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Jeudi
31 octobre 2019

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Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 31 October 2019

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 31 octobre 2019

*The House met at 0900.
Prayers/Prières.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Mr. Tibollo, on behalf of Ms. Elliott, moved second reading of the following bill:

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

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the minister care to lead off the debate?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I'm pleased to stand in the House today for the second reading of the Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act, 2019. I'll be sharing my time today with my colleagues Robin Martin, PA to the Minister of Health, and Doug Downey, Minister of the Attorney General.

Prior to taking office, I was involved in the mental health and addictions sector, volunteering as a mental health and addictions counsellor for a residential therapeutic community. I knew that if I continued to follow my love and passion for improving the lives of those who experience daily struggles with mental health and addiction challenges, I could help make a profound, positive impact on the health and well-being of all Ontarians.

As Ontario's first Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, I am honoured to have the opportunity to be working alongside the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health to address mental health and addictions in the province of Ontario. Mental health and addictions are something I know we are both very passionate about, having both been heavily involved in the sector prior to taking office.

Madam Speaker, Ontario has a unique opportunity to lead the way in this sector, and the proposed legislation before us today is an important part of our plan. Recent statistics suggest the task of transforming the system will be quite daunting. Current data has revealed that one in three Canadians will experience a mental health and addictions issue within their lifetime—70% of those issues will develop early in an individual's life, either in childhood or as a young adult. Recent data also reveals that between 2016 and 2017, roughly 158,000 Ontarians visited an emergency department for a mental health- or addictions-related issue. This number continues to increase steadily each year. Finally, at the national level, 500,000 people per week across Canada call in sick to work because of a mental health or addictions issue.

These are absolutely staggering numbers, but our government places a high priority on the needs of people. We are committed to building an integrated mental health and addictions service system that will support people throughout their entire lives. We are going to build a system where services are easier to access, are of high quality and are focused on better outcomes.

The items included in this bill would play an important part in our government's overall commitment to make mental health and addictions a priority for the people of this province. Ontario's mental health and addictions system has been challenged for too long by extensive wait times, barriers to access, inconsistent quality, a lack of standardized data and widespread fragmentation. We know this because it is what we have heard from experts, from those providing care, and just as importantly, from the people themselves who came in search of mental health and addictions care. That is what our government heard repeatedly during our province-wide consultations. So, we are taking action.

Our government believes that children, youth and adults in Ontario deserve to receive the appropriate services and supports they need, where and when they need them, and we're committed to promoting positive mental health and well-being by building a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system that ensures they get the access that they need. That's why we've already invested \$174 million in 2019-20 to support community mental health and addictions services, mental health and justice services, supportive housing, acute mental health in-patient beds and child and youth mental health services. It is also going to be used for early supports and to stabilize services provided in schools, community organizations, health centres, and hospitals across the province, and our government plans to invest even more into our mental health and addictions system.

This funding for 2019 and 2020 is only a part of our overall commitment to invest \$3.8 billion over the decade in our mental health and addictions system. But we are also going to invest, and invest wisely. We need to ensure that we do so carefully. We need to ensure decisions make sense. Part of the inherent responsibility of being elected to office is that we are being entrusted with the public purse, and in keeping with this responsibility, we need to ensure that we maximize every dollar we invest in the services and programs people have come to rely on. If we are going to invest \$3.8 billion in mental health and addictions, then we need to have a plan. We need to ensure we have laid the foundation to invest this funding in a way that meets the needs of the people of Ontario and that ensures a strong mental health and addictions system that is sustainable for years to come.

Fortunately, the way forward has already been paved for us. If the proposed legislation before us today should pass, then it would deliver on a key recommendation of the all-party Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions in 2010. I know the Deputy Premier is very proud and honoured to have worked alongside all parties, including the current Solicitor General, as well as the member for Nickel Belt, on that committee.

Several people—from both sides of this Legislature—worked very hard to prepare that report, and the proposed legislation before us today would address one of the most significant recommendations to come from that report.

0910

The first recommendation from the report called for the creation of a new umbrella organization to ensure that a single body is responsible for designing, managing and coordinating the mental health and addictions system, and that programs and services are delivered consistently and comprehensively across Ontario. Furthermore, the report went on to recommend that this organization should ensure that a basket of core mental health and addictions services be available in every region of the province for clients of all ages. Those recommendations were informed by the work of the committee in speaking to experts, care providers, and the people of Ontario, especially those with lived experience.

But, Madam Speaker, what is particularly revealing is that the concerns the select committee heard nearly a decade ago are the same sorts of concerns our government heard at our own consultations earlier this year. Our government has listened intently and will continue to listen to the people of Ontario about what they need for their mental health and addictions system.

But listening isn't enough. We need to act. That is why Bill 116 proposes the establishment of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence within Ontario Health, finally fulfilling the important work of the select committee. This centre would put into operation our \$3.8-billion mental health and addictions strategy. It would develop clinical quality-of-service standards for mental health and addictions, and monitor metrics related to the performance of our system. And it would provide the resources and support to the health care service providers,

integrated care delivery systems, and others in the mental health and addictions sector, ensuring they can provide the best possible care to Ontarians in need of support.

We believe that in establishing a centre for excellence inside Ontario Health, we would be sending a strong signal to the mental health and addictions sector. We would be saying that finally our province would have a team that would standardize the quality and delivery of mental health and addictions services across Ontario, and provide a better and more consistent client experience, all based on evidence of what works. We would be saying that the hard work of the select committee was not for nothing.

Should this bill pass, the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence would enable implementation of our mental health and addictions strategy. The Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence would be an important asset in our efforts to help some of our province's most vulnerable citizens.

This bill proposes to give us the tools to hold opioid manufacturers and wholesalers accountable for their role in this crisis. It would also help us to recover health care costs paid by the province due to opioid-related disease, injury or illness. If this proposed legislation were to pass, our government intends to invest any award from litigation against the manufacturers and wholesalers of opioids directly into front-line mental health and addictions services.

We take the opioid crisis very seriously. That's why we created a new consumption and treatment services funding program that is saving lives by preventing overdose deaths, and is connecting people to primary care, treatment and rehabilitation, and other health and social services, to ensure those struggling with addiction get the help that they need. There are currently 16 approved consumption and treatment sites in communities of high need across the province, and we will continue to accept applications from interested organizations.

We have implemented a comprehensive suite of policies and programs to address the crisis, focused on appropriate prescribing and pain management, treatment for opioid use disorder, harm reduction services and supports, and surveillance and reporting.

But this proposed legislation, Madam Speaker, would help us to protect what matters most by taking action to ensure vital front-line services in health care are funded sustainably over the long term. Continuing the battle against opioids in this province is just one way we are working to ensure that Ontarians have access to the mental health and addictions services they need, when and where they need them.

Our government believes mental health is a core component of health, and we're implementing a long-term transformational strategy to modernize our health care system. The proposed legislation we are considering today, Madam Speaker, is going to help us to modernize our mental health and addictions system. This work will only support our broader health care system agenda by preparing our mental and addictions service providers to be part of a more integrated health care system, a system

that would see people get the right care when and where they need it, and helping us bring an end to hallway health care in this province.

Once again, Madam Speaker, I'm honoured to be here to speak to the proposed legislation and the important role it plays in our government's overall commitment to modernizing our mental health and addictions system. I have seen first-hand how our current system is not meeting the needs of Ontarians. We need to take action to address the extensive wait times, barriers to access, inconsistent quality, lack of standardized data, and widespread fragmentation that currently exist. This proposed legislation is an important step toward doing this.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm pleased to stand in the House for the second reading of the Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act, 2019. Speaking after me, as the minister indicated, will be parliamentary assistant Robin Martin.

This act has two schedules: the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence Act, 2019, and the Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act, 2019. I'll be primarily addressing aspects of the health care costs recovery act, 2019, Madam Speaker, but first I'd like to say a few words about our government's plan to build a mental health and addictions strategy for all of Ontario.

As you may know, in the 2019 Ontario budget, this government committed to investing \$3.8 billion over 10 years for mental health and addictions services and housing support. This initiative is being led by the minister who was just speaking. I can tell you, when I spoke to service providers in my riding—when he came up to visit and talk with them and engage, after the meeting, I said to one of the leading experts in my area, “What did you think about that?” And she said, “That was jaw-dropping. His engagement, his knowledge of the dynamic that we're dealing with was, quite frankly, jaw-dropping. That is the best term for it.”

This is a new approach for Ontario after the previous government allowed the system to deteriorate into extensive wait times, barriers to access, inconsistent quality, a lack of standardized data. The previous government was just not on the ball on this, Madam Speaker. But our plans address these shortcomings, beginning with the building of a mental health and addictions system focused on core services embedded into a stepped care model and a robust data and measurement network.

This year alone, Madam Speaker, we're investing \$174 million to support community mental health and addictions services, mental health and justice services, supportive housing, and acute mental health in-patient beds. Ron Noble, who some of you will know, the CEO of the Catholic Health Association of Ontario, said, “We appreciate the government for its commitment to invest in long-term-care beds and funding for mental health, addictions, and housing. These are significant commitments that will go a long way to improve the system and end hallway” health care.

Camille Quenneville, CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association—again, somebody who many of the members will know—said, “CMHA Ontario division is delighted with the mental health and addictions care funding announced in the 2019 provincial budget.

“This is a positive step in the province's 10-year, \$3.8-billion commitment to mental health and addictions services. We look forward to continuing to work with the province to enhance client-centred, community-based approaches to mental health and addictions” in Ontario.

My colleagues will be speaking in further detail over the next series of days about the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence, Madam Speaker. As the member for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, I'm encouraged on behalf of my constituents by this innovative proposal to improving Ontario's system of mental health and addictions services.

This government has held extensive consultations across the province. Madam Speaker, all you have to do is look at social media to see the breadth and depth of the consultations that Minister Tibollo has been doing. They're all across Ontario, in the north, in the southwest, in the east and, again, in central Ontario, where I'm from.

0920

The engagement is deep in the sense that he's talking to people with lived experience. He's talking to people who are providing services. He's talking to people who are helping to design systems and non-profits and leveraging the volunteer aspect of what's in our communities. The number of people who come around the table to talk and engage on the subject just speaks to the depth of the need in this province and the neglect that has been had by the previous government.

Nineteen formal consultations across the province with mental health and addictions community organizations—those front-line providers, hospitals, advocates, experts and, again, people with lived experience.

We had an individual in Barrie who was working at what's called the Sandbox Centre. The Sandbox Centre is an incubator. It's a space where businesses can collaborate and learn from each other. That's where we held our consultation. MPP Khanjin and I were jointly doing this. As people were going around the table to introduce themselves, one individual—he was the third person who introduced himself and he worked at the Sandbox Centre. He said, “I'm not entirely sure why I'm at this table, but I think I know why. I'm working here at the Sandbox Centre, and I've been working here for about a week.” I think it was a week or two weeks—not very long. He said, “But the real story is that I've been homeless for three years.” He then went on to talk about his lived experience, his interaction with the different agencies, with police services, with CMHA, with housing and hostels. I don't think I can overstate it; it was quite gripping. The whole room just became so serious all of a sudden and understood that the topic that we were talking about impacts individuals' lives, that we have to get this right.

There are people who have pathways, but they need a bit of help, and the minister knows that. Then, when he

responded and interacted with those types of individuals at the table, it was clear that he gets it. That gives me great confidence in our government's plan to move forward.

Everywhere we went and with everyone we talked to, Ontarians give us the same message: The system is too fragmented. The system is too confusing. The system is too hard to navigate. The creation of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence within Ontario Health, which will be a central engine for care oversight, will address those concerns. It will develop, standardize and monitor care across Ontario. It will help people and families to access better and more consistent patient services and supports. It will help Ontarians in their mental health and addictions battles.

Now, Speaker, I'd like to talk about schedule 2 of the bill in particular: the Opioid Damages and Health Costs Recovery Act, 2019. But first, I'd like to begin with some difficult context on opioid addiction in Ontario and the reasons why we've made this a leading priority.

According to a recent report by Public Health Ontario, the Office of the Chief Coroner, the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service and the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, between July 2017 and June 2018, in that one-year period, there were 1,337 confirmed opioid-related deaths in Ontario. I just want to pause there for a moment. When I talked about real lives being impacted—these 1,337 individuals who died in Ontario in a one-year period—we need to think not just about those individuals; we need to think about the people around them, about their families, their siblings, their parents, their children, and how they're left in a system of disarray and lacking support themselves.

Madam Speaker, it's really quite staggering. That's almost four tragic deaths every day in Ontario—and the collateral damage that goes with it. To put that into perspective, it's roughly the same number of people from across all of Canada who are dying each day from vehicle crashes from alcohol- or drug-related impairment. Shockingly, there's an estimated 46% increase in the number of deaths related to opioids between 2016 and 2017.

This, Madam Speaker, is an epidemic. It is a crisis, one that has cost the people of Ontario enormously, both in terms of lives lost and its impact on our public health care's front lines. Our government is determined to address this crisis. We are addressing this crisis. We're committed to addressing the physical, mental health and social needs of individuals addicted to opioids, as well as combatting drug use to prevent future addictions and overdoses.

The Ontario government is embarking on a comprehensive agenda of policies and programs to address a dramatic increase in opioid addictions and overdoses. There will be further action taken in the coming months. Ontario's priority has been transitioning to a new delivery model for consumption and treatment services, with an emphasis on treatment. These sites will provide life-saving overdose prevention and harm reduction services, and connect people to treatment, rehabilitation services, and other health and social services.

Make no mistake, the opioid epidemic is, in part, rooted in the over-prescription of pharmaceutical drugs. Recent cases in the United States have reached this conclusion. United States municipalities, counties, states—they've all brought lawsuits against opioid manufacturers and distributors. Their claims are valued in the billions of dollars—the collateral damage of this. In August of this year, a judge in Oklahoma ruled that Johnson and Johnson had intentionally played down the danger of opioids, and ordered the company to pay the state of Oklahoma US\$572 million for the damage caused by the company. The judge stated, "The defendants caused an opioid crisis that is evidenced by increased rates of addiction, overdose deaths and neonatal abstinence syndrome."

Ontario has been impacted by the opioid crisis also. Too many communities across Ontario continue to face an ongoing opioid crisis that is perpetuated by opioid manufacturers and wholesalers—all communities. You can go to a community now and talk to the community's leadership, and they will tell you their stats in relation to opioids. If I phone the mayor of Barrie today, he will tell me that we have the third-highest rate of death per capita in Ontario. These are stats. We used to track economic statistics. We used to track employment statistics. Now we're tracking opioid death and opioid emergency statistics. We do need to track it, but it is a commentary on how prevalent this has become. It's not a big-city or an inner-city problem; it affects all cities and towns across the province.

The crisis has meant that Ontarians have incurred tremendous costs. We've incurred health-care-related costs, including in-patient hospitalizations, emergency department visits, specialist treatment for opioid use disorder, physician time and drug costs. In my area, we have what's called a RAAM clinic that needs resources, that helps with this. We have overdose beds. The affordable housing is affected by it. There are just so many sectors that are affected by this crisis. We've incurred lost productivity costs, including lost value of work due to premature mortality, and long-term and short-term disability. We've incurred criminal justice costs, including police time, police work, courtrooms, corrections, expenditures for criminal offences partially or wholly attributable to the substance use. And we've incurred other direct costs, including fire and motor vehicle damage and workplace costs not included in lost productivity.

These costs have had the effect of taking money away from our front-line health services. This is why the government is introducing legislation to enact the Opioid Damages and Health Costs Recovery Act, 2019. If passed, the act would allow this government to sue opioid manufacturers and wholesalers for their alleged wrongdoing. It would allow us to recover past, present and future health care costs due to opioid-related disease, injury or illness. It would also create a series of special rules to assist the litigation process and support Ontario's participation in a national class-action lawsuit that the province of British Columbia launched in August 2018 against more than 40 opioid manufacturers, wholesalers and others, on behalf of provincial, territorial and federal governments. This class

action alleges that these opioid manufacturers and wholesalers failed to warn doctors and the public of the dangers of opioids, and they marketed them as safer and less addictive than other medications, when they were not. This act would also give Ontario the right to bring an individual or a multi-government class-action claim in the future, if it decides to do so.

We feel that joining the BC lawsuit instead of launching our own is the best course of action at this time. The BC-based national class action would be an efficient way of addressing the common issues among all the provinces, territories and the federal government and having the matter heard by the courts at once. Already, Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, and New Brunswick have announced their support for this lawsuit, and of course, BC is leading the way. We understand that Alberta has publicly stated that it's considering similar legislation.

We've heard questions surrounding how the recent filing in the United States of chapter 11 bankruptcy by Purdue Pharma will affect our government's proposed actions. The company and its owners, the Sackler family, also recently reached a tentative settlement with 23 US states and more than 2,000 cities and counties that sued the company over its role in the opioid crisis. But I will reiterate that the opioid crisis is unfortunately not limited to the border. It is not limited to the US, and it continues to have a devastating impact across Canada, with a corresponding, extraordinary toll on our health care system, to the detriment of Ontarian and Canadian taxpayers, let alone the individuals suffering through it.

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So while there may be a real desire on the part of Purdue entities and members of the Sackler family to achieve "global resolution," any proposed agreement ought to account for, and include, payment for the Canadian claims, which are presently advanced in a structured and consolidated manner in a national class action commenced in British Columbia, of which Ontario is a part.

We will continue to assert our claims against the Purdue entities and the Sacklers to ensure that Canadian jurisdictions are fairly and reasonably addressed in any proposed settlement in the US. We will not be content to simply permit the US settlement to proceed with no appropriate approach and consideration for Canada. Ontario remains ready and willing to participate in the reported effort to achieve global resolution of the claims against Purdue and the Sacklers. If, however, Ontario is not included in this process, we are determined to continue to pursue our claims, to the fullest extent permitted by the law, on behalf of Ontarians.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I'm sure that some are wondering what the province of Ontario would do should this class-action lawsuit be successful and the government be awarded money in damages. Let me assure the members of this House, and all Ontarians, that this government would invest any award from this litigation directly into front-line mental health and addictions services.

Madam Speaker, that gives a sense of where we're headed with the litigation. It gives you a sense of the

importance of what we need to do as a province. I want to reiterate again: When we talk about litigation, when we talk about where we're going with the bill, should it pass, it's always rooted back in the individuals that have really incurred the life-altering—and sometimes death—experience. It's heartbreaking to talk to the families who have children who are caught up in opioid addictions. I don't feel permitted to tell their stories per se, but you hear them from individuals, and again, it's heart-wrenching. It's not acceptable. It's not the kind of Ontario that we want to live in.

I couldn't be prouder to stand with my colleagues and support this bill so that we can move forward and deal with the crisis, and to stand behind the Minister of Health, parliamentary assistant Martin, and Associate Minister Tibollo and just the excellent work that he's doing to move us all forward.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mrs. Robin Martin: It gives me great pleasure to rise today in support of Bill 116, the Foundations for Promoting and Protecting Mental Health and Addictions Services Act, 2019. I want to thank Associate Minister Tibollo for sharing his time with me today, and for the important work that he has been doing on mental health and addictions in Ontario.

Speaker, we all know Ontario's mental health and addictions system has had ongoing challenges for far too long. After completing extensive consultations on the opioid crisis, and designing and implementing our new consumption and treatment service model, which emphasizes treatment, as the Attorney General has just mentioned—earlier this year, Minister Elliott and I held 19 consultation sessions across the province with experts, providers, and clients and families accessing mental health and addictions services across the province. More recently, Associate Minister Tibollo has been holding consultation sessions on this as well, as the Attorney General has just mentioned.

We heard consistent messages. The experts, the providers, and the people accessing mental health and addictions services, and their families, all spoke about long wait times and barriers to accessing care. They spoke about inconsistency in the quality of care. They spoke about poor coordination across services that have left people vulnerable and struggling to navigate a system that they feel is failing them.

Widespread fragmentation of the sector, Speaker, challenges people and their families even further when they're already struggling. Additional hurdles, frankly, are the last thing that they need.

Our government believes that for too long, there has been a lack of attention to and a lack of investment in our mental health and addictions system in Ontario. Frankly, calling it a system is maybe part of the problem, because although we have many services, they're not systematized in any way. Even health care providers have indicated on occasion that they can't find the right services when those services are actually available in their community.

An estimated 30% of Ontarians will experience a mental health or addiction issue at some point in their lives. Because they face needless delays when trying to access care, Ontarians experience unnecessary suffering when they turn to our current mental health and addictions system for help. This is just wrong, Speaker. We can do better, and we must do better.

Our government recognizes that mental health is health. It is essential to the well-being of people. With this proposed legislation, Bill 116, we are taking a firm step toward building a better mental health and addictions system for all Ontarians. If passed, this act would lay the foundation to support a mental health and addictions strategy in Ontario, providing a unique opportunity for Ontario to lead the way in this area. This act, if passed, as we have indicated, would establish a mental health and addictions centre of excellence within Ontario Health and would help ensure that people in Ontario are able to access integrated, standardized, evidence-based care and services no matter where they live in Ontario.

When this proposed legislation was first introduced, in May of this year, I attended an event with a mental health organization along with the Attorney General at the time, Caroline Mulroney. Our government characterized—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I would remind the member and all members of the House that we refer to people in this Legislature by their title or their riding, only and exclusively. Thank you.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Speaker.

Our government characterized the proposed centre as being like a central engine. Engines are complex, and as I've indicated, our mental health and addictions sector is actually complex. Like an engine needs fuel, however, our mental health and addictions sector needs investment. To get the best engine performance, our government made a commitment to invest \$3.8 billion in new funding over 10 years to fuel, to develop and to implement a comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy. If this bill should pass, the centre of excellence would provide much-needed tools, like data, like performance indicators and a common system infrastructure in which to share evidence and set service expectations.

As it stands now, mental health and addiction lacks a provincial coordinating body overseeing systems, standardization and performance and best practices. This lack of a centralized province-wide oversight has, we think, contributed in many ways to the challenges in our mental health and addictions system, as I mentioned earlier. But it bears repeating because, as I have said, as we discovered at our consultations, even our health care providers are sometimes unable to access services which are in their own communities, in the best interests of their patients.

Without this important coordinating lens, barriers to access unfortunately will continue to hamper people from getting the help they need, and a lack of data and uneven quality of care will unfortunately not produce the improvements in mental well-being that we are really trying to achieve. But we all want our investments to get real results, and we want those real results to help the Ontarians who are looking for support.

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Speaker, our mental health and addictions system cannot keep doing things the same way they have been for years and expect different or better results. This centre of excellence would standardize quality and delivery of mental health and addictions services across Ontario and provide a better and more consistent patient experience. Hopefully, the result would be we would see people actually achieving good results and getting better and restoring their mental well-being.

If this proposed legislation passes, then the centre of excellence would be that central engine that would manage and coordinate the quality and availability of Ontario's mental health and addictions services across the province. Unfortunately, what those in need are confronted with now is fragmented, disconnected and not really centred around people and their needs. Rather, what we have is a mental health and addictions sector which is disconnected, disjointed, and which seems to have little or no infrastructure at all to hold it together.

Passing this legislation would send a strong signal to our mental health and addictions sector that, finally, Ontario will have an agency, within Ontario Health, that will standardize the quality and delivery of mental health and addictions services and that will provide a better and more consistent health care experience for Ontarians.

Through the proposed Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence, Ontario Health would carry out its mandate to develop a better, more comprehensive system in the area of mental health and addictions.

Speaker, our government created Ontario Health to bring together the best expertise across our health care system and to form deep roots that would put health care in our province on a solid foundation for the future. The centre would put into operation our mental health and addictions strategy. It would develop clinical standards, quality standards and service standards for mental health and addictions, and it would monitor performance-related metrics of the mental health and addictions system.

It sounds like a lot of data, but it's very important because, as a government, we need to know that the services that we're buying are actually helping people to restore their mental well-being, and it's very difficult to ascertain that with the existing system right now. We need to have these investments in a system-wide kind of coordination and standardization, so that we can make sure that people are getting the best help that will really make a difference for them, and that they see the results that we would all like them to see so that people actually get better. This, in turn, will also provide resources and support to our health service providers, our new integrated care delivery systems and others related to mental health and addictions.

When our government introduced the Ontario health team model, we envisioned a new way of organizing and delivering care, care that is more connected to people in their local communities. Under Ontario health teams, health care providers will work as one coordinated team, no matter which sector they're working in right now,

whether that's primary care, acute care or community-based care. All of these sectors are important, and we need people to work together as a team. That is the model that Ontario Health envisions.

Mental health and addictions system modernization supports this broader health system agenda by preparing what is now a fragmented sector and the people in the sector—the providers of mental health and addictions services—to be part of a more integrated team and system through our Ontario health teams. So we're getting them ready, with these investments and with this standardization, to be a better partner with the Ontario health teams.

The proposed Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence would provide support and resources to these teams, connecting clients to the different types of care that they need and helping them navigate the system.

Speaker, our government is committed to building a better system. This year we have invested an additional \$174 million, in annualized spending, in mental health and addictions services. These early investments are an exciting first step in this long system transformation plan. We are taking a thoughtful approach that will help our government to build a publicly funded health care system that is sustainable, including for mental health and addictions services.

I think we all recognize, Speaker, that the current issues our system experiences, like delays accessing care, not only have a social cost but also have an economic cost. According to a study commissioned by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, mental health problems and illnesses cost the Canadian economy at least \$50 billion per year. Of that \$50 billion in total, over \$6 billion a year is in lost productivity due to absenteeism. Those are staggering figures.

That study goes on to say that promotion, prevention and early intervention initiatives can significantly reduce those losses. That is why our government wants to create more, and more effective, mental health and addictions services on the ground, where they are needed and where they matter most.

This proposed legislation is our first opportunity under the Ontario health framework to take the best practices from other areas of the system, like Health Quality Ontario or Cancer Care Ontario, which people are quite familiar with, and regional planning agencies, and to leverage this broader health system expertise to create a world-class approach to mental health and addictions challenges.

This provincial strategy would look to see if there are ways to work smarter together with our community mental health and addictions partners. It would look to streamline supports and provide better-connected and comprehensive care to clients, which would make our mental health and addictions system investments actually go further and achieve more results.

This proposed legislation supports the introduction and implementation of a mental health and addictions strategy, and we are committed to its long-term success.

We understand we cannot do this alone. We also understand that introducing and implementing a successful

mental health and addictions strategy depends on the sustained commitment of all sectors and levels of government.

We will continue to work with health care leaders, experts, sector partners and associations, health service providers, and, of course, those with lived experience to identify mental health and addictions needs across the province and to create a connected system of care, a system that is comprehensive, with wraparound services, to ensure that every Ontarian is fully supported in their journey toward mental wellness.

Our proposed legislation would refocus care by putting people and their families at the centre of mental health and addictions services that they need, and providing services which are more inclusive and accessible for everyone.

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The proposed establishment of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence within Ontario Health is part of our government's plan to modernize our public health care system. Our plan is relentlessly focused on patient experience and better connected care, which we know will yield better outcomes. We are going to reduce wait times and end hallway health care. The creation of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence would be a major step toward integrating mental health and addictions care into all parts of our health care system.

Our government is committed to the creation of a fully integrated health care system in which mental health and addictions care is a core component. We all know that the stakes are very high. We heard from the Attorney General earlier about the opioid situation in Ontario, which we're all very concerned about. As I mentioned, the minister and I had many consultations at the beginning of our term here this time about consumption and treatment sites, about the model. I attended the Opioid Symposium, which was a two-day symposium in downtown Toronto, and the stories are very sad. We have to do better. We have to help people to get better. We have to make sure that those services are there for them. We came up with the model for the consumption and treatment service sites which is really emphasizing the treatment part of it, so that when people who have addictions are ready to make a choice to try to get better, the services will be there at hand for them to access.

The point of those centres is really to have people have a place where there are people who can help them—health care professionals, primary care physicians, nurses and other people providing harm reduction products etc.—to have those places available for people so that they establish relationships with health care providers there and with the people who work there so that when they're ready to make a change and when they feel that it's a time that they can try to get better, the services are available to help them. And that is, really, I think, a good improvement in the model that came before. It came as a result of our consultations with experts, with health care providers and with the people who use the services, frankly. That's what we heard from them.

We took the best model that we saw. We visited the Regent Park site and found it a warm and inviting

atmosphere for people, just the kind of place where people can establish those relationships, where people come in and they're invited to use the laundry facilities if they'd like to, or have a shower, or, "Would you like to see a primary care doctor? There's one upstairs." There's a place to have a meal. All of those things, frankly, enhance the opportunities for people struggling with addictions to see that somebody is there who cares about them and is willing to be there to help them if they make a decision to try to get away from their addiction. And it's a very difficult thing to do, so that support is really important for people.

I was really excited about that model because I think that model has made a big difference for how people can get better. There's still much work to do, because it's only those people who actually enter those sites who have that opportunity, and a lot of people don't use the sites. But at least there is that opportunity there when they reach out.

Speaker, as I said, our government is committed to the creation of a fully integrated system in which mental health and addictions care is a core component. The stakes are very high. We want a system that Ontarians can rely on, a fully integrated system that includes mental health and addictions strategies, and a system that we also have an obligation to work on, as I've just given an example of, to improve and to protect.

There are lots of opportunities to find mental health and addictions services that can be improved, and we're working on all of those, trying to make sure that the services that we do provide are services that are actually going to help people.

We know that the status quo, currently, isn't an option. We know that these issues in the sector cannot be resolved overnight. People suffering with mental health and addictions problems, what their caregivers and their families are also going through with them—all of these affect our entire mental health and addictions system, and our entire health care system, frankly. As I mentioned, they even affect our economy, because people are absent from work, staying home, unable to give their best, because they're struggling.

So, it has a huge impact across the board, and I think we all know this. It's something being recognized more and more in our society, where we're much more willing to talk about mental health and addictions challenges, which is a good thing. Because I think everybody should know, and I really hope younger people will recognize—there are some pages here, too—but I really hope that they will understand that as human beings, none of us are perfect, and all of us face struggles and challenges. If you have a struggle or a challenge, there has to be somebody there, when you reach out, to help you. It's okay, because every human being faces challenges. It's part of being a human being, and we're in this together.

I'm afraid, sometimes, that young people think that they need to be perfect. All of us older people know that none of us are perfect, and young people shouldn't think they need to be perfect, so I hope they can recognize that. I always say that it's actually part of being a human being

to realize that you're not perfect, because that's what being a human being is about. We're not gods; we're humans.

I think this is an important message to get across, especially to our young people: that none of us are perfect, and any of us can have a challenge or a struggle at any point in our life. That's really what this is about. It's about recognizing the human quality in all of us, the fact that all of us are subject to fail on occasion, to err on occasion or to have a challenge or a struggle on occasion that we just don't know how to deal with by ourselves, and that is what having a great mental health and addictions system really is about.

We believe our proposed legislation moves us in the right direction toward fulfilling our commitment to building a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system. As the associate minister mentioned, I believe, it comes right out of the recommendations of our Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions—that was in 2010—that members opposite also participated in. I think there was all-party consensus that there should be some kind of centralizing function to steer the ship in the mental health and addictions sector, so that is where this comes from. It's based on a lot of the recommendations in that report. I know the minister, Minister Elliott, who was Vice-Chair of that committee, certainly looks to that report as a grounding for our entire system endeavour, and the Minister of Health has been referring to that report regularly as she has developed the changes in our mental health and addictions system, and so has our associate minister. It is a big part of informing us on how we want to go.

So, as I said, the proposed legislation is a step which moves us in the right direction toward fulfilling our commitment to building this comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system. We hope it will be a system that ensures children, youth and adults in Ontario receive appropriate services and supports where and when they need them, no matter where they live in Ontario. I am confident that we have the right plan and the right team to get this done. I know that together—and we'll have to all work together—we will finally build a coordinated health care system that includes our mental health and addictions strategies in Ontario, and that it will be centred around people.

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With that in mind, I just want to appeal to all of my colleagues here in the House. I know it's an issue that has affected everybody. I want to appeal to everyone to support this legislation, because we have before us a real opportunity to address long-standing issues facing our mental health and addictions system and facing the people who rely on our system.

I always think our health care system, our mental health system especially, is not really a system, as I said. It is so fragmented, partly because it grew up *sui generis*, if you will, from the ground—people trying to make a difference in their communities for people who needed help—and it has never really had a lens applied to it to systematize it and to break down that fragmentation. There have been steps in some communities that have helped with that, but

overall, it hasn't had that centralizing oversight that this bill will allow. I think it's just because of the way it evolved historically. What happened historically in our hospital system has to happen now in our mental health and addictions system. I think that initially hospitals were founded by people in the communities, trying to make a difference in those communities, and eventually the health care system took a very strong role in that regard. The same thing now needs to happen, I think, in our mental health and addictions system, where we need to get some control, some standards that will apply across the board, so that we can see better outcomes for people when they access those services. That is really where we're trying to go with this legislation.

Again, I appeal to all of my colleagues to please support this legislation, to please help us get on the right path to creating a truly integrated system where mental health and addictions is as important and plays as important a role as any other part of our health care system, and where people can get the support they need, where and when they need it and, as I said before, no matter where they live in Ontario, because that makes a big difference for everybody. I know that with the support of everyone in this House we can really make this happen. So I'm looking forward to working with everybody and looking forward to the rest of the debate on this issue.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments?

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's a privilege to rise on Bill 116.

I'm really pleased that my colleagues from St. Catharines and—I call it Welland, but I think it's Niagara West—are here today, because in Niagara we have a crisis. I've had the opportunity to meet with the associate minister to almost beg—to ask them to get the money to Niagara that we need, through my motion 31. It has been almost a year. I want my colleagues to hear this, because we can stand up here and say there's a crisis in mental health and there's a crisis in opioids and addiction, but we've had an opportunity in Niagara to at least fix some of the problem. I've worked with the Canadian Mental Health Association and local mental health organizations to determine what the need is in our community, as young people, middle-aged people and seniors are taking their lives. We've had an opportunity for a year—a year—to support that motion and get us a 24/7 mental health and addictions drop-in centre, which would benefit our residents. It would save lives. It would benefit my colleague from Welland. My colleague from St. Catharines is going to tell you some stats that I didn't even know.

So again, I'm begging the minister: Support my motion. It was supported by all four—not just three; all four supported that motion. People are dying in Niagara. We can do something about it today. I noticed your number: \$3.8 billion over 10 years. I'm not asking for \$3.8 billion. I'm begging you to please get the 24/7 that we need immediately, to try to save—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: It is a pleasure to join this debate today. I certainly stand behind this bill and all the

work our government has been doing towards mental health. Mental health, as we say, is health, and I am pleased that our Premier has put in the first Associate Minister of Mental Health to say how serious we are about mental health and the problems that this province is facing. And it's not just our province; it's all across Canada. We need to continue to talk about mental health, and this is a great step moving forward.

Right now, we hear about wait times; we hear about a fragmented system and uneven quality across Ontario. You may get service in one area of this province, but sometimes it's harder in northern communities and on our reserves. I commend our government and I thank them for the work. I thank the parliamentary assistant for her work. I look forward to working alongside as we continue to talk about mental health, because that's the message today: We need to continue to talk about mental health. We need to tell people it's okay to talk about mental health. But, as a government, we need to put a system in place that will help these people moving forward.

I'm looking forward to continuing this debate and, when it goes to committee, to further discussing this debate and how to make this bill even stronger and how to continue to help people who have mental health problems.

I know Minister Tibollo, the Associate Minister of Mental Health, has been out all summer, in every community, with anyone who has asked to sit down, to talk to people and learn from them. It's a consultation. It is a fulsome conversation. He and I have spoken, and he has reached out to me and said, "If you have any people you would like me to talk to in your community, please just let me know."

I'm very pleased that this man is our minister of mental health issues and addictions, and I look forward to working with him as we continue this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: It is a privilege, again, to rise today on Bill 116. This issue of mental health and addictions is so prevalent in today's society. It's something I witness every day in my riding in St. Catharines with the ongoing opioid crisis.

St. Catharines is top of the list of Ontario cities that have been hit by the opioid crisis. St. Catharines is at top place in all of Ontario. Thirty-seven overdose-related deaths amongst residents in St. Catharines were reported by July 2018, Speaker. In second place is Thunder Bay, with 44 people. St. Catharines is ahead of larger municipalities like Hamilton and Toronto.

In light of this, it is definitely encouraging to know that this government is working towards a provincial strategy to tackle mental health and addictions. However, Speaker, we need to ensure that this Ford government follows through. We need to hold this government accountable in making mental health and addictions top priority moving forward.

This is not stories of people; this is reality. Mental health and addictions is reality. It is not a story. This is people who suffer from PTSD, veterans who have fought

for this country who are homeless in St. Catharines. It is about what the timelines are that this government is going to put in to put this strategy in place. If specific deadlines for establishing a strategy and having an operational centre are not laid out—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Mr. Roman Baber: I had some remarks prepared, but I'd just rather speak from the heart. I have met with a constituent over the summer who has suffered perhaps the greatest loss. It is something that has resonated with me throughout the summer, so I was very touched by the words of the Attorney General and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health.

We are experiencing an epidemic. There is no question about it. And it affects everyone around us, irrespective of their socio-economic status. I'm grateful that we're finally able to have a free and frank conversation about opioid addiction and the underlying issue of mental health.

Some of my friends in the opposition were surprised to learn that I started my legal career at Community Legal Services at the University of Western Ontario. I've practised poverty law, and I was astonished to learn that the very bulk of the underlying issue that brought clients to Community Legal Services was mental health. I would venture to say that over the course of my two years at the clinic, I estimate that, at the very least, three quarters of those I served suffered from some sort of mental health illness. That leads me to believe, and led me to believe even then, that mental illness is the underlying cause of so many other perils that plague so many of our friends and loved ones, be it poverty, bankruptcy or criminal activity. So I'm grateful that we're finally tackling this head-on.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Speaker. I want to thank my colleagues from St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Etobicoke–Lakeshore and York Centre for their comments. I think you can see that there is a lot of consensus that we really need to fix our mental health and addictions system, and there's a lot of goodwill to work together to make that happen. It doesn't happen often enough in this House that we're all rowing in the same direction, but I think in this case we truly are rowing in the same direction.

We want to see real results and better outcomes for people. We recognize that people are struggling. As my colleague from York Centre has mentioned, unfortunately it seems that more and more people are struggling and need assistance. We need to make sure that what we're doing is providing real help for those people, and the best help that we can provide, frankly.

This new centre of excellence for mental health and addictions which Bill 116 is trying to establish will be an important part of providing a provincial oversight that up until this point has been lacking in this area. It will help us to address some of the profound difficulties that we have come across and have heard about from various people whom we have spoken with in our consultations and in our constituency offices, including, as we've mentioned, the

fragmentation of the system, the uneven quality, barriers to access—all of those things. I remember, when I first started working in this sector, I was astounded by the number of agencies actually on the ground providing services. I think it's something like 890. It's just so fragmented that we need this to bring it all together.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands in recess until 10:30.

The House recessed from 1013 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): As Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce some visitors in the Speaker's gallery. Today we have a delegation of elected officials from the Aichi Prefectural Assembly in Japan. The group is led by the head of the delegation, Masanari Nagae. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests to the Legislature today.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Also with us today in one of the members' galleries are students from the Public Leadership for Change course at McMaster University in Hamilton. With them is another very special guest: former member of the Ontario Provincial Parliament in the 37th to 41st Parliaments, and the longest-serving Speaker in the history of the province of Ontario, Dave Levac.

Hon. John Yakabuski: Records are certainly made to be broken, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I won't break that one.

Introduction of visitors.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like to introduce Dr. Rick Caldwell and Jenna Burnt from the Indigenous oral health committee of the Ontario Dental Association.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I'd like to welcome a great community organizer, Jason Veltri, to the gallery today.

Hon. Doug Ford: I'd like to wish everyone a safe and happy Halloween tonight. I'd also like to wish the legislative adviser in the government House leader's office, Jessie Saliba—it's her birthday today, the big two-five.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Our page from Waterloo, his name is Jack Sullivan. His family is here in the members' gallery today: Sean Sullivan, Laura Sullivan, and Michael, Terry and Mary Sullivan. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Good morning, Speaker. I'd like to welcome Michael Warchol, who is the former president of the U of T political students association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I would like to add my welcome to Mr. Levac coming to Queen's Park, and also to the McMaster students, the fourth-year McMaster students. McMaster is in my riding of Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas. I'm very proud and pleased to have you here and will be seeing you today at lunch.

SIKH MASSACRE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Brampton East has a point of order.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I believe we have unanimous consent of this House for a moment of silence. This November marks 35 years since the 1984 Sikh genocide, where members of the Indian government directed mobs in carrying out a campaign of genocide against the Sikh people in Delhi and throughout India. Voter lists were used to identify Sikh households, and kerosene was provided to set Sikhs on fire as their families were forced to watch. Survivors of this genocide now live here in Canada, many having been saved by their courageous Muslim and Hindu neighbours.

Today I ask for the unanimous consent of this House for a moment of silence to remember the thousands of lives lost in this genocide.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Brampton East is seeking a moment's silence. Agreed? Agreed.

The House observed a moment's silence.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: I also want to wish everybody a happy Halloween and a safe and fun time for children tonight as they go out trick-or-treating.

My first question this morning, Speaker, is for the Premier. This week, Ontario families have heard some stark news about the state of their hospitals, long-term care, and the lack of credibility of the Premier's promise to end hallway medicine by summer. They learned hospitals in Brampton are routinely operating at over 100% capacity. An urgent care centre receives 587% more patients than they are funded to care for. And from the independent Financial Accountability Office, they learned that the wait for long-term-care beds will grow longer, and that hallway medicine is going to grow much worse until things change.

Is the Premier ready to admit that things actually need to change, or does he still claim that his plan is on track?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I know we've said it over and over again, but we've actually increased health care by \$1.3 billion. That's on top of mental health and addiction, \$3.8 billion.

We're building 15,000 long-term-care beds for the first five years. And what's amazing, Mr. Speaker, is in the first year and four months, we're almost at 8,000 beds already.

We inherited an absolute mess when it came to health care. I travelled around the province. I talked to the front-line doctors. They were the ones telling me it's an absolute mess. They had some solutions. We sat down at a round

table and listened to the front-line folks who deal with it day in and day out.

We're pouring money into health care, and as you're going to hear, we're going to put more money into health care next year as well. So we're focused on ending hallway health care. We will end hallway health care in this province.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, yesterday the Financial Accountability Office painted a stark picture of our long-term-care system. The Liberals allowed the wait-list of seniors waiting for a long-term-care bed to grow by 78% over seven years. Under the Ford government, it keeps growing.

Can the Premier tell us how many new long-term-care beds he has actually made available—not just announced, but actually made available—after over a year in office?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Long-Term Care.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member for their question. I am thankful to the FAO for providing this report and shedding light on an issue that was ignored by the previous government—supported by the NDP 90% of the time—for 15 years. They sat on their hands and they ignored this issue.

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Now we're dealing with this reality. We are well on our way with 50% of those 15,000 beds allocated. We have 8,000 allocated. We have 1,800 that are newly allocated. We are putting people into long-term-care homes regularly. The 36,000 people who were on the wait-list are being accommodated, as we speak, in terms of new long-term-care spaces becoming available. But we know the problem is growing. That's why we are making sure that we develop innovative ways to address the issue, making sure that people get the care they need when they need it.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Speaker, the answer that the minister didn't provide, notwithstanding other information that was inaccurate that she provided, is 21. Between July 2018 and August 2019, the government only created 21 beds. During that same time, while they created 21 beds, the wait-list grew by more than 2,800 people.

Can the Premier explain why his government is following in the Liberals' footsteps even though our seniors population continues to grow?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you for the question. Between 2011 and 2018, the number of long-term-care beds in Ontario increased by only 0.8% while the population over 75 years of age grew by 20%. The previous government and the NDP were blind to the issue.

Our government is committing to making sure that those 15,000 new beds are created. We are committed to redeveloping another 15,000. We are adding \$1.75 billion to long-term care over the next five years to address that, and \$72 million more this year over last year. So our government is actively working on this issue, one that the previous government ignored.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is for the Premier. The Financial Accountability Office's report made it pretty clear that the government needs to increase investment in long-term care if they want to make a dent in the waiting list or get patients out of hospital hallways. If we're talking about stats in terms of how many beds are being created versus how many additions are coming to the wait-list, this government's record so far is 0.01%.

The Ford government, unfortunately, is not able to get patients out of hallways, because they're doing things the same way the Liberals did. The Ford government is, at the same time, however, making cuts to our long-term-care grants. This is something we were talking about all summer long in many communities across Ontario. The question is, will the Premier listen to expert advice and agree to abandon his government's intention to cut \$34 million from long-term-care funding?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I just can't wait until the Leader of the Opposition sees both the Minister of Health and the Minister of Long-Term Care standing in front of these long-term-care facilities cutting ribbons—also cutting ribbons for the historic \$27 billion put into building new hospitals, into new infrastructure. This will create 3,000 new hospital beds right across this great province.

This year our government is increasing health care again, just to remind everyone, by \$1.3 billion. That's an increase of 2.1%. That's \$384 million or a 2% increase for hospitals. This includes \$67 million for 700 beds in crowded hospitals; \$68 million for small, medium-sized and multi-site hospitals, which are desperately needed because it was ignored for 15 years—propped up by the NDP—\$155 million more with home and community care; and \$72 million more for the long-term-care sector, not reducing funding but increasing it by \$72 million for the long-term-care—

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: With all due respect, ribbons make good photo ops, but they don't help our hallway medicine crisis or build long-term-care beds.

The FAO is crystal clear, Speaker. The cost of creating new long-term-care beds will grow over time. Yet as the need for the investment grows, the Ford government is moving ahead with cuts to long-term care. That's combined with budget cuts at over-capacity hospitals that are struggling with deficits. This was a formula for hallway medicine and the crisis that was made when the Liberals put it in place while they were in office.

Why is the Ford government repeating the mistakes of the Liberal government, Speaker?

Hon. John Yakabuski: I think you supported them on that budget. You supported them 90% of the time. You must have.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry will come to order.

Restart the clock. The question is addressed to the Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Long-Term Care.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member again for the question. I would like to read you something from the FAO, from his report: "The 15,000 new beds represent the first meaningful increase to the supply of long-term-care beds in over 15 years...."

I am pleased that the FAO recognizes that our government's investments in long-term care is "the largest new health sector spending commitment in the 2019 budget and is 'a crucial part of the government's priority to end hallway health care.'" The inaccuracies in some of the commentary that has been going on are misleading, and I want to make sure—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'd ask the minister to withdraw the unparliamentary remark.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: But if we're going to talk about—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I didn't hear. I didn't hear. You must withdraw.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I withdraw. Yes, I did.

The report states that between 2011 and 2018, the number of long-term-care beds in Ontario increased by only 0.8% while the population of Ontarians age 75 and over grew by 20%. Our government is committed to addressing this issue that has been building for 15 years and we're well on our way to doing that.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Well, Speaker, as I said yesterday, there's a big "if" as to whether or not the promise to build those beds actually comes to fruition. We saw the Liberals make those promises as well and those beds were never built. And of course, the Conservatives are following on the same track as the Liberals in all the other mistakes that were made in terms of our health care system.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. The government side will come to order. I need to be able to hear the member who is asking the question.

Restart the clock. Again, my apologies to the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: There's no doubt the Liberals left the health care system hanging by a thread. Instead of making things better, the Conservative government continues to plow ahead by making cuts to health care services, and it's making things even worse—from ambulance shortages to bigger wait-lists for long-term care to more hospital overcrowding. Now we're heading into a terrible flu season, which is a recipe for disaster.

Will the Premier put patients first, stop the cuts and make the investment needed to tackle hallway medicine?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member opposite, again. We recognize that Ontario has an aging population. This issue has been building for many, many years and we know it's going to take real action to create the capacity that's required. That's why we're streamlining processes to make sure we get shovels in the ground,

allowing areas across Ontario to benefit from the allocation of almost 8,000 new beds that we've announced and 18,014 beds in just the last year. The FAO report clearly states that the previous government failed to act responsibly and proactively to deal with this problem.

Our government is committed to protecting the front-line services that directly impact Ontarians. Long-term care is one of them. We are making major investments—I want to repeat that: major investments—into the long-term-care system and we are committed to addressing any gaps that there may be.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Andrea Horwath: My next question is also for the Premier. I want to ask the Premier about an Ottawa woman's plight which encapsulates health care under the Ford government and the Liberals before them. Maria Konopeskas is an Ottawa resident who had minor surgery in 2017. She has been living in hospital ever since, because the personal support workers and home care that she needs aren't available for her.

Does the Premier believe that patients who receive minor surgery should be forced to live in hospitals for years at a time?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Health.

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you very much for the question. I am familiar with the situation in Ottawa. It should not be happening. When people are ready to leave hospital, they should be able to do so with the supports and services that they need at home. However, we also know that there are many personal support workers who are graduating in the province of Ontario, but they're not staying on as personal support workers. So it indicates to us that there's more work that we need to do.

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I am working with my colleague the Minister of Long-Term Care to develop a human resource plan for people to receive the supports they need, whether they're in hospital, long-term care or in home care. It is something that we are working on. We know that there are concerns with respect to some of the scope of work that they're doing, so we are looking at client-partnered scheduling, which allows care providers to make the most of their workforce, and geographic alignment of home care and community care to reduce travel times. I will discuss more in the supplemental.

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

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Look, Speaker, this woman is now on her second Premier and is still waiting in the hospital. Here are the facts: The FAO says that hallway medicine is going to keep getting worse. The wait for long-term care, which grew by 78% under the Liberals, is going to keep growing longer. And 94% of the government's home care investment this year comes from the federal government.

There are literally thousands of people like Maria waiting for home care. When is this government—this

government—going to stop continuing the neglect of the previous government and take serious action to deal with the crises in home care, long-term care and hallway medicine?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the leader of the official opposition that we are taking action on all three fronts, because we need to provide integrated care for patients and families regardless of where they are.

The status quo of our current health system is not sustainable. It's not satisfactory to people. They feel as if, when they leave hospital, they're being shut out of the system. That shouldn't be happening. People should know that their health care system is there for them throughout their health care journey, wherever they happen to be. That's why we are transforming our health care system and bringing it into the 21st century, with digital tools as well to make sure that people are supported.

Even though we have increased care in hospitals by \$384 million this year, with an additional \$68 million for small and medium-sized hospitals, we know that hospitals aren't the only sector that needs help. We need help in the home and community care sector. That's why we're investing \$155 million more this year so that people can get from hospital to home with the care and supports that they need. We are working on that. Numerous hospitals in Ontario—

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

Next question.

JOB CREATION

Ms. Donna Skelly: My question is to the Premier. Premier, yesterday you highlighted the positive impacts that our policies were having on the economic conditions for this province. Since we formed government, Ontario has once again become the jobs leader in Canada, with nearly 272,000 new jobs created. As you previously indicated, this success is unprecedented. Since 1981, there have only been a handful of times that the economy has performed at this pace. This is a true testament to the success of our open-for-business strategy.

In your closing remarks yesterday, you made reference to the historic investment by DHL in Ontario. Can you please describe what it will mean for the people of this province and—

Interjection.

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

The Premier to reply.

Hon. Doug Ford: I want to thank our all-star member from Flamborough–Glanbrook, who worked her back off getting DHL into Hamilton—by the way, the only member that's working their back off in Hamilton.

Mr. Speaker, I've got great news for the Leader of the Opposition. I'm sure she hasn't heard about it, but DHL is expanding, a \$100-million expansion, over at the Hamilton airport in the leader's riding. Not only are they putting

\$100 million in; they're actually expanding their operations from 50,000 square feet to 200,000 square feet. They're going to be hiring more people. This is a perfect example: When you have an MPP representing all of Hamilton, working hard, creating jobs, meeting with companies and connecting with the Premier, that's why we have 272,000—

Interjections.

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

I had to interrupt the Premier because—it wasn't a standing ovation, but it was a loud ovation, and I couldn't hear him.

Restart the clock. Supplementary question.

Ms. Donna Skelly: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Back to the Premier: This really is a huge deal for the people of this province and for the people in Hamilton. Having investments from companies like DHL truly recognizes how crucial Hamilton is as a gateway destination to Ontario.

This announcement, combined with the recent investments by Liburdi group, Stryker Corp. and KF Aerospace, among others, demonstrates the vital economic potential that Hamilton has in helping to drive our province forward.

And you know what? The good news continue. Premier, can you share with the Legislature the announcement regarding the Korea Electric Power Corp. engineering and construction company here in Ontario?

Hon. Doug Ford: Thank you, again, to a great MPP. I first want to acknowledge the great work the Minister of Economic Development is doing out there—job creation. He's out there focusing on trade, no matter if it's Asia or over in India or all over the world—the United States—telling the people that Ontario is open for business, open for jobs. What a successful trip. The minister went, took along the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility—Kamsah hamnida. Annyong haseyo. Thank you for the tie that you brought back for me. Thank you.

Because of their efforts on the trade mission in Korea, the Korea Electric Power Corp. engineering and construction company has announced that they have opened up a new office in Port Elgin.

Korea Electric Power Corp., Mr. Speaker, does 93% of Korea's electricity grid. The insight and knowledge which they provide will be an invaluable resource in support of the Bruce nuclear generating station—

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

Next question.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT

Mr. Taras Natyshak: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, parents and advocates of children with autism, some of whom are in the public gallery today, have long felt attacked, first by a Liberal and now by a Conservative government more concerned about their political fortunes than the welfare of the children who need support.

Today's Globe and Mail has a concerning and disturbing report detailing how a communications firm under

contract with the Ford government was also providing free communication training to an advocacy group that routinely attacked parents fighting for therapy for their kids. Speaker, families deserve to know what this firm was doing and why.

Will the government make the contract between the ministry of children and youth services and the Daisy Group public today, along with any documents associated with that contract?

Hon. Doug Ford: House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister followed all the rules with respect to this contract. Look, the minister is no different than any one of us here. We often sometimes need assistance in fulfilling our duties. I know the members opposite do as much as we do. But in this instance, the minister followed all of the rules. I think, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, she has been working very hard for the people of Ontario. The government, of course—we've all been working very hard.

I hope the honourable member will take the opportunity to receive that report and work with us to bring forward an autism program that I know the new minister has been working very hard on.

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

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Concerned parents deserve answers. Government funding went to a communications consulting firm, and that firm turned around and offered free services to a group that was attacking the government's critics. Even the group itself felt this was suspicious. When they asked questions about why they were getting all this help for free, they were threatened with a lawsuit.

The Ford government needs to come clean, Speaker. Will the Premier tell us today what Daisy Group was being paid to do, and provide answers for parents who have been treated so cruelly by this government over the last year?

Hon. Paul Calandra: As I said, the minister followed Treasury Board rules in the awarding of the contract, as all members would suspect. The important thing is that the former minister and the current minister have been working very hard over the summer to bring forward a report which I know was released yesterday. I know that on this side of the House—and I know and I appreciate, hopefully, the members on the opposite side of the House will work with us to bring forward a program that all of us can be proud of.

This is a very important community, Mr. Speaker. I know the minister has worked hard to double the funding in the sector. I'm very much looking forward to it, as I know all of the members are, in bringing forward a program, as I said, that we can all be proud of and that works for the families who have fought so hard.

LEGAL AID

Mr. Michael Coteau: The Premier earlier this week in the Toronto Star admitted to making many mistakes in his first year in office.

My question is to the Attorney General. Does the Attorney General believe that the devastating cuts to legal aid services to families here in Ontario was among those mistakes?

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm glad to rise for the first time in question period.

I think the mistakes that were made in legal aid were really about the Liberal government allowing it to increase by 27% in the budgets and providing no meaningful service beyond that.

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I can tell you that when we came into office, we wanted to improve service for the 900,000 people who access legal aid, whether it's through duty counsel, whether it's through clinics or whether it's through the 4,000 lawyers who take certificates to provide service to those who are vulnerable.

I think what we're doing with legal aid—when I was in Brampton or Mississauga or Ottawa or Renfrew, all over the province, when I go into the clinics and I talk to the service providers, I can tell you one thing, Mr. Speaker: They agree with the Auditor General that we can do better, that we can provide better service and that we can make major improvements in the system.

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

Mr. Michael Coteau: A question back to the Attorney General—I'll ask another question about a potential mistake.

While the government was making massive cuts to legal aid, slashing and cutting those services to families, the Premier was on the phone reassuring people that he would actually take care of business and get them the services they need. Instead, they were shuffled from office to office to office, without any hope or any help. Worse, these promises by the Premier could be seen as potential political interference.

My question back to the Attorney General: Will he admit today that the Premier assuring people that they would get these services, get this help and just giving that false hope was among these mistakes that the Premier has admitted to?

Hon. Doug Downey: Again, I'm pleased to address the question, because it's not really shocking that our offices talk to each other. I think it's the silos that were set up by the Liberals that were causing some of the trouble.

Mr. Speaker, it's critical that we hear from the people in Ontario of their experience with their government so that we can fix the system and we can improve the system, so that we can make sure that they're getting the service they deserve. It's not throwing more money at it, like the Liberals did, increasing the budget by 27% with no more service. That is shameful, Mr. Speaker. We will not do that.

Interjections.

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

Restart the clock. Next question?

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

Mr. Norman Miller: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to meet with the leaders of Safer Highway 11 Muskoka. We discussed that several at-grade intersections along the highway between Bracebridge and Huntsville make portions of Highway 11 a dangerous drive. In fact, they told me that there have been 950 accidents on this stretch since 2009.

I would personally like to thank co-founder Kevin Powers and others for their work in bringing attention to this issue.

Speaker, can the Minister of Transportation please inform the constituents of my riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka about what her ministry is doing to address safety concerns along Highway 11?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I'd like to thank the member for his question and for his advocacy on behalf of his constituents in Parry Sound–Muskoka. I know that we both share the same commitment to road safety.

Mr. Speaker, the ministry is currently undergoing an operational performance review of Highway 11 between Bracebridge and Huntsville. This review includes examining a total of 10 at-grade intersections along this 35-kilometre stretch, and will provide recommendations to address any safety and operational concerns at these locations.

Once this review has been completed, the ministry will develop an implementation plan for the recommended improvements to ensure the safety of Highway 11. Our goal is to remove all the at-grade intersections and replace them with a combination of interchanges and crossover bridges.

We understand that these large projects take time to design and construct. That's why, in the interim, we're making improvements that enhance the safety of at-grade intersections.

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

Mr. Norman Miller: I would like to thank the minister for her response. Highway 11 is a vital corridor facilitating the movement of people and goods across Ontario, which keeps our economy booming. Both the town of Huntsville and the town of Bracebridge have passed resolutions asking for improvements to Highway 11. I'm pleased to hear the minister shares their concerns.

Can the minister please tell us how our government is investing in Highway 11?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Thank you again to the member for the question.

Our government is committed to making smart investments to ensure people and goods get to where they need to go safely. That's why our government is investing \$11.3 million in Highway 11. This investment entails ongoing rehabilitation of three highway structures and resurfacing to improve the ride quality and performance of Highway 11 and increase safety for local drivers. This work is expected to be completed this fall, just in time for the winter months.

Our top priority is to ensure that our roads, bridges and highways remain among the most safe in North America. Speaker, safety will never take a back seat on our watch.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Mr. Faisal Hassan: My question is for the Premier. Yesterday morning, two people were shot in my riding of York South–Weston. Last night, five teenagers were injured. And just this morning, gun violence has erupted again, shaking our community. People are scared, and they don't feel safe in their own neighbourhoods.

But the Ford government has cut programs that helped prevent youth gang involvement, like youth employment programs, mental health resources and after-school programs. We need more resources to prevent young people from joining gangs, not less.

Premier, when will your government commit to making the necessary investments to keep our youth and community safe?

Hon. Doug Ford: Solicitor General.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I share the member opposite's concerns. I think that we all are very disturbed when we hear about these brazen attacks that are happening on our streets and in our communities.

While I would never suggest that I get involved in an active investigation, Chief Saunders has made it very clear that, in the most recent attack that we learned about yesterday evening, he believes strongly that this is a solvable crime. We, as a community, must come together and assist the police whenever possible to ensure that these individuals who don't have any regard for our families and our streets and our communities are brought to justice swiftly and quickly.

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

Mr. Faisal Hassan: Again, my question is to the Premier. By the time the police are called, we have already failed the community. We cannot keep holding funeral after funeral. And community members are tired of government inaction. They saw the Liberal government fail to act on the recommendations from the Roots of Youth Violence report for over a decade after it was released. Now they see a Conservative government that is making cuts instead of investments in communities and getting guns off the streets. People in my community deserve so much better.

Is this Premier content to continue the inaction on community safety, or will he rise in this House today and commit to take action?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Respectfully, I must disagree. One of the first actions that we took when we formed government was, an additional \$25 million was given to the city of Toronto to deal with guns and gang violence in our community. As recently as this summer, we, along with our federal partners—I think we all understand and appreciate that federally, the city of Toronto and provincially, we have a role to play in ensuring that our communities

are safe. We funded surge funding to assist the Toronto Police Service, at the request of the city of Toronto.

We are doing things, but we also need our communities to step up and bring forward any kind of evidence, to reach out and communicate so that our police, as I said, can act swiftly and quickly to cut down on some of this very heinous criminal activity.

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PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Michael Parsa: My question is for the ever-hard-working Associate Minister of Transportation. Minister, I know that there are a lot of people who are excited to see that they will finally be getting the new transit service in their backyard in Richmond Hill. The reason I say “finally” is because they have been promised this time after time after time by the previous government, but it took this Premier one year to finally get it done. It's great to see that our government will finally be working together with the city of Toronto, and hopefully the federal government, to build new transit to places like York region.

Can the minister please tell the House how our transit plan will not just benefit the people of downtown Toronto but in York region as well?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you to the wonderful member for the question. I know that over the last few days, there has been a lot of discussion taking place around Toronto—the Ontario Line and the Scarborough extension. I think it's equally as important that we discuss how the Yonge North extension will serve the people that reside north of Finch. I know that our York region MPPs—and we have many of them in the House here—and local municipal leaders in York region are ecstatic that they finally have a firm commitment for transit expansion.

As the municipalities in the greater Toronto area continue to grow, we need to ensure that we build a strong subway network, a foundation so that we can address future growth and expansion and future regional integration. I look forward to breaking ground with all of my colleagues from York region in the very near future.

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

Mr. Michael Parsa: I would like to thank the minister for her response and for her commitment to delivering transit to the people of York region. I know that the associate minister is a true transit advocate in her roles both as a minister and as an MPP.

One of our four transit priority projects included in the province's deal with the city is the western extension of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT project, which will see the current Eglinton Crosstown project extended further west, delivering more relief for commuters. Would the minister please tell us a little bit more about this and other key transit projects?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you very much to the member. Mr. Speaker, I cannot emphasize to you enough how important this project is to my constituency. For many years, there has been great uncertainty as to how to

proceed, and when, with this project. For those of you that don't spend a lot of time in Etobicoke, my constituents do not have access to fast and reliable public transit. This project, this \$4.7-billion investment in our community, will serve the people west of Mount Dennis through Etobicoke and eventually connect to the airport. Much of the proposed extension will be underground, as we've advocated for, and I am excited to continue to collaborate to work with the city of Toronto to get this project in motion and get the great people of Etobicoke moving.

LEGAL AID

Mr. Gurratan Singh: My question is to the Premier. The Premier himself knew his government's cuts to legal aid have caused harm to Ontarians. He told Global News, on April 22, "If anyone needs support on legal aid, feel free to call my office. I will guarantee you that you will have legal aid." Sounds pretty clear, Speaker, what the Premier was saying, but his own staff disagree with what he meant.

So let's get some clarification. To the Premier: What did you mean when you said to Ontarians, "I guarantee that you will have legal aid"?

Hon. Doug Ford: Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: I thank the member for the question—the member from Brampton East. When I visited the clinic in Brampton, it was very informative, because what the legal aid clinic in Brampton has done is work around some of the existing rules to make sure they're providing services in a modern way. They have rooms set up in the Brampton legal aid clinic where you can go in and there are TVs and they can interact with the services they need.

The answer to the question is this: The answer is that we want to hear from Ontarians. We are so frustrated with what the Liberals left us as a legacy of neglect with legal aid that we're having to make sure that we understand where the service needs are. We want to hear from every Ontarian who is trying to access the system. Mr. Speaker, whether they contact the Premier or they contact my office or they contact any member in this caucus, we want to hear what Ontarians want, and we want to hear how we can deliver service in a better and more modern way.

There's absolutely no question that there is more that we can do, but it is not throwing money at the problem; it's doing our work in a more modern way.

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

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Back to the Premier: In a freedom-of-information request, the Premier's staff wrote that they were honestly "struggling" with how to respond to Ontarians pleading for legal aid support.

Another staffer wrote that what the Premier meant to say was that Ontarians would have "access to the folks at Legal Aid Ontario." Which is it, Speaker: the empty promise that the Premier made on radio that Ontarians will be guaranteed access to legal aid, or what his staff have decided, that the cuts will continue?

Hon. Doug Downey: Make no mistake, the ministers make the decisions; the staff may provide advice. So I stand behind any decision that we have made because we made it with knowledge of where we needed to go. We needed to make sure that the bus that the Liberals put us on towards a cliff—27% increases that caused the system to become unsustainable. Whether the NDP were either on the bus with them or standing on the side of the road saying nothing, I have no idea. But it is not sustainable, what we were handed.

We're going to make legal aid more reflective of the needs of the 900,000 people who access our system, the vulnerable people who are going to be losing service on the track that we were left. So we're making sure that services are going to be there for the most vulnerable, and we want as many as possible to access the system. That's why we want to hear from them, whether it be on radio shows, phone calls, emails or texts—it doesn't matter—to any minister, to any member of our government in this House.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: My question is for the Minister of Transportation. We have heard a lot about subways this week. After years of delays and political gridlock, the city of Toronto and the province of Ontario have entered into a historic partnership to build an integrated and modern public transit network for Toronto.

But I understand that the minister is doing much more than just getting subways built for Toronto. Could the minister please share what she has been working on since her appointment to this portfolio?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Thank you to the member for Brampton West for the question. I'm very happy to switch gears today to talk about our plans to create a gridlock-busting network of transit options across the region.

Speaker, our government is building towards the largest-ever GO rail expansion. This summer, we announced 150 additional GO train trips per week, including 84 new trips and the extension of 65 existing trips. We've also announced our intention to purchase 36 more GO railcars, which will be built by Ontarians and support local jobs in Thunder Bay.

The demand for public transit is growing. That's why it's so important that we work today to improve and expand GO services. The GO rail expansion will permanently change the way we move around the region.

I look forward to sharing more in the supplementary.

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

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: Thank you to the minister for the answer. I know that residents in my riding of Brampton West are directly benefiting from our government's recent introduction of hourly, two-way, weekday evening train service between the city of Brampton and Toronto. My constituents now have more options when travelling from home to Toronto, making life easier for commuters in the GTA.

Offering more trips at more times is the key to getting Ontarians moving, which is exactly what our government is focused on. Speaker, could the minister elaborate on our plan to enhance GO services?

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Thank you again to the member for the question. I'd also like to take a moment to thank my colleague the Minister of Infrastructure, who is helping to facilitate the procurement on our massive plan for GO expansion. She's doing a great job. Thank you.

We're working toward bringing all-day, two-way GO every 15 minutes to our GO network. This is significant. We're making it easier for people to move around in our province so they can get where they need to be quicker and safely.

Earlier this year, we launched Kids GO Free. With children under 12 riding GO for free, more families are choosing GO Transit. We've also announced that starting in the spring of 2020, GO riders will be able to enjoy free WiFi on all GO Transit trains and buses.

Mr. Speaker, we're not only expanding public transit in Ontario; we're also delivering better services, more choice and more convenience for commuters.

1120

DOCTORS' SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: My question is to the Minister of Health. Huron Shores Family Health Team in Blind River was able to secure not only one, but two physicians for their clinic. This should be great news for the community, but ministry officials have told them that the application and registration will take up to 20 weeks.

This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. These two doctors have been practising in Ontario, have their CPSO numbers and billing numbers, but they have to wait for the ministry to approve them while the ER is full and flu season is just around the corner.

Minister, what is taking so long?

Hon. Christine Elliott: I thank you for raising this question. We don't want people who are fully able to provide services to not be able to do so, so I would certainly be happy to speak with you following question period to get a few more details so that I can follow up within the ministry to see what is taking so long, to get those people online and working as soon as possible. Thank you for raising it.

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

Mr. Michael Mantha: Minister, I'd be pleased—and I've sent many letters to your ministry.

Again, northern and rural communities are struggling enough as it is to recruit and retain doctors. These two doctors relocated to Blind River along with their families in the hopes of helping to relieve the pressures on the community. Now, they are told to stay on standby.

This process could be and should be streamlined in a matter of a few days. Again, this is unacceptable. If there is no immediate change, it will hurt the recruitment prospects of future physicians in Blind River and the area.

Will the minister fast-track the process for these two physicians in Blind River and restructure the current process to meet the needs of northern communities?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Yes, as I indicated in my previous answer, I certainly would do whatever I can to work with you and to find out specifically what the problem areas are in why this isn't being moved forward more quickly.

In response to your specific question, I'm happy to look into it. In terms of the more general situation, the fact that it's very hard to recruit medical professionals, health care professionals, to northern Ontario as well as some more rural and remote areas—we're certainly aware of the concerns with that. We are working with the Northern Ontario School of Medicine. They've been enormously helpful in trying to attract local candidates to go to school there and to stay there thereafter.

So we are working on some recruitment and retention policies. There is more to be done, obviously, but we want to make sure that people across Ontario can receive the health services that they need, and we will continue to focus in on northern Ontario because I know there is a continued—

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

CHILD CARE

Ms. Jane McKenna: My question is to one of my favourite ministers, the Minister of Education. Speaker, I know from speaking with my constituents in Burlington that access to child care spaces is a significant pressure on their families. I know that the minister recently announced the government's progress in supporting the creation of child care spaces across Ontario, underscoring our focus on creating greater choice for parents in Burlington and communities in Ontario.

Can the minister outline how many spaces have in fact been created in the first year of our government?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from Burlington for being a champion for affordable child care for families right across the GTA.

I am also proud, Speaker, that I joined my colleague Minister Dunlop last week to announce that under our government, 19,000 public and private child care spaces were built in the province of Ontario. That is because we're creating incentives in the private sector for independent daycare to expand in every region of the province. It's why we're expanding institutional daycare. In schools, we're investing over \$1 billion to build 30,000 child care spaces for working families in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we do not believe in a one-size-fits-all approach, as other parties do. We believe in choice for families and affordability for working people. We're going to continue to build on our success going forward.

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

Ms. Jane McKenna: Speaker, this is important progress families welcome, but we also know there is more to

do. I know from speaking to families that they need more spaces and they want more choices, not the one-size-fits-all model that is proposed by the other parties.

Can the minister tell us more about how the government is investing and unleashing growth in child care across Ontario?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Thank you again to the member from Burlington for her leadership. Mr. Speaker, we are investing over \$2 billion this year in child care to ensure we achieve two dual objectives. The first is affordability. We're doing that through a nearly \$400-million child care benefit announced by our government, because we recognize that under 15 years of the former Liberal government, child care rose to the highest cost in the nation. This is unacceptable for working families and it's unacceptable for this government.

That's why we've moved forward with an initiative to make child care affordable for up to 75% of eligible expenses for working moms and dads. We're investing millions of dollars to expand child care options—quality child care options—right across the province, and we're going to continue to do this while supporting our municipal partners with a \$1.7-billion investment to help them make child care accessible for their families and their communities.

MANUFACTURING JOBS

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: My question is for the Premier. As you know, Premier, layoffs at the Bombardier plant are coming next month to Thunder Bay. This government has not offered a real solution and neither did the government before them. Hundreds of families across my riding are facing uncertainty and hard times.

What will the Premier do to help the workers at Bombardier keep their jobs?

Hon. Doug Ford: Thank you for the question from the member from Thunder Bay. I find it ironic. I was up there. I didn't see that the member—actually, last moment, I met one of the heads of the Unifor groups, named Dominic. He came to an event the night before and he said, "Can you show up at 7 in the morning?" I showed up at 7 in the morning, talked to over 300 members there and told them that we saved over 200 jobs. They appreciated me showing up so much, they were clapping, cheerful: "Way to go. You're the only one that has showed up to our plant."

This government saved over 200 jobs. What they did tell me is, they didn't appreciate Unifor actually using their union dues to attack a person that's trying to save their jobs and help their family and fight for them. They said they don't want their union dues being used to attack the guy that's helping them. That's what they said. I get along great with them.

We're going to continue to thrive in Thunder Bay and represent—

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

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: My question is still for the Premier. The Thunder Bay Bombardier plant has a

long and storied history and is over a century old. Fighter-bomber aircraft were built there during World War II and it remains a major employer in the northwest. Jurisdictions across the globe have found ways to keep production local, but so far, there has been no real action by this government or the government before to save that plant. What will this government do to keep the Bombardier plant open?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Economic Development.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: First, I want to congratulate the Minister of Transportation on purchasing 36 of Bombardier's cars that are built there. We're greatly appreciative of that work in the north.

Speaker, not long ago the CEO of Fiat Chrysler told Premier Wynne that she has created the most expensive jurisdiction in all of North America in which to do business. That's why Premier Ford and our government took very swift action to make Ontario open for business and open for jobs. Since taking office, we've reduced red tape and reduced the cost of doing business by \$5 billion.

Companies like Bombardier and others all now have their WSIB payments reduced without any benefit reductions, and can now write off their equipment in the year that they purchased it. This gives companies like Bombardier and others the hope they had lost under the previous government, and that's exactly how 272,000 new jobs were created in the province of Ontario.

NATURAL GAS

Mr. Rick Nicholls: My question is to the Associate Minister of Energy. Expanding natural gas will make Ontario communities more attractive for job creation and new businesses. I was excited to join the associate minister last month at Kent Bridge Road station in Dresden, where he announced that construction work was officially underway on two new natural gas transmission pipelines in Chatham-Kent.

1130

Mr. Speaker, could the associate minister please tell us how the natural gas expansion program will save people money and ensure our province is open for business?

Hon. Bill Walker: It's my pleasure to answer the question from the honourable member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington—and for all the great work he does on behalf of his constituents.

I also want to thank the Minister of Infrastructure and the Minister of Energy for their continued leadership and for putting affordability back into energy bills for Ontarians. Our government's priority is putting more money in the pockets of people by lowering energy costs. By expanding access to natural gas, we're helping make life more affordable for families and businesses in Chatham-Kent.

The Chatham-Kent natural gas expansion project is possible thanks to our government's new and innovative partnership with the private sector. The construction of two new transmission lines there could save the average homeowner up to \$2,200 per year in energy costs as they switch from costlier fuel sources.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to sharing more information on the benefits of this excellent program in my supplementary.

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

Mr. Rick Nicholls: Thank you to the Associate Minister of Energy for your continued support on this critical file. I know our government is working very hard to fix the 15-year-long Liberal hydro mess and deliver real relief for families and businesses.

Would the Associate Minister of Energy please tell the members more about how our government is helping to lower energy costs for businesses across rural, remote and other underserved communities in Ontario?

Hon. Bill Walker: Thank you again to the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington for that great supplementary, for the great work he does, and I truly hope he's back dancing soon with a successful knee replacement.

Investing in Ontario communities benefits the whole province. This is why we're working to connect more rural and remote communities to natural gas. In Chatham-Kent, the municipality estimates the additional natural gas capacity could create up to 1,400 new jobs in the local greenhouse industry alone. This is significant, Mr. Speaker.

The natural gas project is a great example of how our government is working with the private sector to create more incentives to make communities more attractive for businesses, which in turn creates more jobs.

We're committed to lowering energy costs and giving real relief to families and local businesses, and look forward to having the people in South Bruce, Arran-Elderslie, Kincardine, Chatham-Kent, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation and Scugog Island in service as early as the end of this year, and we'll continue to make lives better for the people of Ontario.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Premier. Bonnie O'Keefe has been on a hunger strike outside Renfrew town hall since Monday. Bonnie is taking this drastic action because she is desperate for help for her adult daughter, Jenny. Jenny has Williams syndrome. Bonnie and her husband cannot care for Jenny on their own.

Jenny lived in a group home until a year and a half ago, when her bed was given away after a brief hospitalization. Now, Jenny is being bounced from homeless shelter to homeless shelter, which cannot meet her complex needs. She has been bullied and even brutally assaulted in a shelter.

Jenny desperately wants a place to call home. Bonnie has tried every avenue to find supportive housing for Jenny, but with the 25-year-long wait-list and about 16,000 adults on that list, Bonnie and Jenny have nowhere to turn.

I ask the Premier: Why is your government not helping Bonnie and her vulnerable daughter, Jenny?

Hon. Doug Ford: Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member opposite for the question. I know I was down in Windsor earlier this summer and had some meetings with the member from Windsor West with a community group that had a lot of the same issues she just described. We both feel very passionately about the need to build more housing for individuals with developmental disabilities.

While I can't speak to the case that she's referencing directly, what I would encourage that family to do, or any family in this province that's running into a similar situation is—we do have a lot of caring MPPs in this Legislature and caring constituency staff who do tremendous work every day dealing with situations like the one the member opposite just described.

It's imperative, actually, that people who are in crisis, like the individual that was just mentioned, reach out to our constituency offices, because we will do everything that we can, within this ministry, with crisis intervention, to help the individual get the accommodation that they're looking for.

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

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I'd like to point out that Bonnie was contacted by someone from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services who suggested that she and other parents pool their resources to build their own home and to start a GoFundMe page.

I spoke to Bonnie, as did my colleague from Ottawa Centre. She is desperate for help. She has contacted her MPP, who is the Minister of Natural Resources, and she has contacted the Premier. Neither of them responded. Bonnie feels ignored.

There are thousands of families that are facing the same challenges. The wait-list for supportive housing is over 25 years long and, as I pointed out, about 16,000 people are on that list. Liberal and Conservative governments have created this shameful legacy in Ontario. People with developmental disabilities are being told that their only option is to live in homeless shelters. I get at least one phone call a week from a parent at the end of their rope, desperate for housing for their child. This is deplorable.

Will the Premier work with Bonnie to find a solution to find a home for Jenny? Will he get to work immediately to address the back—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. The question has been referred to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Todd Smith: Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a bit of a theme today when it comes to developmental services, and there seems to be a theme when it comes to long-term care as well in the province of Ontario. The theme is that, after 15 years of inaction on the housing front by the previous Liberal government, we have a lot of work to do on this side of the House. I can tell you that my ministry takes this extremely seriously. I can tell you that the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is taking this extremely seriously. I can tell you that

the minister responsible for housing in Ontario is taking this seriously.

We need more housing in Ontario. We need housing for our seniors. We need housing for individuals with developmental disabilities. We need more housing for mixed-use community housing. That's why we have brought lots of legislation to the floor of the Legislature to start to deal with the irresponsibility and the inaction of the previous Liberal government, who had—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. I will remind all members that when the Speaker stands, you sit.

The next question.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: My question is for the Minister of Long-Term Care. We are all aware of the difficulties when it comes to securing long-term care in Toronto and across the province. Parents and loved ones end up sitting on wait-lists for days at a time, sometimes with no end in sight. It's an issue that affects us all.

Across the province, there are more than 36,000 Ontarians waiting to get into a long-term-care home, putting a strain on the health care system and leaving residents waiting too long for the care they need. I know the situation right here in Toronto can be especially difficult to deal with. Can the minister please outline what she has done to shorten the long-term-care wait-list right here in Toronto?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you to the member for their great work.

I know that the wait-lists in larger cities like Toronto and Ottawa are particularly challenging. Over the past few months I've been able to visit many of the long-term-care homes and have had the opportunity to hear about the wonderful work that our long-term-care homes are doing to provide the services that our residents need.

Earlier this month, I was in Etobicoke Centre with the good member from Etobicoke Centre, and we reaffirmed our commitment to the 200 new long-term-care beds at the Runnymede Long-Term Care Home project here in Toronto. Runnymede Healthcare Centre has always been a leader in the delivery of health care in Toronto, and these new beds will help take pressure off hospitals and allow doctors and nurses to work more efficiently and to provide better and faster health care for families and patients.

These beds will make a great difference to individuals in this area and ensure that those who need care in long-term-care facilities will receive it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes question period for today and for the week.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I want to recognize the member for Nickel Belt on a point of order.

M^{me} France Gélinas: A quick point of order, Speaker: On Monday I talked about one of my constituents, Mr.

Hyslop, and I mistakenly referred to him as Robert. His name is Raymond.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion number 68, relating to allocation of time on Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector.

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

The division bells rang from 1140 to 1145.

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

On October 30, 2019, Mr. Calandra moved government notice of motion number 68, relating to the allocation of time on Bill 124. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be counted by the Clerk.

Ayes

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

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

Nays

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 65; the nays are 42.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I recess the House, I want to express my appreciation to all of the members of this Legislature for the higher standard of decorum that we achieved this week. I'm sure the people of Ontario noticed, and the Speaker appreciates it very much. Thank you. We can do it.

This House stands in recess until 1 o'clock this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1150 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Deepak Anand: It's an honour today to welcome Rupreet Sidhu, Harvinder Sidhu, Swaranjit Sidhu and Sukhjot Sidhu and their grandfather, Sukhdev Singh Kooner, who could not join, from EcoSikh Canada. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I just want to join in welcoming the folks from EcoSikh. We had a fantastic tree planting of 550 trees last Saturday. It was a really amazing way to celebrate the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Welcome to this House.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

TREATIES RECOGNITION

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. Next week is Treaties Recognition Week. Schools across Ontario will recognize and learn more about treaties. Treaties matter to all Ontarians. They are more than just historic documents. And we are all treaty partners.

As partners, we need to think about the ongoing relationships between First Nations and the government. We have to recognize that the colonial system that's in place puts First Nations in a perpetual crisis. This is systemic racism, discrimination and inequality.

But if we go back in our history and think about the intent of the treaties, they were meant to share the wealth of the land. An example is that Ontario and Canada are signatories through Treaty 9. Treaty 9 allowed governments to prosper from the resources opened up to them through the agreement. First Nations have not shared the same benefits from these resources. This is why treaty knowledge in Ontario is important.

The government should recognize the treaties by committing to improve the quality of life for First Nations people in Ontario. Part of this can be done through the passing of my private member's bill to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Ontario. I hope that you all join me in acknowledging Treaties Recognition Week next week.

Our people have been here for generations. We are here today. We will be here tomorrow. Work with us by honouring the treaties. Meegwetch.

HALLOWEEN EVENTS IN MILTON

Mr. Parm Gill: After his own battle with kidney failure, Milton's own Mitch Garber started treating people on his street with an elaborate Halloween display. Since 2013, this has really taken off. Not only is Mitch providing Halloween excitement, but he has raised over \$40,000 for the Kidney Foundation, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to see our community rally around Mitch to support the Halloween display year after year.

In addition to Mitch's Halloween display, for 10 years now town councillor Rick Di Lorenzo has organized the highly anticipated Milton Haunted House each and every year. With all of the proceeds going to the Milton District Hospital Foundation, the Milton Haunted House has raised \$12,000 this year alone. It takes an army of volunteers to put on this event every year—100 of them, to be exact.

I would like to thank Councillor Di Lorenzo and many volunteers for entertaining and treating our community and for raising an impressive \$110,000 to date, Mr. Speaker. Mitch and Rick are doing a spook-tacular job in Milton, and I would ask all of my colleagues, on behalf of all of my constituents in Milton, to applaud their efforts.

BULLYING

Mr. Paul Miller: I want to take the time this afternoon to implore the government of this province to take action on a matter that recently led to an unthinkable tragedy in my constituency.

As we speak, children from all levels of our education system are facing harassment from their peers. Bullying is not a rite of passage for our youth. Bullying is physical and mental abuse and is occurring in our schools and neighbourhoods and online.

Bullying takes many forms, and those who experience it have lifelong scars and fears to overcome. While most students graduate and move on from terrible bullying experiences, some are denied the chance to grow up and move on.

Sadly, this was the case of 14-year-old Devan Bracci-Selvey from Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in my home riding. After weeks of intense and escalating bullying, Devan was stabbed and killed by his tormentors on October 7 in the presence of his mother. Thousands of people are asking, "How did something like this happen, and what are our leaders going to do about it?" As leaders, it is our responsibility to respond to the cries for help when bullying and violence occur in our schools. Knee-jerk reactions and looking for someone to blame is not constructive. We need a joint effort by all levels of government and society as a whole to solve the serious issues. We must establish a real process where students can feel safe coming forward with their concerns. They have to

know that concrete action will be taken to resolve this situation.

My community and the rest of the world have seen what can happen if we ignore the problem of bullying in our schools. We have the opportunity to prevent another tragedy and to improve the lives of thousands of tormented students in our schools. It's time to take action now.

ECOSIKH

Mr. Deepak Anand: This year marks the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of the Sikh religion, an advocate for unity, peace, hard work and community giving. Around the world, the occasion will be celebrated through events, exhibitions, prayers and in many unique ways.

One such example is done by organizations like EcoSikh, which is a global organization established in 2009 by Dr. Rajwant Singh. Guru Nanak Dev Ji taught us that humans must be in harmony with the earth and all of God's creation. It is our purpose. "Air is the Guru, Water the Father, and the Earth is the Great Mother." Taking inspiration from this, EcoSikh Canada has pledged to plant 55,000 trees across the country, with the global aim of planting one million trees by 2021.

EcoSikh leverages Guru Ji's teachings to promote positive living for all humanity and caring for our environment. Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to participate at EcoSikh Canada's first tree planting held in the great riding of Mississauga–Malton, where 200 trees were planted. It was such a great way to spend a Saturday morning in the service of our community. I'd like to encourage my colleagues in the House to join EcoSikh events in their ridings. The details can be found at www.ecosikh.ca.

I'd like to recognize Roop Sidhu, president of EcoSikh, for doing this. This is the very best of Guru Ji's teachings and a great way to honour Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I had the opportunity to meet with many constituents over the last five months, and I heard a lot. I heard about long-term-care challenges, hospital gridlock, emergency room nightmares, concerns of parents of children with autism, cuts to legal aid, and all the effects of the opioid crisis. Some were desperate for help, and others had good ideas on how to help.

One experience stands out: the Simpson Street neighbourhood meeting I attended earlier this month. This is a working-class neighbourhood, multicultural, and I grew up in it. Everyday citizens organized to bring their concerns forward. I listened to a long line of passionate people speak about street crime, derelict drug houses, garbage and needles in the street. People do not feel safe in their own community. They know that Toronto and Ottawa gangs have infiltrated the area, and increased levels of violence have followed. Police services are stretched, but not one cent of the \$214 million of federal guns-and-gangs

funding has reached Thunder Bay. People at the meeting focused on solutions so they could feel safer in their communities. They understood that support must be in place so there are opportunities for everyone.

1310

I'm so proud of the organizing work my constituents are doing, and I urge the government to do more to help.

CYSTIC FIBROSIS

Mr. Jim Wilson: I'd like to read an important email I received this week from my constituent Sasha Haughian from Tottenham. I've been working with Sasha and her husband, Jamie Larocque, for over a year concerning coverage for cystic fibrosis medications for their two young sons. Sasha's letter reads:

"Hello again Jim,

"This was a big week for the CF community around the world." But "unfortunately, we are getting left farther and farther behind.

"The FDA announced the approval of a new triple therapy gene modulator this week.... I can't describe how left out so many of us Canadians feel, knowing we are still fighting for Orkambi, which is now becoming ancient to the rest of the world.

"As well, England (one of the countries the Ministry of Health always compares us to when defending their stance on Orkambi) just signed a deal with Vertex and are providing public access for all gene modulators as well as future therapies. We are now officially one of the only developed countries in the world to not provide these medications to our patients.

"Why our children are suffering when the rest of the world is celebrating is just incomprehensible, especially with a government that wants to end hallway medicine and save money. CF patients are literally taking up hospital beds and needing costly procedures when there is a medication that could prevent that."

Mr. Speaker, as you know, this is the exact same issue I raised in this Legislature five years ago on behalf of another constituent, Madi Vanstone. While the medication Madi needed was eventually funded for her, the root of the problem was never addressed. Five years later, here we are again. Ontario needs to develop a rare drug strategy to fix this issue, and in the meantime Ontario needs to help those in need now by negotiating with drug companies like Vertex for these life-saving cystic fibrosis drugs.

DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS FUN WALK

Mr. Dave Smith: On Saturday, September 14, I had the great honour of taking part in one of my favourite events held in my riding of Peterborough–Kawartha. It was the second annual Down Syndrome Awareness Fun Walk, also known as the Buddy Walk.

For those of you who aren't aware of this event, let me describe it to you. The walk is used to raise awareness about Down syndrome and to raise money to support those

families with a Down syndrome loved one; a great family event where everyone can enjoy an inclusive day. Our walking route was from Lakefield's Isabel Morris Park down Queen Street to Albert Street, and then back up Queen Street to return to the park, a total of 2.2 kilometres.

Each participant was given a white Buddy Walk t-shirt. Why a white t-shirt, you ask? Well, at the stations, every 400 metres, we had paint, and participants were splashed with various colours of paint as they were going through the route. People in blue, red, green, gold and purple rainbow shirts after the walk spent the rest of the afternoon singing, dancing and playing in the park.

This year was only our second year, but we raised more than \$26,000 for Down syndrome. We had almost 500 participants take part. And for me, one of the most exciting parts of this event: we had 39 VIPs—for me, that's valiant, impressive participants.

Speaker, it was a wonderful experience again this year. I look forward to taking part again next year. I can't thank the organizers enough for all of their hard work and the awareness that they raised.

SIKH MASSACRE

Mr. Gurratan Singh: In the past weeks, voter lists were used so people could go door-to-door to engage Canadians in the very cornerstone of our democracy: our right to vote.

But now imagine if our elected officials gave those voter lists to violent mobs so they could go door-to-door to identify minorities, so they could be systematically targeted and killed; so women could be raped and men have tires placed around their necks, be doused in kerosene and set on fire.

That is precisely what happened to the Sikh community in Delhi and throughout India in 1984. Indian elected officials, who had a duty to represent their communities—to protect them—were the ones who provided the mobs with the voter lists and the kerosene, directing them in carrying out a campaign of genocide against the Sikh people. Those elected officials used their privilege, their resources and their position of power to murder thousands of Sikhs and displace thousands more.

This November marks 35 years since this genocide—35 years of trauma and pain; 35 years, and still we've not received the justice that we deserve. But we will continue our fight for justice. They may have bloodied our bodies, but they could never kill our spirit. Lest we forget.

CHRISTMAS IN PARIS

Mr. Will Bouma: It's an honour to rise and speak about an exciting event taking place in my riding. Tomorrow is November 1. The Kindred Spirits Artisans of Paris will be hosting the 28th annual Christmas in Paris at the Paris fairgrounds.

Christmas in Paris is a unique, annual event held in the small community of Paris in the county of Brant. Over the course of the weekend, all manner of artisans and

craftspeople and thousands of visitors gather together to sell their wares, celebrate the local culture and herald in the holiday season.

You will find a large and varied assortment of artwork and crafts, ranging from acrylic paintings to rustic decor and much, much more. All of these are hand-crafted and original, and are made by over 30 participants, who are all members of the Kindred Spirits Artisans.

Christmas in Paris is an excellent example of the vibrant and growing art scene in the county of Brant. Proceeds from the event's admission will go to help support the arts and art education to encourage continuing artistic development in Paris.

The 28th annual Christmas in Paris will be running Friday from 6 to 9, Saturday from 9:30 to 5:30 and Sunday from 9:30 to 4:30. Admission is only \$2 for adults, and children under 12 are free. I would encourage everyone who is able to attend to do so and experience one of the great cultural events in the county of Brant.

SKILLED TRADES

Ms. Christine Hogarth: I rise today to share good news: that our government is increasing apprenticeship opportunities and transforming training services.

Technology is changing Ontario's economy and we have to help the skilled trades keep up. About one in five new jobs in Ontario over the next five years will be in trades-related occupations. We know that we have talented workers in Ontario and that providing the right training will make it easier to match talent with good jobs, help us grow the manufacturing sector and ensure Ontario is truly open for business.

On May 29, 2019, we passed the Modernizing the Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship Act, 2019, which provides the new legislative framework needed to update skilled trades and apprenticeship systems.

On September 23, the Minister of Colleges and Universities announced that Adam Melnick and Andrew Pariser have been appointed as new training and skills advisors for the next two years. Mr. Melnick and Mr. Pariser have led consultations with industry and stakeholders and provided recommendations to the minister to modernize the skilled trades and apprentice system.

We are living up to our promise. We want to encourage employers to increase participation and to promote the skilled trades as a desirable career path.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committees:

On the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, Ms. Mitas replaces Mr. Bailey; and

On the Standing Committee on Estimates, Mr. Parsa replaces Mr. Crawford; and

On the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Mr. Gravelle replaces Mr. Fraser; and

On the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, Mr. Fraser replaces Mr. Gravelle.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Calandra has moved that the following changes be made to the membership of the following committees:

On the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly, Ms. Mitas replaces Mr. Bailey; and

On the Standing Committee on Estimates, Mr. Parsa replaces Mr. Crawford; and

On the Standing Committee—

Interjection: Dispense.

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

Motion agreed to.

1320

PETITIONS

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

Mr. John Vanthof: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts represent an all-out attack on municipalities, health care, schools, universities and social services; and

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts are harming families, children and the most vulnerable across Ontario, making the services we all rely on less accessible and accountable; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will strip workers of their charter-protected right to free collective bargaining; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will force front-line public sector workers to accept contracts below inflation, compounding cuts that make the delivery of services more difficult;

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

“That the government of Ontario stop dismantling our social infrastructure, properly fund our public services, withdraw Bill 124, and support communities, not cuts.”

I fully support this petition, add my signature and hand it to page Christian to take to the table.

TAXATION

Mr. Will Bouma: This petition is entitled “A Carbon Tax is Not the Only Way to Fight Climate Change.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government for the people was elected on a mandate to make life more affordable for Ontarians; and

“Whereas the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan is currently working to reduce targets by the previously agreed upon Paris accord targets without a carbon tax; and

“Whereas Ontario is the only province that is meeting the goals of the 30% reduction rates agreed to in the Paris accord; and

“Whereas the seniors, workers, families and small businesses of Ontario cannot afford another tax burden on every purchase they make;

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

“Fight the federally imposed Justin Trudeau carbon tax with every tool at the government’s disposal.”

I completely agree with this petition, will sign it, and give it to page Ella.

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, good afternoon to you.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts represent an all-out attack on municipalities, health care, schools, universities and social services; and

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts are harming families, children and the most vulnerable across Ontario, making the services we all rely on less accessible and accountable; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will strip workers of their charter-protected right to free collective bargaining; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will force front-line public sector workers to accept contracts below inflation, compounding cuts that make the delivery of services more difficult;

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

“That the government of Ontario stop dismantling our social infrastructure, properly fund our public services, withdraw Bill 124, and support communities, not cuts.”

I fully agree. I’m going to sign it and give it to my friend Joshua to take up to the table.

FOOD SAFETY

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

“Whereas Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, states that ‘every room where food is prepared, processed, packaged, served, transported, manufactured, handled, sold, offered for sale or displayed shall be kept free from live birds or animals’; and

“Whereas low-risk food premises serving only beverages and/or only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods have for many years in this province allowed customers to be accompanied by their pet dogs for their convenience and social benefit; and

“Whereas the decision whether or not to allow dogs on site should be driven by the business needs of such premises, so long as sanitary and safe conditions are upheld;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to create an exception to Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, for low-risk food premises serving only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods, for the

benefit of all Ontario pet owners and the businesses that serve them.”

I affix my name to this petition and hand it to page Nathan.

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts represent an all-out attack on municipalities, health care, schools, universities and social services; and

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts are harming families, children and the most vulnerable across Ontario, making the services we all rely on less accessible and accountable; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will strip workers of their charter-protected right to free collective bargaining; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will force front-line public sector workers to accept contracts below inflation, compounding cuts that make the delivery of services more difficult;

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

“That the government of Ontario stop dismantling our social infrastructure, properly fund our public services, withdraw Bill 124, and support communities, not cuts.”

I completely agree with this petition and will be affixing my signature to it. I’m giving it to page Alexander to take to the Clerk.

FOOD SAFETY

Ms. Christine Hogarth: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas many small businesses in Ontario, including many craft breweries, desire to provide a safe and pet-friendly space for their patrons; and

“Whereas approximately 40% of Canadian households have at least one dog and many members of those households like to socialize with other dog owners in pet-friendly spaces in our communities; and

“Whereas the government of Ontario ought to amend regulations to enable business owners the flexibility to allow patrons with dogs on their premises, where food is not being prepared; and

“Whereas many jurisdictions throughout the world allow patrons with dogs to frequent open marketplaces and patios of restaurants and bars. Canadian provinces like New Brunswick, British Columbia and Alberta have all taken the lead in amending provincial regulations in order to give business owners the option of allowing dogs on their premises;

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

“That the government of Ontario amend regulations to enable a private business to permit individuals to bring dogs that are supervised in areas on their premises where no food preparation is taking place.”

I agree with the petition, and I’ve already signed my name to it. I will give it to Mick to bring to the front.

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Mrs. Claudette Friel from Capreol in my riding for this petition. It reads as follows:

“Whereas quality care for the 78,000 residents of (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families; and

“Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in LTC homes to keep pace with residents’ increasing acuity and the growing number of residents with complex behaviours; and

“Whereas several Ontario coroner’s inquests into LTC homes deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and staffing levels, and the most reputable studies on this topic recommend 4.1 hours of direct care per day;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“To amend the Long-Term Care Homes Act ... for a legislated minimum ... standard of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and give it to Bernat to bring to the Clerk.

FOOD SAFETY

Ms. Lindsey Park: I rise to present the following petition:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, states that ‘every room where food is prepared, processed, packaged, served, transported, manufactured, handled, sold, offered for sale or displayed shall be kept free from live birds or animals’; and

“Whereas low-risk food premises serving only beverages and/or only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods have for many years in this province allowed customers to be accompanied by their pet dogs for their convenience and social benefit; and

“Whereas the decision whether or not to allow dogs on site should be driven by the business needs of such premises, so long as sanitary and safe conditions are upheld;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to create an exception to Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, for low-risk food premises serving only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods, for the benefit of all Ontario pet owners and the businesses that serve them.”

I affix my name to this petition and I hand it to page Pearl.

1330

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

Mr. Jamie West: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts represent an all-out attack on municipalities, health care, schools, universities and social services; and

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts are harming families, children and the most vulnerable across Ontario, making the services we all rely on less accessible and accountable; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will strip workers of their charter-protected right to free collective bargaining; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will force front-line public sector workers to accept contracts below inflation, compounding cuts that make the delivery of services more difficult;

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

“That the government of Ontario stop dismantling our social infrastructure, properly fund our public services, withdraw Bill 124, and support communities, not cuts.”

I’ll affix my signature.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Dave Smith: I have a petition with more than 500 signatures on it so far.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas currently Peterborough city and county has seen a major increase in the amount of opioid-related overdoses, poisonings, and deaths;

“Whereas in Ontario and across the country it has been deemed that there is a current opioid crisis; and

“Whereas Peterborough currently does not have a consumption and treatment site to help in the reduction of overdoses and deaths in the area;

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

“Work to put forward an application for a treatment and consumption services site to follow the mandatory services, such as:

“(a) supervised drug consumption (injection, intranasal, oral) and overdose prevention services;

“(b) on-site or defined pathways to addiction treatment services;

“(c) on-site or defined pathways to wraparound services: primary care, mental health, housing, other social supports;

“(d) provide proper harm reduction services such as education, first aid/wound care, distribution and safe disposal of needles, and provision of naloxone and oxygen;

“(e) removal of any discarded harm reduction supplies around the consumption and treatment area;

“(f) support ongoing discussions to address local community and neighbourhood concerns on an ongoing basis.”

I affix my name to this petition and I’ll give it to page Elizabeth.

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

Ms. Doly Begum: My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts represent an all-out attack on municipalities, health care, schools, universities and social services; and

“Whereas the Ford Conservatives’ cuts are harming families, children and the most vulnerable across Ontario, making the services we all rely on less accessible and accountable; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will strip workers of their charter-protected right to free collective bargaining; and

“Whereas Bill 124 will force front-line public sector workers to accept contracts below inflation, compounding cuts that make the delivery of services more difficult;

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

“That the government of Ontario stop dismantling our social infrastructure, properly fund our public services, withdraw Bill 124, and support communities, not cuts.”

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

FOOD SAFETY

Mr. Stan Cho: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, states that ‘every room where food is prepared, processed, packaged, served, transported, manufactured, handled, sold, offered for sale or displayed shall be kept free from live birds or animals’; and

“Whereas low-risk food premises serving only beverages and/or only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods have for many years in this province allowed customers to be accompanied by their pet dogs for their convenience and social benefit; and

“Whereas the decision whether or not to allow dogs on site should be driven by the business needs of such premises, so long as sanitary and safe conditions are upheld;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to create an exception to Ontario regulation 493/17 part III, section 14, for low-risk food premises serving only prepackaged or non-hazardous foods, for the benefit of all Ontario pet owners and the businesses that serve them.”

I wholeheartedly support this petition, affix my name and will hand it to page Ella.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The time for petitions has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

BUY IN CANADA FOR MASS TRANSIT
VEHICLES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 FAVORISANT L’ACHAT
DE VÉHICULES DE TRANSPORT
COLLECTIF AU CANADA

Mr. Gravelle moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 133, An Act to promote the purchase of mass transit vehicles that meet certain conditions in respect of Canadian content and assembly / *Projet de loi 133, Loi favorisant l'achat de véhicules de transport collectif satisfaisant à certaines conditions relatives au contenu canadien et à l'assemblage au Canada.*

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Michael Gravelle: As my colleagues will know, the short title of my private member's bill is the Buy in Canada for Mass Transit Vehicles Act. This is a bill that, should it pass, will require that certain bodies that purchase mass transit vehicles may only consider eligible bids that meet certain conditions. These conditions include a requirement for at least 60% of the bid price relating to materials, overhead, labour and profit to be on account of materials, overhead and profit originating in Canada. Final assembly of the mass transit vehicles must take place in Canada. I truly believe that the time has come for this legislation to not only be brought forward but to be supported strongly by this Legislature.

As the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce president, Charla Robinson, has said, this "will help to level the playing field for mass transit manufacturers in Ontario and will ensure that Ontarians receive the best value for their tax dollars through the creation of local jobs and expertise." Doug Murray, CEO of the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission, said, "This is about creating jobs in Canada for products and services paid for by Canadian taxpayers."

Our government should have the appropriate levers to do that, as do governments in other jurisdictions. That speaks to the reality related to the purchase of mass transit vehicles all around the world. The fact is that key markets are very adept at leveraging public procurement in public transit to maximize local economic impact and local innovation. These include the United States, Europe, China, India, Japan and other jurisdictions. These policies are not abating; quite the opposite, they've been intensifying in the last number of years: Buy American, Make in India, Made in China. These local preference policies take different forms, but local content requirement is prevalent in many markets. Buy American is a case in point. The level of US content required will be going from 65% to 70% next year—all the more reason, Speaker, why it is time for us to act, to level the playing field, so that manufacturers like Bombardier in Thunder Bay can legitimately compete for contracts awarded in our own province.

Now that the province has come to an agreement with the city of Toronto for a multi-billion-dollar expansion of transit in the city and the GTA, substantial work will be available for rapid transit, streetcars and subways that the province, with funding support from the federal government as well, will be moving forward on. To have an Ontario manufacturer of these mass transit vehicles only makes sense, but it will be more challenging for Bombardier without significant Canadian content requirements being

put in place. We already know of the substantial economic and job creation benefits that awarding a contract to an Ontario-based manufacturing facility results in.

Over the past several decades, Bombardier has successfully built up the public transit system in Toronto and the GTA. This has resulted in an Ontario manufacturing facility in Thunder Bay being able to raise its local Ontario employment levels to over 1,400 people at its peak, a pretty impressive number. As Thunder Bay's largest private sector employer, Bombardier has not only benefited our own local economy, but the economy of the entire province. That fact should not be lost in this debate today.

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Every time that Bombardier is awarded a contract for mass transit vehicles, the overall provincial economy benefits as well. In a report prepared by the distinguished Dr. José Alberro, an economist from California, he confirmed that if the chosen company has a manufacturing facility in Ontario, suppliers in southern Ontario could expect significant millions of dollars of orders from each of those contracts.

In a column written by Aziz Guergachi, a professor at Ryerson University, he stated, and I'll quote—it's a long quote, but it's a good one:

"Ontario's recent announcements of the \$28.5-billion transit expansion plan for the GTA are welcome and direly needed" for one of the most congested urban agglomerations in North America. "However, nowhere are we talking about leveraging these forthcoming investments to ensure maximum benefits for the province, its local manufacturing, innovation and jobs.

"Ontario will lose out if it does not use the flexibility it has under international trade rules to protect its interests. The rise of protectionism, economic nationalism and unilateralism around the world is evident. In this highly contested global environment, Ontario should adopt a more assertive approach to optimize local economic impact."

That is exactly what we are talking about today: adopting a Canadian content requirement that will level that international playing field and allow Ontario manufacturers like Bombardier to more fairly compete for contracts when it is Ontario and Canadian taxpayers who are footing the bill.

As I begin to move towards the end of my comments today, let me acknowledge that, while I believe I have made a strong case for all members of this Legislature to support this bill, it is also an intensely personal piece of legislation for me. From the moment I was first elected as MPP for Thunder Bay–Superior North in 1995, I've been strongly aware of the important role that Bombardier has played in the economy of Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario. Throughout the ups and downs in its history, I have worked hard to see that contracts that provide employment to the facility were awarded. Working alongside my former colleague and now mayor, Bill Mauro, we supported billions of dollars in investments in public transit that helped build up Bombardier to a facility that saw at its peak, as I referenced earlier, an employment level of over 1,400 people.

But times have changed, and the world has changed. We now urgently need to move forward on this legislation, legislation that will allow Bombardier to more fairly compete for mass transit contracts in the future. We really are doing this for the memory of the thousands of people who have worked at Can Car and Bombardier over the long history of the plant. The birth of Canadian Car and Foundry took place Wednesday, July 17, 1912, in an empty field on the edge of West Fort William. The mayors of Port Arthur and Fort William at the time, as well as representatives from three Canadian railway companies, were there to make speeches and have a ceremonial turning of the sod. From that moment on, Can Car, now Bombardier, began the production of what is now high-quality mass transit vehicles.

We need to see this extraordinary facility continue to grow and prosper. But right now, we are in a very sad downturn, as 550 employees, many of whom I know personally, are about to lose their jobs. This can be turned around. One crucial step in that process would be support in the Legislature for this private member's bill. While I am proud to present it today, I would be just as pleased if the government brought this forward as their own initiative. That would be a good thing not only for the people of Thunder Bay, but for the entire province.

I know that the government under Premier Ford has been to Thunder Bay, been to the Bombardier plant, and indicated support for the plant itself in a number of ways. Now I say today that one of the best ways you can support them is by supporting my legislation. I hope that happens later this afternoon when it's time to vote.

Thank you, Speaker, for your time today. I look forward to the rest of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: I would like to begin by thanking the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North for putting forward this private member's bill. Last year, I was proud to introduce my first private member's bill, the Tamil Genocide Education Week Act. I know the hard work and, often, emotion that can go into drafting and debating a private member's bill. Private members' bills provide an important vehicle for members to represent their constituents and bring forward local concerns and issues to the assembly. Representing our local constituents, after all, is the core of what our job is. So I thank the member opposite for this proposed legislation because it is important to hear these ideas and to have the debate in the House, and it's a debate that I'm very happy to take part in.

Madam Speaker, this private member's bill, the Buy in Canada for Mass Transit Vehicles Act, if passed, would essentially require that in Ontario, those purchasing mass transit vehicles only consider bids that meet certain conditions. A large portion—60%, to be precise—of the work, parts and profit must originate in Canada. Furthermore, the final assembly must take place in Canada.

I understand where the member opposite is coming from with this proposed legislation. I think I can certainly

speaking for many of my caucus colleagues when I say that we were all disappointed to hear about the layoffs at the Bombardier Thunder Bay plant in July. Sometimes I think people treat job losses as statistics, but we are talking about people's livelihoods, their family budgets and their dreams for a stable retirement. We must all recognize the gravity of this and the awful effects of layoffs such as those at Bombardier.

This was especially surprising and disappointing when this government has been making historic investments with our ambitious transit plan, including the Ontario Line, the Yonge North subway extension, the Eglinton West LRT, and, last but not least, the three-stop subway extension into Scarborough.

While, as I mentioned, we were all disappointed about the layoffs, I do not believe that protectionist policy is the way to go. In fact, our government has consistently shown leadership in opposing protectionist policies of other governments. I don't think those kinds of policies will have the intended positive effect.

Ontario's transit procurements respect our international trade law commitments, and will continue to do so. Under the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, or CETA for short, Ontario has preserved the right to maintain a policy of 25% Canadian content for the purchase of transit vehicles with provincial funds. Thus, this bill would be in direct contravention of our current international obligations. The reality is that open and competitive contracting benefits taxpayers and, furthermore, benefits businesses and the economy. The supply chain for many transit vehicles is global, and our local Ontario businesses will suffer if protectionist policies are implemented, because it is a two-way street. Moreover, our ability to procure the necessary transit vehicles at the cost and timeline required to support our ambitious transit plan may be in jeopardy.

1350

Madam Speaker, Ontarians want shovels in the ground and governments to work together to break the gridlock throughout the GTHA. This gridlock seen throughout the region costs us dearly in lost productivity and opportunity. The C.D. Howe Institute estimates that the GTHA loses \$7 billion in productivity each year due to gridlock, while the Toronto Region Board of Trade notes that gridlock adds \$400 million to the cost of goods.

We are currently on the cusp of a historic gridlock-busting transit expansion, thanks to the vision and hard work of our Premier and my colleagues the Minister of Transportation and the Associate Minister of Transportation.

Tuesday's decision at Toronto city hall to support our transit plan is good news for Ontario, as the city of Toronto now has \$5 billion freed up to spend on the backlogged state of good repair, and that means jobs. To put this into perspective, the city of Toronto itself estimates the current backlog to be \$30 billion.

Moreover, in further good news, a little over a month ago, on September 10, the province announced Metrolinx's intention to purchase 36 bi-level cars from Bombardier Transportation. These cars will be manufactured at

Bombardier's Thunder Bay plant. The purchase of 36 bi-level cars by Metrolinx will enable them to add in 31 standard and five accessible cars to its existing order, which will provide more than 6,000 additional seats for GO riders. I'll repeat that in case anyone missed it: 6,000 additional seats for GO riders. This is great news for transit users in the GTHA, as GO Transit continues to work towards their goal of providing better, faster and easier service.

In 2018-19, GO Transit had an overall ridership of 76 million people. That's a year-over-year increase of 5.3%, with the daily weekday ridership reaching 275,000.

The GO Transit network is expanding and offering more frequent service on more corridors.

Improving transit and expanding the network means new construction resulting in more jobs, opportunities and procurements. There are currently large and small projects under way throughout the province, and there are many more to come.

Ontario has some of the best businesses in the world, and they will have an invaluable contribution to make to this province and this province's transit network improvement and expansion.

As I said, GO Transit is offering more service along more corridors, and ridership is seeing real increases. This means jobs and opportunities.

I could go on about the improvements and gains that Metrolinx and GO Transit have been implementing, such as renovating a number of stations—for example, the Guildwood station, which I had the pleasure of touring recently with the then parliamentary assistant and now Associate Minister of Transportation—or the recent partnership with the TTC and the federal government working on an automated shuttle pilot program in my great riding of Scarborough–Rouge Park, but I understand my time is limited.

To conclude, I want to sincerely thank the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North for bringing this proposed legislation to the House for discussion and debate. As I said at the start, representing our constituents is at the core of what we do. However, I do not believe that this bill will achieve the intended outcomes while allowing us to achieve the very necessary transit expansion that this province desperately needs. I hope the member opposite and his colleagues will support us in our historic transit expansion to reduce gridlock and get Ontario moving.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I am very concerned about the future of the Bombardier plant in Thunder Bay. Because the province has not signed new contracts, the plant is shutting down production. Even though there has been a temporary, mild reprieve, it's clear the plant will be shutting down if new contracts are not forthcoming.

Some 1,100 people work there, and hundreds are facing layoffs next month. To put that in perspective, our regional workforce is about 60,000. This is going to have a major impact on our local economy.

While I welcome my colleague from Thunder Bay–Superior North's bill, I also would have liked to have seen this be legislation when it was brought forward before by my colleague from Timmins and the previous times that it was meant to be legislation. Because we don't have that legislation, we are at the place that we are now.

Adopting a requirement to buy Canadian-made mass transit vehicles is a good idea. It just makes sense. Requiring the province to buy Canadian could save the plant and the 1,100 jobs. When you speak to the people in Thunder Bay, many are frustrated that the federal government gave a German company a contract to build the new Via Rail trains in California when our plant could have done that work.

I've spoken to workers directly and they do not want to be used as political pawns. They see what I see: two levels of government that need to sort this out, and quickly. The federal and provincial governments continue to pass the buck, and new orders have not been signed. I urge both sides to work together.

For the workers, this is not political. They just want to keep working hard and bringing home a paycheque to take care of their families. These are hard-working people, many with young families. These jobs are what keeps a roof over their head and food on their table.

I've talked to the Unifor local and they want to end this crisis for their members in any way they can, even if it means high-fiving the Premier. Bombardier is ready to continue production on new orders that are large enough to make business sense for them.

Made-in-Thunder Bay transit vehicles keep people moving. We know Ontario is growing; so are our transit needs. We hear it every day. The Thunder Bay plant is ready to help Ontario meet those needs.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: It's a pleasure to rise in the House today and speak to my colleague's bill, the Buy in Canada for Mass Transit Vehicles Act, 2019. We know how passionate the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North is about northern Ontario. Anyone who spends one minute in his presence will get that.

I was in northern Ontario a couple of weeks ago and had an opportunity to visit a mill. It was EACOM, which is located right in—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Timmins.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Right in Timmins, yes. It was right in Timmins.

It was a great experience because you could see the innovation that was occurring on site. You could see that this company was thinking about the changing economy, the changing environment and how this company will continue to operate. It's been operating continuously for 100 years.

But what I was most impressed with were the skills, talents and the work ethic of the people who were there and the leadership that was shown. That's what keeps companies thriving and growing. But at some point, the environment which we create as legislators is important to

sustain businesses that are operating in this province, and it's important that that environment is a level playing field for everyone so that they can compete both here and around the world.

1400

Bombardier is Thunder Bay's largest private sector employer and, as has already been said today, many jobs are dependent on them continuing to operate. However, this summer, it was announced that 550 workers will be laid off from its Thunder Bay plant. This decision was due to a shortage of work at the Thunder Bay facility, as two major contracts in Ontario are due to wrap up by the end of this year.

Despite having a history of producing mass transit vehicles in Ontario—and we know, as our presenter has already said, that that's been up and down. We know that. But they have had to make this difficult decision and disrupt those 550 lives, as well as their families. So four days from now, on November 4, 550 individuals will lose that source of income and that sustainability that they need for their families, and that will be impacted. All of the small businesses and suppliers that are connected to that will also be impacted.

The Buy in Canada for Mass Transit Vehicles Act, 2019, has an urgency to it. The comment was made around trade agreements and respecting that. Of course we have to respect our trade agreements. But perhaps that's why this bill should go to the committee, so that it can have a study that does an economic impact, a study that looks at the intersection of this bill with other legislation, as well as trade agreements, to make sure that we are respecting those international partners. But our jobs here as legislators representing the people of Ontario is to ensure that we fight for every job in Ontario, that we fight for every business opportunity in Ontario. We can't throw up our hands and say that the ship has sailed; we have to find solutions.

More jobs means more opportunities for northern Ontario, and by ensuring the long-term viability of manufacturing plants that empower northern communities, we are supporting a region that has historically served all of us here in Ontario. So wouldn't it be a privilege for all of us to see those cars, whether they're railcars or streetcars, being produced right here with materials sourced in Ontario and built by the skills and the talents of our hard-working individuals? This would be a source of pride for us here in Ontario, and for this reason, I support this bill. I absolutely agree: It requires study, and that's why we send it to committee for it to do that good work, and perhaps for the government itself to look at its own transit policies and how this bill will fit into that.

We must all do our part to fight for northern Ontario. A strong northern Ontario is a stronger Ontario, and these families deserve a Legislature that will stand with them and stand behind them to make sure that their jobs and their futures are protected.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm proud to be speaking on this bill today. There is no question that we need good-quality

public transit in Ontario. That means transit that is accessible, that's affordable and publicly owned and gets people to where they want to get to every single day. But we also need to make sure that the money invested in our public transit systems creates good jobs right here in Ontario. That means keeping the Ontario government's revenues circulating in the Ontario economy as well.

We all know that investing in new subways, streetcars and buses requires a significant amount of government funding, and this government has announced plans to spend \$28.5 billion in transit. Now, I do think that we need to remind people that we did actually have some good transit plans on the books that were supported by all three levels of government, and it might have been easier for this government just to move forward with funding them and then building them extensions. But I'm going to put that aside for a minute and talk about how we can make sure the plans that this government is working on are making sure that they are built without delay and that they're built right. When we're talking about building transit right, a requirement to have a percentage of the construction of the vehicles go towards Ontario jobs is an example of how we build right. That's why this bill to buy in Canada for mass transit vehicles makes a lot of sense, because this bill would require public bodies in Ontario—and that includes Metrolinx—to purchase transit vehicles and would only consider bids that would include a minimum of 60% in Canadian content and labour. It would require the final assembly of transit vehicles to take place in Canada as well.

In fact, this bill is very similar to one that was put forward by the NDP, by our opposition House leader, back in 2008, called the Canadian Mass Transit Vehicles Act. It's extremely similar to what we're debating today. It's important to remember that that bill was voted down by the Liberal government at that time, and that the Liberal government had 15 years to increase the Canadian content rules to support good jobs all across Ontario, and especially in Thunder Bay. It's certainly time that we do this now. This is our time to move forward on this—now, before we invest a huge amount of money into building transit in Ontario.

I did also speak to the workers in Thunder Bay, Unifor 1075. They asked me to share a quote today about how valuable this would be to their community. This is from Dominic Pasqualino, who is the president of Unifor Local 1075: "An increase in Canadian content means more jobs for highly skilled Canadians" so that Canadian taxpayers don't "see their hard-earned dollars going to foreign companies to support their economies and not ours." I think that makes a lot of sense. That's why I support this bill, because public transit should truly benefit transit riders in Ontario and the communities that we live in. That money shouldn't be sent outside to foreign multinationals if there is a better alternative here.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member from Timmins.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Well, Mr. Speaker—Madam Speaker, sorry. My, oh, my. I slipped there, sorry. I have a bit of a cold.

Listen, I first want to say up front that New Democrats will be supporting this bill. We think it's the right way to go. Why? We suggested the same thing back in the days of Mr. McGuinty, when he was the Premier of Ontario in the 39th Parliament. In fact, I authored the bill and brought it to the House and asked the government to give us support, and guess what? The government wouldn't give us support. They said, "If you call it, we're going to vote against it." I remember thinking at the time, "Well, that's kind of silly. We've got manufacturing facilities in Thunder Bay. Why wouldn't we utilize those facilities in order to be able to support the work that needs to be done to supply contracts in places like Ottawa or Toronto or wherever it might be?" Unfortunately, I couldn't get that support back then, and the bill ended up dying on the order paper.

So I say to my good friend across the way—because I have a lot of respect for the member for Thunder Bay. He and I over the years have done a lot of work together. I have great respect for him. He always was very good at listening to what we had to say in opposition in order to try to fix problems like the docks in Moosonee and other issues that we had to deal with. But I say to the honourable member, and I mean this with as much respect as I can: Where was your government for 15 years?

I'm sure we're going to hear from the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane in regards to what happened to him in regards to the shops in North Bay that lost the Metrolinx contract under the tutelage of the government.

Nonetheless, let's not play politics; let's just vote for this thing. I think that's what is important. I hope that the government does the same. After all, if this is all about—what's the slogan that they have? Something about jobs in Ontario or making Ontario great again or whatever it is. I think it's like the Donald Trump thing, right? Something like that? But anyway, this is a chance for us to basically prove that we really mean it. If we're serious about creating a stronger economy in Ontario and we're serious about making sure that we create good jobs in this province, this is one of the ways that we can do it. If the government has problems with particular parts of the bill, it's for them to allow this bill to pass, to get into committee, deal with the issues in committee, because that's where you do it, and then we can move on and do what's right for all Ontarians, including the good people of Thunder Bay.

So, Mr. Speaker, Andrea Horwath—

Mr. John Vanthof: Ms. Speaker.

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: All right. Let me finish my point. I'm getting heckled relentlessly by my own caucus here. This is terrible. I apologize.

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Interjection.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It might be deserved, but nonetheless I'm being heckled. I apologize.

I just want to call on the government to support it; I can tell you Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats will be doing so.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Before I call for further debate, would all members please, if they have electronics in the House, put them in the silent mode so that we're not constantly listening to dings? And if you can locate the ding, make it stop, please.

Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to speak in this House. It's the first time I've risen since we came back, and today I speak on Bill 133, brought forward by the member from Thunder Bay–Superior North—a member who, in his past years as minister, I had the opportunity and the honour to work with many times. He was one of my favourite ministers, and he actually did what he could. He didn't go beyond the government's policy, but he did what he could to help the people across the north. And that's why this bill is a bit perplexing. We fully support it, and I have faith in the member that he wouldn't put forward something that isn't possible to pass. It might be a bit tricky with trade negotiations, but I'm sure we could somehow get that by. But I am somewhat perplexed that this bill wasn't put forward by the government before.

For a personal case, I distinctly remember, before I was elected to this House, one of the issues was—I believe it was 2009, 2010. The Ontario Northland Transportation Commission has a refurbishment shop in North Bay, one of the best shops in North America, and they refurbished train cars for Metrolinx—a pretty symbiotic relationship. Metrolinx and ONTC are both public corporations.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: By the province.

Mr. John Vanthof: By the province. They lost that contract under the Liberal government of the day. The same principle applies here.

We fully support this bill, and we hope that it actually will be enacted to help the people in Thunder Bay. We implore that to happen. But it would have been so much better if the government, when the Liberals were in power, had realized it themselves and done it themselves when they had majority after majority government.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I will remind all members to direct their remarks to and through the Chair in the future, please.

I return to the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North, who has two minutes for a reply.

Mr. Michael Gravelle: I appreciate the time and very much appreciate all the comments made by the members from Scarborough–Rouge Park, Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Scarborough–Guildwood, University–Rosedale, Timmins and Timiskaming–Cochrane. Thank you very much. I appreciate the fact that this has had a good discussion in the Legislature today.

For me, this has always been about levelling the playing field and trying to make it fair so that Canadian companies such as Bombardier can see the kind of work they need to be able to see, in order to have prosperity, not just for the private sector employment in Thunder Bay, but for all across the province as well.

I appreciate the comments that have been made by my good friends in the opposition about previous efforts to move this legislation forward.

From my perspective, the time certainly is now. There's no doubt about it that we're seeing an increase in protectionism in other parts of the world, particularly in the Buy American reality, which is about to move up to 70%. I think in order for us to protect ourselves and to be able to move forward on our own economy, we need to at least look at this legislation, have it go through the second reading support here in the Legislature, and then carry on to committee for further discussion.

Again, I am grateful to be able to bring this forward. There's no question that my community of Thunder Bay and all of northwestern Ontario is very, very dear to my heart. It means a great deal to me to see the economy continue to go forward. We have many challenges in Thunder Bay and in northern Ontario, but we also have a great big heart. I want people to know that I appreciate all the support that I've received as a result of bringing this legislation forward, and I will continue to fight to see that good things come to not just Bombardier, but to the people of Thunder Bay–Superior North and all of northern Ontario in the future.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Jamie West: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should declare the opioid overdose crisis in northern Ontario a public health emergency, and commit funding for comprehensive, evidence-based local health and community initiatives such as harm reduction strategies, awareness programs, anti-stigma training, residential treatment and overdose prevention services that will address persistent health inequities in the region.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jamie West: I want to begin by thanking the many people in Sudbury and northern Ontario who contributed to the development of this motion, who reached out to me with their stories, who participated in the town halls in Sudbury, and who work every day to help people impacted by the opioid overdose crisis in northern communities.

I want to thank Marion Quigley from CMHA Sudbury/Manitoulin; Julie Gorman from SACY Sudbury; Terry Jenkins, a Sudbury leader and a spokesperson on drug addiction; Dr. Ariella Zbar from Public Health Sudbury and Districts; Kathy Savage, Richard Rainville and Lisa Toner from Réseau Access Network; Roxane Zuck from Monarch Recovery Services; and Staff Sergeant Rick Waugh from the Greater Sudbury Police Service. Speaker, this list can go on and on. I want to thank everyone for their tireless advocacy and their dedication to improving the health and safety of people in Sudbury and across northern Ontario. The work you do has saved countless lives.

I also want to thank and I want to acknowledge Amanda Byrne. When her brother Ryan Packham died from an opioid overdose, Mandy was courageous enough to share her experiences with Sudbury. I met Amanda at the second of two town halls that we held in Sudbury, Speaker. I held

one in November and one in March with service providers, with activists, and with members of the public discussing the opioid overdose crisis in Sudbury. And after those meetings, I continued to speak with service providers and speak with peers and people with lived experience with drug use, and families that have lost loved ones to this crisis.

What I learned from those conversations was shocking. In 2018, 1,473 people died in opioid-related incidents; 141 of those cases were in northern Ontario. Of those, 32 of those deaths were in Greater Sudbury. Rates of opioid-related deaths in northern Ontario are some of the highest in the province, Speaker. The rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits in the north are also above the provincial average. This spring, front-line workers told us that there was one potential fatal overdose happening every day in Sudbury—one every day.

Preliminary statistics indicate the situation has become worse. From January to June, 2018, Sudbury paramedic services responded to 62 opioid-related incidents. During the same period in 2019, last year, Sudbury paramedic services responded to 200 more. Speaker, we can't afford to wait any longer.

Behind these statistics are tragic stories of people who have lost their lives far too soon, stories of families being torn apart and loved ones dying, like Ryan Packham. I spoke about Amanda earlier. Ryan's sister Amanda spoke from the audience at our second town hall. She stood up and she told us about what a great guy Ryan was, how he was an amazing man, a hard worker. She said Ryan was the best uncle any child could ask for and he was a loving son.

Speaker, Ryan died on August 25, 2018, after a 10-year battle with drugs. That same weekend, two other people died from overdoses in Sudbury. Amanda wrote to the Sudbury Star about the devastating impact the loss of her brother had on her, on her family and on our community. She wrote, "These three lives lost aren't even the tip of the iceberg of devastation left behind from this epidemic we face today. I am sure in our small town there are hundreds if not thousands of lives lost that are simply forgotten by society."

Speaker, Amanda decided to write to the Sudbury Star after she read about the story of Devon Lachance. Devon died in February, on February 8, 2019, from an overdose of purple heroin. Devon was a 23-year-old Cambrian College music student. He could master any instrument in just a few hours.

Daniella Stevens, a friend of Devon's, wanted people at our town hall to know that Devon was a brilliant musician. She wanted us to know he was an animal lover, a caring friend. She wanted people to know that Devon was a kid with a heart of gold, and she said he was the funniest person you could ever meet.

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Speaker, in tight-knit northern communities like Sudbury, the impact of this crisis is magnified. Nobody is left untouched by these tragedies. When someone passes away, all of Sudbury mourns.

Each and every one of these lives deserves to be more than just a statistic, which is why I titled my motion “Preventing overdoses in the north: more than just a statistic.” The motion is dedicated to the memory of people like Amanda’s brother Ryan, Daniella’s friend Devon, Terry Jenkins’s son Matthew, and every other family whose loved one deserves to be more than just a statistic.

Speaker, we need to take action to prevent more deaths. What I heard from front-line health care workers, from peers, from family members and concerned constituents is that we need to take action now. They want us to show leadership, to raise awareness and to remove the stigma of this issue. They want work to be done to ensure that people in our community are healthy and that they’re safe and that they have access to the supports and the services they need.

We know that this crisis is having a heavy toll on marginalized and vulnerable communities. For people living in poverty, who don’t have access to stable housing or who are coping with a legacy of colonialism and the pain of systemic racism, there’s a much higher risk of dying. As well, the images that many of us may think of when we think of opioid addiction only scratch the surface.

We have to stop thinking of opioid addiction as something that happens to “them,” to undesirable people, to people who should have made better choices in their lives. That’s a harmful stereotype that doesn’t help, because there are many people living with opioid addictions who, because they have homes, they have cars, they have workplaces, are better able to hide their addictions from society. However, Speaker, their outcomes, the effect on their families, the effect on our communities, the helplessness of these users—those outcomes remain the same.

Front-line workers, volunteers and community advocates are working tirelessly to help prevent these overdoses from occurring. In 2018, the Sudbury needle exchange program had over 23,000 visits. They distributed 1.5 million needles. Public Health Sudbury and Districts distributed over 2,440 naloxone kits, the life-saving medication that can block the effects of opioid overdose.

But far too many people are still falling through the cracks. In northern Ontario, long wait times to access treatment centres and mental health services, limited harm reduction supplies, difficulty accessing off-reserve and culturally appropriate health care for Indigenous northerners, and a lack of affordable and supportive housing are just some of the gaps in our system that prevent people from getting the help they need.

Front-line workers, our public health units, our local community organizations are doing their best, but they need more support from the provincial government. The opioid overdose crisis is a public health emergency, and this government needs to treat it like it is one. We need investment in comprehensive, evidence-supported work that will save people’s lives in our communities. To do that, this government needs to step up. They need to declare the opioid overdose crisis a public health emergency and invest in the initiatives that will prevent these deaths from ever taking place.

Speaker, even though declaring a public health emergency would allow for funding to move quickly, and even though it would increase resources to front-line workers, and even though it would ensure investment in harm reduction services, both the former Liberal government and this current Conservative government so far have refused to declare the opioid crisis a public health emergency. Instead of investing in solutions, the government has chosen to cut services that help people with addictions, from supportive housing to health care.

These cuts have hit the north hard. The government has cut funding and merged our public health units—public health units who are leaders in working to prevent this crisis. They’ve capped the number of supervised consumption sites to just 21 across this province. This means that communities in crisis that have identified a site may not get the help they need. Currently, northern Ontario only has one overdose prevention site. It’s located in Thunder Bay. In the north, we measure distance by hours. Thunder Bay is 11 hours from Sudbury. It’s nine hours from Sault Ste. Marie.

Sudbury is currently undergoing a needs and feasibility study to determine if our city should have a safe consumption site. Over 2,000 people in our community already participated in a survey as part of this study. But advocates for overdose prevention in my community are concerned that even if the study finds that a safe consumption site is warranted, the government won’t provide the funding necessary to make it a reality. This government needs to stop ignoring the north. They need to show leadership and ensure that people and families in crisis have access to overdose prevention sites as well as treatment and care.

Speaker, people suffering from addictions often have complex needs. We need to be looking at a variety of solutions to reduce harm and to help people. We need to ensure that the money is there to support and expand initiatives that we already know will save lives—initiatives like harm reduction strategies, like awareness programs, like anti-stigma training and residential treatment. This response needs to consider that northern Ontario has a unique set of challenges. Northern communities are often isolated, with limited access to health care. People need access to care in their preferred language; en français, par exemple. They need care that is culturally appropriate and, perhaps most importantly, care that is within their communities, rather than thousands of kilometres away in southern Ontario.

I hope all members show the courage to vote for this motion and that, going forward, we can implement the plan and set out this motion. Because if we can work together, if we can address this crisis with a real sense of urgency and together, Speaker, we will save lives.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I would like to thank the member opposite for giving me a chance to rise today to speak about mental health and addictions in the province of Ontario and the work our ministry is doing to address the opioid crisis in northern Ontario and all across the province.

As many of my colleagues know, I'm quite passionate about mental health and addictions. For many years, I have been a strong advocate for the creation of an improved, connected and integrated mental health and addictions system. Prior to taking office, I volunteered for nearly a decade in the mental health and addictions sector, where I eventually became a certified addictions counsellor. In fact, I am continuing my studies in the area and I'm about a year from completing my doctorate in clinical psychology, in addictions and concurrent disorders.

I'd like to let the member opposite know that our government is continuing to make mental health and addictions a priority across the province, including northern Ontario. Last month, I travelled throughout northern Ontario. My travels took me to Thunder Bay and Sioux Lookout, all the way to remote communities such as Pikangikum and Sandy Lake, and to numerous Indigenous communities around Thunder Bay. I met with a number of Indigenous leaders and community organizations that continue to work with populations who were continually neglected by previous governments. I can assure the member opposite that I've heard from people with lived experience in these communities, and our government continues to be committed to taking real action to tackle the opioid crisis.

Madam Speaker, our government, led by Premier Ford, appointed me to this position so we could maintain a strong focus on creating a connected, integrated and comprehensive mental health and addictions system, so that every Ontarian could be supported on their journey toward mental wellness. It's estimated that 30% of Ontarians will experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives. In addition, each year 2.5 million Ontarians—that's one in five Ontarians—will experience a mental health or addiction challenge. I am willing to bet that most of us in this Legislature have been impacted by mental health and addiction challenges, either through knowing a family member or friend that has experienced them, or perhaps even through our own personal experiences.

Our government has pledged to make substantial new investments in mental health and addictions services over the coming years. That is something we remain committed to do. Our government takes the ongoing opioid crisis very seriously. Too many people and too many families across Ontario continue to be impacted by opioid addiction and overdoses.

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Earlier this year, our government conducted extensive consultations, spanning the entire province, that directly informed our new consumption and treatment services model. CTS sites will be located in communities based on need, and are part of a much bigger picture which includes more detox beds and funding for mental health and addictions. This new CTS model will save lives by helping us reverse and treat overdoses and connecting people who use drugs to primary care, treatment and rehabilitation and other health and social services. Based on extensive consultation with experts, we are confident that the model

brought forward is the right approach to connect people struggling with addiction with the care they need and deserve.

Our government is investing an additional \$174 million this year to address the critical gaps in our system and support patients, families and caregivers in the communities struggling with mental health and addiction. We don't truly save a person's life, Madam Speaker, until we help them beat their addiction. Our overriding priority is to ensure that all efforts to combat the opioid crisis allow those struggling with addiction to get the help they need, where and when they need it. Since we were elected by the people of Ontario, there has been extensive work done and investments made to address mental health and addiction challenges, and we continue to work towards building a connected mental health and addiction system: one that will be client- and family-centred, comprehensive and focused on quality care for all Ontarians where and when they need it.

We recognize that solutions to address these challenges need to target the system at all levels: for clients, for service providers and for system leaders. These solutions need to make the system easier for Ontarians to understand and navigate so that people know where to go to access the high-quality services they expect. Solutions also need to focus on getting people help sooner by funding the front-line services that we know are effective and are needed. And solutions need to ensure that the system remains accountable to Ontarians, including putting in place province-wide mechanisms to monitor and improve quality.

We also recognize that, in undertaking mental health and addiction systems transformation, our government must pursue a whole-of-government approach that brings much-needed supports to Ontarians by leveraging existing health, education, housing, justice and social service sectors and infrastructure. Many ministries oversee services that are key to recovery and rely on an effective mental health and addiction system to help people achieve better outcomes. I know, for example, that a significant portion of people on the Ontario Disability Support Program live with mental health challenges, and I know that students in schools can't focus on learning if they're anxious or depressed—and we all know about the recent increase in suicides on college and university campuses.

In recognition of the fact that mental health and addiction issues impact all our sectors in significant ways, our ministry has worked directly with partner ministries to identify opportunities to invest in services and supports that will improve access to mental health and addictions in alignment with each sector's unique needs. Our plan for mental health and addictions involves building the foundations of a sustainable, high-quality system while investing in the services that Ontarians need now. Our government's historic investment of \$3.8 billion over 10 years aims to build capacity in the mental health and addictions sector and seeks to provide evidence-based services that will help reduce pressures on hospitals and decrease wait times, helping end hallway medicine.

Since our government first took office, we have taken real action to address sector challenges by providing investments in areas identified as critical gaps across the province. On May 6, 2019, our government announced \$174 million in new annualized investments for mental health and addiction services, with funding going to Ministry of Health programs as well as programs of partner ministries, like the Ministries of Education, Children, Community and Social Services, and Municipal Affairs and Housing, just to name a few. Investing in mental health and addictions services will contribute to building a strong continuum of care across an individual's lifetime.

Our government recognizes that more work needs to be done, which is why we're taking a whole-of-government approach to making mental health and addictions a priority. Investments for this fiscal year address six priority areas of the mental health and addictions system, in particular:

- reducing wait times for services;
- enhancing addictions services;
- expanding mental health beds in hospitals, creating additional supportive housing;
- building capacity in child and youth mental health services;
- investing in services for Indigenous communities and priority populations, including « Franco-Ontariens »; and
- ensuring our first responders have the tools they need to stay safe and provide services in an effective, culturally sensitive manner.

These services will benefit thousands of Ontarians, including children and youth, post-secondary students, individuals who are justice-involved, people experiencing homelessness, Indigenous people, families, communities and our first responders.

With respect to support for people living with opioid addition, our \$174-million investment will be going to community addictions services, such as our \$6-million investment for community-based service providers to increase developmentally appropriate addictions services to youth; our investment of \$9.23 million for rapid-access addiction medicine clinics, which are a key component of our response to the opioid crisis; residential treatment; and withdrawal management. These investments aim to increase access to addictions services, reduce wait times and improve connections to other community-based health and social services supports, such as primary care.

In addition, on top of the \$19.5 million we've invested into consumption and treatment service sites, I'd like to point out that we have also made significant investments in the north that will generate positive impacts in northern communities. This year, as part of our additional \$174-million investment, we've invested over \$33 million in opioid addictions treatments and services. Some examples of these include \$370,000 for Health Sciences North in Sudbury, \$170,000 for Timmins and District Hospital, \$170,000 for the Sault Area Hospital, \$75,000 for Monarch Recovery Services in Sudbury and \$52,000 for North Bay Recovery Home.

We have also invested in community health services, including, for example, \$97,600 for CMHA in Sault Ste. Marie, \$97,600 for CMHA Cochrane-Timiskaming, over \$500,000 for community mental health programs at Health Sciences North and \$97,600 for CMHA Sudbury/Manitoulin. All of these investments are part of our commitment to invest \$3.8 million over 10 years to finally develop and implement a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions treatment strategy centred around patients, their families and caregivers.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I want to congratulate my colleague from Sudbury for his motion. I will share with the House the story of Ricky—not his real name.

Ricky was a sweet kid. He was good in school, he was good in sports. He learned to snowboard within a season, and at the end of the season he could go through all of the trees, come out, do a 360°, land it and make me look really bad. He went to school in Lively in my riding. He was well-liked.

Ricky had a tender heart, you would say. If he came fishing, we were not allowed to keep the fish. We had to catch and release, because we had to protect animals. He loved his dog. He loved animals. Whenever somebody was down, Ricky was the first one to give you a hug, to hold your hand. He was a loving son. He had a very special, loving relationship with his grandmother, who he visited pretty much every day.

In his late teens, Ricky started experimenting with drugs. His dad, his grandmother, everybody around him reached out, and the wait-list being what it is for children with mental health issues in my riding—it's 18 months—you age out of the children's services, to be put on the wait-list for adult services, but there are no services to be had.

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Then his dad got the call. Ricky was in intensive care at the hospital. He had overdosed. After a short time, they made their tough decision to say goodbye. Ricky was 21 years old. He's dead. This is a story that we all go through in northern Ontario. We know those kids. They are our neighbours. They go to school. We see them all the time, and yet we are told that we cannot have a supervised consumption site because we don't have the services to service them after. What are we talking about? We have no services in the north. What we have are wait-lists that let people down, and then you are telling us that we're not allowed to have more because we have nothing? Anybody see anything wrong with that? I do. I do, each and every day. Northerners don't have fair access to mental health services and addiction services.

The motion that my colleague has put forward is to bring in a public health emergency to show to the rest of the province what it is like to have an addiction problem in northern Ontario and have no support whatsoever. His motion will change this. I hope you will vote for it.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Suze Morrison: Thank you so much to the member from Sudbury for bringing this motion forward, and to the member from Nickel Belt for your passionate remarks. We've all lost people to the overdose crisis, all of our communities, from north to south. I may be a member for downtown Toronto and Toronto Centre, but people in the north deserve no less access to services than folks in my riding.

Just last year, I stood in this chamber and I shared the story and I paid tribute to a friend that we had lost last year to the overdose crisis. Every day in my community in Toronto—and I know it's the same in the north—in the downtown east, we see the effects of poverty and homelessness and how that intersects with the opioid crisis and how it exacerbates the public health emergency that we're in. I've sat in meetings with service providers who are doing their best to save lives while being significantly underfunded. Again, that story is no different in the north. I have attended community safety round tables and I have heard from residents who are dealing with issues of safety in their communities because of the abject levels of poverty and trauma that are really the root causes of the opioid crisis.

The opioid crisis has been knocking on the doors of this Legislature for years. Let us not forget the brave activists in my riding who had to organize unsanctioned and effectively illegal overdose prevention sites when the previous Liberal government sat on their hands and did absolutely nothing to help.

In my riding of Toronto Centre, we are a stark contrast to the north. I represent the smallest geographic riding in the province—only a few square kilometres. We're the most dense. I have the luxury of having five overdose prevention sites in my riding. Those sites, in the last year, have reversed more than 1,500 overdoses—1,500 people have been saved by that service, and that is a service that folks in north deserve to have.

It's shameful that northern Ontario only has one overdose prevention site—in Thunder Bay, a full 1,000 kilometres away from Sudbury, and even farther from remote Indigenous communities and small towns and villages. It's equally shameful that we don't talk about the insidious ways in which the opioid crisis is currently intersecting with the housing crisis. Across Ontario and in downtown Toronto—again, just like in the north—tenants are struggling to make ends meet, and many are only one paycheque away from becoming homeless. Our social safety net has been eroded by years of inaction by Liberal and Conservative governments, and people literally have nowhere else to go.

The opioid crisis is a public health emergency, and while Toronto's downtown east is the epicentre of a concentration of that crisis, the north's needs have been largely ignored for years. Both deserve an approach that's tailored to them and allows people to thrive.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I rise today in support of my colleague's motion. We must declare the opioid

overdose crisis in northern Ontario a public health emergency, and we must commit to ending it. Families are torn apart and lives are being lost. This is not confined to only one part of one community. Young people, old people, employed, unemployed, well and unwell—this is an epidemic that knows no bounds. But this government has not taken action or sufficient action. The government has cut services to people with addictions or put a hold on them when the need is growing. We feel that in my riding.

Families and communities are being ripped apart. Children are left without parents. Grandparents are raising grandchildren. Families are in pain, watching their loved ones disappear in front of them. Thunder Bay has the only overdose prevention site in the north—I remember standing up in this House to try to get that done—but there was a study done, and we in fact proved that we need two sites in Thunder Bay. There should be no arbitrary cap on the number of overdose prevention sites. You cannot help people when they pass away. The province has placed this arbitrary cap, and that should be lifted.

Across the north, there are no other overdose prevention sites. That's shameful, and the province must act. Unfortunately, the government continues to ignore this crisis, but people are dying. This can't be ignored. There are inadequate services for people addicted to substances and long wait-lists for mental health care of any kind.

We have only one child psychiatrist in northwestern Ontario. When people are ready for treatment, it must be ready for them. The services must be wraparound and comprehensive. Too many people leave our region for treatment only to return to find no services are available. Without services, people die. We have the tools. We have the evidence. We know what works. We must act now. One more death is one too many.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Madam Speaker, there's not a lot of time, but I want to first say, both as a northerner and as a citizen of this province, that we will be supporting, obviously, this motion. Far too often, friends of family members and/or friends have been affected by opioids, and I want to give one quick story.

A person I will not name because I don't have permission, who I've known for a long time—an upstanding individual. She has worked hard to get to where she did. She went back to school. She eventually became somewhat of an accountant—some title to be able to manage the books and pay the bills for large firms. But along the way, she had an injury to her back, and as a result of the injury to her back—because of where she lived she couldn't get access to the pain management clinics to deal with the pain in her back, so she actually moved away from Timmins. Because we didn't have a pain management clinic, she went to where she thought she would be able to get one. Obviously, things didn't go well because she ended up becoming addicted to opioids.

Within the last 12 months, I've learned—and I'm being very sketchy, because I don't want to relate this to her directly—that she was charged with a theft of \$3 million

from her employer. All of that money went to drugs; it went to opioids. I know this woman. She's an honest woman, hard-working. She is like any member of your family or the circle of friends that we hang out with. But she ended up becoming injured and she became addicted to the drug.

Now, it raises a bunch of questions. Why is it that we don't have better control over opioids when it comes to being able to prescribe these things to individuals? It should be the drug of last resort. We should be trying to find ways to be able to manage the pain so that people don't end up having to go on opioids.

Recently, I had dental surgery. They gave me two prescriptions. One was for an antibiotic in case of infection, and the other one was an opioid. I gave it back to the pharmacist; I don't want that stuff. The pharmacist said, "It's perfectly okay." There was like a big jar of pills, and I'm thinking to myself, "My God, if they're prepared to give that to me, how many other people are getting it?"

I just say that this motion is about making sure that we put in place the proper controls so that people don't have easy access to opioids, but, number two, that we make sure we deal with their pain because their pain is real, it's debilitating, and it does all of the things that unfortunately pain does to a person when it comes to their wellness.

Yes, we will be voting for this particular motion, and I encourage the government to do the same because I know that other members on the government side have moved similar motions. In fact, the member for Nipissing, Mr. Fedeli, has actually had a very similar motion that he brought to the Legislature in the last government. I hope that's an indication that the government will actually support this particular motion.

1450

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? Further debate? Seeing none, the member for Sudbury has two minutes to reply.

Mr. Jamie West: I want to thank my colleagues for their responses: the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the member for Toronto Centre, the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan, the member from Timmins and the member for Nickel Belt. If time allows, I will talk specifically to them.

I think my most powerful role as an MPP is to echo and amplify the voices of the people in my community. Last night, Amanda Byrne contacted me. She was Ryan's sister. Mandy sent me this letter and gave me permission to share it here today. This is the story of when she found out that her brother had overdosed when she went to her mother's house, where they found his body.

"I parked my car a couple of houses down and I ran to the house, where a paramedic grabbed hold of me and said you can't go in there. That's when my legs gave out and I fell to the ground.

"Mom came to me. She sat down with me in the front yard and we held each other in the pouring rain.

"I will never forget the look in her eyes. The emptiness like a piece of her soul had been torn out. That look has never gone away. Losing a child is a nightmare, but

finding your child cold and blue—and knowing in your heart there is nothing you can do to bring them back—but still trying to revive him until the ambulance comes—is a terror that you will live with forever.

"Can you imagine that being the last image that you have of your child?"

"We spent five hours outside of a place that I've always known as safe. Five hours in the pouring rain because we were not allowed to go inside until they completed their investigation, released the scene and the coroner came to take my baby brother away."

Similarly, Terry Jenkins shared in the paper the story of her son Matthew: "It was his first night injecting heroin with a needle; a friend taught him how to do it and he overdosed.... His friend found him the next morning but he was already cold. There had been a substantial lack of oxygen.... He'd give the shirt off his back, but he had issues, like so many in our community."

COMBATting LITTER
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURE ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 VISANT À LUTTER
CONTRE LES DÉTRITUS
AFIN DE PROTÉGER
L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA NATURE

Ms. Khanjin moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 130, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Action on Litter / Projet de loi 130, Loi proclamant la Journée provinciale d'action contre les détritrus.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Last week was Waste Reduction Week, and I know that the people of Canada, and in Ontario especially, are environmentally conscious year-round and they would like to promote more waste-reduction efforts in their lives. This is why I'm pleased to introduce my private member's bill on a provincial day of action on litter.

As we know, litter negatively impacts our wildlife, our waterways and our green spaces. It also affects our enjoyment of our provincial parks, our forests and our shorelines. That's why myself and the government are committed to reducing litter and waste in our communities. We want to make recycling easier for everyone and to ensure that environmental awareness and action is top of mind. After all, the current generation and the future generation are counting on it.

The people of Ontario have already shown that they are passionate about protecting our environment and engaging in protecting what matters most, engaging in finding solutions on environmental issues. Through the valuable feedback we've received, we've not only engaged in public consultations but online consultations when pursuing

our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan and, of course, our government's paper on waste reduction.

I've received countless feedback in support of my private member's bill on combatting litter, and it is this enthusiasm that will drive change throughout our province. We all deserve a beautiful, litter-free Ontario, and we can achieve this by working together: together with all levels of government—together with our federal partners, our municipal partners—and together with our communities. After all, we all want to do something. And as my grandmother often said, "If you want to see change, you have to do something about it," which is why we're empowering local communities—students, grandparents, parents and everyone across Ontario—to do something to take action to help their environment.

In Ontario, we continue to be a leader in waste reduction, but there is still more we can do. Right now Ontario diverts about 70% of its waste, which means that 30% is still ending up in the landfill. What's more, we can certainly do better when it comes to organic waste. Why, Madam Speaker? Well, 60% of the food and organic waste that is sent to our landfill has methane gas in it, which is 25% more potent than carbon dioxide. Therefore, we need to do more. When our diversion rate has been stuck at 70% for more than a decade, it certainly shows that Ontarians can come together to take action and do more.

That is why true environmentalism starts with meaningful action close to home, and it is why I'm happy to announce my private member's bill is following through on our government's commitment, and my commitment, to establish the first official day of action on litter in Ontario, which is May 12, 2020. This bill will encourage clean-up events all across our province and raise awareness about the impact of litter in our communities.

From my riding of Barrie–Innisfil to Kenora and everywhere in between, Madam Speaker, I'm inviting all Ontarians to take action on litter. It's time to empower our local residents to be able to do something. This local event and this annual event will provide opportunities for everyone to get more involved in waste reduction and spread awareness across our province, whether it's education efforts on the impacts of litter on our communities or coming to events. I look forward to working with partners and communities to bring Ontario's annual litter cleanup to our schools, our neighbourhoods and our municipalities across this province.

Not only will this raise awareness, but there is a huge impact that this will also have on our local economy. After all, for every 1,000 tonnes of waste produced in Ontario, it creates seven full-time jobs. So while we take action on litter and we double down on our recycling efforts, we're also creating employment. Unlike the carbon tax, which kills jobs, we're promoting jobs through our recycling efforts.

In addition, Madam Speaker, this is going to result in \$360,000 in wages by focusing on our waste reduction efforts, and more than \$700,000 in GDP to our province when we focus on recycling and waste reduction measures. So you see, all in all, these are positive changes to our community.

If you look at the Blue Box Program, which our government announced many weeks ago, that alone has the ability to save municipalities up to \$125 million annually. So my private member's bill, in step, is very complementary to our government's actions as well, as we try to raise more awareness in our communities of the practical measures that we can take to combat litter. This will make a lasting impact on Ontario's environment and communities, to make sure that they are protected. We all have a role to play, and this is a large part of it.

I'm very excited that, together, we can take action on litter. The minister and I will be working to make sure that all across Ontario, residents can participate in these actions. I look forward to working with all members in this Legislature to initiate our day of action in May to combat litter in our province.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Ian Arthur: It's a pleasure to rise once again in this chamber and contribute to the debate on this bill.

Thank you to the MPP for Barrie–Innisfil for bringing the legislation forward, which we will be supporting. That support, though, is paired with a significant amount of skepticism as to this government's commitment to much-needed environmental action. The climate crisis is the single greatest threat that we have ever faced, and this is a bit like picking up a cigarette butt when you're about to be washed away by a tsunami. I question if the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of the Environment might have used her PMB slot for something slightly more substantive. I question why said MPP might not try to stop litter at its source with a ban on single-use plastics, much like the one that we put forward, or why this government has yet to meaningfully move forward with extended producer responsibility for packaging, which would also significantly lower litter at its source.

1500

I wonder why we need to take provincial credit for what has previously been done by Scouts, cadets, school boards, cities, and so many other valuable community groups across this province who have logged countless hours to lower the amount of litter on our roadways, in our cities and in our parks. And I wonder how this MPP can claim environmental leadership when her government has gutted the independence and teeth of the Environmental Commissioner, when this government has destroyed the job-creating and emission-lowering cap-and-trade program, when this government has dismantled much of the Endangered Species Act and when this government insists on throwing good money after bad in an ego-driven appeal of the federal carbon tax.

But forget the record on the environment. In place of the vast amount of dismantled environmental legislation that this government has left in its wake, we get a litter day—a litter day, Speaker. Tokenism continues to reign supreme in the development of PC environmental policy. While they promote an anti-littering bill, they table legislation that amounts to "pay less and pollute more" in Bill 132. The word "hubris" comes to mind.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. David Piccini: I'm very pleased to rise today in support of our Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan, of my colleague the parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of the Environment, and of the remarkable work being done by the Ministry of the Environment under the leadership of Minister Yurek. But today we get an opportunity to speak about my friend and colleague Andrea Khanjin and the great work she's doing on the file.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I'm sorry to interrupt the member, but I would ask and remind all members to please refer to their colleagues by riding or by title only.

Mr. David Piccini: Thank you, Madam Speaker—the member for Barrie–Innisfil, who is really taking leadership on this file.

When it comes to climate change, I agree that this issue will “define the contours of this century,” as said by a former President. But I see it as very troublesome how, far too often, we frame this issue as a zero-sum game defined by a select few far too often demonizing their opponents—an overnight approach to climate change that would kill our jobs and our economy and the number one industry in my riding, agriculture. In fact, we don't need to look much farther than our agriculture industry to see some of the most responsible stewards of our land.

The pathway to a sustainable future, Madam Speaker, means unlocking the potentials of our universities and colleges, and I'm pleased in my PA role to see the remarkable work we're doing, supported by our government: to reduce our carbon footprint in our auto industry, using agricultural waste to support auto parts; and the work of our scientists, our agriculture community, for better seeds, better storage and better protection of our agricultural lands.

In fact, I think of my riding of sustainable foods and of Doug Gray and Bonnie Wilson, who recently won the 2019 Mapleseed Pasture Award. I look to Doug and I look to Bonnie. They're the greatest stewards of our environment. We need to stand by them and support them, and I am pleased to stand today to support my colleague and the work that she's doing to reduce litter and waste.

We know that Ontario generates nearly a tonne of waste per person each year, and only 30% of this actually goes to recycling. That means that 70% is going to landfills. Madam Speaker, do you want to talk about climate change? We can talk about methane. It's estimated to be responsible for 25% of major climate events in our climate. Cutting methane is one of the cheapest and easiest and most effective things that governments can do right now to tackle climate change. But I didn't say that; David Suzuki did.

So when I stand shoulder to shoulder with our parliamentary assistant on this litter reduction day, and we stand shoulder to shoulder to tackle the estimated 10,000 tonnes of plastic debris that enter the Great Lakes each year along the shoreline of my community of Northumberland–Peterborough South, I think, this isn't hubris. I think, this

is significant. This is significant that we're seeing leadership from this government to tackle litter and waste. We're setting targets. We're setting a day of action. We're working shoulder-to-shoulder with all levels of government. That's leadership, Madam Speaker.

More than 80% of litter collected during volunteer clean-ups along the shorelines of the Great Lakes is plastic. In my riding, as I said, which is situated along the shoreline, every April we have the mayors' challenge. I'd like to give a shout-out to Mayor Ostrander of Brighton, who won that award this year. Volunteers in Brighton picked up an estimated 35.8 kilograms of waste per volunteer, matched only by the exceptional volunteerism of the members of Alnwick-Haldimand, who had a remarkable 70% participation of the entire municipality.

When we see leadership from this member to dedicate a day where we can work at all levels of government together to tackle the very real problem of litter and waste, the very real problem that plagues our landfills and that plagues our Great Lakes, I say that's target setting. I say that's significant, and I stand shoulder to shoulder with the honourable member from Barrie–Innisfil.

Three million pounds end up in Lake Ontario each year. That would fill up 28 Olympic-sized pools. I'd like to zero in on micro-plastics, which damage our Great Lakes. Micro-fibres account for approximately 71% of micro-plastics in Lake Ontario. When we engage all levels of government, when we engage our NGOs to create awareness to divert this waste to not end up in our lakes, that's action, Madam Speaker.

Keeping our waste out of the landfills also benefits our economy—I know, something far from the mindsets of the members opposite. Every 100,000 tonnes of waste diverted from our landfills can generate seven full-time jobs. That's \$360,000 in wages above the provincial average, more than \$700,000 in GDP alone.

I think of Tri County Plastics and award-winning Brighton councillor Doug LeBlanc in my community: That's job creation. Each year they divert over 20 million pounds of plastic. That's job creation. We know the remarkable economic opportunity that this too can bring to our economy. In fact, as the member said, shifting the Blue Box Program to full producer responsibility is estimated to save municipalities over \$125 million.

We can have a conversation about the environment that isn't solely revolved around punitively going after the poorest in our community, solely revolved around taxing. We can have a discussion that shifts responsibility to the polluter. We can have a conversation around very real targets on litter and waste reduction.

I stand shoulder to shoulder with this member, who isn't demonizing other members, who isn't demonizing the opposition, but who is standing, willing to work with all levels of government to actually lead real action on our environment, action that will stimulate job creation, action that will reduce litter and waste along the lakes, along my municipalities in Northumberland–Peterborough South. I stand by her wholeheartedly.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: I want to know if this is a joke, because it's not April Fool's Day; it's Halloween. This bill, this once-a-year anti-littering day, would have been progressive in the 1960s, when it was the time of Mad Men and people were throwing litter out of their cars that had no seat belts, and men—and it was white men—were going for lunch from their offices and drinking three martinis, but it's 2019, folks. We're facing a climate crisis. We have a million species on the verge of extinction. We have frighteningly few years before we are unable to reverse the effects of climate change. We are in a time when the insured losses in Canada for natural disasters have gone from about \$400 million a year in the 1980s to about \$1 billion a year in the last decade, and almost \$2 billion a year in 2018.

1510

Just today, the Globe and Mail, that bastion of progressivism, called the government's most visible climate action, its slippery stickers, "legally questionable, politically shameful and economically illogical."

The government is fiddling while North America literally burns. We don't have time for jokes. Smarten up and get serious about the climate crisis.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Just Niagara West.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The House will come to order, please, so that the member can have the opportunity.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's an honour to be able to stand in this House and be able to speak to the issues that we're discussing today, and I want to commend my colleague, the member for Barrie—Innisfil, for bringing forward this legislation. I also want to wish a happy Halloween to all of my colleagues in this House, and also acknowledge that it is the 502nd anniversary of the great Reformation, when Martin Luther nailed his theses to the doors of the cathedral in Wittenberg, starting one of the greatest social movements in human history, something I want to acknowledge as well.

But Speaker, what we're talking about today is something that's very, very important. Growing up in the Niagara region, in a bastion of environmentally sensitive land, a micro-system that's uniquely situated between two of the Great Lakes with our beautiful escarpment running through the centre of it, I had the great privilege of spending many hours walking the trails of the Bruce Trail, spending time wading through the ponds and Jordan Harbour and spending time swimming in our Great Lakes. I grew up to really appreciate the importance of maintaining our pristine environment that we have here today.

One of the things that we all care about in this House is climate change and addressing the reality of climate change and how we can do that through carbon capture, through new technologies and through cracking down on

heavy emitters. But we also need to acknowledge that although it's easy to talk about some of these broad sort of macro-environmental strategies—I know the party opposite does have a lot of thoughts when it comes to pie-in-the-sky ideas around this—what we also need to talk about is recognizing how we can bring about positive environmental changes on a local level. Instead of simply talking about emissions and talking about carbon offsets and credits, we can also look around us: look in our backyards, look in the lakes, rivers and streams that we hold so dear in every part of this beautiful province, and challenge ourselves and our neighbours and our communities to take action on littering and on trash, which is one of the ways that we can ensure that in our uniquely sensitive habitats we're also able to protect that biodiversity and ensure that we are protecting the species that are at risk. One of the ways we can do that is by ensuring that we're removing the litter that clogs up so many parts of our ecosystem and that is drastically impacting our Great Lakes.

One thing that I saw recently, actually, was that in Quebec, unfortunately, the city of Montreal has dumped billions of litres of sewage into the St. Lawrence. It was something that frankly shocked me. So when we look here in Ontario, we have to look at other jurisdictions that are doing those types of things and say that we won't let that happen here. We need to make sure we're keeping our lakes and rivers clean. The member from Barrie—Innisfil clearly recognizes that.

Speaker, I want to recognize the various organizations in my riding that do wonderful work on this already, but will see this day of action on littering and waste as a way to really bring this message home and to make people own it and talk about it, whether at school or in the workplace or in their various environments, to have those discussions. I want to recognize the work of the Eco-Defenders, a group of young people in my riding who volunteer to go to community events to clean up and make sure that they're picking up all the litter that happens, encouraging others to stop littering and to make sure that they're keeping their natural habitat clean and friendly.

I also want to recognize, when it comes to food waste, the work that the Niagara Christian Gleaners do in my riding, diverting tens of thousands of tonnes of food, 30% of which would go to waste. Potential food waste that would just be rotting in landfills: They send that to impoverished nations around the world, in sub-Saharan Africa and those types of areas, to make sure that they're addressing some of the challenges when it comes to the changes that we're seeing in our environment and the impacts that those changes are having. So we see innovative ways to also hear that we're able to utilize our resources in ways that we can help take this fight global. But ultimately climate change has local impacts and environmentalism needs to be local.

I'm very proud that, growing up, my mother, I like to say, was an environmentalist before it was cool. She always recycled, even the plastic bags that we had for the milk. She always cut open the tops, cleaned them and

reused them multiple times for sandwiches. It's little actions like that. It sounds small, but when you look at the numbers, the fact is that a tonne of waste is generated per person in the province of Ontario, and we recognize that all these small, little things add up.

I want to commend the member on her initiative. I want to commend her on taking this seriously. I appreciate there's more that can be done, and I know our government is committed to doing more, but this is a step in the right direction. Small steps, but a great journey starts with many small steps.

Thank you very much, Speaker, for letting me be part of the conversation.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. And I apologize to the member from Niagara West. He's no longer Niagara West—Glanbrook. Old habits die hard.

Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I want to thank the member for bringing the bill forward—not because the content is particularly useful. I mean, it's not an evil bill; it's just an inconsequential bill. But it does set the basis for us to have a useful debate this afternoon.

It's extraordinary listening to the grand words from the member about the global emergency that we're facing, but looking at a bill that is totally underwhelming in terms of the scale of what we're looking at. It's as if in your apartment building, there was a fire going on and people were grouped in the lobby talking about the lack of cleaning of dust underneath the chairs. You should get that dust out; I don't argue that. But really, there are other things more germane.

Right now, in California and Los Angeles, large parts of that city are under red alert from a fire emergency—large parts of that city. Millions of people have had their power cut because the lines have ignited fires in that state, something that didn't happen five years or 10 years ago. We are dealing with an emergency and millions are at risk.

What we have, though, is a measure that the government seems to have forgotten about even though it presented it a year ago. I went to the press conference when the government introduced its environment and climate plan. At that time, it was promised, "Ontario will establish an official day focused on clean-up of litter in Ontario, coordinated with schools, municipalities and businesses, to raise awareness about the impacts of waste in our neighbourhoods, in our waterways and in our green spaces." Typically, when the government wants to introduce something, it puts it in a government bill, not a private member's bill.

Another member of the government, the Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction, introduced an ominous omnibus bill just recently, including sections on the environment. He could have stuffed it in there, in one or two paragraphs. No problem; it would have been a government bill. A private member's bill says that the government really doesn't care about this. It's a nice little news hit, but they'll just sort of push it to the

side and see if it gets a little pickup in a local newspaper and gets forgotten about.

When a government abandons even the least part of its environmental program, you know it doesn't care about it at all.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? I recognize—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Oh, they're out of time? I beg your pardon.

I recognize the member for Toronto—St. Paul's.

Ms. Jill Andrew: Bill 130 is a good gesture, albeit a token gesture from this Conservative government. Bill 130, while proposing a Provincial Day of Action on Litter, doesn't even go as far as making it a requirement that Ontarians pick up litter from public places every day, especially on the Provincial Day of Action on Litter. The legislation merely encourages Ontarians. Sadly, what we need now for the state of climate emergency that we're in—a state which this government voted against when the NDP tried to say that we need to declare a climate emergency in Ontario—what we need is climate action, not a fuzzy and warm encouragement.

I met with our enthusiastic ecology group this summer at Christie Gardens Apartments and Care in our community, and here are some of their ideas that we think may help with climate change—real action, not encouragement and not warm and fuzzies.

First of all, we have to declare a state of climate emergency, freeze new fossil fuel extraction/expansion projects, including any expansion of fossil fuel transportation. Christie Gardens says that we need to create millions of good, high-wage jobs in a green economy, and increase unionization and workers' rights. They're also adamant that we need to legislate the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to free, prior and informed consent. I believe the NDP also—we support that too.

1520

As you know, 57 Ontario First Nation communities are on boil-water advisories. That is simply not acceptable, and that cannot be changed by picking up litter one day out of the year. We have to demand and financially support full mandatory education on climate change, and we also need to decarbonize pensions and investments, because there is no solution to climate crisis without changing the basic economic system.

So I'd like to say thank you very, very much to Christie Gardens' ecology group in Toronto—St. Paul's for your hard work around climate change.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? And I'd remind all of the side conversation members to please help me be able to hear the speaker.

I recognize the member from University—Rosedale.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Today the Ford government, or the member, has introduced a bill to make the second Tuesday in May a provincial day on litter to encourage people to

pick up litter. I get it. We do want to keep our neighbourhoods clean. I actively participate in community clean-ups in my riding of University–Rosedale, including some organized by the Harbord Village Residents' Association. I get it. But I've got to say the bill to combat litter for the environment feels token, like this government wants to paint itself green, but when you pull back the curtain, you realize that this Ford government is no friend to the environment—no friend to the environment.

You can see that with this government's track record, this anti-environment track record over this past year, like spending \$30 million of taxpayer dollars taking the feds to court to stop them from putting a price on carbon, even though this government knew that legislation, that plan, was doomed to fail; or canceling a cap-and-trade plan that made polluters pay for the damage they're causing to the environment, including the Great Lakes; or canceling green energy plans and subsidies to retrofit homes to save energy and create good jobs. This Ford government's actions is one of the reasons why so many young people in Ontario took to the streets as part of the climate strike, because they know and we know that the path we must take for a good, green future is not going to be achieved by encouraging individuals to take small, cautious, voluntary actions. They know it; we know it.

One of the real ways that we can tackle the issues that we face is through real, bold government action, which I expect this government to take, like a real climate plan that respects the science; like a green new deal that creates jobs and protects our environment at the same time; like a ban on single-use plastics so we can stop litter from being made in the first place. It is entirely doable, and this government is not doing it.

This is the kind of future that we should be fighting for. It's the kind of future that I will be fighting for, and it's the kind of future that the NDP stands for as well.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The member for Barrie–Innisfil has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Counter to the negativity that's occurred, I do hope the opposition does warm up to the idea of participating in an Ontario-wide day of action and leading by example to many of our champions in our communities. When I made the announcement of an Ontario-wide litter day in my community, it was amazing to see the Earth Rangers come out and all the young kids, to give them hope for their future as well and to show the encouragement on a provincial level. I do hope the opposition does warm up to the idea of hosting a day of action in their communities and their constituencies, working with their local community partners to make it a reality and encouraging them to do something about it.

There were a lot of questions in terms of environment. Well, this is a private member's bill, so I'm doing my part in order to work with my community members and to take a lot of the initiatives that we do in my community and expand that to the whole province, to lead by example. So I do encourage the opposition, if they're interested more in terms of what the government is doing in its Made-in-

Ontario Environment Plan, to read the Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan. Read our platform, which also had a lot of actions and positive things that we want to do for the environment.

I was remiss to read the NDP platform that didn't really mention climate change, mitigation or resilience, but I was really encouraged to see that our government is really taking action on environment and talking about mitigation, resilience and making a change when it comes to the climate. I was also encouraged that we are making a lot of accomplishments when we launched our made-in-Ontario plan as a government, separate from my private member's bill.

We talked about making producers pay. Today, I made an announcement, with the Minister of the Environment, to talk about administrative penalties and how we're actually expanding administrative penalties to make sure that the violators in our environment do pay their fair share. The other day, you saw other provinces that are charging emitters to pay. In fact, our plan that we introduced, when we do make big emitters pay, is probably the strongest enforcement that we've had across our government.

I just want to thank everyone for their speeches, and I hope they have their day of action.

BUY IN CANADA FOR MASS TRANSIT VEHICLES ACT, 2019

LOI DE 2019 FAVORISANT L'ACHAT DE VÉHICULES DE TRANSPORT COLLECTIF AU CANADA

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): We will deal first with ballot item number 79, standing in the name of Mr. Gravelle.

Mr. Gravelle has moved second reading of Bill 133, An Act to promote the purchase of mass transit vehicles that meet certain conditions in respect of Canadian content and assembly. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

ADDICTION SERVICES

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. West has moved private member's notice of motion number 76. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

We will deal with this vote after we have finished the other business.

**COMBATTING LITTER
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURE ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 VISANT À LUTTER
CONTRE LES DÉTRITUS
AFIN DE PROTÉGER
L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA NATURE**

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Ms. Khanjin has moved second reading of Bill 130, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Action on Litter. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

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

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

The division bells rang from 1527 to 1532.

**BUY IN CANADA FOR MASS TRANSIT
VEHICLES ACT, 2019**

**LOI DE 2019 FAVORISANT L'ACHAT
DE VÉHICULES DE TRANSPORT
COLLECTIF AU CANADA**

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All members will please take their seats.

Mr. Gravelle has moved second reading of Bill 133, An Act to promote the purchase of mass transit vehicles that meet certain conditions in respect of Canadian content and assembly. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Gravelle, Michael	Schreiner, Mike
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hassan, Faisal	Shaw, Sandy
Arthur, Ian	Hatfield, Percy	Simard, Amanda
Begum, Doly	Hunter, Mitzie	Singh, Gurratan
Bell, Jessica	Kernaghan, Terence	Singh, Sara
Berns-McGown, Rima	Mamakwa, Sol	Stiles, Marit
Bisson, Gilles	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Vanhof, John
Fife, Catherine	Morrison, Suze	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Rakocevic, Tom	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Glover, Chris	Sattler, Peggy	Yarde, Kevin

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy
Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Phillips, Rod
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Karahalios, Belinda C.	Sabawy, Sheref
Bouma, Will	Ke, Vincent	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Khanjin, Andrea	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kusendova, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Martin, Robin	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Surma, Kinga

Crawford, Stephen	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Ford, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	Walker, Bill

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 33; the nays are 54.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negatived.

ADDICTION SERVICES

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. West has moved private member's notice of motion number 76. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerks.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): My apologies to all members. We will put 30 seconds on the clock to open the doors to allow people to come and go.

Just confirming that we're good? Oh, good.

Again, Mr. West has moved private member's notice of motion number 76. All those in favour please stand and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Andrew, Jill	Gravelle, Michael	Schreiner, Mike
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hassan, Faisal	Shaw, Sandy
Arthur, Ian	Hatfield, Percy	Simard, Amanda
Begum, Doly	Hunter, Mitzie	Singh, Gurratan
Bell, Jessica	Kernaghan, Terence	Singh, Sara
Berns-McGown, Rima	Mamakwa, Sol	Stiles, Marit
Bisson, Gilles	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Vanhof, John
Fife, Catherine	Morrison, Suze	West, Jamie
Fraser, John	Rakocevic, Tom	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Glover, Chris	Sattler, Peggy	Yarde, Kevin

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy
Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Phillips, Rod
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
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	Kusendova, Natalia	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Martow, Gila	Surma, Kinga
Crawford, Stephen	McDonell, Jim	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Ford, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 33; the nays are 56.

1540

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Please put 30 seconds on the clock.

COMBATTING LITTER
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
AND NATURE ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 VISANT À LUTTER
CONTRE LES DÉTRITUS
AFIN DE PROTÉGER
L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET LA NATURE

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Ms. Khanjin has moved second reading of Bill 130, An Act to proclaim the Provincial Day of Action on Litter. All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Rakocevic, Tom
Andrew, Jill	Hassan, Faisal	Rasheed, Kaleed
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hatfield, Percy	Sabawy, Sheref
Arthur, Ian	Hogarth, Christine	Sandhu, Amarjot
Baber, Roman	Hunter, Miltzie	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Sattler, Peggy
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Schreiner, Mike
Begum, Doly	Karahalios, Belinda C.	Scott, Laurie
Bell, Jessica	Ke, Vincent	Shaw, Sandy
Berns-McGown, Rima	Kernaghan, Terence	Simard, Amanda
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Khanjin, Andrea	Singh, Gurratan
Bisson, Gilles	Kramp, Daryl	Singh, Sara
Bouma, Will	Kusendova, Natalia	Skelly, Donna
Calandra, Paul	Mamakwa, Sol	Smith, Dave
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Mantha, Michael	Smith, Todd
Cho, Stan	Martin, Robin	Stiles, Marit
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Surma, Kinga
Coe, Lorne	McDonell, Jim	Tabuns, Peter
Coteau, Michael	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Crawford, Stephen	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Thompson, Lisa M.
Downey, Doug	Morrison, Suze	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fife, Catherine	Oosterhoff, Sam	Vanthof, John
Ford, Doug	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Fraser, John	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Fullerton, Merrilee	Parsa, Michael	West, Jamie
Ghamari, Goldie	Pettapiece, Randy	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Gill, Parm	Phillips, Rod	Yarde, Kevin
Glover, Chris	Piccini, David	

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 89; the nays are 0.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Which committee?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I would like to send it to general government, please.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Did you say general government?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Yes, thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on General Government? Agreed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTING A SUSTAINABLE
PUBLIC SECTOR FOR FUTURE
GENERATIONS ACT, 2019
LOI DE 2019 VISANT À PRÉSERVER
LA VIABILITÉ DU SECTEUR PUBLIC
POUR LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 29, 2019, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector / Projet de loi 124, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre des mesures de modération concernant la rémunération dans le secteur public de l'Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Bethlenfalvy has moved second reading of Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 20-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1545 to 1605.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Members please take their seats.

Mr. Bethlenfalvy has moved second reading of Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector. All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Pettapiece, Randy
Baber, Roman	Hogarth, Christine	Phillips, Rod
Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Kanapathi, Logan	Rasheed, Kaleed
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	Smith, Todd
Crawford, Stephen	McDonell, Jim	Surma, Kinga
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McKenna, Jane	Tangri, Nina
Downey, Doug	Miller, Norman	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dunlop, Jill	Mitas, Christina Maria	Thompson, Lisa M.
Elliott, Christine	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Ford, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pang, Billy	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Park, Lindsey	Walker, Bill
Gill, Parm	Parsa, Michael	

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): All of those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hassan, Faisal	Simard, Amanda
Arthur, Ian	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Gurratan
Begum, Doly	Hunter, Mitzie	Singh, Sara
Bell, Jessica	Kernaghan, Terence	Stiles, Marit
Berns-McGown, Rima	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Bisson, Gilles	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Vanthof, John
Coteau, Michael	Morrison, Suze	West, Jamie
Fife, Catherine	Rakocevic, Tom	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fraser, John	Sattler, Peggy	Yarde, Kevin
Gates, Wayne	Schreiner, Mike	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 59; the nays are 32.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Pursuant to the order of the House passed earlier today, the bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on General Government.

Orders of the day. I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice relating to the order of the House dated October 31, 2019, with respect to Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice relating to the order of the House dated October 31, 2019, with respect to Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector. Do we agree? Carried.

Government House leader.

1610

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that the order of the House dated October 31, 2019, relating to Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector, be amended by replacing the fourth bullet point with the following:

"That each witness will receive up to 10 minutes for their presentation followed by 20 minutes for questioning, with eight minutes allotted to the government, 10 minutes

allotted to the official opposition and two minutes allotted to the Green Party independent member."

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Calandra has moved that the order of the House dated October 31, 2019, relating to Bill 124, An Act to implement moderation measures in respect of compensation in Ontario's public sector, be amended by replacing the fourth bullet point with the following:

"That each witness will receive up to 10 minutes for their presentation followed by 20 minutes for questioning, with eight minutes allotted to the government, 10 minutes allotted to the official opposition and two minutes allotted to the Green Party independent member."

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

BETTER FOR PEOPLE, SMARTER FOR BUSINESS ACT, 2019 LOI DE 2019 POUR MIEUX SERVIR LA POPULATION ET FACILITER LES AFFAIRES

Mr. Sarkaria moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 132, An Act to reduce burdens on people and businesses by enacting, amending and repealing various Acts and revoking various Regulations / Projet de loi 132, Loi visant à alléger le fardeau administratif qui pèse sur la population et les entreprises en édictant, modifiant ou abrogeant diverses lois et en abrogeant divers règlements.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'd just like to start by saying that I'm going to be splitting my time with the MPP from Flamborough-Glanbrook as well as the MPP from Mississauga-Streetsville.

I have the opportunity to speak to the second reading of the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, yet another part of our government's open for jobs, open for business policies that have already helped create an environment for over 272,000 new jobs right here in the province of Ontario. Madam Speaker, this is only one of many—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Stop the clock. I apologize to the minister. I would invite everyone who is coming or going to please do so quietly and quickly so that I am able to hear the minister. Will all members please come to order so the minister can be heard? Thank you.

I return to the minister.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Our open for jobs, open for business policies, as I was just alluding to in our Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, is just one of many steps we have taken to help support an environment whereby our job creators can continue to create opportunities for hard-working families across Ontario and continue on the path of economic

prosperity as we have seen since being elected in June 2018.

Before I start, I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of my entire team, as well as Minister Fedeli and his team and the two incredible parliamentary assistants, the MPP for Flamborough–Glanbrook as well as the MPP for Mississauga–Streetsville. I want to thank them for all their support and help on this bill. You will be hearing from them very shortly in terms of what this bill actually has to offer and how we are further helping create an environment for our job creators and for the families of this province.

Today I'm going to focus on the broad strokes of what's really in this package and how, if passed, this legislation will make life easier for people and make it easier to do business right here in the province of Ontario. Since being elected, we have helped with over \$5 billion for many various business communities to foster, if we want to say, a further environment for growth, whether it has been through the WSIB premiums that we helped reduce across the province, whether it was to ensure that the minimum wage was frozen but at the same time delivering the most progressive tax cut in the history of this province, whether it was in making sure that the job-killing cap-and-trade \$880 million was removed and we supported our businesses or by introducing the capital investment depreciation, open-for-jobs investment tax cut as well so companies could write off capital projects.

These are just some of the steps that we have taken as a government to help ensure that Ontario remains competitive and continues to be competitive across various other jurisdictions, as well as against some of our competitors south of the border. Red tape in the form of burdensome, outdated and duplicative regulations has cost Ontario jobs, hindered our competitive advantage and lost opportunities for families and businesses to get ahead. Under the previous government, we lost over 300,000 manufacturing jobs in the province of Ontario. We know that—

Mr. Will Bouma: It's 350,000.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Yes, 350,000, thank you.

We know that fixing Ontario's regulatory framework is key to making Ontario work better for people and smarter for business. Easing burdens on people will help our communities thrive, and cutting red tape for businesses will improve Ontario's investment climate and help them create jobs and grow wages for hard-working families across this province. Madam Speaker, if passed, the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act will be key to the government's broader strategy of achieving these goals on behalf of the people of Ontario.

The province has seen report after report, whether it's the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the University of Toronto's 360 policy think tank, or a report commissioned by Deloitte's chief economist last week calling on Canada and its governments to reform regulatory requirements to ensure that they are in line with other states that we are competing with for good-paying jobs and further invest-

ment. In the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report for 2019, Canada fell yet again, two points, to 14th. That's 13 behind some of our biggest competitors.

We know that economic competitiveness is a primary source of a rising standard of living for Ontarians. It all comes down to economic productivity. The more productive our labour force is, the higher the wages. This translates into higher incomes and a higher standard of living across this province. When regulations are not serving the public interest, when they duplicate federal or municipal rules, or when they cause excessive costs to the economy, it harms our competitiveness.

Monday's package includes over 80 items, initiatives that represent yet another major step this government is taking to make Ontario open for business and open for jobs. Our plan starts with empowering people and getting government out of the way of business so that they can do what they do best: create jobs and opportunities for hard-working families across this province. We're taking a common-sense approach to Ontario's regulatory framework. We know that red tape causes frustration, delays, complications in people's everyday lives, and that it adds massively to business costs, making it harder for Ontario companies to compete with other provinces, states and markets overseas. We are working to fix that.

Madam Speaker, in recognition of our government's successful efforts to date, Dominic Barton, former global managing partner at management consultancy firm McKinsey and Co., said the following: "Ontario is a role model in reducing the regulatory burden on businesses. I am impressed by the government's leadership in making regulation more agile by applying a small business lens and taking a lighter touch to enforcing.... We need to take this approach across Canada."

1620

Dominic Barton's sentiments are the same sort of positive feedback this government has received as a result of our mission to ease burdens on families and job creators across this province.

As a matter of fact, in January 2019, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business gave Ontario an A- in its 2019 red tape report card. This was Ontario's highest grade ever, and a big jump from the C+ that the previous government received in 2018.

This is proof positive that our approach is working and the right people are taking notice. But there is still work to do, and the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act will take us another major step forward in our ongoing mission to ease regulatory burdens on the people of Ontario.

Since becoming minister, I have had the opportunity to engage with Ontarians from every corner of the province—from local small business owners to regional chambers of commerce, to the charitable organizations performing remarkable work in our communities. Whether I'm in Ottawa, Whitby or Sault Ste. Marie, the concerns I have heard have all been the same: Red tape

and burdensome regulations are standing in the way of what they want to do.

I had the honour of meeting with the dedicated team at Wychwood Open Door in my office, to hear the challenges they face serving the needs of our community. Wychwood Open Door, along with Second Harvest and other community feeding organizations, have had to adhere to the exact same regulations as any other fast food chain operator or restaurant operator—the same regulations. We heard about the challenges that they were facing. Organizations like these are not restaurants. They do not have the same resources to navigate a regulatory framework that classifies them as such. But until now, that is how they have been seen in the government's eyes.

There are few people that understand the nature of this challenge better than Lori Nikkel, the CEO of Second Harvest. At Second Harvest, “We have been outspoken advocates for food safety training, education, and oversight that both understands the capacity that exists in the non-profit sector and keeps people safe,” she says. “With growing opportunities to rescue surplus food, we are seeing gaps that may prevent food programs from providing good, healthy food to some of our most vulnerable populations. We are pleased the government is consulting to better understand the resources that exist in the sector to serve food, and the need to deliver training and oversight specifically designed to ensure Ontario's most vulnerable can access the food they need for success.”

In some sad cases, Ontario's regulatory burden has led to worthy programs closing their doors to the people who need them the most. That's coming to an end.

We're not doing away with regulations that will protect the health and safety of people who rely on these programs to get by. Instead, we are creating a tailor-made, specified set of regulations that apply to the special case at hand: our community feeding organizations.

To this point, Daily Bread Food Bank CEO Neil Hetherington had this to say: “Community meal programs and food banks play a vital role in meeting the immediate needs of our most vulnerable residents.

“We are pleased to be taking part in the Better for People, Smarter For Business consultation to ensure that these important programs can operate safely in our communities.”

Simply put, we're helping those who are helping others by fixing what's wrong with the regulatory burden that is holding them back.

Another great example of some of the great work we're doing in this bill comes down to many of those who are employed in the trucking sector. In many communities scattered across the province, trucking is a major employer. I've met with these hard-working Ontarians in my time as a minister, and I have heard first-hand about the time delays spent completing a 30-minute test in one location for emissions, only to have to book another three-hour test at a different location for inspection. That, too, is coming to an end.

We have streamlined our transport truckers' concerns and we're streamlining testing regulations to allow for a

one-test, one-result examination at a single location. Ontario Trucking Association president Stephen Laskowski had this to say about our smarter approach: that the Better for People, Smarter for Business's trucking inspection program “will bring real, effectual enforcement and tangible reductions to heavy-duty diesel emissions.

“When these regulations are passed, Ontario will be the first jurisdiction in North America to inspect vehicles at roadside for emissions tampering as well as during their annual safety inspection.”

This will save our truckers time and money and get them back on our roadways doing what they do best: helping to keep Ontario's economy moving.

Listening to the concerns of Ontarians has been critical to our mission of fixing Ontario's regulatory framework and building an Ontario that works better for people and smarter for business. We are working to restore Ontario's competitive advantage that once made Ontario the economic engine of Canada. In the past 16 months, we've taken over 100 actions to modernize and streamline regulations, simplify complex regulatory processes and eliminate regulation overlap between federal and municipal rules.

While our government's commitment to red tape is not new, last June I had the opportunity to be sworn in as a member of this cabinet as Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. There are four things that we would like to point out.

As our public-facing documents suggest for this piece of legislation, we are guided by five key principles.

We are committed to a strategic approach that, while keen to see great results, recognizes that Ontario's regulatory framework and regulatory knot was not tied overnight. Untying this regulatory knot will take careful—effectively taking time to undo this knot carefully.

Third, my commitment to using my role to help make Ontario work better for people. Red tape isn't just about businesses. Slow government processes, outdated rules and extra paperwork affect people too.

And fourth, measuring our progress in a meaningful and tangible way.

Many governments say that they'll try to reduce red tape, but our ministry and our government are measuring our success. We have adopted the OECD's metrics and we have a goal of reducing business costs by \$400 million by June 2020. Today, I'm pleased to announce that, if passed, we will be well on our way to our target, as we'll currently sit at \$338 million.

The Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, along with regulatory changes, contains over 80 measures to reduce regulatory burdens and costs on communities and job creators. If the Legislature passes this act, these actions will spur job creation, economic growth and greater investment across several sectors: from manufacturing, forestry, mining and agri-foods to life sciences, transportation, energy and waste recovery to Main Street businesses like restaurants, barber shops and dry cleaners. These steps are intended to make it easier to do business that will benefit people in their everyday lives and increase

opportunities by getting government out of the way of hard-working job creators.

We are not against regulation; we are against unnecessary regulation. Ontario families expect and deserve clean air and water and safe products and working conditions. Regulations are there to ensure these things. But all too often, businesses are required to spend time and money complying with rules that go well beyond what's needed to achieve these goals of regulation. We're establishing a regulatory framework that is effective, targeted and focused while maintaining Ontario's high standards to keep people safe and healthy and to protect the environment.

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I'll go through some very brief examples of how we're making Ontario more competitive. For our farmers, we are simplifying forms that will help with filling out crop insurance claims. We're reducing the length of these forms by 65 pages and saving farmers over 140 hours. We have worked with GM at their Ingersoll plant to develop a streamlined new model for environmental compliance approvals that leads the way in North America. This model, which simplifies the approvals process while maintaining environmental protections, will be available for other manufacturers that would also like to use it.

We recognize that Ontario's growing populations need more roads and houses. We are streamlining requirements and improving access to aggregates, such as stone and gravel, which are key ingredients in the asphalt and concrete used to build houses and roads.

We are protecting seniors and families from drug shortages and reducing burdens on drug manufacturers to expand access to innovative and lower-cost generic drugs.

We are getting out of the way of community-feeding organizations such as food banks, churches, mosques, temples and synagogues—the dedicated people who stand on the front lines against hunger and need. We're allowing restaurants to decide for themselves whether to let customers bring a dog with them on a patio. This will give people a choice of patios that do or don't welcome dogs.

These are but a few examples of the actions we are proposing to make life better for people and remove regulatory roadblocks that hold back investment and job creation. We are working to create the conditions for businesses to thrive. We are making Ontario a more competitive and attractive place for companies to grow, create jobs and increase wages for the people of our province. This week, we took another major step toward our goal of making Ontario work better for people and smarter for business.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Stan Cho): I recognize the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook.

Ms. Donna Skelly: A big thank you to the Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction for introducing the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act as part of our government's plan to fix Ontario's broken regulatory framework.

I'm going to focus in this section on what we're going to do to reduce the regulatory burdens on job creators

across Ontario. This work is essential because we have a real problem in Ontario with red tape impeding business. Our government inherited a regulatory burden that, over the years, has grown into the heaviest in this country. As of June 2018, businesses in Ontario on average had to deal with 100 legislative and regulatory requirements while Quebec had 77, Alberta 43, and BC just 20. Businesses told us that far too many of Ontario's regulations were outdated, onerous, resulted in duplication or simply didn't fit the purpose. This regulatory burden has reduced the business investments that drive job creation.

The province has seen report after report from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the University of Toronto's Ontario 360 and, most recently, from Deloitte. All of them state that our regulatory burden is out of step with other provinces and with the US states we compete with for good jobs and growing wages. In the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2019, Canada was seen to have dropped two spots to 14th place.

We know that economic competitiveness is the primary source of a rising standard of living for Ontarians, and it all comes down to productivity. The more productive our labour force is, the higher the wages. This translates into higher incomes for hard-working families and a rising standard of living. If regulations aren't serving the public interest, if they duplicate federal or municipal rules or if they cause excessive costs to the economy, that harms our competitiveness.

The good news is we've already made a strong start in fixing all of this. Over the past 16 months, the government has taken more than 100 actions to modernize and streamline regulations to simplify complex regulatory processes, and to eliminate overlap with federal and municipal rules that are already on the books.

In November of 2018, the Legislature passed the Making Ontario Open for Business Act, which repealed onerous regulatory burdens introduced by the previous government. That included pausing an increase in the minimum wage to give small businesses a chance to reassess their resources and, of course, their labour costs. We are ensuring that regulations in the province are effective, that they're targeted and focused while still maintaining Ontario's high standards. These changes will lower the cost of doing business by making it simpler and cheaper to comply with regulations. It will also make it easier for people to interact with government. It will provide direct benefits to people in their everyday lives while making it easier to do business, to create jobs and to grow wages.

Last April, the Legislature passed the Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act, which is taking 31 actions to cut red tape in 12 separate sectors. As a result, Ontario companies will be more competitive and they will attract new investments, growing jobs and growing our economy. This package will address specific regulatory issues that curtail expansion and investment in industries such as agrifood, manufacturing, construction and our auto sector. We are not opposed to regulation; we are opposed to overregulation.

A research paper from the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy shows that Ontario has the highest cost of complying with regulations of any province: \$33,000 per business per year. This is well above the average of \$26,000 in most other provinces. The action our government is taking is about cutting the red tape that is holding business back, while maintaining the regulations that protect consumers, that protect workers and that protect our environment. These changes will take the government a long way towards delivering on its commitment to reducing the number of regulatory requirements affecting businesses by at least 25% by the year 2020.

In June, the government announced the spring regulatory modernization package, which is eliminating regulatory irritants in the auto sector and other manufacturing sectors. We are also reducing red tape as part of broader legislative packages that don't have the words "red tape" on their label. For instance, the Ontario budget included the Putting Drivers First auto plan, which is allowing auto insurance companies to offer more innovative products such as pay-as-you-go insurance.

In May, the Legislature passed the Simpler, Faster, Better Services Act. Our plan will improve the quality of service provided by adopting more digital practices right across our government. It includes actions to reduce red tape, such as allowing the government to send notices by email instead of paper. There are dozens of provincial laws that require hard-copy signatures on documents and rely on methods like fax machines and traditional mail. This is only the beginning. Our plan is to use secure digital methods to bring more government services online and remove out-of-date processes.

But "digital first" does not mean "digital only." We are expanding access to meet people's expectations for service delivery, whether it's 9 to 5 at a ServiceOntario centre or midnight from the comfort of your own home.

In June, the Legislature passed the More Homes, More Choice Act. This is significantly speeding up processes for the approvals that companies must obtain before they can begin construction. This applies not just to new home construction, but to building or expanding industrial plants. The changes are intended to eliminate unnecessary steps, duplication and barriers to creating the housing that Ontario so desperately needs.

1640

While cutting red tape, the government is holding firm to our commitment to maintain protections for health and safety and to protect the environment, the greenbelt, agricultural lands and our rich natural heritage.

So one of our biggest steps to reduce red tape has been through a housing bill.

We are committed, by 2020, to saving Ontario businesses at least \$400 million with the cost of complying with regulations, and we're off to a great start. Preliminary estimates suggest that by June 2019, we had achieved \$126 million in savings through actions completed by then. This total will increase substantially once these changes are fully in place. As well, by 2019, we had reduced fees, charges and levies on businesses by an

additional \$160 million. And now we are adding to these savings. The Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, along with regulatory changes, is expected to further reduce costs by \$52 million. This will bring total savings to businesses to \$338 million.

Interjections.

Ms. Donna Skelly: I agree.

And our work is being recognized. In January, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business gave Ontario an A- in its 2019 Red Tape Report Card. That was Ontario's highest grade ever and a big jump from the C+ that the previous government received back in 2018. The CFIB said that it gave Ontario an A- because of our commitment to tackle red tape right across government. It also said that improving from a C+ to an A- after just six months in office was a particularly impressive accomplishment, and I agree.

Madam Speaker, in a moment, I'm going to describe an array of actions in this package that will benefit specific business sectors. But before I do that, I want to highlight something to keep in mind about these proposals: It's that they're not just about reducing regulatory burdens in these sectors; they are also about improving the lives of everyday Ontarians. Making it easier to do business also improves people's lives and increases opportunity by getting government out of the way of our job creators.

Here's an example. We are reducing an unnecessary burden on transport trucking companies, which employ huge numbers of people right across Ontario. Currently, professional truck drivers are required to take their vehicles off the road twice a year for government-mandated inspections—once for emissions testing, and then, again, they pull the same truck off for a vehicle safety inspection. Both tests are very important, but doing them separately simply makes no sense, and it takes drivers off the road when they could be delivering goods. So what are we doing? We're taking a common-sense approach by combining these tests into one single inspection. It makes sense, saves time and helps job creators do what they do best: create jobs and grow our economy.

Madam Speaker, here's another example of how reducing regulatory burdens on businesses will also benefit individual Ontarians. Our package includes a number of proposals to modernize the administration of pension plans. Currently, it's unnecessarily costly and complex for employers to set up and run pension plans. For example, Ontario has a much lower threshold for requiring audits of pension plans than BC and Alberta. The threshold here is lower than it needs to be, which creates unnecessary costs for smaller employers that encourage their employees to join their pension plans. We are proposing to raise the threshold from \$3 million to \$10 million in assets, which is similar to the ones in BC and Alberta. This step alone would reduce costs for small business employers by \$10 million a year. In total, the actions that we are proposing on pension plans would save businesses over \$35 million per year. That would benefit workers by making it easier for employers to provide good pensions.

The next example I'll highlight is about the agri-food sector, which is enormously important to communities right across Ontario. This package includes a number of actions that will help ensure that we continue to put Ontario food on the table.

One of them would reduce paperwork for the 14,000 farm businesses that are enrolled in the AgriInsurance Program. Crop insurance is a crucial support to help farmers manage events beyond their control, such as pests, disease and weather. We are simplifying the forms that farmers fill out for crop insurance claims—and not just slightly. These are big changes. We are reducing the length of these forms by 65 pages and saving farmers an average of 140 hours of their time.

We're also proposing another action that would benefit farmers. We'll streamline regulatory processes to approve the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on farms while maintaining a restricted-use status for these pesticides. Farmers will be allowed to use them only if they have completed a training course in their proper use. When we think of pesticides, the first thing that probably comes to mind is a product that is sprayed, but neonics are treated seeds, so farmers can plant them precisely where they are needed. It is important to streamline the approvals process for using them if they are going to do any good. That way, farmers will be able to plant these treated seeds in time to ward off grub infestations that could devastate their crops.

Madam Speaker, the next action I'd like to highlight is another example of how regulations that were written with one situation in mind have led to unintended consequences. We are fixing regulations that have created an unnecessary burden on small main street businesses that collectively employ huge numbers of people: barbershops and hairdressers. In the spring of 2018, health regulations were enacted for businesses in a category known as "personal service settings." That includes tattoo parlours, nail salons, barbershops and hairdressing salons. The regulations were designed to protect the public against the risk of disease transmission from procedures that can cause exposure to blood or body fluids. This included requiring these businesses to obtain the name and contact information of every single client. This would allow a business to quickly contact clients if there had been any failure in practices that reduce disease transmission, like keeping equipment clean and sterile.

The trouble is that this requirement was also applied to barbershops and hairdressing salons, where services don't routinely or intentionally involve cutting or puncturing skin. In rare instances when this does happen, there are requirements in place to sterilize and clean their equipment. We are planning to amend the rules to stop requiring these businesses to collect information that simply isn't necessary, and to stop requiring people to share their personal contact information for something as routine as a haircut.

The next proposal is an example of how main street businesses are held back by being subject to both federal and provincial regulations in the absolutely same area. Our government has listened to business owners as part of a

thorough review of Ontario's regulatory system, and we learned that it is surprisingly common for two levels of government to regulate the same thing. There are few things more frustrating for a business than to spend the time needed to comply with federal regulatory requirements, only to be asked to do the same thing slightly differently to satisfy provincial requirements.

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Madam Speaker, that is the case for a small business that operates in every corner of Ontario: dry cleaners. Dry cleaners are required to have someone on staff who has completed provincial training in the environmental management of waste and contaminants from the cleaning equipment, but stringent federal regulation of dry cleaners has rendered this training absolutely unnecessary. Evidence shows the federal rules have been effective at reducing the environmental impact of dry cleaning. So we are proposing to do away with a layer of provincial regulation that has become unnecessary to protecting workers' health and to protecting the environment.

We are doing what we believe needs to be done in order to safeguard workers and the environment, while giving businesses relief from redundant regulations so that they can grow their businesses and our economy.

Madam Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to PA Tangri.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I recognize the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

Mrs. Nina Tangri: Thank you to PA Skelly.

Before I begin, I wanted to thank Minister Sarkaria for putting this package forward, and congratulate him and his team on their first piece of legislation put forward through this House. As the minister himself and PA Skelly have explained, it is a crucial step our government is taking to make things, as this bill states, better for people and smarter for business.

I'd like to highlight three proposals that are of interest to the people of northern Ontario. The first concerns the forest industry, which is, of course, one of the pillars of the economy in the north. Current regulations require forestry companies that log trees on provincial crown land to get the government's approval for their annual work schedules. This is despite the fact that these schedules are consistent with each company's 10-year forest management plan, a plan that the government has already approved. This causes unnecessary delays. It can even force a company to halt operations until it gets the green light for planned operations, even though they haven't changed from the ones already approved under its forest management plan. We are going to streamline regulatory approvals in this sector. The package that we have introduced also includes provisions to enable further streamlining in an industry that supports so many jobs from this renewable resource.

The second example of particular relevance to the north is about regulatory change that would benefit another pillar of the region's economy: the mining sector. It would require the province to acknowledge amendments to mine closure plans within 45 days. These plans are important

because they ensure that mines are closed in a safe and environmentally responsible way. This regulatory change would set a strong government service standard for the mining sector. It would also help make Ontario more attractive for mining investments by providing something that businesses value highly: certainty.

The third example I'll highlight, that would especially benefit northerners, would make it easier for communities to adopt a cleaner and low-carbon alternative to diesel. Around the world, offices, factories, homes, schools, hospitals and universities use combined heat and power systems based on biomass or natural gas turbines. These proposals would streamline and sharply cut the cost to get the regulatory approvals required to install these systems. That would make it easier for rural and northern communities to reduce energy costs and emissions. In some cases, it would also provide emergency backup power supply in hospitals, universities and other critical infrastructure. As well, it could create economic opportunities in the north for timber by-products. This would create good jobs in communities where those aren't easy to find.

The next action is about regulations around the sale of bananas in grocery stores. Actually, it's not just about bananas; it's also all kinds of fruit and vegetables. It's a classic example of a regulation that was written with one situation in mind that led to consequences no one saw coming. Ontario has menu labelling requirements that are designed to help people make informed decisions when they order food in a restaurant or buy it in a grocery store, and that's a good thing. The problem arises in the way these regulations are applied to food counters in grocery stores. A banana that's for sale in the produce section doesn't require a label showing the number of calories and a nutrition facts table, but it does require a label if it's sold next to ready-to-eat meals at the food counter. We're proposing to clarify the rules to get rid of this discrepancy. That will include exempting unprepared produce sold by weight or unit from the menu labelling requirement.

The next section I'll highlight is an area where Ontario has developed a regulatory model that puts us ahead of every other province and every US state. We've worked with GM at the company's assembly plant in Ingersoll to develop a streamlined new model for a type of permit known as an environmental compliance approval. It's important to ensure that manufacturing plants meet Ontario's environmental protection standards, but the current model is far too complex and time-consuming. The new permit will consolidate multiple approvals into a single approval that will focus on ensuring the outcomes that the regulations were meant to achieve. That will give the GM plant the flexibility to make changes to its operations without having to seek amendments to its permit for each one. The government will require more information on environmental impacts up front, but once that is done, it will be much easier to adjust permits later.

This model strikes the right balance by simplifying the approvals process while maintaining environmental protections, and now we'll make it available for other Ontario manufacturers that want to adopt it.

The next proposal is an example of how reducing regulatory burdens on a specific sector will create benefits far beyond it. Ontario's strong economy is a magnet for people from across Canada and around the world. We need to build more roads and houses to meet the needs of our growing population, and that means we need to ensure an adequate supply of aggregates such as stone and gravel. They are key ingredients in the asphalt and concrete used to build roads and houses.

This bill includes proposals to streamline requirements on pit and quarry operations. This would improve access to aggregate resources for construction companies so they can build what we need both for those who were born here and those who now call Ontario home.

Now I'm going to highlight a final example of work we're doing to reduce regulatory burdens on Ontario businesses. It's an example that shows that in a world where you can do so many things quickly and easily online, governments—and by no means just in Ontario—are laggards that are still relying heavily on paper-based systems. Ontario has a service for businesses to track and report on any hazardous waste they produce. This service is essential for ensuring that hazardous waste is appropriately managed in order to protect the health and safety of the general public. But this service is outdated because most of the reporting is done on paper, and it produces an incredible number of documents—over 450,000 a year.

As part of our package, we're going to start switching over to a modern, digital reporting registry. This will make it easier, faster and cheaper for companies to meet their obligations to track and report on their hazardous waste. It will also greatly enhance the government's ability to track these wastes.

So far, we have highlighted a number of examples of how we're working to reduce the regulatory burdens on individual Ontarians and on businesses. Now I'd like to take you through some examples of a third area where we're reducing regulatory burdens.

1700

We're starting to streamline our processes to simplify interactions between the province and municipalities, universities and colleges, school boards and hospitals. We're working with these organizations in the broader public sector to identify areas for improvement. As we review these processes, we're asking questions such as "Is this data we require school boards to provide really necessary?" and "How can we make it easier for municipalities to carry out routine activities?" We're looking at ways to ensure that more of the funding for the broader public sector goes to the things that people count on in their everyday lives. By making government more efficient, we'll save money on unnecessary administrative costs, which can then be reinvested in classrooms, municipal services, hospital beds and university and college spots.

I'll now take you through some examples of the work we're doing to simplify our interactions with the broader public sector. I'll start with a few that we've already announced or completed, then move on to actions in the fall red tape package.

The first example concerns an action that we've taken to get out of the way of routine activities by local governments. The province used to require municipalities to go through an environmental assessment for low-risk activities, such as planting trees and installing benches and pedestrian lighting to beautify local streets. Our government has done away with this unnecessary layer of regulation by eliminating environmental assessments for low-risk activities like those. Instead, we're focusing these assessments where they're actually needed: on higher-risk projects, such as landfills or new power transmission lines.

The next example concerns a burden that governments around the world seem to have a real knack for: requiring unnecessary reports. We inherited a system that imposed a significant burden on school boards by requiring them to collect and report a lot of unnecessary data. We identified 379 requirements for school boards to provide data to the province that were outdated or that duplicated information we were already collecting, and we have eliminated all 379. We're doing the same thing to relieve a pointless burden on local governments. Municipalities are required to file huge numbers of reports to provincial ministries. We took a hard look at which of those reports are actually worth doing. Many of them do provide information that is vital for the province's work to help keep people safe and healthy and protect the environment, but many others are simply unnecessary. So we're getting rid of the latter kind. We have identified 94 unnecessary reports that we'll wind down and another 27 that we'll consolidate or simplify.

Now I am going to outline four actions we are proposing in our package to lighten the regulatory load on the broader public sector.

The first is to simplify the approvals processes for changes to local drainage systems, such as ditches beside rural roads. These are an important part of the local infrastructure in rural municipalities, and the current complex approvals processes are a real burden on local governments that operate very leanly. Our proposals would save municipalities time and money in getting approvals for major upgrades to their systems. This would have other benefits. It would also reduce costs for farmers and other landowners for drain repairs, maintenance and minor improvements. As well, it would reduce barriers to projects to make farms more competitive and sustainable, manage floods and protect the environment.

The next action I'll highlight are proposals that would allow more Ontarians to participate in civic life and give municipal library boards greater flexibility to manage their governance resources appropriately. These proposals would widen the pool of potential board members by expanding it beyond Canadian citizens to include permanent residents of Canada. They would also reduce the number of times per year that boards are required to meet from 10 to four. That's important because meeting 10 times a year is a big burden on smaller boards and simply not necessary.

The next action would open the door to more cultural exhibits by making it easier to bring them to Ontario. It would do this by protecting museums and art galleries

when they borrow art or other cultural objects from outside of Canada for a temporary exhibit. They need protection from the risk that someone might contest the ownership of artwork and take legal steps to seize it. This proposal would make the process of gaining immunity from seizure faster and less complex, and far less costly.

The next action would expand choice and opportunity for post-secondary students. It would do so by simply eliminating an unnecessary regulatory requirement in order to expand the degree-granting authority of two universities that used to be colleges. Currently, Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie and OCAD University in Toronto must obtain a minister's consent to offer degrees in any programs that weren't identified in the acts that enabled them to become universities. Eliminating this rule would reduce red tape and offer students more degree programs to choose from.

My colleagues, I have gone into detail about well over 20 specific proposals. We have done this to give the House a sense of the scale of our efforts to untie the regulatory knot in Ontario. Our work to reduce regulatory burdens is an across-the-government project because that's the only way to get the job done. The problem we have in Ontario with red tape isn't limited to just a few areas; it pervades so many aspects of people's everyday lives and of doing business in our province.

It took decades for the situation we inherited to develop, so we won't fix it overnight, but we're off to a strong start. We're taking a thoughtful and targeted approach to eliminating unnecessary red tape. We are listening to the people of our province about how we can make their everyday lives easier. We're listening to the business owners about how we can reduce regulatory burdens that hold back investment and job creation.

Our regulatory vision is one in which people are better served by government, in which businesses are unshackled to do what they do best—create jobs—and in which local governments, universities, colleges, hospitals and school boards can focus more of their funding on the services that the people of our province deeply value.

We are working to improve people's everyday lives and to restore the competitive advantage that will help make Ontario the economic engine of Canada again.

Next month, I shall be travelling with the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade to India to promote Ontario as the destination to grow, to do business and to create jobs. Through our Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, if passed, we'll continue to create the environment to allow new innovation, to allow businesses to grow, to give businesses the confidence and the certainty they need to succeed and, most of all, to create more jobs.

It has already begun. By listening to businesses, by taking swift action, Ontario has already had a significant gain in employment of over 272,000 new jobs. And we must help our communities thrive.

1710

We deserve clean air and water. We must have safe products and we must have safe working conditions.

Effective regulations are there that ensure and protect these things. And we can have smarter regulations and still protect public health and safety.

We are focused on common-sense improvements to regulations in this province. Duplicative and outdated rules and regulations hinder growth for all of us.

I urge all of the members of this House to support the passing of this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Questions and comments.

Ms. Jill Andrew: I'm happy to rise today to add a few words on this discussion about this Better for People, Smarter for Business bill.

I'm going to stick to the "better for people" piece, actually. The government keeps touting this 272,000 new jobs that are being funneled into the province, and I would ask the government to seriously reflect on whether or not any of these 272,000 new jobs are ones that any of you across the aisle would substitute your current job for.

I think it's important that we create an environment where people can aspire to be as big and as bold as they want to be. We are all in here elected MPPs. I'm assuming that most of us may not have problems affording food for our family or paying our monthly bills. I am certain this is not the case for many of these folks with these 272,000 new jobs.

While you tout that number, I'd like to tout another number, and that's the 10,000 teachers who have lost their jobs. When we talk about creating a province "better for people," we really should start with thinking about the classrooms that we are creating for our students. You all spoke very proudly about post-secondary education regulatory changes that you're making. I'd just like to bring us back to reality and remind us of the hundreds of millions of dollars of cuts this government has made to universities, to colleges—and the fact that that, quite frankly, isn't going to even allow students to get to university and to college because they can't access equitable access to OSAP.

So these are things that I'd like us to think about. If we go back to social sciences and the days of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, people need homes. They need access to education. They need clean water before we can talk about—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Ms. Christine Hogarth: Thank you, Madam Speaker, you for allowing me to add to this debate today. I just wanted to wish everybody a happy and safe Halloween. I know it's dark out there, so all the drivers, make sure you drive a little slower tonight. I hope the kids have fun.

I'm happy to join this debate. I just wanted to comment on the members opposite. You talk about people affording food. That's why we don't want a carbon tax: because that tax will add extra money to our food and our grocery bills, and we know that food is very expensive.

That is really why we're talking about regulatory burdens today. We need to make sure that goods are cheaper. And when those small business owners have to

take their time to fill out all of these duplicative forms, that's their time and that's their money. As we know, small business owners, a lot of it is families. It's them who are there putting in the time, and this is burdensome work for them. So we want to make sure we're helping those businesses so they can support their families and make sure that they have good prices for their consumers.

I also want to congratulate the minister—Minister Sarkaria—on his appointment and on his first piece of legislation. Congratulations. Bringing forward 80 proposed amendments and actions in such a short period of time—I just want to congratulate you and your parliamentary assistants on that, because that is excellent.

This is a start and we want to make sure that people know that we are listening. The Doug Ford government is listening and we want to make sure that you know that you're going to be heard. We want to make sure that businesses have a friend and an ally in the Doug Ford government, because we want to make sure that you create jobs. We need to create the environment, but we need you to create those jobs, those good-paying jobs, to grow our economy and just make Ontario the best place to live.

Just to say: Ontario is open for business and we're open for jobs.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): A reminder to all members that we must refer to members by their riding or their title, which is the title of the ministry, not the title of their family name, please—all members. Thank you.

Further questions and comments?

Mr. Chris Glover: I was looking through this bill, and it's called An Act to reduce burdens on people and businesses. The purpose makes some sense. You want to reduce regulations that aren't actually serving a purpose, because you do want to streamline business. But schedule 17 of it really stuck out for me, and that's the schedule about Highway 407.

What it does is make it easier for the 407 concession company to collect fees and charge penalties, so it's going to increase the profits of the 407 concession company, which is really painful for those of us who lived through the privatization of the 407. In 1999, the Conservative government of that day sold a 99-year lease on the 407 for \$3.1 billion. Today, in 2019, it is estimated that the 407 is worth \$30 billion, or that concession, that lease, is worth \$30 billion, so taxpayers got ripped off.

The problem with the privatization of the 407 is that it adds cost to every worker and every product that travels along it. All the way from Burlington to Pickering and now to Oshawa, there is an additional cost on every person and every product that travels along there.

The thing I'd like to ask the government about is, if you really want to streamline business, give up on your blind adherence to the ideology of privatization. Privatization does not create a competitive advantage every time. In fact, many times, it doesn't. We need competitive advantages like public roads, public transit, public schools and public colleges and universities, and yet you're privatizing

all of them. You're privatizing GO Transit; you've got an RFP to send it over to the private sector.

I would say to the government, if you really want to streamline business and increase our competitive advantage, don't privatize all—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Mr. Will Bouma: It's always a pleasure to rise in the House. I'm really excited to be able to talk about this bill today, because it means so much to the people who are on the ground. Just the fact that we now have—and it's kind of a mouthful—a minister of small business and red tape reduction really speaks to how much we care about people who are on the front line in Ontario.

It was interesting, listening this afternoon. Really, the only criticism is that it's easier for the 407 to do business. Every other criticism of this bill seems to be centred around items that are not mentioned in this bill.

Listening to the conversation this afternoon, the term "helping those who are helping others" was used—the fact that our truck drivers and companies that operate trucks can get service done more quickly; the fact that our front-line food source, our farmers, can do their job more efficiently and easily; the fact that our mining industry, which will be able to provide so many resources to our Indigenous nations in the north, will be able to do their job more easily; the fact that our front-line auto workers will be able to do their job more easily; the fact that in a job as simple as, hairdresser's, they will be able to do their job more easily; the fact that our municipalities will be able to submit their reports and do their job more easily; the fact that our school boards—and this is something that I heard consistently from teachers when I was speaking to them—will be able to do their job more easily.

This is legislation that has far-reaching effects that are going to have completely positive impacts on the front-line workers that we are most concerned about. That's why I am so happy to support it, and it sounds like we're getting support from the opposition on this also.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to, I will assume, the minister for small business and red tape reduction for his reply.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I just want to highlight the great work that has been done across the entire government, whether it's to support small businesses or modernize our regulations so that Ontario can continue to be competitive.

We know that a more competitive Ontario will lead to higher productivity levels. Higher productivity levels will increase income and wages for families and ultimately result in a better standard of living for Ontarians across this province.

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Report after report has called on Canada and the government to do regulatory reforms. The World Economic Forum published its yearly report on competitiveness, and Canada fell two spots, to 14th. On the regulatory aspect of it, we fell to number 38, and that's unacceptable. If we want to ensure that future generations of this

province have access to good opportunities and have access to good-paying jobs, we must ensure that we are more competitive and that we can compete against our international trading partners, that we can drive more investment into Ontario to continue supporting job growth.

Our plan has been working. In the past 16 months, we have helped create over 272,000 jobs in the province of Ontario. Under the leadership of Premier Ford, Minister Fedeli and this entire government, we will continue to make sure that Ontario remains open for business, open for jobs, and that we continue fighting to support small businesses, we continue to support the hard-working families of this province and we continue to make Ontario more competitive. And we do this by ensuring that we are protecting the environment, we're upholding the highest levels of standards on public health and safety and ensuring that whether it's community kitchens or small businesses across this province, we're going to continue to support them and make Ontario—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Order. A reminder to all members and ministers to please refer to all members and ministers by their riding or their title. Please and thank you.

Further debate? I recognize the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: Speaker, I believe you will find we have unanimous consent to stand down the lead of the opposition on this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Mr. Vanthof is asking for unanimous consent to stand down the lead of the official opposition. Are we agreed? Agreed.

I return to the member.

Mr. John Vanthof: Thank you. It's always an honour to stand in this House to speak on any bill. This is my first chance at an extended period to speak on a bill in the House. Before I start, I'm going to warn that I'm going off topic right away, but for a very good reason.

In September, members of the House came to my riding for the International Plowing Match, and I would like to thank all the members who came. It was very well appreciated. It was a beautiful day. For the whole plowing match, it was beautiful weather the whole time.

Just as a point of information: Over 81,000 people came to the little town of Verner. I would like to give a thank you to all the volunteers and community groups who did yeoman's work to get that done. I don't like to single specific people out, but I'm going to in this case because this story exemplifies the heart and soul of northern Ontario and of that area. Those of you who were there have seen this man.

Dan Olivier is the vice-chair of the 2019 International Plowing Match. He was the mayor of the Tented City. He spoke at the opening ceremonies. Dan Olivier was one of the driving forces of the IPM. When you're the mayor of the city and vice-chair—he put his whole life into it.

We were there the whole week, and by Saturday I was beat. On Sunday morning, we moved our trailers out, and they had portable dumping stations for the septic systems of the trailers. One of the men putting the hoses on the trailers of people leaving Sunday morning after the IPM was done was the vice-chair of the plowing match, the mayor of the Tented City. He was dumping people's trailers. It warmed my heart. It was a true northern—I've never been so proud of somebody dumping a person's trailer. But it truly exemplifies the heart and soul of that community.

Now we've come to Bill 132. I'm not going to be as glowing. It's not instinctively evil to try to make regulations more efficient. That makes sense. I hope that the government takes their time and actually, with this bill, does hold hearings and do committee work because—we'll give a few examples—there are things, when you're changing regulations, that you always have to be careful of. When a regulation is made, regulations are made for a certain purpose. I tell this to people at home. A lot of people at home have never been to Queen's Park, and I say, "Despite what people think, there is not a big tower with 40 storeys of people there just making up useless regulations. That's not how it works." A regulation is usually made for a purpose.

Sometimes it doesn't work. Sometimes, quite frankly, that purpose is no longer there. There's a really good example in this. I never thought I would have the opportunity to speak as a farmer in the Ontario Legislature about the Line Fences Act. There are going to be a few people who are going to be upset that the Line Fences Act is no more.

The Line Fences Act isn't as crucial as it was 100 years ago, 50 years ago, 20 or even 10 years ago, but when I started farming, the Line Fences Act was very important. Most people had livestock then, and on a line, on the boundary, you were each responsible for half the fence. If you weren't fixing your half and your cattle were always on the other side, or the other person's cattle were always on your side, you needed a fence arbitrator. You needed the Line Fences Act; you needed it. There will be somebody who is going to be upset that the Line Fences Act—I don't know who, but I'm sure I'll get a call. But there is a case of something that has lived its life. When the Line Fences Act was created, you couldn't use a satellite and Google-map your farm, right?

Just as a background, on the corner of my farms, when they did line fences, they put in serious corner posts. They were there for a long time, so you couldn't argue about where your farm actually was. All these things have happened in the country. They don't just happen where people argue about a foot on a city lot; people argue about 15 feet or 20 feet.

Most farms in our area are divided by 160 acres. At the end of our road, my last farm was 140 acres and the one next to it was 180 acres. The reason was because the guy built the house on the wrong side of the line.

Hon. Laurie Scott: Oh, jeez.

Mr. John Vanthof: Obviously, yes. That was an old house, but whenever that hearing happened, I'm sure the

line fences came up. So there's a case of a regulation that has lived its time.

I am going to focus on agriculture; I am. I'm a farmer, and a lot of this stuff isn't going to be mentioned by anybody else, so I'm going to talk about it. It's Thursday afternoon. We're just going to have to listen to farm stories.

The Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act is being repealed. I understand why, but in section 31 that's being repealed, it says, "The board ... may pass bylaws ... regulating the sale of goods and produce." That's repealed. So now, in the case of the Temiskaming fall fair, which is the biggest fall fair in northern Ontario—they have an annual attendance of, I'm guessing, 10,000 people—the way I read this, they can no longer regulate what's sold and what's not sold at that fair, and I don't think that was the plan.

This is a very little example. I don't think that was the plan. This is a very little example. I don't think that was the plan; that is not what the government planned to do.

1730

Hon. Laurie Scott: You should call your uncle.

Mr. John Vanthof: Believe me, I will call my uncle. I wasn't planning to speak on this today, so I haven't fully researched this. But there's an example.

I'm really happy that the minister is engaged in this, because there's an example of a case where a regulation is doing something unintended. I'm using the example of fall fairs because it has been in the Ontario Farmer and local papers—you've been pushing it real hard; I understand that. But when we researched it, that's what we found. Yes, a little fall fair board that's running a small fall fair doesn't want to go through all the hoops, and I fully understand that. I could be wrong, but we researched this one pretty well. And if I'm wrong—I hope I'm wrong, but that act is repealed, and that's a problem. That's an example, a very small example, and it's not going to change the world. If I'm right, that one could be fixed pretty quickly. But it's a good example that we need to go slow and do it right, because taking out regulations can have the same impact as putting them in.

One of the members spoke about the crown forest management. We deal with that in my office all the time, the 10-year forest management plan. But the forest and the companies are constantly changing, and the forest is a living thing. So sometimes when the companies—and the companies are doing their job. I am not anti-forestry; it's a driving force in my riding, as is mining. But sometimes we have to step in, because something changes in the 10-year plan or something was built. The reason that the 10-year plans work is that people have faith in the planning process. If they no longer have faith, if the planning process is too much pushed one way, too pro-company or, quite frankly, in parts of my riding, too pro save the trees at any cost—right? It's that balance.

It's the same with the Mining Act. The reason that mines are much more successful now, long-term, than they were 50 years ago is because we have strong mining regulations, and people trust the mining regulations. If you

to go old mines in my riding, where the mining regulations were a lot weaker, you see bad things. I can show you pictures. So regulations work both ways. Mining companies tell me all the time that they want workable regulations. When I talk to mining companies, they don't tell me—I have never heard that we have too many regulations. I have heard time and time again that the length of the regulatory process is the problem. It's not the strength of the regulations. If you're perceived as making the regulations weaker, you're going to get backlash and you're going to get less work done.

I'm not trying to be partisan here, but I'm going to give an example—I have nothing to do with this fight at all. When the federal government was Conservative—I don't follow federal politics that much, but I perceived that the Conservative government did everything they could to make the regulations easier for oil and gas and for pipelines. They didn't get any pipelines built either, because there was a lot of kickback from groups who didn't feel that the regulations represented them. I'm worried, and I'm putting that worry on the table. The government wants to make things move faster; I understand that. They've got to make sure there's balance.

This January, I spoke to the professional engineers of Ontario. They had a regional meeting in North Bay. The member for Nipissing spoke as well, and the member for Nipissing specifically said that this government, in its first mandate, wants to eliminate—he specifically said—a quarter of the regulations in this province. Quite frankly, that frightened me, because if you've got a quota of a quarter, good regulations are going out with the bad, and the repercussions are going to be a lot bigger than you think.

One of the members touched on—and it's a tough issue in rural Ontario—neonics. The previous system, and how you were supposed to do soil testing—quite frankly, no farmer believed that was going to work.

I'm happy that the member mentioned neonics in the House, because you'll never read it in the—it's very hard to read regulation changes. You have to go through the old bill and compare it to the new bill. But if it's perceived by customers, the people who actually eat the food, that we are going the other way and we are lessening our regulations, then in the end, the farmers are the ones who are going to be hurt.

I am trying to say that on regulations, we have differences of opinion, huge differences of opinion, but on regulations, we all have to be careful—those of us who have, in the past, wanted to overregulate and also those who tend to want to underregulate. I don't think it's a secret that people perceive Conservative governments as wanting to be on the “underregulate” side, and probably people perceive us as being the other. But on regulations, for the good of Ontarians, we have to do it right, and we have to use the Legislature for its intended purpose: Take the time to do the bill right. Take the time to actually allow committee hearings so we can actually have experts make deputations, and take the time to actually have amendments.

I've never said this in the Legislature before. We all have people come to lobby us, right? Honestly, I have never had someone come into my office with a bad idea. I've never had somebody come into my office and say, “I'm here to talk to you. Like, this is a bad idea.” Right? Everyone puts their best foot forward. That's their job, and it's our job to listen. Right?

I'm not going to say which issue it was, but someone came and made a big pitch, and I thought it was great. I had just been elected. I thought it was a great idea, and I supported it. The next week, I got the other side. And now, when someone comes to lobby me, I say, “Okay, well, who is going to be in my office tomorrow, hating this?” Because usually, on every issue, there is a grey area in between. On regulations, we don't want the grey area, but the sweet spot is somewhere in between.

I really want to make it abundantly clear that on this bill—I would say, on every bill, but specifically when you're talking about—I know you got elected with what you believe is a mandate, and I'm okay with that. But use the Legislature for what it's meant for. Simply having consultations with—I don't mean this in a bad way, but having private consultations, and we don't know if they're objective or not—that's not the way to handle this. That's the way that you've been handling this since you've been elected. We were hoping for a new tone, and this bill that was just time-allocated, Bill 124, sure didn't show that. You have a chance to show it with this one.

1740

There are all kinds of things in this bill. An interesting one: the Bees Act. You're repealing the Bees Act. I did talk to the minister last night and the minister's chief of staff. The minister's chief of staff, who I work with a lot, said—actually, I'm not going to try to quote her, but what I understood was, “We're repealing the Bees Act, but we're not ready to do that, so we're repealing it so we can reinstate it so we can repeal it later.” But it doesn't say that in here. In here, it says you're repealing the Bees Act.

The Bees Act is pretty important legislation. That's how you have the Provincial Apiarist. That's how you can know, if there are diseases in the bees, what percentage of the colonies you lose. It's pretty important stuff. But it doesn't say that here. It says you're repealing the Bees Act. Of course people are going to flip out.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Read the full bill.

Mr. John Vanthof: But that's what it says.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Read the full bill.

Mr. John Vanthof: No, but if you read this—and another one: You're repealing the Livestock Medicines Act.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Because they require prescriptions.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, I know. I used to be on the livestock medicines committee.

But then a few pages later—

Interjection.

Mr. John Vanthof: No, no, wait a second. A few pages later—I'm enjoying this. I'm trying to be respectful here.

I'm not trying to debate. Well, I am trying to debate. A few pages later, you're repealing part of the act.

We have to make sure we do this right. I just used one example of the fair as a very small example. Hopefully we can fix it before it hits the fan. We've got to make sure that we catch as many of those as we can because if we miss one, it's not on us. If something goes down, it's on you. It's not on us; it's on you. But mostly it's on Ontarians, and we want to make sure that we take the time to do this right.

Thank you very much, Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): And a reminder to all members that with debate, we do have the opportunity to weigh in as we alternate.

Questions and comments.

Ms. Donna Skelly: I would like to thank the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane for pointing out and highlighting the fact that there are many pieces of regulation within the agricultural sector that truly are duplicative and outdated. You mentioned the Line Fences Act. It's an outdated piece of legislation. It's run its course.

That's really what this package of changes to reduce burdens on our businesses is all about. It's about identifying outdated pieces, identifying duplicative pieces, burdensome pieces, of regulations that are holding our business community back. But we're doing so keeping in mind the health and safety of our citizens, keeping in mind the protection of our environment. That is top of mind. We will always take that into consideration when we consider changes to these mounds of unnecessary pieces of legislation that we deal with, that Ontario businesses deal with on a daily basis.

Something as simple as—a lot of people here probably frequent a hairdresser, but the fact that hairdressers are required to seek personal information from every single client that walks in the door can be considered by some people overreaching. Why do they need to have their home address when they're going into a barbershop to get a haircut? It was just a piece of regulation that isn't necessary. It was clumped into a bill that was really designed to track any sort of a risk that involved cutting—for example, a tattoo parlour—when there could possibly be a risk with the exchange of a body fluid.

These are simple things that we have identified in this great piece of legislation. What it will do is it will create an environment for businesses to thrive.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I rise to comment on this bill entitled the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act. This is really bad for the people of Ontario. It gives major polluters a pass. Ontarians deserve a government that penalizes pollution and takes seriously the devastating impact of climate change, and this bill does not. What it does is it makes it easier for polluters to pollute. It makes it easier to permit bigger, deeper gravel pits which destroy the natural environment. It makes it easier to take fresh water for commercial bottling, reduces restrictions on pesticides, and also appears to weaken penalties for

polluters. It weakens the complaint process for environmental damage. And it doesn't help people. It also really doesn't support productivity. It doesn't support workers, giving them a living wage. It makes it harder for people. It also dissolves local planning processes. It doesn't grow jobs. And it makes workers basically unable to afford a living—the cost of living in this province, especially in Toronto, in my own riding. The minister said that it creates jobs. How come my community's unemployment is above the provincial average?

That tells me that this doesn't really make people better—it makes it worse. Ontario deserves a better government.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further questions and comments?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Two minutes won't be enough for me to respond or give me enough time to address many of the comments that were made and, I would say, the inaccuracies from the member from York South—Weston.

Let's start with the environment. For the first time, this piece of legislation is going to allow for administrative monetary penalties for those who violate environmental regulations. That has never existed before for many of these. And the best thing about it is that those penalties will then be collected and put back into a pool of funds to support local environmental initiatives. That has never been done before. This is punishing those who contravene environmental regulations. So this is actually a step forward to enforcing those very important rules and regulations that we have on the books right now that haven't been enforced.

There were many other things that the member stated that I could go through that I would say were inaccurate, but I would appreciate an opportunity to speak to many of the issues also raised by the member from Timiskaming.

Farmers are going to be very supportive of this piece of legislation. For example, when we're talking about crop insurance claims—we're reducing the length of these forms by 65 pages and saving them 140 hours. Not only that, we've got many other provisions in here that farmers across Ontario are going to be very supportive of, very happy about. You spoke about the livestock medicine piece of legislation that was in here, but we very well know that now prescriptions are required. So if prescriptions are required—that part of the legislation is now being removed to better serve the purpose of that legislation.

I'd be happy to engage in further dialogue with the member across, and with other members, when I hear about environmental issues—

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you. Further questions and comments?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate this opportunity. It's quite an extraordinary bill to encounter and to hear comments about.

I appreciate the comments from my colleague about matters related to agriculture. But if you're talking about small business, I don't know why on earth you would say the Ministry of Health no longer has to prepare an annual report on the Ontario drug benefit plan. I don't see where

that's going to make a difference to small business. But it does make a difference to the citizens of this province to understand what's being done in their name and with their money.

Again, another small business—often not recognized that way, obviously—is the corporation that owns Highway 407. I know it's tough making a buck if you own that highway. They're pressed hard. But this government, in its generosity and its beneficence, has made it a lot easier for them to shake down the people who actually use that road now.

We hear all about the barbers. I like barbers. I visit one regularly, as you can tell. But to say this bill is all about barbers is very creative, and exceptionally good marketing and spin, but doesn't deal with the guts of it.

The minister just talked about environmental penalties. As I read the bill, environmental penalties are capped. You can pollute in an area where you're trying to protect, say, drinking water, and your liability is capped at \$100,000, plus if you made some—

Interjection.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Excuse me, Minister—if you made some benefit from polluting the water, you have to pay the amount of that benefit. But I'll just point out to you that if water is polluted, if drinking water is polluted, not only do you have to clean up the pipes and the source, but you may never be able to do that. So the total value of that damage to the population is not reflected in this bill.

Environmental Defence, which is a well-respected organization in this country, has pointed out that you've dramatically weakened environmental protection. People will deal with a lot more sewage in their drinking water in the future, thanks to you.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I return to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane for his two-minute reply.

Mr. John Vanthof: I appreciate all the members who came to reply to my comments.

This came up a few times in the debate, and it's one that I would like to talk about to the minister. I have had crop insurance for 30 years. I don't think I've put 140 hours total into the forms. I have never seen a form that's 65 pages. So is this over a multitude of time? I'm an average farmer. I'm sure, if you have 20 different crops and you're in vineyards and stuff, that you have got a huge—but I had 500 acres of crops, with eight or nine different crops that I insured, and I have never seen a form of 65 pages.

Those are the frustrating ones. Those are the frustrating ones, because you're saying that we're inaccurate, but you're using terms that, in my opinion, are as faulty as anything that I have heard here. I have had crop insurance for 30 years, and it's an hour. It is. Yes, if you have a claim—but you know what? If you have a claim, you'd better have good documentation. It's like any insurance program, and you need good documentation to get insurance. You don't, on the flip side, want to have claim papers that aren't accurate enough—that you can't actually actuate the claim.

I'm not saying that's the case. I'm saying, if we want to have this debate, apples to apples, oranges to oranges, I'm happy. I would love to sit down and—but use the process. Use the committee process. Use the Legislature. Get this right.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Thank you.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): I hope that everyone has a safe and happy Halloween. Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands adjourned until Monday, November 4, 2019, at 10:30 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1754.

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Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (PC)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Jane (PC)	Burlington	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Deputy Speaker / Vice-président

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (PC)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Piccini, David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie, du Développement du Nord et des Mines Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa- Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associé délégué au dossier des Petites Entreprises et de la Réduction des formalités administratives Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	Minister of Infrastructure
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (IND)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Associate Minister of Transportation (GTA) / Ministre associée des Transports (RGT) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Associate Minister of Energy / Ministre associé de l'Énergie Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Yakabuski, Hon. / L'hon. John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Vacant	Orléans	
Vacant	Ottawa—Vanier	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates
Stan Cho, Stephen Crawford
Wayne Gates, Randy Hillier
Andrea Khanjin, Jane McKenna
Judith Monteith-Farrell, Lindsey Park
Randy Pettapiece, Peter Tabuns
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Julia Douglas

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Amarjot Sandhu
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jeremy Roberts
Ian Arthur, Sol Mamakwa
David Piccini, Kaleed Rasheed
Jeremy Roberts, Amarjot Sandhu
Sandy Shaw, Donna Skelly
Dave Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

Chair / Présidente: Goldie Ghamari
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Daryl Kramp
Robert Bailey, Jessica Bell
Goldie Ghamari, Chris Glover
Mike Harris, Daryl Kramp
Sheref Sabawy, Amarjot Sandhu
Mike Schreiner, Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens
Daisy Wai
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Will Bouma, Lorne Coe
Rudy Cuzzetto, Parm Gill
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Marit Stiles, Vijay Thanigasalam
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Roman Baber, Will Bouma
Lorne Coe, Parm Gill
Natalia Kusendova, Suze Morrison
Gurratan Singh, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam
Robert Bailey, Rima Berns-McGown
Michael Coteau, Faisal Hassan
Logan Kanapathi, Jim McDonell
Sam Oosterhoff, Kaleed Rasheed
Sara Singh, Donna Skelly
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Jill Andrew, Toby Barrett
Stan Cho, Stephen Crawford
Catherine Fife, John Fraser
Goldie Ghamari, France Gélinas
Norman Miller, Michael Parsa
Nina Tangri
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Will Bouma
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Will Bouma, Stephen Crawford
Mitzie Hunter, Laura Mae Lindo
Gila Martow, Paul Miller
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Christine Hogarth, Belinda C. Karahalios
Terence Kernaghan, Natalia Kusendova
Robin Martin
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