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Dimanche  
2 juin 2019

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Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Todd Decker

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Sunday 2 June 2019

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Dimanche 2 juin 2019

*The House met at 1300.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** It being Sunday, let us pray.

*Prayers.*

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Paul Calandra:** I'd like to introduce Giles Roca, who joins us from the United Kingdom, and my daughter Natalie, who is here as well.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** I'd like to introduce my niece, Mallory, and her husband, Greg, who are here for their first time at the Legislature.

**Mr. Michael Parsa:** I just want to welcome to the House my dear friend Lynn Perrier, a true champion standing up for our animals everywhere, especially in York region. Thank you, Lynn, for joining us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** It is now time for members' statements.

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

#### DECORATION DAY

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** It's not only Sunday today, it's Decoration Day. Decoration Day is celebrated to recognize and honour veterans. Its origin started as a form of protest on June 2, 1890. At that time veterans of the Battle of Ridgeway—a battle in which nine people lost their lives—united together after the government overlooked their hard work and success in protecting the country and its citizens during the Fenian raids. The following year, approximately 80,000 individuals were present for the celebration and parade.

Decoration Day may seem overshadowed by Remembrance Day; however, I think we can all agree that there can never be too many days dedicated to remembering and honouring those who helped protect our rights, safety and freedom.

As we take a moment to decorate cenotaphs, memorials and the resting places of those who are no longer with us, we recognize the triumphs and hardships, the grief and the victories. As we do so, we are also reminded that their realities are still the lived experience of many around the world today. Thanks to them, this is not a reality we are subjected to growing up. Thanks to them, Canadians are able to focus on peacekeeping missions worldwide, in the

hopes that these realities can become past history for everyone.

It is days like this that allow us to restore the memories, respect and impact of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice. It is days like this that help us remember the lifelong physical, mental, emotional and spiritual scars that so many had to carry. And it is days like this that ensure that the generations that followed them learn about the past while building the future. Thanks to their bravery, many of us will never have to face combat or live in a country that still experiences those realities.

Additionally, those who do choose to serve can do so knowing their stories and their impact in ensuring our privileges and rights today. We will remember them.

On that note, Speaker, I would like to request unanimous consent in order to have a moment of silence recognizing Decoration Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Algoma-Manitoulin is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to have a moment of silence in recognition of Decoration Day. Agreed? Agreed.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

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

#### GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, I have to say, it's quite interesting that the government had to call us back on a Sunday to deal with a bill that they have known about for—how long? It's not as if this came out of nowhere. We all knew that the SPCA legislation had to be done before a certain date. The government, in the way that they organized their House, I think, are demonstrating, quite frankly, that they're not as good managers as they make themselves out to be. Tories always like to talk about how great they are as business owners and as entrepreneurs, and about how to manage things, but they can't even manage how to bring legislation through the House by way of the regular calendar.

So we're here on Sunday. We, as New Democrats, are always happy to be here. Every day in the House is a great day. That's the way we look at it. It gives us a chance to raise the issues important to our constituents.

But we have to point out that the government is pretty lax, when it comes to its managerial skills, when they find themselves having to call the House back on a Sunday for a bill that it could have dealt with at any time over the last year. Why did they do that? I would think they kind of

forgot that they had to do it, maybe, and at the last second, they realized “Oh, we’ve got to get this done.”

I just think it’s very, very passing strange that the Conservatives, who always put themselves out to be the great managers, couldn’t manage their way through the House on a very simple bill such as this one.

#### GOVERNMENT’S AGENDA

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Members’ statements? The member for Brampton Centre.

**Ms. Sara Singh:** Thank you, Speaker, and happy Sunday to you. It’s a pleasure to be here.

I just want to take this opportunity—as our member from Timmins highlighted, we’re here on a Sunday to, again, debate legislation that we could have done through the week, through night sittings. But instead, the government, because of its lack of understanding of how to put legislation through this House, is again making us be here on a Sunday.

Actually, what this government has done, time and time again, is ram through legislation with time allocation motions. Most recently, we’ve been debating Bill 108, the More Homes, More Choice Act. The city of Brampton is very concerned about this bill and the fact that it was time-allocated, and that they won’t have an opportunity to speak the way they would like to to this bill at committee—because this government likes to cut first and consult later. That seems to be the approach that they like to take with legislation here in this House.

It’s really, really unfortunate to see that a government, as member from Timmins points out, that prides itself on being experts in business and management can’t get through what we need to, here in the House, in a timely and orderly fashion.

It is really unfortunate to see. But happy Sunday to everyone, and thank you all for being here.

#### RAMADAN AND EID-UL-FITR

**Ms. Doly Begum:** I want to take this moment to say Ramadan Mubarak to all those who are celebrating Ramadan this month. Today is the 28th day for many Muslims in Canada, and for some across the world. Also, on Tuesday or Wednesday, depending on the moon, Muslims here in Ontario, in Canada and across the world will be celebrating Eid-UI-Fitr. I want to wish Scarborough Southwest and everyone else celebrating Eid-UI-Fitr a very happy Eid. Eid Mubarak.

1310

#### MOTIONS

##### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(iii), the House shall continue to meet from 6

p.m. to 12 midnight on Sunday, June 2, 2019, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Lecce has moved that pursuant to standing order 6(c)(iii), the House shall continue to meet from 6 p.m. to 12 midnight on Sunday, June 2, 2019, for the purpose of considering government business.

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.

**Interjection:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Carried on division. *Motion agreed to.*

#### PETITIONS

##### WASTE REDUCTION

**M<sup>me</sup> Nathalie Des Rosiers:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas plastic bags and polystyrene are so light-weight that they get blown into trees, streams, lakes and oceans. Only 11% of all plastic in Canada gets recycled annually...;

“Whereas Canadians use 2.86 billion plastic shopping bags per year...;

“Whereas plastic bags and polystyrene are made from petroleum, and mining it adds greenhouse gases to the air, and pollutes the ground and streams;

“Whereas plastic bags and polystyrene break down into microplastic bits and get ingested by marine life and birds making them sick, as well as entering the food chain;

“Whereas up to one million seabirds and 100,000 sea mammals and countless fish die each year from ingesting plastic, according to the Ocean Conference, United Nations...;

“Whereas plastic bags take 10-1,000 years to decompose and polystyrene never biodegrades and can be fatal for wildlife...;

“Whereas stores can sell reusable plant fibre bags, and takeout food and drinks can be served in cardboard or reusable containers;

“Whereas the students of Ms. Jerreat’s grade 4/5 class, and all grade 5s from Elginburg District Public School in Kingston, Ontario, and all children in the province of Ontario want and need clean lakes to swim in, clean air to breathe, and a healthy planet;

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

“To ban plastic shopping bags and Styrofoam ... packaging used for drinks and food from being manufactured, or commercially distributed, in the province of Ontario.”

I agree with this petition and I will give it to Hillary.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 30, 2019, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

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

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

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Happy Sunday to everybody here.

It is a pleasure to rise in this House to speak to this bill. To be honest, Mr. Speaker, this came as a bit of a surprise, as I'd been hearing about this issue for a little while, just not from this government.

Just to let you know, Speaker, I'll be sharing my time with the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

My office has been getting calls and emails on this issue for some time. When I speak to my colleagues, they have experienced the same. While people of good conscience can agree, animal welfare and enforcement has been at times an inherently contentious issue that, unfortunately, the general public is reminded of in the worst of situations, when a case of apparent animal abuse is made public. For many members of the public, they may even be unaware that animal welfare enforcement is principally the responsibility of a private charity in this province. As the official opposition, we recognize this is a complicated and, as I've said, sometimes contentious issue. It's definitely an emotional one, and members from both sides of this House have already recounted their emotional connection to the animals in their lives, and those of their constituents and neighbours.

We're not saying this requires a quick fix or that this is a simple issue that can be ignored or fixed in a day or two, but what you hear from us, Mr. Speaker, is that something needed to be changed, and it's been a while that we've needed that change. This government has known at least since January that this is the case. Animal rights and welfare advocates have called for this change. Farming communities and those who rely on animals for work have called for this change, as well. And I know my colleague, the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane, who, in case you are unaware, is a proud farmer, will be speaking later to represent the concerns that farming communities and those who rely on working animals have with the current enforcement regime.

Academic studies have called for for this change. The organization that has been tasked with this and provides

the enforcement on behalf of this province for the last hundred years has called for this change—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I apologize for interrupting the member. There are a number of audible conversations taking place in the House at the moment. I'm trying to hear the member for Brampton North and I'd ask the members to quiet down.

Again, the member for Brampton North.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important issue and I guess they may have other things to discuss, but if they would listen, that would be great because, as I mentioned before, this is something which all Ontarians are concerned about.

Academic studies have called for this change. The organization that has been tasked with this and provides the enforcement on behalf of this province for the last one hundred years, as I mentioned, has called for change. Animal rights advocates have also called for change and, importantly, an Ontario Superior Court judge has told this government that things need to change. I'll return to that in a minute, Mr. Speaker.

Now, I'm thankful to all those who took the time to call and email my office, and some of those even met me in person to help me understand the depth of this issue. I'm proud to stand in this House today to speak on these issues and represent the voices of all those across this province who deeply care about the issue of animal welfare and want us to ensure proper measures are enacted to protect animals.

But I am surprised that I'm getting the opportunity to address and speak to this issue, Mr. Speaker. Let me explain my reaction. There has been little sign that this government has been prepared to meaningfully act on this issue for some time, even though the alarm bells have been going off. Instead of focusing on the clear direction from the court's decision and the varied yet unified calls for transformation of the animal welfare enforcement system, this government apparently has seen fit instead to focus on public misguiding and public mudslinging against those whose job it has been to provide animal welfare in the province, resorting to proxy columns in friendly media to make their case. How is that a good use of time, Mr. Speaker, as well as our resources?

In fact, this temporary—we're told—legislative measure may in fact prove worse than the status quo if it is not accompanied with a serious withdrawal, a complete withdrawal away from relying on private charitable delivery of animal enforcement. The public demands it and the courts have decreed it.

The OSPCA, which is a private charity, has been the organization that has enforced animal welfare in this province for a century. The OSPCA is a very unique case on its own and it's been noted that the OSPCA is a non-governmental entity and the only non-government entity that has the power to enforce laws this way in the province. The OSPCA Act enables the OSPCA to enforce animal welfare through the ability to appoint inspectors and to do this through a general inspector. Inspectors are peace

officers with the powers of a peace officer. However, unlike other law enforcement agencies like the OPP, the OSPCA does not have the resources and is not equipped to enforce the act itself. The OSPCA gets about \$5 million in funding from the province to enforce the OSPCA Act across the entire province. Imagine if the OPP was only given \$5 million to enforce the Highway Traffic Act. I better not say that too loud, Mr. Speaker, should it come true.

**1320**

As a charity, the OSPCA is successful and able to raise money, but the amount received for enforcement is not that high. As I mentioned, it is \$5 million. By any measure, those enforcing the animal welfare laws are minimally equipped to enforce the act, and sometimes work under dangerous and hostile environments to fulfill those duties as law enforcers. That has been the case and situation in animal welfare and protection in this province for a very long time.

There is strong criticism of enforcement. As I mentioned, there is an emotional issue. But what we are concerned with here today is what the court was concerned with, and that's what this government's responsibility is: to provide the framework, resources and enforcement of animal welfare in the province.

Inspectors and agents are faced with some horrible, sometimes very public, examples of animal abuse, for example—it has been referenced already in this debate—the case of the OSPCA inspectors being called to a farm in Stouffville after 15 horses were found to have been starved. As has been pointed out, that was in some ways an extraordinary circumstance, but what most of us don't see is the scale of the problem and how many instances of abuse and alleged abuse and neglect inspectors investigate across this province every day.

It should be pointed out that it was horse people, other farmers, who called attention to this situation in Stouffville. My point is that we recognize that Ontarians from all walks of life are concerned with animal welfare and the proper care of animals.

Something that everyone seems to agree on and a court has ruled on is that it is the government's responsibility to provide transparent, accountable, properly resourced and publicly transparent animal welfare law enforcement in this province. I should point out that it is not clear that this government appreciates this, as they are currently appealing the judge's ruling. It is truly awful when we hear about such situations. We need the enforcement because there are animals out there that are being abused, mistreated or, as in the case of the horses in Stouffville, starved. No animal should have to go through that.

Fast forward to earlier this year and the Superior Court decision: In January, a judge ruled that the OSPCA, as a private charity, should not be tasked with enforcement of the OSPCA Act and instructed the province to come up with an enforcement regime. The judge then gave the government a year to come up with a plan and put it in place. Essentially, the government was told that it would have to find an alternative way to enforce the act, as the

OSPCA was a private entity and was not the appropriate vehicle to enforce animal welfare laws in the province—this, along with renewed calls on the government to intervene to put in place a robust enforcement system to help ensure the welfare of animals across this province. In other words, the courts expect the government to get into the business of law enforcement for animals. They said that a private entity would lack sufficient oversight and that the powers conferred to it through the act would not be able to provide adequate animal welfare enforcement.

Then the OSPCA notified this government that as of March 30, they would no longer be providing animal welfare enforcement, meaning that the organization that was in charge of providing animal welfare enforcement would pull itself out of the business of enforcing the act on behalf of the government.

At this point, you would think it would mean that the government would get to work and try to find solutions to enforce the law in Ontario. To my surprise, there has been little movement from the government to that end. They did not seem to prioritize animal welfare. It was only earlier this month, weeks after learning the OSPCA would withdraw and months after the judge's ruling, that this government posted an online survey soliciting views on an animal welfare enforcement regime. That survey ends the day this House is scheduled to rise, six months after the judge's ruling. Instead, this government has been apparently busy with their policies around beer and making beer available in stores, making beer available in parks, making beer available before noon, making beer available in parking lots, cuts to autism funding, cuts to classroom organizations, cuts to library lending, cuts to social services funding, and not prioritizing the responsibility—court-ordered—to provide animal welfare law enforcement in the province.

The humane society offered to extend the agreement between the province and the humane society for three months, to the end of June. The government wanted to wait until December, the end of December. Now, you can understand my surprise at this point. We potentially had a situation where no one in this province would be enforcing animal welfare laws. How does the government just neglect this and pretend the problem didn't need quick action until the 11th hour?

I say the 11th hour, because I was informed—I can't really say "briefed"—about this interim measure being debated here today the same day the legislation was tabled earlier this week—so very little time, as you can see. Was the legislation written earlier this week? The humane society has been clear for weeks, months even, that their role would sunset. What resources has this government put in place to resource the continuance of animal welfare enforcement? What resources have you allocated for this replacement? These are questions we want to ask the government.

It's not even clear that the government intends to truly fulfill the responsibility to provide animal welfare enforcement. The regulation that's in place that would allow some humane society affiliates to continue with the status quo



enforcement, along with this legislation, could simply continue as the animal welfare regime in this province. There is no sign of urgency beyond this measure. There is nothing here that commits you to actually train and empower and equip law enforcement officials to provide this enforcement.

What happens if, in the next six months or beyond, the OSPCA doesn't co-operate with the full realization of enforcement in the province? The government needs to answer these questions. We know what this government thinks of the organization that has provided this enforcement for a hundred years. They have been very forward with what they think about them.

I know that you have appealed to individual affiliate humane societies to provide this care, and I know that they feel obligated to provide the care and they have the training and expertise to provide this care. And there isn't a doubt in my mind that this is so, but how many inspectors are there left to provide this enforcement? Less than there are now? And what resources will they have? Less than they have now?

You can't simply spit fire at your former partners for clearly interpreting what the judge has ruled and then appeal to individual societies to provide the same enforcement and consider this in any way an adequate response. Given that this government has cut the budget of the OPP by tens of millions of dollars and has cut other oversight standards and enforcement agencies across the board, why should any Ontarian concerned with animal welfare believe that this government will properly resort to law enforcement here?

Animal rights advocate and labour academic Dr. Kendra Coulter undertook an online survey polling Ontarians for their views on the current future of animal welfare enforcement in this province, and that survey clearly highlighted how Ontarians feel about this issue. Her conclusions, released as a report in March 2019, called for there to be urgent reform. Her previous survey of the OSPCA enforcement officers found that they were chronically underpaid and understaffed, with low morale and frequently in tense law enforcement situations without much of a public profile as a branch of law enforcement.

Coulter's survey found that OSPCA agents are paid \$19 to \$21 per hour. Inspectors are paid \$22 to \$25 per hour. Senior positions top out at \$32 per hour, well below other front-line enforcement agencies. Yet they face complex and dangerous situations, inherently emotional, just the same as other law enforcement agencies, only never with the resources they truly need. For months, this government has sat on this issue because they decided that making cuts to education, making cuts to health care, transit and other social safety nets was a bigger priority for them.

1330

I do not expect a lot, but this is surprising, Mr. Speaker. This is very telling of this government and their priorities. Clearly, animals, who are unable to speak for themselves and cannot vote for any particular government, need assistance. Once again, this government has relied on its instincts to foster ferment and lay blame and think it's

appropriate to wage a PR campaign against those who have provided this enforcement. Now, with just over a week left until the House rises for the summer, this government brings in this bill as a band-aid, temporary measure.

Let it be clear, Mr. Speaker: The official opposition recognizes that something needs to happen. I have a pet dog and I love my dog. Like people across this province, my pet is part of my family. To think that there are animals out there being mistreated, abused or, like the horses in Stouffville, starved, is painful. Our animals deserve better.

This is why there have been calls for months, from animal welfare advocates and those reliant on animals for their livelihoods across this province, for this government to act and put together an effective system of animal welfare enforcement. This is not a political issue. This is something we can all agree on and get behind.

Let's look at this bill now that was tabled this week, at the eleventh hour, before the House rises in the next coming weeks. The chief inspector position would cease at the end of June. This bill transitions the chief inspector role from the OSPCA having the power to appoint, and has that power transfer to the ministry. Therefore, in simple terms, the ministry would have the power to appoint inspectors who would carry on the work as they did before.

From what we have heard talking to folks around the province, there are some affiliate humane societies willing to continue with enforcement of the act. These affiliates are in mid-sized cities and communities and represent 35% of OSPCA enforcement activities.

Prior to this, we already had an underfunded, understaffed and inadequately equipped enforcement system. Now we are going to move to a system that will be cut by more than 60%. This is exactly the opposite of what the people of Ontario have been calling for. They have been calling for an adequate enforcement system, not to rely on an already underfunded system. This is just setting the stage for animal welfare to be neglected in this province. Again, Mr. Speaker, our animals deserve better than this.

The government has been aware of the court ruling for months now. They have been aware of the fact that the OSPCA would stop enforcing the act for months as well. Yet here we are. There is no clear indication of how this government will proceed to address this problem. I just wish that this government was as quick to address this issue as they were to implement their buck-a-beer policy.

We still do not know what the long-term plan is. From what I have heard, the government's approach has been that affiliates should simply continue to provide enforcement services—maybe indefinitely. This would indicate that the government has no real plan in place or a deadline by which they would implement a robust, public and transparent animal welfare enforcement regime.

Without a robust plan or a deadline to make some real changes to fix this problem, I find the efforts of the government rather disingenuous. The government has known of this issue—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I am listening, and I'm going to ask the member to withdraw his unparliamentary comment.

**Mr. Kevin Yarde:** Withdraw.

The government has known of this issue. Organizations like the OSPCA were clear about the limits of what they would do. The court has been clear about what the government needs to do, yet the government was silent for months on the issue. Now, at the last minute, we see legislation which brings in a band-aid solution to a real problem, with no real promise of a robust system in the foreseeable future.

We have all known that the OSPCA has changed their role and, after the court ruling, there was a need for immediate action. This government has known that there was a need for legislative change in order to make the transition from the OSPCA. My concern, Mr. Speaker, continues to be the process in which the government has carried this forward.

I have a lot of other questions about how the system will work in the absence of the OSPCA and any other robust enforcement system. These are all real questions and concerns that need to be addressed.

As I stated before, we have a system under the OSPCA which was inadequate. Can the government ensure that they will not make any cuts to the funding of these affiliates and animal welfare?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'll recognize the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker. I wasn't expecting to be here today, but I am actually happy to be here today. Any time that I can spend time talking about animals and farmers and the problems they face—that's what I'm going to focus on, regarding this act.

My colleague from Brampton North covered a lot of the issues, and hopefully I'm not going to re-plow that ground.

The OSPCA has been a problem for a while in the agricultural sector, mainly because it's a charitable organization doing the job of a police force. This doesn't reflect badly on the people who work for the OSPCA. They are doing everything they can with what they have. But they face some incredible, stressful situations because sometimes when animals are not treated well, it has to do with mental health issues of the owners. There are many issues. To expect someone who works for a charitable organization to go in and deal with things like that—you're expecting a lot. Also, the training available to all the people across the province isn't the same, and that is a huge issue.

I'll give you a personal example. I only dealt with the OSPCA once before I got elected. We had a dairy farm. Across the road from our dairy farm, my wife had a store. The OSPCA inspector came regularly to my wife's antique store, and one day, my wife's horse was beside our barn, lying flat out. It was across the road. The OSPCA inspector said, "Oh, my God, there's a dead horse there. Someone isn't treating—what's happening?" My wife says, "Dead horse? The horse is dead?" She ran to it and she said, "Velvet," and the horse got up and walked over to the inspector. The donkey came too. It turned out very nicely.

But that inspector, because she didn't deal, I guess, with a lot of horses, didn't know the difference between a dead horse and a live horse.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** And one that's sleeping.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It was a very well-treated horse. That was truly frightening. If that inspector had showed up at my farm door and said something like that, it might not have turned out that well. So it's something that needs to change.

I welcome—and agriculture across the province welcomes—the opportunity to make some changes. To bring the chief inspector under the government's purview is a step in the right direction, but it's a very tiny step and it won't fix the system.

Agricultural organizations have been doing their best. Many of them have signed memorandums of understanding with the OSPCA to work together with them, because many dairy, swine, beef—they have their own animal treatment protocols. I know, as a dairy farmer, that we had regular inspections to make sure our animals were treated correctly.

Farmers want to make sure that all the animals are treated correctly. If farmers find out that someone isn't doing the job correctly, they will point them out, as happened in Stouffville. No one in the farm community who is doing things right wants someone else—farmers love animals. They don't want other people to mistreat animals. So let's make that really, really, really clear.

This is a very small first step. Farmers will work in lockstep with the government, and so will the official opposition, to try and make this system better, to try and make this system—that the inspectors are trained to the same level, that they're equipped to deal with some very stressful situations, to actually make this work.

I'm not sure, in the long term, that this can continue to be an OSPCA situation. These people need to be trained, and they need to know that a farmer in Oxford county or a farmer in Earlton has the same level of training when that person knocks on the door. And that is not the case now.

**1340**

There are places now in this province where there is no training and where there are no people. I'm not going to blame this on this government or the previous government. That's just what happened, and we've got to fix that. We're willing to fix it, and I hope the government is actually sincere with—they've taken a preliminary step, saying it's an interim step for the appointment of the chief inspector. I hope they're sincere that this is a small, preliminary step and they're actually going to work towards fixing the problem.

There are some red flags, because on many other issues, the government has provided less funding instead of more funding. Quite frankly, to do this right, it's going to cost money. The government has to make a decision: Is it worth doing right or is it worth risking animal welfare and at times risking people? The government has to make that decision. If they make the decision that it's not worth it, we're going to come after them. But if they make the decision that it is worth it and it's worth doing right, we're going to work with them, and so will farmers.

This also provides a unique opportunity—because animal welfare is a very emotional issue. People have different values regarding animal welfare. Some people are very opposed to the use of animals at all. We respect that view. We respect people who have that view and who will want to forward that view. The issue is, on occasion, some people with that view break into farms and violate a farmer family's personal space. It happened here. They remove—at that point, it was a dead animal—an animal, totally destroying biosecurity. That is not acceptable. We also have to work together to make sure that people understand the ramifications and that farm families aren't violated.

Farm families are expected to treat their animals correctly. That's why we need a very strong welfare system. On the flip side, farm families also have to know that they are going to be protected by the laws of the province, and there are times when they don't feel like that.

Again, this is going to cost money. Let's make this clear. If you've got a court backlog and someone gets charged for doing something on a farm and that case gets thrown out because, "Quite frankly, we've got more important cases," when that farm family feels violated and those court cases get thrown out and you've got so much emotion—because that farm family is going to be emotional, and people who come on those farms are very emotional. If we let that keep happening, the government is going to be responsible. It's going to be on their watch if something unspeakable happens because they didn't want to spend the money or the time or do it right.

I've been at this job since 2011, and I have never seen farmers in my office so emotional; specifically, livestock farmers, when people come onto their farms. For a family farm, the farm isn't just their workplace. Walking into my barn is the same as walking into my house. The fact that the rest of the people who don't work on farms don't realize that is causing a problem. If they have to start feeling like they have to defend themselves, it's not a good thing. They are saying, "We want to do everything we can to make this system work." But they want to be protected. And for the safety of the people who have these views, when they try to block trucks going into processing plants—we know that's happening. We need to have the resources to stop that from happening before people get hurt. We can't just ignore these issues.

The fact that we're talking about making changes to the OSPCA gives us a unique opportunity to actually make all the changes that need to be made. I'm reaching out. We are reaching out to the government—the Minister of Agriculture, the Solicitor General, the Attorney General—to take this opportunity and actually listen to the farm community—listen to everybody, not just the farm community. I want to reiterate this: We are not saying that people can't make their views known. That is not the point here. I respect that. One of the great things about democracy is that people can have different views and make them known.

Where we cross the line is when we knowingly break laws. When people knowingly trespass on a farm, then the government has to have to have the resources in place so

that those people can be brought to justice, because unless that happens, it's going to happen over and over and over again.

I've had people come to me saying that we have to make the laws stronger. There are a few things that we can change in regulation, but unless you actually have enforcement behind that regulation—this government doesn't like regulation much, I know. You can make all the regulations you want, but unless you enforce the ones you have, you're wasting everybody's time. Here we don't have time to waste.

We have a unique opportunity, Speaker. It's actually a good thing that we're all here talking about this on a Sunday, because we will remember this Sunday, and we will rue this day if a year from now there is a headline that there was an altercation on a farm and someone was hurt because they didn't feel anyone in the province had listened or was protecting them. We will rue this day.

We have a chance. Pass this bill. But this is just the beginning, Speaker—just the beginning. We have a chance to actually protect domestic animals, protect pets, but also to protect all the people who work with animals. We have this chance to do that, Speaker. Let's all work together and let's take this chance.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Harris:** It's a pleasure to be here on a Sunday. I know we're all anxious to see the Raptors beat the pants off Golden State again tonight, and I, for one, will be looking forward to seeing that happen, but we've got to get through the day first.

I appreciate the comments from the members opposite, but this really comes down to a few very important things. Number one is the Liberals had 15 years to sort this out and they didn't, in typical fashion; we've heard it time and time again. So again, we come in and we try to clean up the mess.

We've been in consultation, of course, with the OSPCA. We've been in consultation with humane societies all across the province. I know many of us here have had a chance to go out and speak to our humane societies. I know I had an opportunity a few weeks ago to go and see the Kitchener-Waterloo Humane Society, and they were adamant—adamant, Mr. Speaker—that they were going to be able to provide the services and become that stopgap and make sure that animals were still going to be protected here in the province of Ontario.

I know that the Solicitor General and the parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General have been very active on this file. I've liaised with them many, many times, and we're continuing that conversation. We're trying to find a real long-term solution, but the clock was ticking, Mr. Speaker, and we had to have something in place. So I'm glad that we were able to come up with a real, concrete solution to this. This will be something that's ongoing. We're not just going to sit here on our laurels; we're going to make sure that, again, animals will always be protected here in the province of Ontario.

I know that we again hear the NDP and the opposition constantly talking about how we've had a year to do these

things. Well, Mr. Speaker, there are also other things that we're doing here in the province of Ontario as well, like investing in education, historic investments in health care and getting this province fiscally back on track.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'aimerais commencer par offrir mes excuses au corps de cadets 2915 du deuxième bataillon du régiment irlandais de l'armée royale canadienne, qui m'avait invitée à leur inspection annuelle. J'offre également mes excuses au lieutenant-colonel Thomas McNeil, qui est l'officier de contrôle pour la 46<sup>e</sup> inspection annuelle du corps de cadets du deuxième bataillon du régiment irlandais à Capreol.

Aujourd'hui, on devait être dans nos comtés et disponibles pour participer à ces importantes manifestations, et pour participer à la journée de la décoration au Canada, une journée où des douzaines de personnes à travers Nickel Belt et, vraiment, à travers toute la province, vont remercier nos vétérans en mettant des fleurs sur la tombe. C'est une belle cérémonie. Il faisait beau; il faisait chaud dans le Nickel Belt. Ça aurait été une belle journée pour remercier nos vétérans de tout ce qu'ils nous ont donné : des libertés qui nous définissent comme Ontariennes et Ontariens, comme Canadiens et Canadiennes.

Mais j'aurais également bien aimé que le gouvernement honore et respecte suffisamment nos vétérans pour organiser leur horaire de façon à ce qu'on n'ait pas à venir à Queen's Park en fin de semaine et qu'on puisse être dans nos comtés pour honorer nos vétérans.

I'd like to apologize to the 2915 Second Battalion Irish Regiment of Canada for not being there today with them. I'd like to apologize also to Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas McNeil, who was the reviewing officer, for not being there with him. The ceremony is supposed to start at 2 this afternoon. Obviously, I won't be there; I will be here. Today is Decoration Day, a day that we should all respect. I'm truly sorry that the government called us here and that I am not able to be in my riding to honour the veterans, including my father, who is a veteran of three wars. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Andrea Khanjin:** I'm delighted to comment on Bill 117, Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act. Our government is taking action, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we are here today. We're taking action because we need to make sure that we're providing the right animal welfare and that we're protecting those animals that cannot stand up for themselves. We were elected to protect what matters most, and we're also protecting our animals and making sure that they get the protection they deserve and that Ontarians expect that they deserve.

We are moving robustly, Mr. Speaker. We're going to make sure that there's transparency addressed here and that there's accountability addressed here. We've already been working—the minister has been working really hard with a lot of the affiliates, including OSPCAs, to make sure that we do have an interim period solution here, to make sure no animal is left unprotected and no animal endures harm or danger without the protections in place.

However, Mr. Speaker, we were told on May 4—we were provided less than 30 days' notice—that no longer will the OSPCA be providing those protections. So we are taking action today. We are working together. We are working hand in hand with the residents of Ontario, hard-working taxpayers, to get their input on this legislation, because we can't rush good legislation. We can't rush the protection for these animals. It is crucial. Animal welfare in Ontario can only be successful when the needs of the abused and neglected animals are met, and this can only be accomplished with the province's shelters working hand in hand with those who enforce animal cruelty legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying that not only did many men and women sacrifice themselves to give us the freedoms we have today, but there are also animals that sacrificed in our World Wars, and that worked with medics. That is why we're here today: We're commemorating D-Day, but we're also commending the fact that we have the freedoms to pass legislation we have today because of those sacrifices. So thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments. Response? Would one of the members like to respond to the questions and comments? No? Okay.

Ms. Jones has moved second reading of Bill 117, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? I look to the Solicitor General.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** No, Speaker. Justice policy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The bill is to be referred to the committee on justice policy.

Orders of the day?

**Mr. Stephen Lecce:** I move adjournment of the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Lecce has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Carried on division. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1356.*

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**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Will Bouma  
Will Bouma, Paul Calandra  
Lorne Coe, Stephen Crawford  
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo  
Paul Miller, Billy Pang  
Kaleed Rasheed, Amarjot Sandhu  
Jamie West  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Présidente: Nina Tangri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Deepak Anand  
Deepak Anand, Doly Begum  
Jeff Burch, Amy Fee  
John Fraser, Joel Harden  
Belinda C. Karahalios, Robin Martin  
Sheref Sabawy, Nina Tangri  
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie