustrated with this and we are bringing a big change to fixing this. Once our legislation passes, the minimum fines for driving too slow and not using the right lanes will increase. This change will align our province with other Canadian jurisdictions.

I also want to speak to some of the speed limit changes that we'll be making along with a lot of the changes to the slow driving in the left-hand lane. With the support of the Ontario Safety League, our government announced three pilot projects that will see speed limits increase to 110 kilometres per hour. Three 400-series highways will be trialed. That includes Highway 402, the QEW and Highway 417. Our government's number one priority is safety and we are doing this based on the fact that these highways can accommodate these speeds.

One of the main focuses of this government has really been around reduction of red tape. Since being elected—and before being elected—we promised to reduce red tape in Ontario. This piece of legislation also moves towards reducing regulatory burdens that have prevented Ontario from being open for business. We're proposing to make life easier and expand consumer choice by exempting people with personal-use pickups from burdensome annual inspections and updating for off-road vehicles. I have personally received a lot of phone calls from business owners that we need to make their life easier and stop making it so hard for them to conduct their business. Fines are turning people away from doing business in Ontario, and we are reducing this burden to show the world that Ontario is actually open for business.

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We are also improving access for small commercial trucks from the USA, which are currently not eligible for registration under international agreements, and face fines if they enter Ontario. This change will encourage our cross-border trade.

Another interesting change that we are moving forward with in this piece of legislation involves motorcycles. We are going to allow high-styled handlebars for motorcycles, and let them ride in safer HOV lanes.

Overregulation damages business investments in Ontario, and our government is done adding layers of unneeded bureaucracy on residents. We will always support rules that add safety to our roads, but we will get rid of rules that serve absolutely no purpose.

One of the key pillars of this piece of legislation is safety, specifically school bus safety. One of the biggest priorities for our government has been school transportation and school bus safety. In our April budget, we increased the Student Transportation Grant by \$92.2 million. In Peel, which is a part of Brampton, the Peel District School Board saw an increase of over \$3 million for this year.

Our government is dedicated to making the transportation of children a priority. That is why another proposed change in Bill 107 is the creation of an administrative monetary penalty, to charge drivers who pass an extended school bus arm outfitted with a camera. In Ontario, over 800,000 children travel on buses to and from school. Another very shocking statistic is that over 17,000 drivers pass a stopped school bus. While driving, I have personally seen drivers pass a stopped school bus. This is unacceptable and could unnecessarily end the life of a child.

Our government will put cameras on every school bus to record the make, model and licence plates of cars that pass buses. Our government will be putting forward regulations through this bill to allow the evidence from these cameras to be used in court. Introducing this will help keep our children safe and will help the city of Brampton enforce road safety—and across this province, in our communities—more efficiently.

I would personally like to thank the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington, who has been a huge advocate for this for many, many years.

Safety of our children is a top priority. We are going to target those who pose a serious risk to the safety of others on our roads, and remain vigilant in our efforts to protect some of the most vulnerable road users. We will be excited to see that at the start of the 2019-20 school year, cameras will be on all these buses. This will be a reminder to drivers who pass a school bus that passing a school bus is unacceptable and will have serious consequences.

The Getting Ontario Moving Act will improve the quality of life for so many people in this province, and will bring our transit network into the 21st century.

I've had the opportunity to travel to different parts of this world, and one of the things I always look back at is how far behind we are, as a province, when it comes to public transportation. When I was previously in Europe, I didn't have to use a taxi; I didn't have to get into a car. I could just jump into a subway station, an underground subway station, and get to and from almost every single place I needed to, whether I was in Spain or whether I was in Paris.

I think our government is taking the first step towards ensuring that we have a strong public transit system, a system that works for people. When I was knocking on doors, people were complaining about how, when they were leaving home and getting to and from work, it was taking way too long. That's time that could be spent with their loved ones. That's time that could be spent doing so many other things, rather than sitting in traffic and wasting time. We are going to be putting safety first, and will

continue to pass legislation that will give our municipalities, the province, our police greater powers to ensure that residents, especially our children, are safe on the roads.

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

Ms. Doly Begum: It is my pleasure to speak about transit, but not so much about this bill. It's interesting that this bill called "Getting Ontario Moving," which focuses so much on Toronto, which is a little bit unnerving—and then it focuses a lot on Scarborough. We even have members in the House from the government side talking about Scarborough who don't even represent ridings in Scarborough. It completely fails to address the transportation needs within Scarborough.

Mr. Speaker, people are really, really tired—

Interjection.

Ms. Doly Begum: Now I have the member from Scarborough—Agincourt heckling me because I questioned his judgment on speaking about Scarborough ridership and transit.

When it comes to transit in Scarborough, residents are tired; they're exhausted. They're tired of waiting for buses. They're tired of waiting for 40 minutes and then watching a "Not in service" bus go by. They're tired of getting on a bus and then seeing how cramped, how packed it is, and being almost unable to breathe. They're tired of the transit costs rising every single year, and yet experiencing such poor service and such dreadful, long commute times.

Last week, I had a chance to meet with a group of Scarborough residents who were rallying for transit in the Malvern region of Scarborough. Local community groups, as well, such as TTCriders, Keep Transit Public, 42 Voices, Scarborough Transit Action, all joined together for this rally. I had a chance to hear some of the stories there. There was a single mom, Jennifer Robinson, who talked about her own story of commuting to work. If you drive, it's maybe a 15- or 20-minute drive. But she had to take three buses to go to work. She would take the 85 bus to Don Mills and then take two other buses, and that first bus ride would take more than 45 minutes. That's unacceptable, but that's the reality of Scarborough. That's just within Scarborough, getting around from one end of Scarborough to another. Her son Troy, who decided to go to Durham region, to Oshawa, for university at UOIT, shared how it's easier for him to go from Scarborough Town Centre to his university than from his home to Scarborough Town Centre. That's ridiculous.

Let me tell you how long people in that region have been waiting for transit: since 1985—probably longer, but that's the last time they were promised. That's more than 30 years. Scarborough has been neglected for so—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: The first time they were promised.

Ms. Doly Begum: Yes, that was the first time they were promised, and they have been waiting over 30 years. They have been neglected for so long.

We had a Liberal government for 15 years, which allowed Scarborough residents to be left behind. That's probably the only thing that this government and our

members on this side will agree on. The then Liberal government did not restore the operating funding—the maintenance, the buses, the things that you need. The things that we have in Scarborough—mainly buses and the LRT—were not maintained well. So we have buses that are falling apart. We don't have AC. But people are still trying. The Liberal government had 15 years to fix it, and instead they destroyed the two plans that actually came forward.

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I want to point out that Jennifer Pagliaro from the Star, in her article in June 2018—the article is called, “How Kathleen Wynne’s Liberals Secretly Helped Kill the Scarborough LRT.” If you read the article—because I don't have enough time—it really highlights how the Liberal government ignored expert advice, ignored the people of Scarborough and really killed every plan that we had in Scarborough in the time that they had in government.

Now we have this PC government, which puts forward a bill making drastic changes. It focuses on Scarborough. The mayor—the Premier here—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: He thinks he's mayor.

Ms. Doly Begum: —he thinks he's mayor—who talks so much about Scarborough, forgets that this plan actually doesn't get people moving from the southeast corner of Scarborough to the northwest corner of Scarborough. It doesn't even get people moving within the region.

Bill 107 is called the Getting Ontario Moving Act. I want to highlight a little the upload plan and I want to quote the bill. It says cabinet “may prescribe a rapid transit design, development or construction project as a rapid transit project that is the sole responsibility....” It talks about sole responsibility, and then it talks about direction and approval projects.

It highlights these things, except that the legislation ignores the basics that are necessary. It doesn't talk about who's responsible. It doesn't talk about when things will happen. It doesn't talk about the capital or the operating costs of these projects and it creates a lot of confusion for people like Jennifer, for people who live in Scarborough who are still waiting for transit to be built in Scarborough.

If I were to talk a little bit about the basics of this bill, which is a recipe for disaster—people are worried, and I can't really blame them. There is distrust in this government. People can't trust them because this government has introduced cut after cut. Then, in this bill, we're seeing all these plans, but then we also have \$1.1 billion that has been cut from transit.

We're not maintaining our system. We're not building any new transit. We're talking about Scarborough. We're using Scarborough as a tool, and I take offence at that. I live in Scarborough. I grew up there. My family, friends and all my constituents—including the other ridings in Scarborough—all these people are really tired, because we're talking about cut after cut after cut. And with the \$1.1-billion cut, it's just going to make things worse.

If you remember, in 2018, the estimates that this government—at that time they were campaigning—the

cost of the capital maintenance that they estimated was way off the actual TTC costs in order to operate, and its maintenance requirement.

This bill talks about the Ontario Line, which is a very vague description of Scarborough and doesn't even get people moving. I want to point that out again: It doesn't get people moving within Scarborough. Let me just share with you facts about Scarborough and what people really need again, because I think it's really important for the Scarborough members to listen to this as well.

If you look at the ridership report of Scarborough, the Eglinton East and Morningside-Meadowvale bus corridors—those three corridors are the busiest in Scarborough. That's actually the same line that the Eglinton East LRT would have connected. That has about 41,000 riders per day. The Eglinton East LRT: We have no idea what's happening with that.

We're talking about the Finch East line as well, the corridor, which has 54,800 customers per day. Then we have the Finch West bus corridor, which has 47,300 per day. Those are the numbers we're talking about when we talk about how many people are waiting for buses, standing there in the cold during winter months with strollers, people going to work, spending hours and hours.

If you look at the Finch East line or the West line or the connection between Morningside and Meadowvale, none of these connections within each other—we're missing the connections within. We need a network that connects people to their homes, to their educational institutions, for example.

I want to share another story about another resident of Scarborough, who goes to the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus. She was at the rally the other day as well and she shared with me how difficult it is for them to go from home to their campus—multiple bus rides, and then sometimes they are late for their classes. On top of that, what happens? We're talking about people who take classes, then realize that they can't keep up with the amount of time they have to commute to those classes and end up dropping them.

Is this the choice we are giving our students? Is this what we're telling our students in terms of how we're getting Ontario moving? Seriously? Are we really getting Ontario moving by the types of choices we're giving them? This bill does nothing for that.

The other thing I want to point out is—I have so many thoughts that I'm—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Take your time.

Ms. Doly Begum: The other point that Sarah actually pointed out was—and she represents the student body on the Scarborough campus. She talked about how difficult it is for students who work part time and go to school. That means we are limiting choices for them drastically, because either they take an hour-long ride and not work, or try to figure out a day where they're working and studying for about 16 or 18 hours. It becomes very unhealthy for them. That's how it really impacts people in Scarborough. So when I get really frustrated with the members in the House who talk about Scarborough and

don't really understand these issues, it's because I know these people who share with me their stories.

Let me tell you now a little bit about my own riding. We have three subway stations in our riding: We have Warden station, Kennedy station and Victoria Park. Listen to this: A woman in a wheelchair—probably in her seventies or eighties—or anyone in a wheelchair or anyone who needs to take the elevator has to get off three stops before at Main station because the elevators in those three stations never work. Some of them don't even have elevators. The bus terminals, for example, at Warden—you can't even get to the bus terminal from the subway if you are in a wheelchair.

What do I say to her? When someone like that comes to me and says, "I'm already dealing with accessibility needs. I have a place to get to, and this, this and this to do during my day, and I have to get off at Main station. And then, now, from Main station I have to take a bus to get to where I'm going in Scarborough. So I have just lost maybe an hour or an hour and a half to get to where I am."

What we just did was that we basically took away a lot of options from her. We basically limited her ability to get around from Scarborough to outside. But also, we basically told her that this place is not for her. That's the type of transportation we have been dealing with and those are the needs of the people in Scarborough.

So pardon me when I say that I want members who represent Scarborough to talk about the real needs, because if you listen to these people, if you listen to the real needs of these individuals, you would understand what they're going through. It's really hard when you are carrying three shopping bags and you have your kid and then you have to go up the stairs because an elevator is missing in a station.

And you know what? People have spoken out. We have had a city council that failed to listen at times—many, many times. We've had Premiers who failed miserably. My colleagues—we were just talking about what happened when the then Ontario NDP government was working on the Eglinton line. The construction was happening, folks were working, and then the PC government came along and cemented the entire line.

1710

Mr. Gilles Bisson: So much for that subway.

Ms. Doly Begum: So much for that. That's the type of government we are talking about in the PC government. So when people are scared, when people are skeptical—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Pure concrete: PC.

Ms. Doly Begum: Pure concrete.

That's what we're talking about. People are worried, because this bill does not show the money. It doesn't look at the numbers. It has no real plan. It doesn't even give responsibility to who would hold those responsibilities to get things done. It doesn't work for the people. It does not represent what people really need, and that's really disappointing. Because if you stopped doing what you're doing with the type of bills that you're bringing forward and actually started listening to people first, doing consultations and then proposing the bills, instead of doing it the

other way around, you would realize that there are real, good things you could do. You could do amazing things by helping people like Jennifer, helping people like Troy or Sarah. There are so many others in Scarborough, in Toronto and in this province who could do so much.

Since we're talking about what you could really do, and because you've recently been ripping up contracts and using that power—if you really want to do good and you want to use that power, why not rip up the contract for Highway 407, which a former PC government threw away, basically destroyed and just sold off to private shareholders?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: An NDP highway.

Ms. Doly Begum: It was an NDP highway, yes. We built it.

If you really want to help, if you brought it back without compensation and ripped that contract apart, now you could really get Ontario moving.

So pardon me if I'm skeptical. I definitely will not support this bill, because it does not help Ontario, it does not help Toronto, it does not help my people in Scarborough. It does not help the people who have accessibility needs, who are working hard and are paying their fees but cannot get to work on time because we have failed—because government after government has failed—to provide the necessary services that they need. So pardon me if I cannot support this government, because this bill completely fails to really get Ontario moving. It's a shame that we call this bill that.

Once again, I just want to say, rethink what you are doing. Maybe go back and do some consultation, talk to some folks and find out what we really need in terms of folks in Scarborough or folks across this province, because then you'll find out the real needs. You'll find out the real safety needs. You'll find out how you can help ridership. You will find out how you can help elders, seniors, get across from one place to another, and really make sure that we're building a transportation system that helps people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Jeremy Roberts): Further debate?

Mrs. Amy Fee: It is my honour to be able to speak today on Bill 107, the Getting Ontario Moving Act. There are a few areas that I want to highlight this afternoon in this piece of legislation that are especially important to me, including how this bill will make roads safer for our children travelling to and from school by holding accountable drivers who blow by school bus stop signs. This is something that I started working on as a trustee in Waterloo region, and I'm grateful that Minister Yurek and his parliamentary assistant, Kinga Surma, also see this as such a big priority.

I, like many of us in this Legislature, am also on our highways quite a bit. For me, it's usually the 401, either heading into Toronto or Queen's Park, or out to the Durham region or Kingston to see family. We all see areas where we can work together to improve road safety, including keeping our roadside workers and emergency crews safe while they're working to help us on the side of the highway. If this bill is passed, it will increase penalties for drivers who endanger their lives.

I'd also like talk this afternoon about the improvements in transit that we're working on with Bill 107. Every day, I hear from constituents in Kitchener South–Hespeler about commuting and transit issues. It can be everything from our local issues to getting to Toronto and then around once they are in the city of Toronto for work or to see family or friends. The minister and his PA are continuing to work hard on improving GO Transit to Kitchener and subway service in the GTA.

I've said this in this House before: The most critical component of this bill, if passed, will ensure that municipalities have the authority to make sure that people who ignore school bus stop signs and drive past them will be held accountable. As parents, we trust that when we send our children to school every day, they'll be safe, whether that means they are walking to and from school, taking the bus, or actually during the school day.

I first noticed how big of a problem school bus stop sign blow-bys can be at my own children's bus stop several years ago. Mr. Speaker, it was horrifying just how dangerous the situation could be. I've seen it many times over the years, and it's even happened multiple times in one week. I live on a main street in my neighbourhood in Kitchener where some drivers are already going at excessive speeds, and sometimes they will just drive right past the stop sign on the bus. It's as if the school bus isn't even there. Then, there are other times where it appears that drivers are just getting impatient with how long it takes for children to get on the bus, and they do actually stop for a few minutes or a few seconds and then suddenly just drive past the bus, even though that stop sign is still out.

Now, there are a fair number of children at my bus stop, including some children with special needs, including my son who has autism. Sometimes he does struggle to get on the bus in the morning, and he is taking a lot of time or needs some encouragement—he may be having a meltdown before he will actually get on the bus and sit safely so the bus driver can leave. But that does not mean that a car should ever drive past that stop sign. Sometimes there are kids who are maybe across the street from the bus who are late and see that bus is still there, so they're going to run across the street. They would never think that a car is going to go through that stop sign. The danger that these drivers create for our children when they go through these stop signs is unimaginable.

It's not just my own children's bus stop, but in Waterloo region we have seen this as being a major issue. As a school board trustee with Waterloo Catholic, I heard many times from parents who were frustrated with similar concerns, and it was their concerns that then led the Waterloo Catholic and Waterloo Region District School Boards to do a pilot project with stop-arm cameras on school buses a few years ago.

For that pilot, six school buses were equipped with stop-arm cameras. The data they collected was, for me, absolutely horrifying. Over the course of just 23 school days, 97 stop-arm violations were recorded. Again, that was on just six school buses. That was nearly 100 times

that a child could have been seriously hurt, or worse. Mr. Speaker, during that pilot, every day in Waterloo region at least four drivers were breaking the law and putting, again, potentially dozens of our children at risk. Then, if you expand that data and actually take it from those six buses to all of the buses in the fleet in Waterloo region, it means there could be up to 130 school bus stop sign blow-bys every day. Thankfully, though, Bill 107 makes it easier for municipalities across Ontario to go after drivers who are passing these school bus stop signs.

Another issue that's also important to residents, especially parents, are the changes in this legislation for driving instructors. I do have four young kids; my oldest is about to become a teenager. And the fear for me of them getting their driver's licence is certainly real. There are definitely those parent nerves with them starting to drive. But with Bill 107, we're looking at trying to help calm those nerves and also to lead by example for our young people. We want to ensure that all new drivers know that it is never safe to drive under the influence and are introducing a new offence for any driving instructor who violates a zero blood alcohol or drug presence requirement.

We think that driving instructors should be, again, leading by example in keeping our roads and our young drivers safe. Andrew Murie, who is the chief executive officer at MADD Canada, agrees with that, saying, "In establishing and enforcing a zero blood alcohol content and zero drug presence for driving instructors, the Ministry of Transportation is reinforcing that responsibility and sending a strong message to both instructors and students, about the importance of always driving sober."

Also with driving safety, we're looking at changes to make our highways safer. As I mentioned, I'm driving on our highways multiple times a week and I constantly see the danger that can be created when someone is driving too slowly in the passing, or left-hand, lane.

1720

Just this past weekend on my way into Toronto, I saw multiple times where there would be someone driving slowly in the left-hand lane and then drivers getting frustrated with the situation and then sometimes not just passing one lane over but passing in that shoulder lane where people are merging onto the highway or there are slower-moving vehicles and whipping around not just that one car but now multiple cars and weaving in and out of traffic. The situation becomes extremely dangerous. It doesn't just cause gridlock; what it does is create potentially deadly situations on our highways. That's why we are working to enforce road safety on our highways by introducing tougher penalties for drivers who drive slowly in the left lane.

Mr. Speaker, if this bill passes, we are also putting more protections in place for our roadside workers, like construction crews, emergency personnel and tow truck operators by strengthening penalties. When families say goodbye to their loved ones in the morning when they go to work, they should feel confident that they're going to return safely home. This is something that the CAA is

pleased that we're addressing in this bill, including those additional protections for tow truck drivers.

We've all heard and seen many stories where roadside workers have been seriously hurt or, unfortunately, worse. As a news reporter, I have certainly seen my fair share of accident scenes. I would go out to those scenes and see cars that wouldn't slow down or wouldn't move over for emergency personnel. It can be quite scary to see the lack of respect, quite frankly, that some drivers have when passing emergency workers and tow truck operators.

One story that I talked about during the second reading of this bill, Mr. Speaker, was that of a tow truck driver who had a very close call on the 400. Andrew McDonald told 570 News in Kitchener that he was helping a CAA member with a flat tire when he was clipped by a mirror on a passing dump truck. He told the radio station that the hit knocked him over and threw him in front of the member's van. Thankfully, he wasn't badly hurt, but he said the experience spooked him, especially since at the time he was a single father.

In the last five years, the OPP have laid over 9,000 charges against drivers who failed to slow down or move over for tow truck drivers, police and other emergency personnel. That's over 9,000 times that someone could have been easily killed. Acting OPP deputy commissioner of traffic safety and operational support Dave Quigley stated that these people count on drivers to give them a safe space. They need that safe space "so that they can make it home to their families at the end of their workday." If passed, this bill will put more protections in place for those vulnerable workers.

One other thing I want to quickly highlight with my time, Mr. Speaker, is that there were some changes that were championed in this bill by the member for Kitchener-Conestoga, who is the member next to me, Mike Harris. It takes aspects of his private member's bill with the launch of a new digital dealer registration pilot project. The idea behind it is to make purchasing a vehicle a little easier. Car dealerships in the pilot will be able to perform in-house registrations for any new vehicles purchased at their locations. Again, it is simply to make the transaction and to make buying a new vehicle that much easier for both the person buying the vehicle and also for the dealerships.

We certainly talk about transit issues quite a bit in the Legislature. It's something that I hear frequently from people in my riding of Kitchener South-Hespeler. We have been working extremely hard at getting improved GO Transit service to Kitchener. It is up by 25% in the last year. But Minister Yurek and his parliamentary assistant, MPP Surma, are working extremely hard on increasing transit right across the GTA and the GO Transit network. Within Bill 107, we are looking at improving that transit system in Toronto. That is a transit system that many people from Kitchener and Cambridge do use to get to work, events or to see family once they're in Toronto. If passed, this bill will make sure that the new subway lines are built quickly to get people to work faster, home sooner and to see their family and friends and events in the city that much faster.

We all want a seamless transit system and one that goes beyond our city and regional boundaries. Tens of thousands of people, including from Kitchener and Cambridge, are transferring from GO Transit to the TTC every day. Within the legislation, the upload of the TTC is an important step in building out that regional transit that we all want, to get people moving. With the upload, we'll be able to deliver more transit expansions and those options for riders quicker. This is because we're going to have the resources and can issue zoning orders, and ensure that the necessary relocation work is done quickly.

We're not only seeing that; we're also seeing the largest spend ever in subways in our province's history: \$28.5 billion going towards subway expansions in Toronto. The Ontario Line will be finished in 2027, two years ahead of the city of Toronto's target date.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my immense pleasure to speak about this bill again today in the House, discussing the concerns I hear every single day from constituents in my riding of Kitchener South-Hespeler, especially around commuting and transit issues, and also highlighting that work, again, that Minister Yurek and his parliamentary assistant have been doing.

I can't stress this enough: This bill will make our roads safer for our children travelling to and from school, by holding drivers accountable who blow by school bus stop signs. To me, Mr. Speaker, the most important part of this bill is making sure that our children's safety is a top priority.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I just wanted to check on the time and make sure I get the right time in here.

It is a great pleasure to be here to speak to this third reading debate on Bill 107, the Getting Ontario Moving Act, or the so-called Getting Ontario Moving Act. Certainly, I've spoken previously on this bill, and I'm looking forward to having an opportunity to expand on some of our thoughts on the bill today.

This is a bill—let's be clear—that would fragment Toronto's public transit system by splitting off our subway system, putting control of it into the hands of the provincial government and taking control away from the very people who deserve it and need it most, which is the transit riders and the ratepayers who built it, all of that while rendering hundreds of millions of dollars spent on transit planning and development worthless, and opening the door to costly privatization schemes, higher fares and, ultimately, longer commute times.

I want to thank my colleague the member for University-Rosedale, our transit critic, for her really tireless work on this file. Indeed, let's be honest: She has been working on transit issues for many years, from the perspective of being an actual transit rider. Something that was, I think, really sorely missing in this city was that kind of advocacy/organizing work that took place under her leadership. On this particular file, I want to thank her for her many attempts at committee to improve conditions for transit riders in Toronto and across the province.

In the second reading debate, I talked about what a strong, integrated and public transit system means to my constituents in the great riding of Davenport, which, for those that may not know, is in the downtown west end of Toronto. In my riding, in Davenport, we are served by three subway stations, two of the busiest bus routes in Toronto, the streetcar system and regional transit routes. Those connections are essential to our community.

In fact, as I've pointed out previously, our riding is literally defined—the boundaries are defined—by trains, by train routes and buses and roads. It is how we get to work, it's how we shop, and it's how our kids get to school.

That's why it has been so hard to see our community, and our city at large, held back by years of underfunding, years of short-term thinking, getting in the way of building the public transit system that people in this city deserve and desperately need.

1730

The members of the government, the members opposite, like to talk about us, the official opposition, as if we've been in government for the last 15 years, which I find entertaining, let's just say. But you know, sadly, we haven't. If we had, I can assure you, we would not have the system we have now because we would have invested in transit. We would have invested in safe transit, rider-friendly transit. That has been what is sorely missing. I'm going to talk a little bit more about that vision and not losing sight of a vision of the future and what transit could be in this city if we make the right choices.

The North American average for per-rider support from government is about \$2.60, but here in Toronto, the subsidy is just \$1 per rider. Until it was cut by the Harris government, the province funded 50% of the operating cost of municipal transit systems like the TTC.

For 15 years, the Liberals failed to restore that operating funding. We see the results every single day in our overcrowded streetcars, in our buses that just pass us by because they are so full—one after another after another. You're late for work. You're late for school. Those buses are flying by on Dufferin, and the number of people standing on the sidewalk is growing and everybody is getting stressed out. That is the reality for so many transit riders in our city.

The subway delays that leave people increasingly and dangerously over-capacity platforms—and I just wanted to mention something here, as somebody who relies on transit every day and whose constituents do. When we're raising our children—and we all want our kids to walk to school and ride bikes to school and everything. Some people don't have those options—I understand that—in various parts of the province. In this city, certainly once you hit middle school, you're often taking the TTC to school, and many times you're taking the subway, if you are lucky. You might be taking a bus and then a subway or walking or whatever. But when our kids are learning, in the early years even, one of the things that we teach them is not just to cross the road and look both ways; we also have to teach them how to access transit safely. I just

remember when I realized that I needed to teach my children from a very early age where to stand on the platform. You think, "Okay, you're going to stand at the yellow line. Don't stand too close to the yellow line. Stand back." But increasingly with these very overpopulated platforms—I'm glad I had some foresight to do this years ago—it's teaching the kids to stand against the wall because it's everybody's nightmare that somebody shifts or moves or gets knocked over. I can tell you, as a transit rider, that when I go onto those subway platforms, it often makes me really nervous when I personally can't find a place close enough to the wall. In fact, I know of young people who have fallen in and been very badly injured. So these are the kinds of things that we worry about. We shouldn't have to, but we do, because the truth is that those platforms are getting busier and more crowded every single day.

My own daughter takes the subway to high school every day. Another thing I wanted to mention is that at her high school, they routinely have to just sort of look the other way for the number of kids that are coming to school late because the backup of the subway system is so long. It's very routine that kids give themselves so much time to get to school—albeit some other teenagers in my family may be chronically late anyway. But the ones who are really trying to get there can't get there, just like so many people can't get to work on time and are building in this outrageous time to get to work because things are so badly delayed.

We know that underfunding of our public transit system has an impact on the economy, both by limiting the ability of people to participate in it and also by contributing to that gridlock. When we can't get people to where they need to go efficiently, safely and on time, they're going to stay in their car. That's bad for traffic, it's bad for livable neighbourhoods and it's bad for the environment. For the people of Davenport, my community, and across the GTHA, the ask is very simple: They want better transit; they want lower fares. It is really that simple.

But that is something that, as I mentioned earlier, successive governments have just not been able to deliver. Instead of stable, consistent funding to ensure that municipalities can plan transit in the long term, the Liberals shifted transit priorities to match the election calendar. Instead of an electrified relief line in the west end, our neighbourhood got boutique diesel trains, barely integrated with the existing TTC and costing almost \$30 a ride at the time it was unveiled. Let me point out, as well, that they had 15 years to get it right. It is truly unconscionable that they frittered away the opportunities that they had in government. People have put up with this politicization of transit planning for long enough.

I want to refer again—I mentioned it the first time I spoke to this bill, but we've seen this before. We've seen it when the previous Minister of Transportation made sure that he got a stop in his own riding, despite all the best planners' advice. I think that's what we are really ultimately concerned about as well: Are we charting a new path forward, or are we opening up more and more opportunities for that kind of bad behaviour to take place? I can tell

you that Torontonians are really tired of it, and I have a feeling the members opposite are probably hearing some of those concerns right now. Anyway, that's the kind of power that this government is giving themselves over our subway system. Instead of charting a new course, this government is doubling down on that old Liberal play-book, scrapping existing plans that were voted on by the Toronto city council and dragging transit backward once again.

Even the idea of this subway upload, which I think is schedule 3 in Bill 107—is that right? Yes. It's something the Liberals and the Conservatives have traded back and forth over the years. The Tories first proposed taking over the TTC subway in the 2014 election—some of us will recall that—and then it came back again in the 2018 Liberal budget; what do you know? That budget called for the province to “explore whether major transit assets ... can be optimized with a different ownership model.” What does that mean? Hmm.

We saw what that different ownership model meant for our public hydro system, Speaker. It meant higher rates, less control for Ontarians over their electricity system. That Liberal privatization move—which was propped up, let's remember, by the Conservatives—has cost people in this province literally billions. It's costing our grandchildren billions. Those who haven't even been born yet will be paying for that, and it has cost people today dearly. It could be a reason, maybe, why the remaining Liberal independent members in the House chose to sit on their hands, shamefully, on this matter at second reading.

Speaker, it doesn't matter if this subway upload scheme started as a Conservative idea or a Liberal idea, because any way you slice it, it's a bad idea. It's a bad idea for transit users. It's a bad idea for ratepayers. It's a bad idea for our economy. The integration of the TTC is one of our greatest assets. The fact that you can easily move from subway to bus to streetcar and pay one common fare, as our transit critic, the member from University–Rosedale, mentioned, is a really good thing. It's a good thing. By taking one mode of transportation out of that system, it risks the entire integration of the system.

You have to wonder why, Mr. Speaker, this government would move to take such sweeping control over one municipality's transit system. Hmm. Well, there's the fact that the Premier seems singularly fixated on our city and imposing his will on it, whether it's chopping city council in half, cutting a billion dollars from public health for the next decade or slashing affordable child care. This plan that we're discussing here today paves the way for another series of fantasy, uncosted transit lines, the kind that were unveiled just before the budget was announced. Those—I'm going to be generous and say “speculative”—transit maps make for a really great prop at press conferences, but they will not get a single person to work or to a child care centre or to a grocery store any faster. And I can assure you they won't get the students to school on time either.

1740

What are the reasons this government wants to break up the TTC and give planning power to the province alone?

This is a question I keep asking myself. Well, Speaker, it's pretty clear that this, I think, could be the first step in handing pieces of Toronto's subway over to private corporations and developers. Let's face it—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the member from Eglinton–Lawrence on a point of order.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I've been listening to the member from Davenport and I believe that she's breaching rule 23(i), which imputes false or unavowed motives to a member, in the comments that she's making.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. I did not pick up on that, but I will caution the member from Davenport to be cautious, be careful.

Ms. Marit Stiles: All right, Mr. Speaker. I can't understand either, but I appreciate that. Thank you.

So what are the reasons this government wants to break up the TTC and give planning power to the province alone? As I mentioned earlier, I think it is that first step in handing pieces of the TTC over, pieces of Toronto's subway system over to private companies and to developers. When I think of developers, I only have to remember—

Mrs. Robin Martin: Mr. Speaker, point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the member from Eglinton–Lawrence on yet another point of order.

Mrs. Robin Martin: On the same matter: She's imputing motive, because she's talking about the reasons. She's speculating about reasons that we may have to be doing this, and I believe it's in breach of that rule.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order, please. Thank you.

Again, I'll just caution the member: Do not impute motive. That could very well be an interpretation, so I would ask you just to be cautious, okay? Thank you.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to point out, if I may, as I continue on, that this was actually an amendment. This government had an opportunity to eliminate that potential and chose not to, so I think it's actually extraordinarily relevant to our conversations here today, and I can assure you, it is exactly what the people and the transit riders of Toronto are talking about this at very moment when they think about what this bill means for them.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I will remind the member to address through the Chair.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do want to remind everyone opposite, too, that we are talking about all of this and we're debating this legislation at a time when, coming out of an election, we've had organizations like Ontario Proud funded by these same developers who funded massive campaigns to elect the members opposite. I don't think that we are reaching very far to imagine what the ultimate result here is that everybody is looking for.

If you're a wealthy developer or you're someone looking to make money off assets—that have already been paid for, by the way, by Ontarians, by the very people who ride on these subways—this is a very good time to be in this business. From promising away the greenbelt to making it easier to buy your way out of endangered species legislation, half the bills this government has put forward, including this one, have been about making life easier for their well-connected friends, while ordinary Ontarians pay the price with cuts to our schools, cuts to public health, cuts to subsidized child care spaces, cuts to transit and the list goes on.

Examples in jurisdictions like Australia and England show that this is a real possibility. In those countries, shifting ownership of transit lines resulted in higher fares. The last thing Toronto needs is a two-tier system of public transit where only those who can afford it can take the subway, or where you're expected to pay multiple fares across the system. Again, the member from University–Rosedale made that point very clearly. I think it's a great risk, and I think it's something that transit riders in my community and across the GTHA do not want to see us reverting back to.

Metrolinx, which will be assuming an even greater role over Toronto's transit system in this bill, is already—let's be clear—privatizing aspects of our transit system, and the results should give us pause. Ask any transit rider about their experience with the Presto rollout, and you'll see how eager they are to see more risky privatization schemes applied to the operation of our subways.

Speaker, beyond the obvious concerns about privatization and fragmentation of our public transit system here in Toronto, there is a real concern that this bill takes away local control over our own transit system. I'm going to remind the members opposite that Torontonians built and paid for the TTC, and we deserve to have a say in its future. But by further delaying new transit and scrapping plans and starting again from scratch, this government is not listening to the people who use that service every day. It is shameful.

Mr. Speaker, in Davenport I've been out with members of my community many, many times over the last few months to talk to transit riders about our transit system and to listen to them and their concerns about this very piece of legislation. I've also had a chance to ask them what they think we need to be doing differently and what it is going to take to really improve the system. Because it's not perfect; we all know that. I've outlined that already. We've seen that neglect for years and years—more than 20 years.

We've also been educating people about the dangers, though, in the government's plan for our TTC. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is some of the easiest work I've ever done: Go out with a petition and talk to Torontonians about how they feel about what this government is planning to do to our transit system. I can tell you, boy, the signatures on those petitions just grow and grow and grow. I have a feeling the members opposite, many of them who live in this city or even in the GTHA, are hearing very similar things from their constituents. I just know. I think

it kind of speaks to the mood opposite sometimes. If you ask any transit rider if they think it's a good idea to break up the TTC and give control over the subways to this Premier and this government, people cannot sign that petition fast enough.

I have to give credit to groups like TTCriders, the Amalgamated Transit Union, Progress Toronto and others who have been organizing outreach like this at subway stations for months. It has been a pleasure to be out there with them—again, some of the easiest work I've ever done. It's pretty amazing and people are really keen to talk about how they can work not just to defeat this legislation but to defeat this government in three years.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Hear, hear.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Yes.

I want to speak a little bit about the vulnerable road user piece. It does add some protection for workers on the side of the road, as the member from University–Rosedale mentioned previously, but this is another wasted opportunity to implement true vulnerable road user protections in the act, as per the member's bill. I know she tried to add this at committee. The list of amendments and opportunities here is very, very long and, unfortunately, they were defeated by the government. It is very unfortunate that that happened.

I owe it to my constituents and my fellow Torontonians to fight against this attempt at what I see as a hostile takeover of our subway system. As the member from University–Rosedale mentioned, it's what John Sewell called stealing our subway. That's pretty much what we're talking about: stealing it, taking those assets without any kind of compensation. I don't know what else you can call it.

I oppose the bill's opening of the door to privatization. I oppose its scrapping of existing transit plans and starting from scratch, like that's ever going to get built in some fantasyland that the Premier lives in. I oppose the way that it ignores, most importantly, the voices of the very people who use the transit system in this city.

But I want to close on a more positive note by saying that we can do better. We know what the public values and who relies on public transportation. We know that more people want to leave their cars behind and we know that the climate emergency that we are facing requires us to do that. The time is actually right to invest in transit in Toronto and across Ontario. The province should and must restore 50% operating funding for municipalities, as the NDP has long called for.

Instead of throwing out transit plans that have already begun construction, let's support Toronto to build transit that works for everyone, not just the wealthy. Instead of fragmenting this system and concentrating power over it into the hands of the cabinet, let's democratize transit, let's democratize transit planning, and let's help support those cities to connect neighbourhoods, move people and deliver transit that works.

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Out of respect for everyone who has waited for a bus that didn't come or a subway car that was too full to get

on, I urge all members to vote against Bill 107 and help us really get Ontario moving.

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

Mr. Aris Babikian: It is my pleasure to stand up here and support Bill 107. As a resident of Scarborough—Agincourt and Scarborough North for 30 years, I am quite aware about Scarborough and the difficulties we have been facing in Scarborough transit-wise.

Our government promised that we will deliver better service and better transit to Scarborough. That's why the people of Scarborough, after 15 years of negligence by the former Liberal government—they have not only been negligent; they completely ignored Scarborough. The people of Scarborough are fed up with the way they were treated, and that's why they elected four PC members so that they can bring changes to Scarborough.

Keeping with our promise, our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, kept our promise. We immediately went to action and we promised the extension of the Sheppard East subway and we also added two more stations on the Eglinton line.

If there is any government to be blamed for the mess that Scarborough and the residents of Scarborough are facing, it is Toronto city hall and the former government who should be blamed for ignoring Scarborough. The city hall of Toronto voted 11 times to build the Sheppard subway line. Unfortunately, nothing happened. After 11 promises, legitimately the people of Scarborough got fed up, and that's why they trusted Premier Ford and our government to deliver better transit to Scarborough.

To bring to this debate the rundown conditions of how the stations are operated, elevators that are not working, the buses or the services that aren't on time—what has this to do with our government or this debate? I wish my colleague from Scarborough Southwest addressed this issue with the city councillors or with the TTC people instead of coming and bringing these doom-and-gloom scenarios to this debate. Our priorities should be the residents of Scarborough. We should not come here and score political points on behalf of the people of Scarborough. The people of Scarborough deserve better. I agree; all of us will agree. Instead of blaming people or our government, we should work together and address these issues.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this plan is a visionary plan, this whole transit plan for the entire—and no other government had the vision, the courage to come up with such a plan to deliver better service not only for the people of Scarborough but for the entire GTHA. The people of the GTHA deserve better. They have been ignored for a long time.

Today all of us travel around the world and we see such advanced subway lines in New York, Paris, London and other places. Why is it that we, in Toronto, have been lagging on this front?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Because you put cement in my subway.

Mr. Aris Babikian: No.

That's why we want to change that. We want to put Toronto on the map of the world when it comes to transit. That's why I would encourage my colleague from Scarborough Southwest and the rest of her party members to support our bill, so that we can move on. We do not want to repeat the same useless debate that Toronto city hall has gone through for the last 15, 20 years—11 votes and no results. Our government promised—promise delivered, promise kept.

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

Mr. Chris Glover: It's my pleasure to rise and speak about Bill 107, which is the subway upload bill. I sat through the committee for the last couple of weeks, and the NDP proposed a number of amendments to the bill. We proposed that the provincial government not take the subway from the city without the city's permission, and the Conservatives voted no. We asked the government not to steal the subway without compensation, and the Conservatives voted no. The NDP asked the government not to privatize the subway system, and the Conservatives voted no. So it raises a real concern about what the government has in mind—that they're going to take the subway without compensation, that they're going to take it against the city's will and that they're going to sell off chunks and then privatize the rest.

The other thing about the privatization that we're concerned about is that they've announced a \$28-billion transit plan but they didn't put any money in this year's budget towards it. That really speaks to the possibility that they may be going to a P3, a private-public partnership on transit, which will cost billions of taxpayers' dollars extra to build the same transit.

The other concern I have with Bill 107 is in section 47. John Sewell, the former mayor of Toronto, came and deputed last week and he said that this bill is an infringement upon the property rights of the city of Toronto because it states that the province can seize the property of the city of Toronto with or without compensation and that the city has no legal recourse. During the discussion at committee, I got into a bit of a debate with the Conservative member from Markham—Stouffville. He was saying that, yes, the province should be able to do this. But I would ask him how he would feel if Doug Ford decided that he was going to seize control of Markham's Centennial Park, not let the city of Markham know what he was going to do with it, and deny any compensation to the city. That's what's happening here with Toronto.

A real attack, though, on democracy in Bill 107 is what's called the Henry VIII clause. It's section 47(9)(b). If anybody listening really cares about our democracy, they should look at that section because that section gives the minister the power to pass regulations that overrule existing statutes. That's just words, but what it means is that the minister is given the power to overrule decisions that have been made here in this Legislature, in this Parliament. That's not the way a democracy is supposed to work. This Parliament that we are in, that we are part of today, is supposed to be the highest decision-making body

in the province, and yet the minister, the government, is seizing the power to actually overrule the decisions that are made here in our Parliament. That is a real infringement upon our democracy.

Finally, I'd like to make one more point about Bill 107. The TTC moves 544 million people per year—544 million riders. In 2017, the TTC won the American public transportation award for transit agency of the year, and this is in spite of having North America's lowest level of per rider funding. It's about a dollar per rider. If you compare it with Los Angeles, Los Angeles subsidizes each rider by \$3. So they have the lowest funding of any North American transit agency, and yet they provide an excellent

service. This government is now going to break it up. They're going to seize control of the subway. They may privatize the subway. They may charge extra fees on the subway. And they're doing this to a system that's working.

The NDP member from Windsor–Tecumseh said that the motto of this government should be, “If it ain't broke, break it.” Well, I'm asking the government: Please don't break the TTC.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls) Thank you very much. It is now 6 o'clock. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 o'clock.

The House adjourned at 1801.

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