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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 8 December 2020

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 8 décembre 2020

The House met at 0900.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Good morning, everyone. Let us pray.

Prayers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): This morning, I was reminded that we must always, especially this time of year, have and develop an attitude of gratitude. Thank you. You may be seated.

Orders of the day.

Hon. Paul Calandra: No business this morning, sir.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Since there is no further business this morning at this point in time, for those of you watching TV this morning, don't you dare touch that dial because we will back at 10:15, as this House stands recessed until 10:15.

The House recessed from 0903 to 1015.

WEARING OF HAT

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

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: I'm seeking unanimous consent from this House to wear a Santa hat for my member's statement.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member is seeking unanimous consent. Agreed? Agreed.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PEETABECK INNINUWUK COMMUNITY CULTURE AND RECREATION CENTRE PROJECT

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: I rise in the House today to speak about the Peetabeck Inninuwuk Community Culture and Recreation Centre project in Fort Albany First Nation. This project would play a critical role in the preservation and revitalization of the history, culture and language of the Mushkego people, and it would also fill a gap in Fort Albany's community infrastructure and services.

Speaker, the lack of infrastructure in Fort Albany would be a disgrace for any municipality in the province. In light of the ongoing mental health crisis in Fort Albany, this centre can provide a safe space for youth and elders, an area to highlight and celebrate the local culture and the arts, an adult learning facility. Most important of all, it includes a library and archives to preserve the history of the people of Mushkegowuk Aski and the history of abuse,

alienation and the violence children suffered in the infamous St. Anne's residential school of Fort Albany.

I thus ask the Minister of Infrastructure to support this positive project so that Ontario and Canada can start acting like treaty partners.

SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a privilege to rise today to announce more important investments, totalling over \$530,000, in my riding of Sarnia-Lambton by the government of Ontario. This funding is flowing through the Resilient Communities Fund, which was launched by our government to support the non-profit sector to recover and rebuild from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I'm pleased to share that in Sarnia-Lambton, eight important community organizations will be receiving funds from the Resilient Communities Fund, including St. Joseph's Hospice, the Family Counselling Centre, Community Living Sarnia-Lambton, Huron House Boys' Home, Theatre Sarnia, Sarnia-Lambton Rebound, le Centre communautaire régional de Sarnia/Lambton and the Women's Interval Home of Sarnia-Lambton.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that organizations like these enrich the lives of people in our communities. They will play an important role in the recovery and building back a strong and prosperous economy in Sarnia-Lambton and Ontario.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to sharing more good news about Sarnia-Lambton with you in this House in the future.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Faisal Hassan: I rise today to recognize a valuable and very insightful report on housing released last month through the great work by Social Planning Toronto.

This five-year study, the first of its kind, maps out the way racialized individuals, specific racialized population groups, newcomers and refugees are disproportionately affected by the housing crisis in Toronto.

The report is entitled Spaces and Places of Exclusion: Mapping Rental Housing Disparities for Toronto's Racialized and Immigrant Communities. As the member of provincial Parliament for York South-Weston and through my role as a member of the Black caucus and the youth engagement critic for the official opposition, I can affirm that the disturbing statistics and evidence of disparities that exist along racial, social and spatial lines is all too familiar.

The official opposition's own housing plan, entitled *Homes You Can Afford*, recognizes that housing policies must be responsive to different communities and different regions to ensure that housing is addressed across racial, social and geographic divides. I welcome the key findings and policy and research directions provided to address urgent housing and housing-related needs.

1020

RICHMOND SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Mr. Speaker, I know it has been a very tough year for everyone. We've all had to make sacrifices for the greater good of our society. But I'm pleased to say that COVID-19 can't stop Christmas festivities in Carleton.

Just this past weekend, the Richmond Lions Club held their annual "Christmas Cheer" fundraising drive to support local food banks, in collaboration with the Richmond Village Association's annual Richmond Santa Claus Parade.

This year, the Richmond Santa Claus Parade took on a new format. Instead of asking people to gather in crowds on the streets to watch the parade floats and Santa go by, the floats were stationary and separated to maintain physical distancing, and the community was encouraged to drive through the floats at the Richmond Fairgrounds. I was pleased to set up a float, just like I do each year, and I was of course accompanied by my dog, Baxter, who was wearing Christmas lights and is a fan favourite. The community turnout was absolutely incredible. The drive-through parade was supposed to start at 5:30, but the doors actually opened at 4:50 because there was such a long lineup.

I'm also proud to say that the community raised an incredible amount of food for the local food bank. There was barely any room left in the back of the pickup truck that was collecting all of the donations for the community.

Many community members also decorated their own cars and were wearing Christmas lights as they drove by, participating in the Christmas festivities.

Mr. Speaker, it was such a wonderful event. Even though I was standing outside in the cold for almost three hours, I didn't feel the cold at all because the Christmas cheer, excitement, shouts of "Merry Christmas" and the opportunity to speak briefly with residents as they drove by kept everyone warm and happy.

Thank you to the Richmond Village Association.

I can't wait to do it again this Sunday, December 13, in Metcalfe.

IMMUNIZATION

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: A new year is almost upon us. One of the things we are hopeful 2021 will bring is the end of the pandemic.

The COVID-19 crisis has changed us all, and people want to heal from it. We want to hug our grandparents,

dine in at our favourite local restaurants, celebrate birthdays and other milestones with family and friends.

To heal and to save lives and lift restrictions, Ontarians need an efficient and equitable vaccine distribution.

We must be aware that even when this desperately needed, highly anticipated vaccine is available, many will be hesitant to take it. The World Health Organization identified vaccine hesitancy as one of the top 10 global health threats, and it has been a growing trend in Ontario over the past few years due to disinformation.

Now that we have a vaccine against COVID-19, we need to acknowledge that people may be feeling vaccine hesitancy. The good news is that there are best practices from the field of public health to draw upon. It is most important to clearly communicate the benefits of a vaccine while transparently addressing people's concerns.

The COVID-19 vaccine is the key to finally putting a stop to needless deaths from the virus. I urge this government to work with the experts, with communities that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and with all of us across political party lines on a clear, effective and culturally appropriate public health campaign to build trust and confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine. Our collective health depends on it.

SMALL BUSINESS

Mr. Norman Miller: I rise today, ahead of the holiday season, to encourage residents of Parry Sound–Muskoka and all Ontarians to shop locally for Christmas and other gifts this winter. As we all know, the COVID-19 pandemic has hurt small businesses across Ontario, so it's more important than ever that we support them during the biggest shopping season of the year.

My riding of Parry Sound–Muskoka is home to many talented artisans, small manufacturers, family-run shops and restaurants who have adapted their businesses during this health crisis. Even if you don't want to go into stores right now, many local shops have developed websites so you can browse their inventory from home, or they will be happy to take orders over the phone for curbside pickup or delivery. Restaurants are offering gourmet takeout meals, and a break from cooking dinner always makes a good gift.

I encourage everyone to support local businesses in their communities as much as possible this holiday season, not only by shopping at local stores, but by looking for high-quality products made in Ontario or Canada. When we shop local, money goes back into our communities and supports the local economy, we help our fellow Ontarians put food on the table, and we help our province recover.

This Christmas, give a gift to your community: Shop local, buy local.

PROTESTS IN INDIA

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Farmers in India are under attack. Right now, farmers are fighting for their very livelihood as they protest the mass privatization of farming

by the Indian government. In response, the Indian government has used tear gas, water cannons and beaten peaceful farmers.

Now, thousands of people from across the world have protested in solidarity with these farmers, including people across Canada. Leaders across the world have spoken in solidarity with these farmers, including leaders from across Canada, but Premier Ford has remained silent, and his silence is deafening. That's why I'm calling on Premier Ford to immediately speak in support of these peaceful farmers and their struggle for justice.

Right now, farmers in India are fighting for their very survival. New laws put forward by the Indian government will put farmers at the mercy of super-rich corporations. As farmers rise up to peacefully protest these unjust laws, they are being met with violence and repression.

That's why I want to send a very clear message to the Indian government: The whole world is watching. We are watching as you unjustly beat, brutalize, tear gas and water cannon these peaceful protestors. We are watching reports that Internet is being disrupted for those peaceful protestors. We're going to share these injustices with the world. We're going to yell it from the rooftops, and we won't stop until farmers get the justice that they need and that they deserve.

NORTHUMBERLAND UNITED WAY

Mr. David Piccini: As a member of provincial Parliament, I often have the wonderful opportunity to thank so many in our community organizations, individuals who interact with the provincial government and/or are supported. But I wanted to say a special thank you to the United Way Northumberland for the remarkable work that they're doing in our community. They're showing local love in our community. They've launched a call for applications for the Emergency Community Support Fund.

I'd like to thank Bruce McCartney, who is president, and Nick Palalas, the treasurer, for the work they're doing, and the entire board, but especially the remarkable staff at United Way who, each and every day, work hard to give and support those in need and those organizations in need in our community: Bobbie, Cathy, Dianne, Maggie, Helen. Thank you for the work that you do.

This fund provides financial support to charities and non-profit organizations adapting their front-line services to new COVID-19 realities. They've supported Community Care Northumberland, Cornerstone Family Violence Prevention Centre, Green Wood Coalition, the Help Centre Northumberland, Local Food for Local Good, the Salvation Army and, finally, the YMCA Northumberland.

Despite these challenging times, the work of the United Way in our community has never been more important. It's the largest funder outside of government for social service programs in our area. They are quite literally bringing people together. I'd like to thank the staff again, the team at United Way, for all you're doing for our community in Northumberland.

JUNE TURNER

Mr. Dave Smith: It's with a heavy heart today that I rise to inform the House of the passing of June Turner on Saturday, December 5. Some of you will know June as the wife of former Speaker of the House John M. Turner. Her youngest son, Ian, described her to me as the living embodiment of what the TV character June Cleaver was supposed to be. Her love for her community, her friends and her neighbours was only surpassed by the love that she had for her family.

Loving, loyal, supportive and welcoming all describe June. She was born in what was once known as York county near here, in 1925. She moved to Peterborough with her family in her early teens, where she embarked on a lifelong friendship with Ruth and Beatrix. June met John not long before John would go overseas to defend Canada in the Second World War. Their courtship, like many at the time, would continue by correspondence, until John returned home after the war. Eventually they would marry, in 1947.

During the war, June worked at General Electric in Peterborough, but decided that her true calling was that of the noblest of pursuits, and that was being a mother. She left GE shortly after getting married to focus on raising a family, eventually having six children in all.

June will be dearly missed by all who knew her, for she's one of those rare individuals that I can truly say made the world a better place for those who had the pleasure of her company.

1030

Mr. Speaker, I ask for unanimous consent for a moment of silence for June and all the spouses of those who have served in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member is seeking unanimous consent to pay respect to the passing of Mrs. Turner and all others. Agreed? Agreed.
The House observed a moment's silence.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): You may be seated.

REPORT, FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I beg to inform the House that the following document was tabled: a report entitled Expenditure Monitor 2020-21: Q2, from the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario.

QUESTION PERIOD

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Sara Singh: My first question is to the Premier. As the Ford government scrambles to prepare the distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine, it's clear that if everything works out, it will still take months and months for them to be able to distribute it.

Meanwhile, we are seeing record-breaking numbers of new COVID-19 cases throughout the province. Families need help today, but the independent Financial Accountability Office reports that the government has been sitting on \$12 billion in unspent COVID relief funds. Why is the Premier hoarding money and waiting for a vaccine instead of helping families who are managing this pandemic?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Over to the President of the Treasury Board for a response.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member opposite for that question. Numbers tell the story. The plan that was presented by the Minister of Finance in March of this year: The Financial Accountability Officer has highlighted that we increased spending by \$14.5 billion—an 8.8% increase.

Of course, we are going to do everything we can to protect the individuals and families and businesses in this province. We're seeing an unprecedented amount of spending. We are not going to relent until the job is done. We've unleashed an incredible amount of fiscal firepower against the COVID pandemic, and we aren't done yet. We're going to continue to do everything it takes to protect the families, individuals and businesses of this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Brampton Centre for the supplementary question.

Ms. Sara Singh: To quote one health expert on the government's vaccine task force, "Vaccines will help.... But it's going to be ugly in January." Working families in hot spots like Brampton can't sit back and just wait for a vaccine. Expert after expert has called for measures like paid sick days, a ban on evictions, capping our class sizes and direct supports for small businesses hit by the lockdown. The billions of dollars that this government is sitting on could be put to work today.

Why is the Premier refusing to consider measures like these, and choosing instead to wait it out while he just conducts photo ops?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: We have to look at not only the record \$38.5-billion deficit that was tabled by the Minister of Finance on November 5 to just see the number of spending programs that we have, primarily in health and long-term care, and for small business supports in property tax and electricity—that spending is up 7.6% year over year.

In reference to the now \$12 billion of money that we've set aside, I remember the opposition saying that we had \$9.3 billion and we weren't spending it. Well, the Minister of Finance tabled on November 5 that we had actually spent \$6.7 billion of that \$9.3 billion. Prudence says that we should continue to set aside money because we're not finished the battle against COVID-19, and we won't rest until the job is finished.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Brampton Centre for final supplementary.

Ms. Sara Singh: It is fiscally and morally irresponsible for this government to be sitting on money while businesses go bankrupt, people in communities like Brampton and Scarborough are working every single day

and seniors continue to die in long-term-care homes. Will the Premier admit that families need help today and that sitting back and just waiting for a vaccine is not a plan, and start bringing in measures that families in this province desperately need to survive, and help us stop the spread of COVID-19 here in Ontario?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Referred to the Premier for response.

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the interim Leader of the Opposition for the question.

That's the difference between ourselves and the NDP and the Liberals. We actually have some money in contingency: \$2.6 billion. It's not accurate when they say \$12 billion. That's all been allocated, to the exception of \$2.6 billion. Because as we went through this pandemic, we've seen things pop up. It's very fluid. It moves very quickly, especially with the distribution coming up.

The difference is, they spend every single penny they have, then they come hat in hand, looking for extra money—be it raising taxes, going to the federal government. We're being prudent fiscal managers with the taxpayers' money.

We have \$2.6 billion left. The rest has been allocated. We're going to be responsible right up to—what they don't realize, we have this money up to March 31. So rather than spend all the taxpayers' money upfront and then start looking for more money, we're being fiscally prudent.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. John Vanthof: My question is to the Premier.

For seniors living in long-term-care homes, waiting out the pandemic isn't an option. It claimed another 21 lives in the last 24 hours, and the second wave continues to ravage its way through long-term-care homes.

The government has repeatedly promised a plan to increase front-line staff some time in the new year, and the President of the Treasury Board just said the numbers tell a story. So perhaps the Premier could tell us how many extra front-line staff between the first wave, which caught us by surprise, and the second wave, which everyone knew was coming—how many extra front-line staff have actually been placed in homes to prepare for the second wave? How many? Tell us that story.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Before we get the response, I just want to remind all members that you address your question through the Chair, please. Thank you very much.

Now I return to the Minister of Long-Term Care for the response.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you for that question. Staffing: You know the legacy of the staffing crisis that was left for us to deal with and also, on top of that, the staffing issues with COVID. So this is something that it takes many variables to deal with. It depends on the number of residents in the home. It depends on the level of care that is needed. We're working across ministries to

address the staffing strategy long-term, as well as addressing the crises in our homes right now.

So this is a multi-pronged approach. And the dollars do speak for themselves: We started with \$243 million to help with staffing and infection prevention and control—that was put out very quickly—and back in October, \$540 million to address this; \$405 million of that to address the issue with staffing; another \$30 million to allow more training for infection prevention and control to enable our staff to be safeguarded against COVID, so that they can stay and work in our long-term-care homes; \$61.4 million for capital repairs; \$461 million for a wage increase to our front-line workers; \$2.8 million for PPE; \$19.4 million for direct care staffing; \$10 million annual—and the list goes on and on. And—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. Supplementary.

Mr. John Vanthof: Once again to the Premier, through you, Speaker: The list goes on and on about program announcements, but the question was, how many actual people? Because they were short on people when the first wave hit, and shorter on people now, but you had time. Other provinces took steps, put staff in. The question is, how many staff? Not how many programs and how many millions and how many you've got in contingency and how many people—because we're talking about people dying in those homes. We're talking—

Interjection.

1040

Mr. John Vanthof: Thank you for pointing at me, Speaker.

We're talking about people dying in those homes, which were understaffed before.

How many have you actually hired and put in those homes? You knew the second wave was coming.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you for the question.

Ultimately, you have to understand the number of residents in the homes and what the situation is with the capacity in the homes. Our homes were at 99% capacity when we started this pandemic. There was not sufficient space for additional residents. That's why cohorting and infection prevention and control had to be addressed, and we heard very clearly from the homes that they needed space to be able to do that. So the staffing ratio is very dependent.

In terms of other countries or other provinces, I look at Quebec and what they did. In fact, they have not been able to fulfill 10,000 spaces, what they said that they would do. That is no fault of theirs. That is the conditions that they find themselves in—COVID-19.

We've taken a different approach: integrating our acute-care sector, using community paramedics, using the Canadian Red Cross when necessary, using the supports that we have available to us.

Our homes are holding, and we're getting the care that they need to them, along with the support in staff. It's ongoing.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member for the final supplementary.

Mr. John Vanthof: Twenty-one people died in long-term care yesterday.

The minister is able to quote how many people Quebec failed to hire, but she is not willing to say how many people Ontario actually added.

News of a vaccine isn't going to make COVID-19 disappear. Premier, seniors are still getting sick, and they're still dying. They're still waiting for four hours of hands-on care. They're still waiting for regular inspections, which aren't happening either. The government seems to be more intent on saving money and waiting for a vaccine.

How many people is the government prepared to risk while they sit on their contingency fund and hope to be able to roll out a vaccine?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I actually do reject the premise of that question on so many levels. Our government has done nothing but support our long-term-care system—rolling out dollars behind the policies, dealing with an unprecedented situation across the world.

My heart goes out to everyone who has been impacted by this.

The money is going out. If we look at the dollars that have been spent—over a billion dollars already. We've been very clear about the issues that have to be dealt with on an emergency basis—the stabilization of our homes—and then the long-term plan to address the neglected system of long-term care, whether it was in bed capacity or whether it was in staffing or whether it was in other areas. This is a sector that has been largely neglected.

We promised a staffing strategy in December, and that will be coming, and you will hear about it. The dollars are there.

Please understand that it is more than numbers; this is more about getting the support to our homes. Our homes are holding. We are getting support and staff to the homes that are in crisis. This is happening. We'll continue to support our long-term-care homes.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier.

Speaker, for months, health care professionals and public health experts have been calling for paid sick days in Ontario. Their calls are getting more urgent, and they have been joined by Ontario's Big City Mayors and GTHA mayors and chairs.

Almost 60% of Ontario workers have no paid sick days, especially if they are low-wage. These workers can least afford to lose a day of pay and are often at highest risk of COVID-19. People who don't have paid sick days are going to work sick or they are sending their kids to school sick. They are putting off getting a COVID-19 test because they simply cannot afford to lose their paycheque.

This afternoon, I will introduce the Stay Home If You Are Sick Act to provide paid sick days and actually support workers to stay home. Will the Premier commit right now to passing my bill?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Look, every single day during this pandemic, we've been protecting the health and safety of workers and the public at large. That's why the very first initiative we passed here at Queen's Park, literally on day one of the pandemic, was Bill 186, which told any worker in this province that they can't be fired because of COVID-19. If they're home in self-isolation, if they're in quarantine, if they're looking after a son or a daughter, they will not be fired for that.

Furthermore, it was our government that eliminated the need for sick notes during COVID-19. And we all should give credit to Premier Ford for leading the charge across this country to ensure that \$1.1 billion in paid sick days was delivered to the people of this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Supplementary question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It's not getting fired that workers are worried about. It's paying the rent. It's buying the groceries. It's paying the bills.

Workers are put in an impossible position when they are expected to sacrifice their financial security in order to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Workplace outbreaks are on the rise, because this government took away the paltry two paid sick days that used to be available to Ontario workers.

Paid sick days don't just protect health; they are good for the economy. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce said this about my bill: "When a worker protects themselves, they protect their colleagues and employer and in turn, they safeguard the entire business."

This government has an opportunity to do something that will not only help businesses recover from COVID-19 but will strengthen our economy when the pandemic is over. I ask again: Will the Premier agree to pass my bill and provide permanent paid sick days for Ontario workers?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: Thanks to this Premier leading the charge across the country, there are 10 paid sick days totalling \$1.1 billion for the working people of this province. Every level of government has worked together every day during this pandemic to protect the health and safety of workers.

But I have to ask the member opposite and her party, when did you abandon the working people of this province? For example, if this budget that the finance minister tabled passes, we will have more health and safety inspectors than in the history of this province. And do you know what, Mr. Speaker? The NDP, the so-called party of the working people, have failed workers in this province.

IMMUNIZATION

Mr. Roman Baber: Good morning. My question is to the Premier. Premier, we've seen great news this morning out of England and Scotland about vaccinations administered to seniors and front-line health care workers. We know that Ontarians are waiting on Health Canada approval—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Excuse me. Stop the clock. I'll give you a few extra seconds.

I'm hearing a lot of loud chatter coming from the opposition side right now. It's making it very difficult for me to hear the questions being asked by honourable members. So I would ask, use your inside voice so we can all hear.

I'm going to allow the member to start his question once again. Thank you very much.

Mr. Roman Baber: Thank you, Speaker. My question is to the Premier.

Premier, we've seen great news this morning out of England and Scotland about vaccinations administered to seniors and front-line health care workers. We know that Ontarians are waiting on Health Canada approval of the Pfizer and BioNTech vaccine.

Premier, our government has been advocating for Ontarians to receive our fair share of vaccinations and to receive them in a timely manner. Premier, can you please share what the federal government's announcement yesterday will mean for my constituents and all of Ontario?

Hon. Doug Ford: I want to thank the great member from York Centre. He's doing a great job there.

As we get ready to receive the first shipments of COVID-19 vaccines, I'm glad to see, after pushing the federal government, they're actually going to be distributed per capita right across this great province. Our top priority remains getting the vaccines out to the people who need it most, and we're going to do it as quickly as possible.

Our first shipments are going to be in very small numbers, as everyone knows. But what we're waiting for is the millions and millions of vaccines that we can distribute. We have a phenomenal table ready to distribute it. We have a great leader with General Hillier, and both the Minister of Health and the Solicitor General have been doing a great job too. As soon as they land, we're going to be out the door for the hard-working people of this great province.

1050

Mr. Speaker, I'll leave with this note: We are the party for the working class. We are the party who represent the hard-working people, no matter if they're union or non-union.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Supplementary question?

Mr. Roman Baber: Back to the Premier: Ontario is ready to do its part, and we'll be ready to receive and distribute the first batch of vaccines when they arrive at our doorstep. So much work has already been done to date. The vaccination task force met and held its first meeting on Friday, another meeting over the weekend, and another meeting with cabinet today. As General Hillier indicated, they've already run a tabletop exercise to look at how the vaccine rollout process would unfold and are coordinating with the Canadian Armed Forces 4th Division headquarters here in Toronto on the next steps in the planning process.

Premier, could you please elaborate on the next key phases of the vaccination rollout and what that will mean for distribution priority?

Hon. Doug Ford: I thank the member from York Centre. As General Hillier said yesterday, this is our mission. We want to run an efficient and equitable COVID-19 vaccination program right across Ontario in order to provide every eligible person in the province the opportunity to voluntarily get vaccinated against COVID-19. We believe that's going to be a huge way to help end this absolute tragedy that's been facing the world and our province for close to a year.

The vaccination task force, under the command of General Hillier, is taking prudent measures, outlining three phases of deployment. In phase 1, we want to deal with the vaccines that we know are coming in the first quarter of 2021, prioritizing the vulnerable and health care workers. No one is going to protect our most vulnerable more than our health care workers, and they're going to get vaccinated first.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Jeff Burch: Speaker, through you to the Premier: Under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ford government has been quietly issuing a series of minister's zoning orders for projects that threaten the safety of Ontario's conservation lands. At least 19 of these orders are backed by developers that are PC Party donors and close political allies of the Premier.

Why, in the midst of a global pandemic, is the government allowing their donors and allies to build over protected conservation lands?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Mr. Parm Gill: Mr. Speaker, it's disappointing when it comes to this issue and the NDP is totally out to lunch. Every single MZO that has been issued by the minister responsible has been at the request of the local municipality unless the lands were provincially owned. I have mentioned this over and over in this House. I know the members opposite are having a hard time understanding. I would be pleased to draw it for them if that would make it easier, Mr. Speaker.

Let me just list a few projects that the members opposite have opposed: 3,700 long-term-care beds, a new facility to build made-in-Ontario PPE, the expansion of Sunnybrook hospital, 300 new supportive housing units, 1,000 new affordable homes, doing all of this while creating 26,000 new jobs in Ontario. Mr. Speaker, we're proud of that record.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Supplementary question.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Back again to the Premier: The government member needs to acquaint himself with the facts. The government is lining the pockets of their donors and developer friends under the cover of a pandemic and hoping no one will notice.

Over the weekend, seven members of the Ontario Greenbelt Council resigned in protest of this government's reckless attempt to undermine their mandate to protect the greenbelt.

If the government stands by these zoning orders, they should have no problem answering questions from the public on record. Will the government agree to a full review of these zoning orders by the committee on general government so we can hear from the minister, the Premier and the insiders who this government keeps writing the rules for?

Mr. Parm Gill: I want to thank the member opposite for that question again. If the NDP did a bit more research, they would actually find that these builders donated just as frequently to the opposition—to the Liberal Party, to the NDP—as they did to the PC Party.

The people benefiting from these MZOs are Ontarians needing long-term-care beds, people out of work, nurses needing PPE and restaurants needing to expand their outdoor patios. Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, every single MZO the minister has issued has been at the request of the municipalities, unless the lands were provincially owned.

So I would encourage the member opposite to do his research before posing a question in this House. I am happy to sit with the member and go through all of these projects, provide an explanation to him, and make sure he understands the importance of these projects to Ontarians.

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: My question is for the Premier.

In resigning from his role as chair of the Greenbelt Council, David Crombie, a respected former federal Progressive Conservative cabinet minister said this about schedule 6 in Bill 229: "It cuts out the heart of integrated watershed planning and management; severely cripples the conservation authorities in their historic stewardship of environmental issues, and now with the grossly expanded use of ministerial zoning orders and other procedural revisions, essential public discussion and debate will be stifled or shut down."

This legislation will certainly cause irreversible damage to wetlands, natural features and will put the public at risk of increased flooding and environmental degradation without the protective checks that conservation authorities have provided. With the amendments that the government has introduced, conservation authorities will be forced to allow development permits even in the face of contrary scientific evidence.

We know that Charles McVety was the beneficiary of the passage of Bill 213. Can the Premier share with the people of Ontario the names of the developers who support and will be the beneficiaries should Bill 229 pass as it is currently written?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: I want to thank the former Premier for the question.

I'd just like to know, when she changed the greenbelt 17 times, what developers was she helping? I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I have yet to touch the greenbelt, unlike the former Premier, who wanted to take care of all her development buddies by changing it 17 times.

Then, the new leader decided to build a pool in his backyard, as I mentioned yesterday, to ignore the conservation authority.

We're putting \$30 million into making sure that we protect wetlands, protect the greenbelt, unlike the previous government that didn't even put close to that into protecting it. All they wanted to do was line the pockets of all their buddies 17 times.

Mr. Speaker, on one side of the road, a farmer is worth \$50 million; on the other side of the road, he's struggling to pay the bills because of the former Premier playing games with the greenbelt.

We aren't going to play games. We're protecting the greenbelt.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Supplementary question.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I heard this response yesterday. Mr. Speaker, in my recollection—I was also Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and then I was Premier—those 17 adjustments were adjustments to the boundary. We had, I believe, over 600 requests for adjustments. We made 17 minor adjustments. I think it is legitimate that when a government puts a policy in place—we created the greenbelt—it is only reasonable to make adjustments if there were mistakes. I'm the first to admit that there were mistakes made in some cases. But with over 600 requests, I think 17 adjustments is pretty reasonable.

On the CBC this morning, the minister noted that the increased use of MZOs did not pertain to the greenbelt and that the use of MZOs is driven by municipalities. The MZOs and decisions that degrade source water protection outside the greenbelt will affect the land inside the greenbelt. Water flows.

There were plans in place to expand the greenbelt in Waterloo—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: —with the Paris Galt moraine that was planned for—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: Why are those plans not being followed?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you. To the Premier for a response.

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: Everyone in this House remembers the time that they were selling access. Every single minister had their quota—\$10,000 a table. Maybe that was part of the 17 minor changes to support their developer buddies: "You buy the table; we'll give you a little bit of the greenbelt off." That's the real story.

1100

Our government doesn't do that. We aren't going to do that. We aren't touching the greenbelt. We said we weren't going to touch it. We support the greenbelt. We're pouring money into the greenbelt and the watershed to make sure that that is taken care of, unlike the previous government that was selling access: "How many tables do you want? We'll fix you up with the greenbelt. Not a problem at all."

Seventeen times it happened; it's not going to happen under our watch.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Just before we get to the next question: Listen, I know that it's getting close to Christmas and you have visions of sugarplums dancing in your head, but I'm going to ask that you keep the excitement level down so that we can hear the members' questions and their responses. Thank you for that.

Now I return to the member from York Centre for a question.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Mr. Roman Baber: My question is to the Minister of Education.

This has been a year we'll never forget. In the spring, we saw the impact of not having schools open, be it the effect on children, parents or educators. In August, our government revealed its back-to-school plan, fully endorsed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, to allow for in-class learning to resume. We're now in December, and we've seen a remarkable effort by everyone involved in Ontario's education system to create a safe and positive environment in which students can learn.

Could the minister please share with us what efforts have been taken to date to get us to where we are today?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to thank the member from York Centre for the question. It has been an unprecedented year. Amid this difficulty in this province, we have two million children learning safely in Ontario, under a plan fully endorsed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health of this province.

As was mentioned earlier by the Treasury Board president, numbers matter: \$1.4 billion of investment; 3,000 new teachers hired in this province; 1,300 more custodians; 600 additional mental health workers, EAs and ECEs; an additional 625 public health nurses, more than doubling the allocation for our schools; 130,000 more computers; 19,000 more portable HEPA filters; 2,500 portable ventilation devices.

This plan, endorsed by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, fully funded by this province, has helped ensure 99.9% of our students remain safe. Over four out of five schools do not have COVID at all. This is while we face rising community transmission.

The light in the darkness in the difficulty we face in this pandemic is the incredible heroism, hard work and determination of our teachers, our staff and our parents, for which this province is extremely grateful and proud of.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from York Centre for a supplementary question.

Mr. Roman Baber: Back to the minister: The minister is right. Keeping our schools open is a societal imperative, which this pandemic has taught us time and time again. The pandemic forced all of us and our education system to adapt to circumstances beyond our control.

Can the minister please share with us what efforts are being made as staff and students are planning a return to school in January?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Indeed, we are looking forward to protecting the progress made in this province, recognizing fully, with rising community transmission, the challenges imposed within our schools. Having said that, we are committed to doing everything possible to keep our schools open. It is a societal imperative. It is so important to the mental health and development of our children, and I think for parents as well.

That's why we are looking to continue on with asymptomatic testing in schools in the new year in those high-risk regions. We're launching a COVID safety refresher course on the first day back as compulsory learning for all students on the protocols, to ensure they understand them and adapt to them. We're adding an additional \$380 million that we will unlock and we will announce in the new year to further protect schools, to hire more staff, to ensure more distancing and to ensure we have the technology to give every student universal access to learning both online and in-class. We are taking action, following the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

I want to reaffirm my gratitude to everyone working together, public health and school boards collaborating, in the interests of keeping kids learning and keeping them engaged in school.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Sandy Shaw: My question is for the Premier. Today we learned from the FAO that in the middle of the worst crisis our province has ever seen, during a brutal second wave of a virus that's devastating our hospitals, our long-term-care homes and our economy and impacting every single aspect of all of our lives, this Conservative government and the Premier are sitting on \$12 billion of unallocated and unspent money.

The question is simple, Mr. Speaker: How can this Premier and his ministers sleep at night, knowing that they could have kept people safe, but they chose not to?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the President of the Treasury Board for a response.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: The question is simple; the answer is simple: \$14.5 billion of increased spending since March of this year. You talked about health—and we aren't sleeping because we're going to work tirelessly, 24/7, to get this job done.

Let me just highlight where that money is going: 80% of those unallocated funds have been earmarked for health care and other funding. Let me give you some examples: through our Ministry of Health and our great Minister of Health, \$351 million for 2,250 additional beds; over a quarter of a billion dollars, \$284 million, to deal with the surgical backlog; \$70 million for additional flu vaccines; \$572 million to further support hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, as I've said, when you have a crisis like this, we will not rest until all the people of Ontario, families and businesses, are safe and we get to the other side of this terrible pandemic.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I do have to say thank goodness for our independent officers, like the FAO, because it's the only way we're getting any transparency from this government.

For weeks now, members on that side of the House have been howling every time we mentioned that they were choosing to sit on \$9.3 billion in unspent money. Mr. Speaker, that's billions that could have saved lives. They heckled and they spun and they tried to tell us that they weren't sitting on any money at all, that it was just fear-mongering. Now we know, thanks to the FAO, the government wasn't just sitting on \$9.3 billion. It turns out the real number is actually \$12 billion.

What does that side of the House have to say for themselves now? Why weren't the thousands of people who died in this crisis worth the money?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: I do reject the premise of that statement. We have been working tirelessly, and the numbers show it. The \$9.3-billion contingency that we set aside, as the Minister of Finance tabled in the budget in November, that showed that over \$6 billion was spent in that period.

Mr. Speaker, when you have a \$38.5-billion deficit plan for this year, you are spending money. We're going to direct those very dear funds to the people who need it most in this province, but, as the Premier said, we're going to have a little bit left over because we don't know exactly what's around the corner. So 80% has been allocated; we have another 20%.

We're going to support the Minister of Health, the Minister of Long-Term Care, the Solicitor General—all aspects of our response to this pandemic. We won't rest, Mr. Speaker, until everyone is safe in this province.

IMMUNIZATION

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. Rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine to 14.5 million Ontarians is going to be a great challenge. The health of all Ontarians and Ontario's economy depend on it. The government struggled with this year's rollout of the flu vaccine. It was a major pillar in their second wave. Too many Ontarians who wanted it didn't receive it. That simply can't be the case with COVID-19.

I put forward a motion for this House to be debated later this afternoon, with the intention of ensuring that the government is adequately prepared for the task, that there be clear and transparent communication throughout the rollout of the plan and that there be some legislative oversight.

Speaker, through you to the Deputy Premier: Will the government be supporting my motion this afternoon?

Hon. Christine Elliott: Thank you to the member for the question. What I can certainly advise you is that, first of all, with respect to the flu campaign, it was the most successful flu campaign that we've had in Ontario's history, to the point that we've just recently purchased another 200,000 doses of FluMist from AstraZeneca to

make sure that all the people in Ontario who want to receive the flu vaccine will be able to do that.

The COVID vaccine is a mammoth task; there's no question about that. It's going to be the most important vaccination campaign in probably Ontario's history, but we have key people there that are supporting it. The Solicitor General and I are the ministers who are responsible. We have General Hillier leading up our task force. General Hillier has people on the task force who have combined knowledge and experience in information technology, epidemiology and all of the others that are really important for this to be rolled out properly.

There's no question that we will be ready as soon as those vaccines are ready to be shipped. We will be dealing with them and getting them into people's arms as quickly as possible.

1110

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Ottawa South for his supplementary question.

Mr. John Fraser: I was just speaking about the everyday experience of people in my riding, and other people's ridings as well, with regard to the flu vaccine.

I think I speak on behalf of all members of this House to say that we want you to be successful. It's so important to the health and safety of all of our communities. We know that high-risk Ontarians need to be first in line. It's very important. We know the government got a general, but you need an army. Regional leadership is critical in this because Ontarians will need clear and consistent communication to know what to expect. That means setting targets and showing your progress.

We have a committee established in this Legislature for emergency management oversight, and the most important thing in emergency management right now is the distribution of this vaccine. Speaker, through you to the minister, will you or a designate commit to appearing before the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight on a regular basis? We're going to be away from here for two and a half months. That's a long time.

Hon. Christine Elliott: What I can assure the member is that there will be open and transparent communication with respect to plans for the distribution of the flu vaccine. You're absolutely right: It is vitally important for everyone in Ontario to know what the plan is and how things are moving along.

But I can tell you that we've had several meetings already with the task force. They're continuing to meet. They have three virtual half-day meetings a week. This is something that we need to deal with immediately, because it sounds as if we may be receiving some of the vaccines slightly earlier than we expected. But have no fear, we will be ready.

We have the right people in place. We have the plan in place. As soon as those vaccines arrive, they're going to be distributed and dealt with and given into the arms of people who are most vulnerable: seniors living in congregate care settings, long-term care homes and the staff, people in First Nations and other communities that are in

need, as well as people receiving chronic home health care. I don't think there's any concern about the question that these people need to be first, and they will be.

We will be giving regular communications to the people of Ontario about how the plan is moving through.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Roman Baber: My question is to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. In my riding of York Centre and across the province, jobs in the skilled trades are and will continue to be in high demand for years to come. The most recent data shows that one in three journeypersons is over the age of 55. Projections prior to the pandemic demonstrated that the construction sector alone will need an additional 22,000 workers in anticipation of the shortage of skilled and trained workers.

To the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development: What action is our government taking to prevent these shortages and support the skilled trades?

Hon. Monte Naughton: I want to thank the honourable member from York Centre for his strong advocacy to get more young people into the skilled trades. Mr. Speaker, it is true that we anticipate shortages in the skilled trades over the next several years here in Ontario. That is why our government is taking immediate action to promote and recruit more young people, women, Indigenous people and veterans into these meaningful and well-paying careers.

I recently joined the associate minister of women's issues in London to announce the new Group Sponsorship Grant. We are investing \$20 million to help small and medium-sized businesses share the costs of managing and training new apprentices. I look forward to sharing more about our government's mission to reform the skilled trades and get more young people into the skilled trades in my supplementary.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from York Centre.

Mr. Roman Baber: Thank you to the minister for that response. It's great to hear that our government is taking the skilled trades shortage seriously and acting decisively to tackle it. The skilled trades are crucial to our economic recovery. When you have a trade, you have a job for life.

Recently, I was disappointed to hear that only 6% of businesses are taking on apprentices. We know that Ontario businesses want to step up, but they need our help. Can the minister please tell the House how this new grant will further support employers in recruiting and training of new apprentices?

Hon. Monte Naughton: Thank you again to the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, our \$20-million investment will reduce pressure on any one employer to see an apprentice through to the completion of their training. Now, a group of local businesses, for example, can work together to train six to 12 apprentices and receive around \$125,000 and up to \$250,000. This will increase the overall number of people training and working in the skilled trades, and it will expose apprentices to a wider range of skills and work experience.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to connecting people with lifelong careers that provide for them and their families and build stronger communities for all of us.

WATER QUALITY

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Good morning, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Premier.

Yesterday the Auditor General reported that Indigenous peoples, our nations, are not engaged in the development of government programs and policies that impact us. When I see that happening, that is racism, oppression and colonialism in action, and we see it being played out on the lives and the health of people in Neskantaga who have no access to clean drinking water.

Speaker, Neskantaga needs the Premier to be part of the solution. They need clean drinking water now. Is the Premier's help on the way today for the people of Neskantaga?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you very much for the question. As the member pointed out, the Auditor General's report has taken a look at how Indigenous affairs can be incorporated throughout all of our ministries. We've embarked on that process of making sure that all ministries are working together. It was one of the things that we talked about when we were first elected, how many ministries were acting as silos. Those silos need to be broken down, and we have embarked on that process to do that.

With respect to clean drinking water at the community that the member was speaking about, we have been involved with that. The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' Indigenous drinking water team has been involved from the very beginning. We believe that the federal government has it now in place and the testing will be completed very shortly so that there will be clean drinking water.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: It seems that the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs has been MIA in our communities.

But back to the Premier: With this global pandemic hurting the economy, we understand and we hear that the development of the Far North is an essential part of the government's recovery plan. I want to be clear: Without respect for Treaty 9 and the support for Neskantaga's basic human rights, this government has no right to request development on our treaty territories.

The chief of Neskantaga wrote the Premier this week for his commitment in helping to access clean drinking water as human beings, Ontarians and treaty rights holders. Will the Premier meet with Neskantaga to discuss their nation's access to clean drinking water?

Mr. Dave Smith: It's my understanding, in working directly with the federal government on it, that the testing of the clean water facility there should be completed on December 14. Our expectation is that clean drinking water

will be available very, very shortly to the entire community. We thank all of the partners who have worked together to make sure that this is something that is completed.

But I do have to remind the member that it was the federal government that put the \$16 million in to build it. They did not have it completed appropriately, and the provincial government stepped forward with the clean drinking water task force to make sure that we were getting it right so that those people could have clean drinking water.

Further to that, the provincial government did its part to make sure that those individuals had a safe environment to live in, in the meantime, while we looked after the evacuation of the community.

1120

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Good morning. My question is for the Premier. Every prominent stakeholder in the province of Ontario, except for a handful of development industry lobbyists, have unanimously asked for schedule 6 to be removed from Bill 229. But instead of listening to the people, the government introduced amendments that gave the minister even more power to ignore science and run roughshod over responsible planning.

Yesterday, the Minister of the Environment said in a media article that he thought it would be "excellent for democracy to have more debate and consultation" on CAs. I agree—before we pass schedule 6. I agree.

Speaker, why is the Premier hell-bent on continuing to rush this ill-conceived schedule to an unrelated budget bill against the will of the people of this province? Will he listen to his own minister and remove schedule 6, because we need more consultation on the changes to CAs?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the parliamentary assistant.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Over the past few years, as the member knows, conservation authorities were getting into all kinds of things, like zip-lining and photography. The member knows how important it is to focus on flood mitigation, which is why the changes we made brought them back to their core mandate on source water protection, flood mitigation and natural hazards.

The member talks about amendments. Yes, amendments were made in order to take into account natural hazards. In fact, now, conservation authorities actually have more enforcement power, with the stop-work order, when it comes to natural hazards. It's actually more enforcement than they've had in the last 70 years. It was in the bill originally, but the Liberal government never actually proclaimed it. It's this government that proclaimed it, giving more conservation authorities the tools they need in order to protect the environment.

But the member also talks about no support. I will talk about the Ontario Farmers Network, which said that these changes are all overdue. I will talk about Ducks Unlimited London. We also have the Huron Perth Landowners Association and the Ontario Stone, Sand and Gravel

Association, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association. I can name many more people who are in support of these changes.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Guelph for the supplementary question.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'd like to remind the member opposite that the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the big city mayors—literally the local elected leaders who represent everybody in this province—along with conservation authorities, have said that what this government is doing is reckless. It's going to cost us more in the long run.

I want to ask a question that came to me directly from the CFO of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Speaker. If the province is going to force conservation authorities to issue permits for development in environmentally sensitive areas that are in contravention to their science-based watershed approach to decision-making, are they going to indemnify conservation authorities against the repercussions of future impacts of these developments, including flooding? Because there is no mention of this in schedule 6, and there is substantial risk being forced onto CAs due to this legislation.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Let me read you a quote from the mayor of Windsor. He says, "Lots of mayors, myself included (as part of the Ontario big city mayors), have issues with their conservation authorities and the power given to them" and that the delays add "significant cost to projects, often without much material benefit." Please tell the Minister of the Environment "that these changes need to be made."

The changes we're making make sure that conservation authorities are focused on their core mandate. Many of them are doing good work, but frankly, some of them are more focused on zip-lining than they are on flood mitigation and natural hazards. Again, we're giving them the tools to do this, and this is being supported by the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Farmers Network, the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture, and I can name more.

In fact, the Auditor General, in her report yesterday, if the member read it, on pages 243 to 269, followed up on her previous Auditor General's report in 2008 that said there need to be changes to conservation authorities on transparency and accountability. We're doing just that.

SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ma question est pour le premier ministre. Alors que l'anglais et le français sont les langues officielles des tribunaux en Ontario, l'accès aux services en français dans plusieurs régions de la province demeure une utopie. La semaine dernière, un résidant de la ville de Hearst n'a pas réussi à être servi dans sa langue maternelle à la Cour de justice de l'Ontario à Sault Ste. Marie. Ayant de la difficulté à parler et comprendre l'anglais, cette personne a dû comparaître dans une vidéoconférence offerte en anglais seulement.

Le premier ministre peut-il expliquer aux Franco-Ontariens pourquoi, en 2020, ils ne peuvent pas s'adresser aux tribunaux ontariens en français?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the Attorney General for response.

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm pleased to have the question. It is a very, very important topic and something that we're actively working on. I wonder if maybe he's been speaking to some of my officials who know that we're working on some pieces that I hope to be able to bring forward publicly soon.

It's a very important piece that the people can access the justice system in their language of choice, of the official languages in Ontario. Again, I look forward to acknowledging publicly some changes that are in the works and to move us forward in that regard. It's long overdue.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay for the supplementary.

M. Guy Bourgouin: La ministre des Affaires francophones a martelé les Franco-Ontariens du Nord à répétition avec le projet pilote d'accès aux services de justice en français de Sudbury. La ministre a fait l'annonce au mois de mars 2019. Elle l'a répété encore au mois de septembre 2020, puis encore au mois de décembre 2020.

On fait face à des échecs, comme celle d'une femme résidante du district d'Algoma qui n'a pas pu offrir son témoignage en français devant la cour criminelle en tant que plaignante dans un cas d'agression sexuelle. À cause de l'absence d'un interprète, le procès a été reporté et par la suite annulé en novembre 2019, sans que la victime présumée puisse offrir son témoignage.

Le premier ministre va-t-il avouer, une fois pour toutes, ses échecs en francophonie et le manque chronique des services en français dans le système judiciaire ontarien?

Hon. Doug Downey: I'm proud to stand with my colleague the Minister of Francophone Affairs, who was the previous AG, and set in motion a number of very positive changes to catch us up on the neglect that was in place by the Liberals for 15 years, with no regard for the people of Ontario who speak French as their primary language. We need to move this forward, and we are moving this forward. I am really looking forward to being able to announce, in the very near future, some very positive changes with more to come.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: My question is to the Premier. This morning, the FAO released its Expenditure Monitor tracking provincial spending, which revealed that, contrary to the government's pedantic insistence, they have not spent unallocated funds. Quite the opposite: The balance in unallocated funds has actually increased.

Thousands of Ontarians are going to stay home, away from their families this holiday season, because the government failed to flatten the second wave curve. Speaker, they had the funds. They were given the funds by the federal government. They did not ramp up testing and

contact tracing in the summer when they knew the second wave was coming. They did not invest in schools, to make them safe places for learning for education workers and students. They did not shore up COVID hot spot communities, like my riding of Scarborough–Guildwood, and Brampton, and Windsor.

Does the Premier think it's appropriate to sit on billions of dollars in funds while millions of Ontarians are in lockdown?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the President of the Treasury Board for response.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member opposite for that question, but clearly, she has her numbers wrong. Let me tell you, this is the same member who said that the \$9.3 billion that we set aside, we weren't spending any of it. She said we were spending zero; we actually spent over \$6 billion of it. It's only prudent to set aside more money, because now we're up to almost \$12 billion in set-asides, of which 80% has been spent.

Mr. Speaker, she referenced testing—\$1.4 billion in additional COVID testing in the last six months of this fiscal year alone. The Minister of Education mentioned—thank you for mentioning some numbers, Minister of Education—\$1.3 billion in additional funding for education to keep our children safe and our teachers safe. We also put another billion dollars of additional money into personal protective equipment.

Mr. Speaker, the numbers tell the story. The money is being spent, and we're very proud of what we're doing.

1130

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Back to the member for Scarborough–Guildwood for the supplementary question.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Speaker, we're going to have to disagree with the numbers. Right as the second wave was heating up, the government underspent by \$278 million in public health. That's almost \$300 million that could have been used to ramp up contact tracing and testing efforts. They had underspent by an even greater \$477 million in post-secondary education. This is in the face of deep cuts to OSAP while students are accumulating more debt to pay their tuition.

Despite the title of their budget, the government has pinched pennies to the tune of \$12 billion instead of investing to protect and to support Ontarians. This inertia is unconscionable. Speaker, through you, when will the Premier stop being cheap in the pandemic? Or is this going to be where he gives Ontarians a lump of coal this Christmas with a post-COVID bump in cases?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: We're hoping to give all Ontarians a vaccine for this Christmas. That's what we're planning to do.

It's interesting coming from the member opposite, who increased the debt by \$200 billion in the previous government and had a qualified opinion from the Auditor General for a number of years. We've had three years of clean opinions.

The FAO report that she references indicates that spending this fiscal year—from March to now, we've

revised up by \$14.5 billion, 8.8%, as well as, year over year, up 7.6%. I don't know about your math, but my math says that that's an increase and we are spending the money. The Auditor General and all the other officials are supporting us on this.

We won't stop working hard on behalf of the individuals and the families of this great province to keep them safe, and we'll continue working.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Jill Andrew: Elaine in my community is terrified. Her grandmother lives at Rose of Sharon, the only Korean long-term-care home in Ontario. It's non-profit, and now it's being taken over by Rykka Care Centres, a for-profit, and she is worried. There are over 20,000 signatures signed on this.

The question to the Premier is, will the Premier commit today to stop the long-term care licence transfer application of the non-profit Rose of Sharon Korean Long-Term Care to for-profit Rykka Care Centres, which has multiple lawsuits and is for-profit and has had many deaths during COVID?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Thank you for raising your concern. Our priority as a government is the safety and well-being of residents and staff and families involved with long-term care. There is no doubt about that. This situation is under review and we're considering it. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The time for question period has come to an end.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Mr. John Fraser: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the member from Ottawa South on a point of order.

Mr. John Fraser: I may not get a chance to do this: Merry Christmas. Happy Hanukkah. Happy Kwanza. To my family here, I wish all your families a wonderful holiday season, and I'll miss all of you, really.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Thank you very much. That was not a point of order, but we will miss you as well.

DEFERRED VOTES

PROTECT, SUPPORT AND RECOVER
FROM COVID-19 ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2020
LOI DE 2020 SUR LA PROTECTION,
LE SOUTIEN ET LA RELANCE
FACE À LA COVID-19
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

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

Bill 229, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes / Projet de loi 229, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter, à modifier ou à abroger diverses lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): We have a deferred vote on a motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 229, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes.

On December 7, 2020, Mr. Phillips moved third reading of Bill 229. Mr. Calandra has moved that the question be now put.

The bells will ring for 30 minutes, during which time members may cast their votes on Mr. Calandra's motion that the question be now put. Prepare the lobbies.

The division bells rang from 1135 to 1205.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The vote was held on the motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 229, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 54; the nays are 33.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I declare the motion carried.

Mr. Phillips has moved third reading of Bill 229, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact, amend and repeal various statutes. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard 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.

A recorded vote being required, the bells will ring for 15 minutes—

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I believe if you seek it, you'll find unanimous consent to apply the votes of the last to this.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Same vote? Same vote.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 54; the nays are 33.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I declare the motion carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): There being no further business at this time, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1209 to 1500.

ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Tonia Grannum): The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour's assent is prayed:

An Act to proclaim Eating Disorders Awareness Week / Loi proclamant la Semaine de la sensibilisation aux troubles de l'alimentation.

An Act to amend the Occupiers' Liability Act / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la responsabilité des occupants.

An Act to reduce burdens on people and businesses by enacting, amending and repealing various Acts and revoking a regulation / Loi visant à alléger le fardeau administratif qui pèse sur la population et les entreprises en édicte, modifiant ou abrogeant diverses lois et en abrogeant un règlement.

An Act to amend various Acts in respect of transportation-related matters / Loi modifiant diverses lois à l'égard de questions relatives au transport.

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

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated December 8, 2020, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 111(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE AMENDMENT ACT, 2020

LOI DE 2020 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SÉCURITÉ PROFESSIONNELLE ET L'ASSURANCE CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL

Mr. McNaughton moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 238, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 238, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Agreed.

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'll turn it over to the minister for a brief comment to the bill.

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I rise today to introduce the Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act, 2020. This proposed legislation, if passed, will help protect businesses from unexpected increases in their

WSIB premiums while maintaining an increase to the earnings cap for worker benefits.

Our government has been steadfast in our support for workers and businesses throughout this pandemic, and this amendment is one more step to help them when they need it the most.

ROBE INVESTMENTS & CONSULTING
SERVICES LIMITED ACT, 2020

Ms. Fife moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr39, An Act to revive Robe Investments & Consulting Services Limited

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK
ACT, 2020

LOI DE 2020 PERMETTANT
AUX EMPLOYÉS MALADES
DE RESTER CHEZ EUX

Ms. Sattler moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 239, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 with respect to paid leave / Projet de loi 239, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi en ce qui concerne les congés payés.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now turn it over to the member from London West for a brief explanation of her bill.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: The Stay Home If You Are Sick Act provides a made-in-Ontario framework for paid sick leave for all Ontario workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Almost 60% of Ontario workers, especially those who are low-wage, do not have access to paid sick days. They face an impossible choice if they are sick or if their child is sick. Staying home to recover or care for their child means giving up their paycheque, while going to work sick risks infecting their co-workers.

When staying home sick is not an option, especially in a public health emergency, it puts us all at risk. This bill will enable workers to stay home when they are sick. It requires employers to provide 10 days of sick leave, seven of which are paid, plus an additional 14 paid sick days during an infectious disease emergency. It makes the leave flexible, to recognize the reality of workers' lives and caregiving responsibilities, and also removes the requirement for doctors' notes.

Finally, it directs the government to create a two-part financial support program to assist employers to provide both types of sick leave, particularly struggling small businesses that have been hanging by a thread because of the lack of direct supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

TEDDY'S LAW
(ANTI-DECLAWING), 2020
LOI TEDDY DE 2020 CONTRE
LE DÉGRIFFAGE DES CHATS

Ms. Stiles moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 240, An Act to amend the Provincial Animal Welfare Services Act, 2019 to prohibit non-essential cat declawing / Projet de loi 240, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2019 sur les services provinciaux visant le bien-être des animaux en vue d'interdire le dégriffage non essentiel des chats.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'll now turn it over to the member from Davenport for a brief explanation of her bill.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Today, I am proud to table Teddy's Law, an act to prohibit cat declawing in Ontario.

Unlike simply cutting a human's nails, declawing, known by its clinical term as partial digital amputation, removes the entire lower third phalanx bone of a cat's paws, resulting in pain, discomfort and behavioural changes. While a pet owner may be trying to protect furniture from scratching, the consequences of declawing often result in more disruptive behaviours, like biting and marking.

Both the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association have said that non-therapeutic partial digital amputation is ethically unacceptable without comprehensive education for pet owners about the impacts, and a growing number of veterinarians refuse to perform the surgery at all. My bill would ban the practice unless it is deemed medically necessary for the health of the cat by a veterinarian. The legislation will bring Ontario in line with other provinces and jurisdictions around the world. It's time, and in the current pandemic, with record pet adoptions, it is urgent.

1510

The bill is named after Teddy, the beloved former cat of Dr. Gitte Fenger, one of the co-founders of Paw Project in Ontario. I want to thank Gitte and all the great advocates and vets who have lent their advice and advocacy to protect our feline friends.

COVID-19 MEMORIAL DAY
ACT, 2020
LOI DE 2020 SUR LE JOUR
COMMÉMORATIF DE LA COVID-19

Ms. Armstrong moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 241, An Act to proclaim COVID-19 Memorial Day / Projet de loi 241, Loi proclamant le Jour commémoratif de la COVID-19.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I would now be happy to turn the floor back over to the member from London–Fanshawe for a brief explanation of your bill.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: The bill proclaims the third Monday in March in each year as COVID-19 Memorial Day. The observance is designed to honour the lives lost to COVID-19, particularly those in long-term care, as well as to celebrate the way communities came together to support one another, the contributions of front-line and essential workers, and the volunteers and family caregivers who stepped up to navigate COVID-19.

CAREGIVER AND HOMEWORKER
PROTECTION ACT, 2020

LOI DE 2020 SUR LA PROTECTION
DES FOURNISSEURS DE SOINS
ET DES AIDES À DOMICILE

Mr. Baber moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 242, An Act to create a provincial registry to protect caregivers and homeworkers / Projet de loi 242, Loi créant un registre provincial pour protéger les fournisseurs de soins et les aides à domicile.

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

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I would now like to return the floor to the member from York Centre for a brief explanation of his bill.

Mr. Roman Baber: Caregivers, home workers and live-in nannies are often vulnerable to mistreatment by home-based employers, especially when their employment is tied to an immigration process. The bill enacts the Caregiver and Home Worker Protection Act, 2020. The act provides that the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development shall establish and maintain a caregiver and home worker protection registry. The registry shall list the names of all employers to whom a notice of contravention has been issued under subsection 113(1) of the Employment Standards Act, 2000, in relation to one or more caregivers or home workers, unless the Ontario Labour Relations Board finds that the employer did not contravene the provision set out in the notice.

TRESPASS TO PROPERTY AMENDMENT
ACT (PROTECTING CONSUMERS
FROM PACKAGE PIRACY), 2020

LOI DE 2020 MODIFIANT LA LOI
SUR L'ENTRÉE SANS AUTORISATION
(PROTECTION DES CONSOMMATEURS
CONTRE LE DÉTOURNEMENT
DE PAQUETS)

Mr. Crawford moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 243, An Act to amend the Trespass to Property Act to establish minimum fines for specified types of trespass /

Projet de loi 243, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'entrée sans autorisation en vue d'établir des amendes minimales pour certains types d'entrée sans autorisation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I now turn over to the member from Oakville for a brief explanation of your bill.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I'm proud to rise today to introduce the Protecting Consumers from Package Piracy Act. The bill amends the Trespass to Property Act to provide minimum fines where a person trespasses for the purpose of taking, holding, concealing or destroying mail addressed to another person with the intent to deprive the other person of the mail or defraud any person.

With the COVID pandemic, online sales are growing exponentially, and so is package piracy. The goal of this bill will be to raise awareness, protect consumers and reduce the growing crime of package piracy.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Paul Calandra: I move that when the House adjourns today, it stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 16, 2021.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I'll try not to smile on this one.

The government House leader moves that when the House adjourns today, it stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 16, 2021. Agreed?

Interjections: No.

Interjections.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Debate.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I refer to the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you very much. I do appreciate the opportunity to rise today and to say a few words as we, hopefully, come to the conclusion of what has been an extraordinary year in the life of the Parliament, of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

Let me first at the outset just briefly thank very, very sincerely, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the table officers of the assembly, including the committee Clerks who, especially over the last number of months, have gone above and beyond the call of duty and have served all members of the Legislature extraordinarily well. I sincerely thank them for their incredible work.

I think when people look back at this, they will look at this crew, this group of employees, and they will look at this assembly with pride because of the work that they did to make sure that we could all continue to do our job on behalf of the people of Ontario, regardless of what side of the Legislature you sit on.

I also wanted to specifically mention the Sergeant-at-Arms, who I know will take our thanks to all of the security personnel in the assembly. This has been a very, very challenging number of months, and they have handled themselves with distinction. I am incredibly proud—I know all members are, not just me—of the service they have given to all of us. I sincerely thank them for that.

I also want to just very briefly, to the Ontario public service—as I said, this has been an incredibly challenging time. We've all gone through a number of changes on how we have been doing things here, but the Ontario public service—many working from home; some still coming in—have managed to keep one of the largest governments in North America operating extremely well. So a big thank you to them as well.

Also, Speaker, if I can, just to colleagues on both sides of the House—we adjourned under special circumstances in March, and as one of my assistants was pointing out, outside of the whip's office, the notice paper still says March 12 in the window, to highlight when the last time people were in here and able to make the changes. That was the last time.

1520

But despite that, all of the members on both sides of this House continued to do the job that the people of the province wanted them to do. I know it's not my place to be proud of anybody, Mr. Speaker, but it's certainly a proud moment to serve amongst a group of legislators on both sides of the House. I would suggest that the people of the province can certainly be proud of every single one of their members of Parliament, regardless of what side of the House they serve on. Their constituents have received, if I can say it, their money's worth for the work they have done, so thank you to all of those members, on both sides of the House, who have really done extraordinary work to get us through one of the most challenging years that we've had.

I said it a little bit yesterday, Speaker: We have passed an astonishing amount of bills since March; 36 bills have been passed. Of those 36 bills, 26 were government bills. Six of those bills were passed quickly, with the support of all members. As I've said on a number of occasions, although unanimous consent was moved quickly to get those bills passed through the House, I don't want to give anybody the illusion that at any time the opposition did anything but their job in ensuring that the government was held accountable, even when we were able to move quickly in order to get those bills through the House in the early stages of COVID. They did what they were supposed to do, and at the same time they allowed the government to move quickly.

I think I'm also extremely proud of the fact, as much as 26 government bills were passed, that 10 private members' bills were passed in the House this year. I don't know if it's a record; I don't know what the stats are on that. But the thing that makes me most happy about these private members' bills—10 of them—passing is that it was not part of a horse-trading back and forth, as sometimes

happens in this place. Those 10 bills that passed through this Legislature were bills that were earned by the members who fought for them, who fought for them in their communities, who fought for them in this place. There's a good number of bills on both sides of the House, and I congratulate all of those members who did that.

A really special note to the members from I think it's Ottawa–Vanier and Ottawa Orléans. Those two members came into this Legislature in very unique circumstances that I'm sure they weren't expecting, and probably a lot different than they would have hoped to have come into this Legislature. Getting elected to any government position is an extraordinary honour, and doing it in a by-election can be very, very exciting. They had to, unfortunately, forgo the honour of the full House saluting them, but I can tell you that we do salute you for your hard work. Perhaps, one day, when this whole chamber is full again, we can do it over and give you the greeting that you deserve.

To my own caucus colleagues: an incredible job. They really have done some extraordinary, extraordinary work. It has been a complete honour to work with them.

I wanted to briefly also mention, if I can—I know Jasmine is somebody in the NDP House leader's office that we've come to know and we've come to work with. I certainly have appreciated having her to relay messages back and forth and to help us as we try to organize the House. Grace in the Liberal House leader's office has also been of extraordinary assistance in helping organize the House, as have Bianca and Jackie with the Green Party leader.

For my part, Speaker, I have a small team, and when you think of the fact that 36 bills have passed through this place, I commend my small crew. Not only do they have to deal with me on a daily basis, they have a broader caucus and a House that they have to help manage. Jessica Lippert, Jessie Saliba, Owen Macri, Patrick Kelly, Rachel Ali, Felix Burns—all have done extraordinary work for me, and I am very, very grateful.

If you will permit me, sir, I know we're not supposed to mention names, but the best deputy House leader anybody could have asked for, Andrea Khanjin, has done a great job. Again, if you'll forgive me, Lorne Coe, my whip, and the deputy whip, Kaleed Rasheed—I have learned a tremendous amount from Lorne Coe. You would think that in a majority it would be easy, but it's not; it's the most difficult job in government. I, as the House leader, tell him when we're voting, and it's his job to make sure that we have enough people here to vote. In COVID, that is extremely challenging to do, Speaker, so thank you very much to him.

To my fellow House leaders: It has been a very, very interesting year for all of us. I have certainly enjoyed working with them. Sometimes I've enjoyed working with them more than other times, but that's what this place is all about. We all come here with a responsibility to represent the people that elect us, first and foremost, our community. I always lament the fact that sometimes people get up in this place, and they look back and they

look at some of the debates that happened in this place and they say, “Oh, they’re acting like a bunch of kids,” or they get upset when they see the tenor of the debate. Well, that’s what this place is all about. I’ve said it on a number of occasions: You don’t pay us to be bumps in a log in this place; you pay us to have passionate debate. The reason we are on opposite sides is because we disagree on things, but we always agree on one thing: how to make the province better. We just have differences of opinion on how to get there, Speaker.

But ultimately, all members of this House for generations should reflect on the fact that, despite those differences and because of the things that we do agree on, we’ve been able to build one of the best—if not the best—provinces in the entire country, one of the strongest provinces in the entire country. I think that is something that we should all be proud of, because each of us has had a role to play in helping to do that over generations, not just the last couple of months.

With that, Speaker, I’m reminded that while our federal Parliament was busy on Zoom, we came back. We were here in May, we were here in June, we were here in July, we were here in September, and we didn’t just rely on Zoom. We came here and did our jobs in the House. All members agreed to do it in a safe fashion. We were able to vote in the lobbies to continue that. We worked in cohorts, and sometimes we fought about who should be on cohort and who shouldn’t be on cohort, but ultimately, all of us, I think, got the job done for the people of the province of Ontario.

I also salute, if I can—and this is very hard sometimes for a Conservative to say, but I do salute the press corps, who have done a very, very admirable job both in covering the debates in this House and in helping to keep the people of Ontario informed under extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I’ll end it there. Again, just to say really a sincere thank you to my team. With all due respect to everybody in the chamber, I obviously have the best team in politics. And although they might not admit it, I know the opposition members know how hard it must be to work with me on a daily basis, so they can imagine how good a team I have.

Interjection.

Hon. Paul Calandra: And that will maybe be the only time that the member for Waterloo applauds me, but I appreciate that.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, with that, I’ll just say thank you all very, very much. I hope that everybody will be safe, enjoy the holidays, enjoy time with your families. Merry Christmas, happy New Year, happy Hanukkah, happy holidays—

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Happy Kwanza.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Happy Kwanza, and I hope everybody really will. Everybody has earned a little bit of time with their families, and I hope, ultimately, everybody will stay safe and be back in this place when this House reconvenes—assuming that we get the support to do that—on February 16.

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

Mr. Gilles Bisson: On behalf of Andrea Horwath and the New Democrats, I just want for the record to say that we’re not in favour of this motion. There is lots of work yet to be done on behalf of all Ontarians.

1530

As we look across this province and the response that we’ve had in dealing with the problems in long-term care; dealing with trying to support small businesses when it comes to the hardship that they’re going through; dealing with tenants and the evictions that they’re having to go through, because of no fault of their own, in some cases as a result of loss of income—even though they had money from the federal government, it’s far less than they were making before—there are a number of things that we could have done, that we should be doing, that are not being done.

And the government is cutting out in this a little bit early. In the middle of a pandemic, at the height of the pandemic, that the government says, “No, we want to get out,” I think is actually wrong. I think the government should take every opportunity it has in order to be able to deal with things.

For example, we know that we had the first wave back last spring. I think we all went into that with our best foot forward on all sides of the House. The government sure talked a nice line when it came to how we were all going to work together and we were going to listen to each other’s ideas and we were going to do what was best for Ontarians, but it became pretty clear pretty quickly that the government pretty well did what it wanted to do, and in some cases fell short.

If you look at long-term care, I think that is really the one that shows up the most, because it’s our loved ones who are dying. It’s moms, dads, family members, neighbours and friends who died in the first wave. Again, as in all provinces across Canada and across the world, people were ill prepared to deal with it. Mind you, there had been some weakening of the system, both underneath the previous government and the government before that, but clearly, we should have learned. If we look at what we could have been doing in long-term care by increasing the number of people who staff long-term-care facilities for both infection control and for PSWs, we certainly could have been doing a lot more. The government rhymes off the numbers, as we heard this morning in the House, about the extra money that they’re speaking about, but when you go talk to the long-term-care facilities, when you talk to home care people, when you talk to long-term-care people, when you talk to people in the hospitals, that has not really translated into the type of staffing that they need to be able to deal with this pandemic.

We’re now in the second wave, and just yesterday lost 21 seniors in our long-term-care facilities. That’s an indictment, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker. That’s nothing we should be proud of. One death is too many, but 21? That’s a lot of people who we could have been trying to do things for, in order to, as much as humanly possible, preserve

those lives. I recognize that in a pandemic that is difficult; I'm not going to say for a second that the government has an easy task before them. But I think—and Andrea Horwath certainly feels the same, and the rest of the NDP caucus—that the government didn't put its best foot forward when it came to what we could have been doing within the long-term-care sector.

When we look at what's going on with small businesses, the government—I'm not going to argue that they did this, because we all understand why. In the first wave, the government shut down most of our economy, and that's the same as pretty well every other jurisdiction did, because nobody had ever seen this type of pandemic in the world that we live in today. When we had the Spanish influenza at the end of the First World War, people in Ontario and Canada and the United States were infected as a result of the soldiers coming back, but there wasn't as much free mobility between nations as we have today. So governments of all stripes, of various countries, were struggling to figure out how to slow down the spread of the virus, and the government, rightfully so, decided to try to shut down the economy, to slow things down, to shut down schools, to limit how you get into a hospital or a long-term-care facility when it comes to visitation, and those numbers did go down. We went from a high of around 500-some-odd infections a day to below a 100 infections a day as we got into the spring and we got into the summer.

My point is that the government, in doing this when it came to small business, didn't put in the type of supports that were needed in order to support small businesses to survive this. How many businesses, in all the ridings, on all sides of the House, have gone down and are not coming back as a result of the experience—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Fourteen thousand.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It's 14,000, I'm told by our critic, that have gone down as a result of the experience of them not being able to survive through this pandemic and the shutdowns. So I don't argue that the government shouldn't shut down the businesses; I can understand why they did that. But not to put in place the types of supports that they needed in order to really help them I think fell short of what we should be trying to do to save those hard-working men and women in this province who are trying to run their own small business.

We could have done more at the beginning and even now when it comes to rent subsidies. We could have done more when it came to supporting keeping their doors open. The government's response at first was, "We're going to give you an ability to save some taxes and pay back later." Well, you've got no revenue coming in. It's not going to do you much good, because your taxes paid are based on the amount of revenue; plus, when you do come back and you're further behind the eight ball, to try to catch up and pay those things. We think that the government could be using this time to properly deal with how we're able to support businesses through this whole thing.

The interesting part is that the government House leader—who I have respect for. He's doing his job, and I

don't for one second begrudge the fact that he's trying to do his job. But the issue is, quite frankly, that the government says we have 36 bills that we passed through the House. I will make the argument on two levels. One is, yes, the government was able to pass 36 bills because they changed the rules of the House. It's a lot easier to take a bill through first, second and third reading now than it ever was before. When I first got to this place, a bill would be introduced in the fall. There would be a proper amount of time for debate. You would end up in committee for two, three, sometimes four weeks. You would travel the bill in the intersession and it came back in the spring session for third reading. The government has now changed the rules to the point that you can introduce a bill on Monday and have it done before the end of the week.

So yes, I'm not surprised that the government got 36 bills through, because, quite frankly, the rules allowed them to do some things that you couldn't do before. But the other thing is some of the bills they chose to do. They had all of these red tape bills they brought in that they told us were going to do something to address the problem with COVID. One of those bills was the bill that dealt with giving a Christian college university status. Can you tell me what that has to do with COVID, other than returning the favour that the Premier had to return as a result of Mr. McVety helping him during his leadership race and running a polling station inside his college?

Clearly, there are a lot of bills the government passed that had very little to do with COVID and more to do with advancing their agenda. That's really, I think, the mark of this government. It talks a good line when it comes to doing what's right in order to combat COVID and support those who need the support of government to make it through, but when you look at what they did as far as the direction of legislation, a lot of that legislation, quite frankly, left a bit to be desired.

The other thing I would say—and we heard it from the auditor this morning. I heard the Premier today saying, "We're fiscally prudent because we're not spending the \$12 billion that we have in reserve." I'm not arguing for one second as a New Democrat that you should spend all the money you've got. We run our own home budgets. You always have to keep some money aside. You have to make sure that you have enough to pay the bills and that you don't fall back. But we needed to hire PSWs and we didn't do so, and the money was there to do it.

We had to reduce class sizes. How often did Andrea Horwath and our critic for education, Marit Stiles, and others stand in this House and say, "Listen, bring the class sizes down to 15"? We don't argue that our schools shouldn't be open; we understand how important that is for schools, for students, for parents and the economy. But you had to make schools safer. The government says, "Oh, yes, but we put extra money in for janitors." I went and talked to the school boards in my riding to find out how many janitors and extra cleaning staff they hired in the large school boards that are in the riding that I represent and are coterminous with other ridings in my area. It wasn't a heck of a lot. We're talking about 0.5, 1.5 across

the board. They talk about, “Oh, we’ve hired more teachers.” Go find them for me. Other than in the schools where there is growth because of population—yes, there are more students. More teachers were hired in those boards where there was an increase in the student population; I agree. But when it comes to reducing class sizes down to 15 or a number somewhere near that, the government didn’t move in that direction and, quite frankly, could have. So why are we opposed to a motion for this House to adjourn? Because there’s a whole bunch of business, quite frankly, that was not set up in the way that it should be in order to be able to deal with things.

1540

For example, we have a paid-sick-day bill that’s been introduced by my friend from London—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: West.

Mr. Gilles Bisson:—London West. That is important for containing the virus. If you ask somebody, especially at a lower-wage job, who is forced to go to work because they can’t afford to take time off, because they won’t be able to pay their bills, because there’s no sick leave, we’re not helping the economy. We’re not helping workers or their fellow workers or the bosses they work for. In fact, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce supports this bill; it’s not just New Democrats.

My good friend the member for—

Ms. Suze Morrison: Toronto Centre.

Mr. Gilles Bisson:—Toronto Centre has a bill that she brings forward in regards to no COVID evictions. There is a real issue here. Yes, of course, there are some evictions that happen in the due course of whatever happens out there, but there are a lot of people being evicted now because of what’s going on in COVID. We need to be able to protect those tenants so they don’t find themselves out on the street. Unfortunately, that is not happening.

It’s pretty clear that the government wants to get out of the hot seat, and that’s why, quite frankly, they’re doing what they’re doing now by allowing the House to end early. Of course, we will not be supporting that. We will force a vote. We will vote against this motion, I’m letting you know right now, because we think there’s more work that has to be done that is not being done, and the government could be doing more in order to be able to assist others to deal with that.

I know that for a few minutes one of my colleagues, the member from Toronto Centre, would like to say a couple of words about her bill, so I will at this point finish my comments and allow my colleague to take some of that time.

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

Mr. John Fraser: It continues to be a privilege and honour to stand up and say a few words on behalf of my constituents in Ottawa South and Ontarians. I want to begin by saying that we’re all really lucky. We come to this place and it’s safe. We get to connect with each other. We’re a family. I’ve told that story before. We are.

There’s a part of our family that I think we need to recognize and acknowledge, and that’s everyone who

works in the assembly: The Clerk, the Clerks at the table, legislative security, the Sergeant-at-Arms, the library, Hansard—I’m going to forget somebody.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Broadcast.

Mr. John Fraser: Broadcast, yes. Broadcast is very important. They make us look good—or bad, depending on what day it is.

I think it’s important that we think about all those people who help us do the things that we’re able to do on behalf of Ontarians. I just want to thank them very much. They’ve worked hard. I know we’ve worked hard, but they’ve had to work harder, sometimes later, sometimes longer, sometimes faster because of the things that we ask of them. We’re very lucky to have them here, and I just think we should show our appreciation for everyone.

Applause.

Mr. John Fraser: Look, we’re all here. It’s evident we disagree about things. We’ve had a lot of question periods and a lot of debate. The government knows the kind of things that we’ve put forward on behalf of Ontarians with regards to having smaller classes, to increasing contact tracing and testing, to the kind of stuff that needs to be done in our long-term-care homes. It’s the government’s job to take care of that. If they don’t know the things that are important, I am not sure they’ll ever get it. I think they believe they know those things that are important, those things aren’t always easy to fix. There’s a lot of work to be done here, and we need to continue to do that work.

This afternoon I’ll put forward a motion that’s probably about the most important work we have going forward, and that’s the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine. I think it’s fair to say, on behalf of members of this House, that we want it to be successful. We want the government to be successful because if it’s successful, that will be good for all of our communities. We all have an interest in that. There’s a lot of hope that’s out there.

People are scared right now, so the government has to appreciate that we have to ask tough questions; that’s our job. And we have to appreciate too that people are anxious, people are scared, so, collectively, we need to find a way to give people confidence to find that balance, because now is a really tough time. We’re heading into winter. Case counts are rising. There are more challenges in long-term care. Parents, teachers and grandparents are anxious about schools. People are anxious about when they’re going to get the vaccine. It’s important—and that’s why I put this motion forward today—that we talk about that. The motion is put forward in a way, I think, that is reasonable and balanced. There is nothing in that motion that says, “You can’t vote for this,” for any of us. We need to find a way to ask the questions that need to be asked and at the same time give people confidence. That’s all of our jobs.

So I don’t know how we’re going to figure this debate out on this motion. But I hope this afternoon that when we debate, I think the single most important thing on the minds of almost every Ontarian today, especially those who are vulnerable, who have the greatest risk—my colleague from Ottawa Centre and I were talking about

those people from the disabled community who may be at risk but not undertaking chronic care—there are a whole bunch of questions that we have to ask, and those aren't hard questions. They're saying, "You, on the other side, you're not taking them into consideration." Those are just questions that people are asking. I think that's what we tried to do on this side of the Legislature—to ask those questions, to ask the kind of questions that Ontarians have on their minds.

I'm really proud of our caucus and all the staff. I hear Grace got a shout-out before I could give it to her, and I appreciate the government House leader saying that—

Hon. Bill Walker: Go, Grace!

Mr. John Fraser: Yes, thank you—and Eric as well, I'll say too, but Grace, as we all know—she's listening now—is a very special person who has helped all of us a great deal.

As you know, we're not as well-financed as the other caucuses. That's not a complaint; it's just a reality. We work really well with what we have, and that's because of our staff and because I have a great caucus.

To both of the other House leaders and to my colleague from Guelph, the leader of the Green Party: It is a pleasure to work with you. At times, things are a bit bumpy—that might be the best way to put it—but I do believe that you all have the best interests of Ontarians in your mind. Sometimes we disagree. Sometimes people want things to go too fast. Sometimes people want things to go too slow.

So, as I said earlier, I think we just have to find a way to give Ontarians confidence at this really critical juncture in the fight against COVID-19.

Thank you, Speaker. I think I've used the seven minutes that I committed to only using.

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

Ms. Suze Morrison: It's a pleasure to rise in the House. I want to thank my colleague the member for Timmins for sharing some of his time with me on this important debate.

I have to say that I am standing here with rage and fear in my heart. I am so angry at the members opposite for thinking that they can adjourn this House early while people in our communities are suffering. And I am terrified for the people in my community who are being evicted by the thousands right now while our Landlord and Tenant Board proceeds with an unprecedented eviction blitz in the middle of a pandemic.

1550

We heard from the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario that there are more than 7,000 eviction hearings scheduled between now and January. It's absolutely unacceptable. We are in the middle of a pandemic and should be doing everything in our power as a Legislature to keep folks housed so that we can survive the COVID emergency in front of us and get our communities through this.

What I have watched the government House leader do today is come into this House and say, "Nope. You know what? We're done. We're all good, guys. Let's go take an early holiday break," when we had two more days of sitting in this House to debate bills and motions, including my private member's motion calling for a moratorium on

evictions in the province of Ontario that was scheduled for debate Wednesday evening. That debate will no longer take place until the middle of February.

I want to know how every single member of this Conservative caucus thinks it's appropriate, in the middle of a pandemic, to recess our House early instead of dealing with the business that was on the agenda of this Legislature: to debate an eviction moratorium until we are through the pandemic. There is immediate need for it. Every day, my office hears of families that are at risk of being displaced from their homes, through no fault of their own, because they fell behind on the rent for a few months, because of a pandemic, because they lost their jobs, because our communities were shut down and in lockdown. Businesses were closed. People fell behind.

We're hearing stories of folks who were out of work maybe in March, April, May—service workers, for example, in our restaurant industry, who, when the patios opened back up again in the summer, were able to get a little bit of work, start working again, start getting caught up, start paying their rent every month on time, start to chip away at the arrears that they'd accumulated. But now, they're out of work again for a second time. And where do they have to go? What does their future look like?

Well, we're going into the holidays. Our Landlord and Tenant Board has no sympathy for the fact that tenants are facing evictions en masse right now. The worst part is that there's nowhere for these folks to go. The shelters in our municipalities are full. They're at capacity. The encampments in our parks are growing every single day. Our municipalities don't have the resources from this provincial government to handle the wave of evictions into homelessness that are coming down the pipeline.

Like I said, there are more than 7,000 eviction hearings scheduled between now and the time this motion will now come back for debate, when we could be debating it tomorrow evening. Let's debate the eviction ban and get it implemented before this House rises for the winter months. It is the kind thing to do. It is the right thing to do. It is the only thing to do.

I received a letter in the office today from the Woman Abuse Council of Toronto. This letter was co-signed by 27 other organizations in support of the motion that we would have been debating tomorrow calling for an eviction moratorium in the province. In their letter, they said:

"Not all tenants face the same risk of eviction. Low-income and racialized women, survivors of domestic violence and women-led households are all disproportionately affected by evictions. Many of these same groups have borne the brunt of COVID-19 job losses, making it harder to pay rent.

"As gender-based violence continues to rise during the pandemic, the fear of eviction can discourage women from reporting an incident, while histories of eviction can reinforce housing discrimination faced by women and their children. The need for a residential eviction moratorium is urgent."

They went on later to say, "Motion 125 offers an opportunity for Ontario to continue with support for survivors of domestic violence and their families. Evictions can

form a pathway into homelessness and housing instability for women experiencing violence, women-led households who already deal with the unique barriers of safe and affordable housing.” That letter was signed by 27 organizations in the VAW sector.

So I’m calling on this government: Allow us to proceed with the last few bills that are on the order paper, the last few debates that we have scheduled before we break for the holidays. Let’s have a debate about the merits of an eviction ban in the province of Ontario and show up for the thousands of our constituents that are about to be evicted over the holidays, and in a pandemic no less.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, you know how important I think private members’ business is, so I seek unanimous consent to pass the member’s bill at second reading right now.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to pass the member’s private member’s bill. We have a point of order.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I appreciate the offer, but can you give us two minutes? We can do that after. I need to talk to my colleague.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): So I will repeat that the government House leader is seeking unanimous consent for second reading approval for the—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I’ll rephrase what I was about to say. The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent that ballot item number 46 be carried. Agreed? Agreed.

A point of order from the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I seek unanimous consent to pass the private member’s bill standing in the name of the member for Oakville at second reading.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The government House leader is now seeking unanimous approval that Bill 243 be approved for second and third reading immediately. Agreed? I heard a no.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Order. Order, please.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member from Toronto–St. Paul’s will come to order. The member from Carleton will come to order. I’ll move into warnings really quick. Are we good? We’re good.

Mr. Calandra has moved that when the House adjourns today, it stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 16, 2021. 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.

A recorded vote being required, the bells will ring for 30 minutes, during which time members may cast their votes. Prepare the lobbies.

The division bells rang from 1600 to 1630.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The vote was held on the motion that when the House adjourns today, it stands adjourned until Tuesday, February 16, 2021.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 43; the nays are 18.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

ANTI-SMOKING INITIATIVES FOR YOUTH

M^{me} France Gélinas: I’d like to thank youth from all over Ontario, including the Lung Health Foundation, for these petitions. They read as follows:

“Whereas:

“—In the past 10 years in Ontario, 86% of ... movies with on-screen smoking were rated for youth;

“—The tobacco industry has a long, well-documented history of promoting tobacco use on screen;

“—A scientific report released by the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit estimated that 185,000 children in Ontario today will be recruited to smoking by exposure to on-screen smoking;

“—More than 59,000 will eventually die from tobacco-related cancers, strokes, heart disease and emphysema, incurring at least \$1.1 billion in health care costs; and whereas an adult rating (18A) for movies that promote on-screen tobacco in Ontario would save at least 30,000 lives and half a billion health care dollars;

“—The Ontario government has a stated goal to achieve the lowest smoking rates in Canada;

“—79% of Ontarians support not allowing smoking in movies rated G, PG, 14A...;

“—The Minister of Government and Consumer Services has the authority to amend the regulations of the Film Classification Act via cabinet;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly ... as follows:

“—To request the Standing Committee on Government Agencies examine the ways in which the regulations of the Film Classification Act could be amended to reduce smoking in youth-rated films released in Ontario;

“—That the committee report back on its findings to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and that the Minister of Government and Consumer Services prepare a response.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk.

FIREARMS CONTROL

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I have a petition: “Ontario Must Declare Gun Violence a Public Health Crisis and Pass Bill 129.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas all Ontarians have the right to live in safe and healthy communities;

“Whereas gun violence is a public health crisis requiring action from all levels of government;

“Whereas” Premier “Doug Ford and the Conservative government are not taking sufficient measures to address the root causes and long-term impacts of gun violence on survivors and communities;

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

“That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario declare gun violence a public health crisis and pass Bill 129 into law.”

I agree with this petition and I will sign it.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. Dave Smith: I have a petition entitled “Recognize Our Cadets by Passing the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act, 2020.”

“To the Legislature Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas army, sea and air cadets are some of the best of our youth; and

“Whereas the young men and women of Canada’s cadets volunteer” their services to “their communities with honour and distinction; and

“Whereas their development and service within our community are admirable and should be emulated; and

“Whereas their” work, “teamwork, dedication, and discipline are qualities worthy of recognition; and

“Whereas the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act, if passed, would create an annual award for a nominated cadet from within each local cadet corps to celebrate their remarkable acts of citizenship” and named after a Second World War veteran;

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

Immediately “pass the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act.”

I fully endorse this petition, will sign my name to it and give it to the table.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I submit this petition:

“Whereas the proposed plans for the Ontario Line between Gerrard Street and Eastern Avenue seriously threaten the health and well-being of the local community due to:

—loss of needed parks, playgrounds and green spaces;

—environmental damage caused by increased noise and decreased air quality;

—the lack of a reliable safety review of the mix of train traffic;

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

“That the Ontario Line be built underground from the Pape Avenue subway station to south of Eastern Avenue;

“That early works surveying, construction, be done with as little impact as possible to facilities, parks, and natural environment;

“That local community members and elected officials be fully apprised in advance of all plans.”

I agree with this petition and I have previously signed it.

RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: This petition is entitled “Food Delivery Charges.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas currently, fees placed on restaurants by food delivery companies can reach as high as 30% in Ontario; and

“Whereas food delivery services have become lifelines for restaurants and their employees, who in many cases have seen traffic plummet by 90%; and

“Whereas our government has repeatedly called on food delivery companies to do their part and work with restaurants to help the restaurant industry through COVID-19 by instituting fees that are fair to the restaurants they depend on;

“Whereas by working with restaurants and delivery companies, we believe we have reached a commission cap that will help out small restaurants while ensuring delivery drivers are protected and consumers continue to have access to these apps;

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

“Pass the Supporting Local Restaurants Act, 2020, before the end of the fall 2020 legislative session so that” temporarily reduced food delivery fees “help support Ontario’s small and independent restaurants, sustain the vitality of our main streets and communities, and protect local jobs.”

I proudly affix my signature and will pass it on to the Clerk.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms. Jill Andrew: I proudly present this petition, titled “Petition for Real Protections from Above-Guideline Rent Increases,” from my friends and community in St. Paul’s.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas housing is a human right;

“Whereas rental rates in ... St. Paul’s and across Ontario are increasingly unaffordable;

“Whereas we need to protect our affordable housing stock in Ontario;

“Whereas paying to maintain a building should be the responsibility of the landlord;

“Whereas above-guideline rent increases can increase rent well over what people can afford;

“Whereas inaction on this issue will mean thousands of Ontarians will be forced from their homes” into homelessness;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately review above-the-guideline increase rules and regulations, and ensure that rental housing remains” truly “affordable in Ontario.”

I couldn’t agree more with this petition. I will initialize it and get it to the Clerk for tabling.

ECONOMIC REOPENING AND RECOVERY

Mr. Deepak Anand: My petition is for the next phase of Ontario’s action plan.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas nobody knows for certain what direction the pandemic will take or what direction our economy will take. We need to be prepared for anything; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario deserve transparency about the public finances—especially given these extraordinary circumstances; and

“Whereas there are countless examples around the world ... who have let their guard down and who are paying a steep price. Our government is determined to avoid those mistakes;

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

“Pass Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020, so that:

“—funding is provided to hospitals to make sure they have the resources they need to protect Ontarians;

“—jobs and businesses are supported by putting at least \$200 in the hands of every parent and creating a new tax credit to help make the homes where seniors live safer;

“—property taxes and job-killing electricity prices for the businesses that create jobs across Ontario are reduced.”

I fully support this petition and I will sign it.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms. Doly Begum: I have a petition here called Affordable Housing.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas for families throughout much of Ontario, owning a home they can afford remains a dream, while renting is painfully expensive;

“Whereas consecutive Conservative and Liberal governments have sat idle, while housing costs spiralled out of control, speculators made fortunes, and too many families had to put their hopes on hold;

“Whereas every Ontarian should have access to safe, affordable housing. Whether a family wants to rent or own, live in a house, an apartment, a condominium or a co-op, they should have affordable options;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately prioritize the repair of Ontario’s social housing stock, commit to building new

affordable homes, crack down on housing speculators, and make rentals more affordable through rent controls and updated legislation.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to the Clerk.

ECONOMIC REOPENING AND RECOVERY

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: I have a big petition right here.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas nobody knows for certain what direction the pandemic will take or what direction our economy will take. We need to be prepared for anything; and

“Whereas the people of Ontario deserve transparency about the public finances—especially given these extraordinary circumstances; and

“Whereas there are countless examples around the world of jurisdictions who have let their guard down and who are paying a steep price. Our government is determined to avoid those mistakes;

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

“Pass Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020, so that:

“—funding is provided to hospitals to make sure they have the resources they need to protect Ontarians;

“—jobs and businesses are supported by putting at least \$200 in the hands of every parent and creating a new tax credit to help make the homes where seniors live safer;

“—property taxes and job-killing electricity prices for the businesses that create jobs across Ontario are reduced.”

I fully support this petition. I’m happy to affix my signature and give it to my good friend Ilhan over here.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Jill Andrew: I proudly stand to present “Save Our Health Care,” on behalf of my community and friends in St. Paul’s.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ford government is currently proposing massive restructuring to the entire health system without any public consultation;

“Whereas the proposal eliminates local planning and control of health care;

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

“Whereas the last Conservative government privatized home care services, creating a system that fails too many families;

“Whereas the current hallway medicine crisis is a direct result of inadequate home care, long-term care and community care services;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to request the government to abandon Bill 74, The People’s Health Care Act, and focus on improving

our province's not-for-profit delivery of universal health care system."

I absolutely support this petition, I've affixed my signature and will get it to the Clerks for tabling.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. Kaleed Rasheed: "Recognize Our Cadets by Passing the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act, 2020.

"To the Legislature Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas army, sea and air cadets are some of the best of our youth; and

"Whereas the young men and women of Canada's cadets volunteer and serve their communities with honour and distinction; and

"Whereas their development and service within our community are admirable and should be emulated; and

"Whereas their teamwork, dedication, and discipline are qualities worthy of recognition; and

"Whereas the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act, if passed, would create an annual award for a nominated cadet from within each local cadet corps to celebrate their remarkable acts of citizenship;

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

"That the Legislative Assembly of Ontario vote on and pass the Cadet Citizenship Recognition Act."

I fully endorse this petition, Mr. Speaker, and am extremely happy to sign it and give it to my good friend Ilhan over here again.

FRONT-LINE WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: These petitions are coming from all over Ontario:

"Make PSW a Career....

"Whereas there has been a shortage of personal support workers (PSWs) in long-term care and home care in Ontario for many years;

"Whereas Ontario's personal support workers are overworked, underpaid and underappreciated, leading to many of them leaving the profession;

"Whereas the lack of PSWs has created a crisis in" our long-term-care system, "a broken home care system, and poor-quality care for LTC home residents and home care clients;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Tell Premier Ford to act now to make PSW ... a career, with full-time employment, good wages, paid sick days, benefits, a pension plan and a manageable workload in order to respect the important work of PSWs and improve patient care."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'm seeking unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding private bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion regarding private bills. Agreed? Everybody agrees.

Back to the deputy House leader.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively and the question on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate:

Bill Pr20, An Act respecting Hot Docs;

Bill Pr23, An Act to revive Cherry Hill Orchards Pelham Limited;

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive 2404907 Ontario Ltd.;

Bill Pr25, An Act to revive Tapir Corporation;

Bill Pr26, An Act to revive 2585303 Ontario Inc.;

Bill Pr27, An Act to revive Group Seven Construction Limited;

Bill Pr28, An Act respecting Huron University College;

Bill Pr29, An Act to revive Quadrant Consulting Services Inc.;

Bill Pr30, An Act to revive 2372830 Ontario Inc.;

Bill Pr31, An Act to revive 1040062 Ontario Incorporated;

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive Skypride Travel & Tours Ltd.;

Bill Pr33, An Act to revive 704176 Ontario Limited;

Bill Pr35, An Act to revive 2257248 Ontario Inc.;

Bill Pr36, An Act to revive Castleform Holdings Inc.;

Bill Pr38, An Act respecting 62 Grimsby Phantom Squadron Sponsoring Committee; and

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That I move the motions for second and third reading of bills Pr20, Pr23, Pr24, Pr25, Pr26, Pr29, Pr30, Pr35, Pr36 and Pr38 on behalf of their respective sponsors; and

That Mr. Bisson may move the motion for second and third reading of Bill Pr32, An Act to revive Skypride Travel & Tours Ltd. on behalf of Ms. French.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Ms. Khanjin is seeking unanimous consent to move a motion without notice regarding private bills—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Dispense.

Agreed? Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Orders of the day.

HOT DOCS ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Stan Cho, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act respecting Hot Docs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.
Second reading agreed to.

HOT DOCS ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Stan Cho, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr20, An Act respecting Hot Docs.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

CHERRY HILL ORCHARDS
PELHAM LIMITED ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Oosterhoff, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr23, An Act to revive Cherry Hill Orchards Pelham Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

CHERRY HILL ORCHARDS
PELHAM LIMITED ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Oosterhoff, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr23, An Act to revive Cherry Hill Orchards Pelham Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

2404907 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive 2404907 Ontario Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

2404907 ONTARIO LTD. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr24, An Act to revive 2404907 Ontario Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

TAPIR CORPORATION ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Bailey, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr25, An Act to revive Tapir Corporation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

TAPIR CORPORATION ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Bailey, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr25, An Act to revive Tapir Corporation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

2585303 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr26, An Act to revive 2585303 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

2585303 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr26, An Act to revive 2585303 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

GROUP SEVEN CONSTRUCTION
LIMITED ACT, 2020

Mr. Gates moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr27, An Act to revive Group Seven Construction Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

GROUP SEVEN CONSTRUCTION
LIMITED ACT, 2020

Mr. Gates moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr27, An Act to revive Group Seven Construction Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
ACT, 2020

Ms. Sattler moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr28, An Act respecting Huron University College.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

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HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
ACT, 2020

Ms. Sattler moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr28, An Act respecting Huron University College.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

QUADRANT CONSULTING
SERVICES INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, of behalf of Mr. Bailey, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr29, An Act to revive Quadrant Consulting Services Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

QUADRANT CONSULTING
SERVICES INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Bailey, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr29, An Act to revive Quadrant Consulting Services Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

2372830 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr30, An Act to revive 2372830 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

2372830 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Thanigasalam, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr30, An Act to revive 2372830 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

1040062 ONTARIO INCORPORATED
ACT, 2020

Madame Gélinas moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr31, An Act to revive 1040062 Ontario Incorporated.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1040062 ONTARIO INCORPORATED
ACT, 2020

Madame Gélinas moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr31, An Act to revive 1040062 Ontario Incorporated.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

SKYPRIDE TRAVEL & TOURS LTD.
ACT, 2020

Mr. Bisson, on behalf of Ms. French, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive Skypride Travel & Tours Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

SKYPRIDE TRAVEL & TOURS LTD.
ACT, 2020

Mr. Bisson, on behalf of Ms. French, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr32, An Act to revive Skypride Travel & Tours Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

704176 ONTARIO LIMITED
ACT, 2020

Mr. Glover moved second reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr33, An Act to revive 704176 Ontario Limited

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

704176 ONTARIO LIMITED
ACT, 2020

Mr. Glover moved third reading of the following bill:
Bill Pr33, An Act to revive 704176 Ontario Limited

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

2257248 ONTARIO INC.
ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Ms. Triantafilopoulos, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr35, An Act to revive 2257248 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

2257248 ONTARIO INC.
ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Ms. Triantafilopoulos, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr35, An Act to revive 2257248 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

CASTLEFORM HOLDINGS INC.
ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Stan Cho, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr36, An Act to revive Castleform Holdings Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

CASTLEFORM HOLDINGS INC.
ACT, 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Stan Cho, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr36, An Act to revive Castleform Holdings Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

62 GRIMSBY PHANTOM SQUADRON
SPONSORING COMMITTEE
ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Oosterhoff, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr38, An Act respecting 62 Grimsby Phantom Squadron Sponsoring Committee

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1710

62 GRIMSBY PHANTOM SQUADRON
SPONSORING COMMITTEE
ACT (TAX RELIEF), 2020

Ms. Khanjin, on behalf of Mr. Oosterhoff, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr38, An Act respecting 62 Grimsby Phantom Squadron Sponsoring Committee.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

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

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Orders of the day? I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, sir. On a point of order.

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: With respect to standing order 70, just to inform the House that there will be no night sitting this evening.

Speaker, if you seek it, I'm sure you'll find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The member is seeking unanimous consent to see the clock at 6. Agreed? Agreed.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Mr. Chris Glover: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Yes. I recognize the member from Spadina-Fort York on a point of order.

Mr. Chris Glover: I just want to wish all of the members and the staff of the Legislature a happy holiday. I also want to wish happy holidays to my parents, who may be the only two people who have just watched all that corporate work that we've just done.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): That was not a point of order, but I'm sure your parents are proud. I'm sure they are.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS'
PUBLIC BUSINESS**

**IMMUNIZATION
IMMUNISATION**

Mr. John Fraser: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario needs to ensure a clear and transparent COVID-19 vaccination rollout plan that includes prioritizing high-risk Ontarians, biweekly reporting of key statistics, and monthly appearances before the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): Mr. Fraser has moved private member's notice of motion number 127. Pursuant to standing order 101, the member has 12 minutes for their presentation.

I turn it back now to Mr. Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You had me a little nervous there for a while, but I'm good now.

Rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine to 14.5 million Ontarians is going to be a great challenge. The health of all Ontarians and Ontario's economy depend on it. Earlier this year the government struggled with the flu vaccine rollout, despite it being a major pillar in the second wave plan. Too many Ontarians who wanted it, and some who need it, still haven't received it.

This simply can't happen with the COVID-19 vaccine. So we've put forward a motion with the intention of ensuring the government is adequately prepared for the task, that there be clear and transparent communication throughout the rollout plan, and that there be some legislative oversight.

Nous avons présenté une motion avec l'intention de s'assurer que le gouvernement est suffisamment préparé pour la tâche : qu'il y ait une communication claire et transparente tout au long du plan de déploiement, et qu'il y ait une certaine surveillance législative.

First and foremost, the vaccine rollout must prioritize high-risk Ontarians. I was pleased to see yesterday that the government released a preliminary list of those first groups to get the vaccine. However, I was concerned that perhaps some high-risk groups, including home care workers, may have been left off the list. Perhaps it was the government's intention to include them; it was not entirely clear. And many Ontarians with disabilities raised some concerns as well about no clarity around what their position is in terms of being in the lineup for the vaccine.

Secondly, we're asking the government to commit to biweekly reporting of key statistics once the vaccine starts to be administered, including local vaccination targets and rates. Ontarians need to have confidence in the rollout plan, and that means setting targets and showing your progress.

Thirdly, have monthly appearances before the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight. That means the Minister of Health or a member of the vaccine task force would provide a progress report and take questions from the committee.

The measures outlined in this motion are, I believe, fair and reasonable. I will say that I believe that all members in this chamber, on all sides, want the government to be successful. If they're successful, our communities will be safe and healthy, and it's vital to the health and well-being of all the people who we represent. Je crois que tous les députés veulent que le gouvernement réussisse sa stratégie pour le déploiement. Il est vital pour la santé et le bien-être de toutes nos communautés.

The government announced its vaccine task force last week, and that was a good thing for transparency. It's going to help give people confidence. The government also appointed General Rick Hillier to lead that task force, and I think we all believe that's a good thing. Speaker, when you get a general, they need an army. There needs to be a command structure that's clear, and there needs to be a regional component to that, and that's not entirely clear from what we've seen so far. Our province is just too big. We need to know who is responsible in every region. We know that if you have an army and you're going to send them into a crisis, they need to be equipped. We need to know that they're well equipped. Ontarians need to know that they are well equipped and have a plan and a strategy.

I'll give you an example. I got a call this afternoon from someone in my hometown of Ottawa. I was asked a question about the task force plan for the rollout of the vaccine in Ottawa. Now, the mayor of Ottawa said today, just like the provinces said to the federal government, that it should be based on population, on our share of the population. The province just announced that the vaccine is only going to be rolled out in those red zones and grey zones. Ottawa is not in one of those zones, as Niagara isn't, or Sudbury and the east.

Actually, given the fact that there are maybe 40,000 to 50,000 people who can be vaccinated in this first tranche, what the government has put forward is, I think, reasonable and prudent. Both assertions are reasonable, yet there's a disconnect. The question remains, what's going to happen moving forward? I think people in regions need to know that. They need to know what they can expect, and the government has to communicate that clearly. People will understand your decisions and your rationale if you communicate it to them clearly and early. It's about letting people know what they have to do.

Here's an example of why: There was a lot of buildup around this year's flu vaccine. It was a central pillar of the government's second wave plan. There were great expectations created. The reality is that many Ontarians who wanted the vaccine, and some who really needed it, are still unable to access it, and for many who were able to access it, they had to shop around to get it. We all heard that in our communities. We all got emails. We all got calls. These are just regular folks. They're not us in here.

They're not lobbyists. They're just people who have a job, trying to go to work, trying to stay healthy.

If you look at the big numbers, this has been the biggest flu vaccination effort ever. The reality is that the demand was well above last year, and we knew that, so we needed to communicate more clearly to people who should get the vaccine first. It didn't happen. The experience on the ground for too many people was and continues to be frustrating.

I'm not here today to re-litigate the flu vaccine, and I think we're all really pleased the government has got 200,000 more doses of the nasal mist. That's a really good thing. My point is, we can't afford for the same thing that's happened around the flu vaccine to happen with this vaccine. We all have to be together on this, clearly communicating and giving confidence to people. It needs to be better. I think we would all agree on that. And the first and most important way that we're going to do that is by ensuring transparency and clear communication to all Ontarians, both provincially and locally. I think that it's important that once every two weeks—at least once every two weeks—the government reports on their progress, providing key metrics like vaccination rates and targets, which I think—it's really a minimum. Quite frankly, I think people want that information quicker and earlier and more available.

1720

The last thing that we asked for in this motion is legislative oversight. That's really important, and here's the reason that it's really important right now: In about, I don't know, 30 minutes, we're going to rise for two and a half months, right at the beginning of this vaccine rollout. We're not going to be here. We're not going to be in committee. We're not going to be in question period. And question period is not the right place to actually have oversight over this. We have the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight, and as much as I don't think that committee is satisfactory in many ways, I think it's actually a satisfactory way for us to address oversight in this specific case, in the single most important thing we're going to do in emergency management in this pandemic right now.

The COVID-19 vaccine rollout is important to all of our communities, so I really strongly encourage the government not to let the next two and a half months pass without the ability of the government, the vaccine task force or the minister to come before the committee and say, "Here's the progress that we've made. Here are some decisions that we've made. Here's what we're looking forward to," so that committee members can ask fair questions that will not only answer the questions that Ontarians have, but will help the government in maybe considering some things that they had not considered. That's what happens in committees. That's what happens in this Legislature. Sometimes we ask ourselves questions or say things to each other that make us think. That's the point of it, and this is too important not to use everyone in this assembly, through a committee, to be able to do that work.

We could start this Friday at the next committee meeting. I would encourage the government—it's not

prescriptive in this motion—to utilize the committee even more. It's not a committee where there's a lot of contention. There are no dissenting reports. I think it would be very effective for the government to use it in that way, for this Legislature to use it in that way.

This motion is a friendly motion. The things that are in it are reasonable and balanced, and I think they're what Ontarians expect. I think it's very important for us to end this session of the Legislature by showing that we can work together. There's a lot of contention in this place. There is a lot of back-and-forth. We've had some very, very divisive things happen in the last couple of months—a lot of emotion. What Ontarians need to see is again what they saw last March, which is a willingness by all of us to work together to make sure that we do the absolute best we can for everyone living in all of the communities that we represent, and that, as I said earlier, we really prioritize those individuals that are high risk and are vulnerable in our communities. It's really important. We're their voice. Those are the voices in here.

I look forward to debate. I want to thank the members for their time and attention, and I'm looking forward to hearing what you have to say.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: I want to begin my remarks, first of all, by just sticking in a merry Christmas, happy holidays, happy Kwanza, happy Hanukkah to everybody celebrating, and happy new year.

Let me just begin by stating that although I disagree with some of the comments and characterization put forward by the member from Ottawa South, we will be supporting this motion as it is written on the order paper. I must say that I'm very pleased to see that the member for Ottawa South has brought forward a motion calling on us to continue to do what we've been doing for the past nine months and what we are already planning to do anyway with respect to the COVID-19 vaccines.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, our government has been clear and transparent with the people of this province. Whether it's been through providing Ontarians with daily updates of the COVID cases around the province on our COVID-19 website or being one of the first provinces in the country to release modelling data, we have been leading the way on these factors with unprecedented transparency. Our government is still holding frequent press conferences where the people around Ontario can tune in and see what measures we are taking to combat the virus, and hear from our Premier, the Minister of Health and other cabinet ministers who are answering questions from the media.

Our province's health officials also continue to hold their own media briefings where they discuss our ongoing fight against COVID-19 and answer any questions from the media. At those briefings, our health officials have also started to share on a more regular basis our modelling data to ensure that Ontarians have the same information that we do—the same information that is informing and guiding our decisions.

A few weeks ago, we significantly overhauled the COVID information dashboard on our website at ontario.ca/coronavirus. This hub of information provides Ontarians with daily updates of COVID cases around the province and introduces more details about the spread of the virus, public health and health system capacity. It is updated on a daily and a weekly basis.

Speaker, we have consistently relied on the science and data and public health advice from experts, provided to us by numerous medical professionals, on how the province should respond to the evolving COVID-19 situation, and it's an approach that we will continue to follow as we move forward through the next phase of our fight against COVID-19.

But we know that the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine isn't going to be just a public health challenge; it's also going to be a massive logistical challenge. It's going to be the largest vaccination effort in our province's history, and each prospective vaccine, as you may have heard, has its own unique storage and transportation requirements. The Pfizer vaccine, for example, must be stored in ultra-cold temperatures, and the manufacturer has advised that it should not be moved from the point of initial delivery.

That's exactly why we moved quickly to appoint a COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force to build on the preparation work already done by our health officials to ensure we can roll out a vaccine in the most effective and efficient way possible. Under the leadership of retired General Rick Hillier, this task force will ensure the province is ready to receive, store and administer the vaccines in an ethical, timely and effective manner as soon as they are available. Members of our task force include experts in public health and immunization; health and clinical domains; ethics; behavioural science; operations and logistics; federal, provincial, and Indigenous relations; and information technology and data.

I want to assure the people of Ontario that our government is doing everything it can to prepare for the rollout of the vaccine. We will continue to work closely with the federal government and local partners to ensure the province is ready when the vaccine is made available.

We are encouraged by yesterday's news from the federal government when it made the announcement that the first shipments of vaccines could be arriving as early as next week, but as the Premier said yesterday, we're still very far—very far indeed—from having the millions of vaccines that we need for mass immunization. So if the member from Ottawa South wants us to be able to set clear targets or expectations, he should speak to his Liberal counterparts on Parliament Hill and convince them to tell us what vaccine we are getting, how much we're getting and when we're getting it. The federal government has control over that, but the more information they provide us now, or as soon as possible, the better we can plan for the next year. But whether we get those details or not, we're going to be as ready as we can possibly be.

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Yesterday, we identified the key populations to receive the vaccine first. These key populations were recommended by the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task

Force and are in alignment with the guidance of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization. Groups receiving the early vaccine doses in the first few months of Ontario's immunization program will include:

- residents, staff, essential caregivers and other employees of congregate living settings like long-term-care homes and retirement homes that provide care for seniors, as these are at higher risk of infection and serious illness from COVID-19;

- health care workers, including hospital employees, other staff who work or study in hospitals and other health care personnel;

- adults in Indigenous communities, including remote communities where risk of transmission is high; and

- adult recipients of chronic home health care.

Ontario will also be prioritizing the rollout of the vaccine in regions with the highest rates of COVID-19 infection, including those in the red control and lockdown zones. The immunization program will focus on health care workers and the most vulnerable in those regions.

Speaker, as our COVID-19 vaccination program rolls out, we will provide frequent updates to the people of Ontario on our progress, just as we've been doing since the very beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and our approach will continue to be informed by the science going forward.

I want to emphasize that only vaccines that Health Canada determines to be safe and effective will be approved for use in the country. Before any vaccines are available in Ontario or Canada, they will undergo a rigorous clinical trial to determine if they are safe and effective, and they will be evaluated and authorized for use by Health Canada using rigorous standards. Once a vaccine is approved and in use, Health Canada will continue to monitor to ensure it continues to be safe and effective.

At first, COVID-19 vaccines are expected to be only available for non-pregnant adults over the age of 18 years old, based on early clinical trials. As further information becomes available from clinical trials and from Health Canada approvals, the groups for which the vaccines are authorized for use could change. We will, of course, update our guidance accordingly at that time.

Speaker, I want to briefly touch on the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight, which is mentioned in the motion. I'm privileged to serve on that committee, alongside the member for Ottawa South and other colleagues. Under the terms of reference for that committee established by this House, the purpose of the committee is to receive oral reports from the Premier or his designate on any extensions of emergency orders by the Lieutenant Governor in Council related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the rationale for those extensions.

Over the past few months, we have had the privilege of hearing from several ministers at committee, including the Solicitor General and the Minister of Health. Members may recall that the Chief Medical Officer of Health also appeared at the committee's last meeting to answer questions from members.

We remain committed to ensuring the Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight continues to meet monthly to fulfill its mandate under the order of the House that established it, as well as the requirements of the reopening Ontario act.

As the province prepares for the arrival of the vaccines, it does remain critically important that all Ontarians continue to follow public health advice to protect our communities and most vulnerable populations and to stop the spread of COVID-19. This will include following the public health measures, including during our holiday celebrations. I just want anybody who's listening and everybody here today to remember how important it is to continue to follow public health measures. We have to continue to keep control of the COVID-19 virus, especially in the hot spots, the red and grey control areas. I know that, working together, we can stop the spread and keep each other safe, and our friends and families as well.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: The NDP will also be supporting this motion. The vaccines are a light at the end of this long tunnel that we have all been going through. But we still have some worries, and those worries are not only from the NDP; they're from everyone in Ontario.

When we learned that the Premier finally put his team together—they had their first meeting on December 4. Really, Speaker? The plan is due on December 14. Pfizer's vaccines are going to arrive on Ontario soil on December 14, and the first meeting of the planning committee was on December 4. We all knew that vaccines were coming. We all knew that the Pfizer vaccine needed a freezer that goes to minus 80 degrees. How come we're so late to plan for things? It makes me a little bit worried.

The member went through the priority groups. We fully agree that the number one priority group should be residents of long-term-care homes. All 78,000 of them need to be a priority, and the people who care for them—the people in long-term care and our retirement homes, as well as other congregate living for elderly Ontarians. We agree on all of this.

But the first shipment will be here, and there is no plan to give it to them, to go into a long-term-care home. The staff who are caring for them will be able to go to the centres where those Pfizer vaccines will be delivered, but that's not what the plan calls for. The plan calls for making sure that all 78,000 of them get the vaccine. So it worries me that we may see opportunities go by again because of lack of planning.

Let's be clear: We have 20 years of experience in distributing flu vaccine throughout the province, and this year was a disaster. I phoned every single pharmacy in my riding, and not one of them had any vaccine from the last week of October to the first week of November. It was the same thing with the family physicians, with the nurse practitioner-led clinics—zero vaccine available. Really? We've had 20 years of experience in doing this. So things can go wrong and will go wrong.

When I hear the minister say that there are 21 hospitals with those very cold minus-80-degree freezers—really, at this time? I can tell you that NEOMO in Sudbury has one of those freezers that goes to minus 80 degrees. How come I know this and they don't? That worries me.

What worries me even more is that there will be anti-vaxxers out there. I have been in health care long enough to tell you that they are organized, they are very good at spreading misinformation, and they are very good at spreading doubt. How do you work against anti-vaxxers? You put a physician up to assure them of the health effects, not a politician. Mr. Ford has to step back and let public health experts—let politicians sit down and physicians step up so that we can get the best advice to the people of Ontario.

So the light at the end of the tunnel is still there—there are a few worries to get there.

I think the motion that the member has put forward will help to bring transparency and accountability. This is a good thing, which is why we will be voting for this motion.

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

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Je suis heureuse que mon collègue le député provincial d'Ottawa-Sud ait présenté cette importante motion aujourd'hui.

En tant que province, nous devons être prêts à distribuer de façon efficace les vaccins contre la COVID-19 au fur et à mesure que nous les recevrons.

Malgré les efforts du gouvernement autour du vaccin antigrippal de cette année, nous savons que le déploiement a raté la cible. Malgré une grande campagne ambitieuse pour encourager les gens à se faire vacciner contre la grippe, il a été extrêmement difficile pour beaucoup de gens de se faire vacciner. Trop d'Ontariens n'ont pas pu le recevoir et attendent toujours.

Les Ontariennes et Ontariens ont de grandes attentes pour la mise en oeuvre efficace de ce plan à mesure que le vaccin contre la COVID sera disponible. Mais les gens sont inquiets, car pendant une grande partie de cette pandémie, de nombreuses décisions ont été prises en réaction à ce qui se passait autour de nous avec des conséquences non seulement indésirables, mais malheureuses aussi. Le manque de cohérence, de transparence et de clarté a été trop souvent dénoncé. Cela ne peut pas se répéter avec le vaccin contre la COVID.

Ce vaccin représente la lumière au bout du tunnel. C'est pourquoi le gouvernement doit être proactif. Ne restons pas inactifs pendant que nous attendons plus d'informations du gouvernement fédéral. Le fédéral fait son travail pour acheminer les vaccins au Canada; nous devons faire le nôtre pour nous assurer qu'ils seront distribués de façon équitable et efficacement aux Ontariens lorsque nous les recevrons.

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Les mesures proposées dans la motion de mon collègue permettraient d'atteindre cet objectif, et j'encourage tous les députés à appuyer cette motion. Nous voulons tous la même chose : protéger et soutenir les Ontariens. Assurons-nous de faire tout ce qu'il faut pour y arriver.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: I'm proud to rise today in support of this motion. I do want to also emphasize, though, in my comments, Speaker, that I'm rising in my capacity as Ontario's critic for people with disabilities, because in as much as I heard my friend the parliamentary assistant name the criteria for the vaccine distribution, I see some potential gaps here. I see some potential gaps here because while we are talking about adults receiving chronic home health care, and that would cover a certain amount of folks with disabilities, what about folks who have disabilities who are drawing upon the Ontario Disability Support Program right now who are absolutely at risk, who have been confined to their apartments and homes for nine months on meagre incomes of \$1,169 a month, Speaker? How much longer are we going to ask those fine people in our province, who are human beings, just like you and me, to go without a potential vaccine?

I would invite the parliamentary assistant, I would invite the Minister of Health, I would invite the whole government to look at the recent release put out by the International Disability Alliance—this is an international organization representing people with disabilities from around the world—where they say very clearly that people with disabilities have a right to the COVID-19 vaccine and they have a right to be prioritized, given any country who happens to be a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Canada is such a country. Ontario is a jurisdiction in Canada.

I want to remind all of my friends here tonight, those of us in this building who work hard for the people of Ontario, that when we walk into this place, our entry salary is \$116,000 a year. We work hard for it. But someone on the Ontario Disability Support Program earns a tenth—a tenth—of what we make. If we can't make sure the vaccine rollout goes out to every single person drawing upon the Ontario Disability Support Program, Speaker, I would submit to you that we are failing a crucially vulnerable part of our population.

In the few words I have remaining, I will remind us of who built this place in the first place. It wasn't that long ago that we celebrated Remembrance Day in this province. The veterans who built the public health care system that we have—many of them came back from that war against hatred disabled. Many of them asked us to remember those most marginalized amongst us as we made laws in this place.

So I will submit that my friend's motion is talking about key statistics that we have to keep track of at this crucial emergency table. I want to know, as the critic for disabilities in this province, what percentage of people drawing upon the Ontario Disability Support Program have been immunized. I'm going to be asking that of this government every single week that this vaccine is rolled out. I will feel that we will have achieved when we get to 100%. That's the metric I set for myself, as someone who wants to stand in this place and do right by the people who are suffering the most in our communities, without appropriate food, some of them without appropriate medication,

without appropriate housing. We have to get them this vaccine first. We have to make sure that we don't forget about them, because I fear, Speaker, we have not been prioritizing them.

I will also say briefly that the COVID medical triage protocol that I've been asking my friend the parliamentary assistant to let us know about—we need to know the letter of that law. In the event that our tertiary systems and hospitals are overwhelmed, people with disabilities also want to know not only about their access to the vaccines, but their access to critical medical care when they need it. We're still waiting for an answer from this government.

I thank my friend from Ottawa South for bringing this forward, and I look forward to voting for it.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: Mr. Speaker, I can't think of a more important issue to talk about before we break for the holidays and Christmas this year. As the daily case counts rise, as more and more Ontarians get sick and tragically lose their lives to this terrible virus, it's evident that this will not be like any other holiday season any of us have lived through or experienced before. That's because the government missed the opportunity to get the second wave of COVID-19 right. They didn't take the summer opportunity to plan, to keep class sizes small, to plan for and fund the testing and contact tracing necessary to contain the COVID-19 virus. So we'll be spending the holidays apart this year.

It was nearly a month ago when I asked the Minister of Health during question period for the government's plan for vaccine distribution in Ontario. I asked how many vaccines we would receive and what was the government's priority for their distribution. I was surprised that we got an answer that day. We didn't get the tired pivot that we heard from the parliamentary assistant today—"Go ask your federal cousins"—the Minister of Health gave us an answer.

However, later that evening, it was clear that despite the minister's response to us during question period, there was some disagreement, we'll call it, between the minister's numbers and the federal government's. It wasn't clear where the minister's numbers were coming from.

While that, in and of itself, is perhaps not the biggest of problems—people get numbers wrong in off-the-top remarks all the time—it was a signal that perhaps something was missing, that we need a clear commitment from the government to provide transparent, precise information about the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. How many people will be vaccinated? When will they be vaccinated? What will the priority for their vaccination be? It should be very easy to provide that information on a regular basis, which is why the member from Ottawa South has put forward this motion.

I'm very happy that the government and the official opposition have said that they will support it. As we go through this process, it will be extremely important that that information is presented to Ontarians by public health officials, not politicians, in a clear and concise manner.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this, Mr. Speaker. Merry Christmas and happy holidays to all my colleagues.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks to the member from Ottawa South for bringing this forward. I think it's incredibly timely and one might say just in time, by way of a motion. It's incredible, the attention that the vaccine policy and strategy are garnering. I will say that there is a lack of confidence right now in the government's ability to roll this out in an efficient manner and certainly in a transparent manner.

It's funny, because I was contacted by a reporter earlier today asking about the vaccine task force. He told me he had reached out to the government to question them about targets, strategies and priorities, and he was directed to the Solicitor General's office. Why would a request about a public health strategy be sent through the Solicitor General's office? I think it actually highlights the fact that we need the transparency in the reporting, we need the transparency in the targets, because transparency will lead to greater confidence in the entire process. And let's be honest: We need to get this right, Mr. Speaker.

There are some issues around whether or not the task force has had to sign non-disclosure agreements, for instance. Are they able to speak to the public? My colleague from the Nickel Belt quite rightly says that we need less photo ops of the Premier walking into a freezer and holding a little vial; We need more transparency and guidance from health care professionals.

It also speaks to who is actually on this task force. For some reason, the government chose not to put in nurses and front-line workers who have seen and experienced how the flu vaccine actually has not rolled out in an equitable and transparent manner. So there are lots of questions.

I think that this motion would speak to us working together as a team in this place for the betterment and the health and the economy of the entire province of Ontario, so of course, we're going to be supporting it. I hope that the government honours the motion and I hope that we are actually able to come together, on this unfortunate last day here at the House, towards that.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to wish everyone a merry Christmas, and health and happiness to all your families.

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

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to contribute to this because it's very important to the portfolio that I have, which is long-term care—and even the home care piece.

I want to refer back to when the budget was written. This is a statement that was made by the Minister of Finance, and this is the quote in the action plan that we wrote out:

“For so many in this province, it was a time of anxiety. Worry. And fear.

“Fear for our health. And the health of our loved ones.

“For front-line workers, it was a time of anxiety about what was to come” next.

This was just done during November, when we were back for Bill 229. It's still relevant today, and it's even more relevant because we're in the second phase, and the government is talking about the vaccines.

I want to just make sure the government listens to what I want to give them as a message: Listen to the experts, listen to the professionals and have a plan that you actually communicate very clearly, because I think when I read those comments from the Minister of Finance—to lower people's anxieties, to lower people's stress levels, they need to know what's coming. They need to know what the government has planned for them.

And health, of course, is the most serious piece in everyone's life. If we don't have health, everything else falls apart. So the communication piece is so important, and I want to stress it should be done by doctors and experts, because they can quell the stress levels of people. They are the experts. Give the baton to those people, and don't make it about the Premier looking like the hero, that he's going to save everybody with the vaccine. We want real communication so that people will understand how it's going to cure COVID-19 and actually work so that we can get back to the business of what we want to do in society.

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

The member from Ottawa South now has two minutes to reply.

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to thank the members from Eglinton–Lawrence, Nickel Belt, Ottawa–Vanier, Ottawa Centre, Orléans, Waterloo and London–Fanshawe for their remarks. I'm pleased to hear that there's support for this motion.

I do want to say to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence that I do expect everybody to work together—as I had said about the mayor of Ottawa having some concerns and expectations for the government. I think clear communications are critical to making sure that people have confidence. It's about all of us working together, and we have expectations of all levels of government.

My colleagues from Nickel Belt and Ottawa Centre raised some issues on behalf of people who need a voice in this Legislature. It's really important. There are questions, and we all have those questions because we all have members of our community who find themselves in the circumstances that the members described.

I also want to thank all my colleagues for hanging around here and making sure that we had five. I didn't think that we'd need five, but I'm really grateful for them being here and for all of their support during this and throughout the year, and throughout the years.

So, look, we're at the same point we were last March. Actually, there are more cases than there were last March. People are anxious. People are nervous. The good news is,

we have more tools. We have things like masks, hand sanitizer and social distancing, and now we have a vaccine. We have to adopt the same approach that we took last March, which is all of us working together; toning it down, tooling it down, asking the tough questions, but people need to know we're working together.

I am grateful that there is support on all sides for this motion. I think that's a good thing. And when we pass this motion, we actually have to use the elements in the motion to execute the thing that we need to do on behalf of all the people we represent.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mr. Fraser has moved private member's notice of motion number 127. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls): All matters relating to private members' public business have been completed.

Before I adjourn the House, again, I would just personally like to say merry Christmas and happy Hanukkah to everyone. Be safe over the holidays. I look forward to seeing everyone back, because this House is now adjourned and will reconvene on Tuesday, February 16, 2021.

The House adjourned at 1755.

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Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
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Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
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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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
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 / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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	
Yakubski, 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

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Wayne Gates
Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Wayne Gates, Randy Hillier
Andrea Khanjin, Jane McKenna
Judith Monteith-Farrell, Michael Parsa
Randy Pettapiece, Donna Skelly
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

**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, Stan Cho
Mitzie Hunter, Logan Kanapathi
Sol Mamakwa, David Piccini
Jeremy Roberts, Amarjot Sandhu
Sandy Shaw, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Présidente: Goldie Ghamari
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Mike Schreiner
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 / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Vanthof
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Taras Natyshak
Will Bouma, Lorne Coe
Robin Martin, Norman Miller
Taras Natyshak, Rick Nicholls
Billy Pang, Amanda Simard
Marit Stiles, Nina Tangri
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Julia Douglas

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de
la justice**

Chair / Président: Roman Baber
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Roman Baber, Will Bouma
Lucille Collard, Parm Gill
Natalia Kusendova, Suze Morrison
Lindsey Park, Gurratan Singh
Nina Tangri, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Kevin Yarde
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Kaleed Rasheed
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vijay Thanigasalam
Rima Berns-McGown, Michael Coteau
Faisal Hassan, Logan Kanapathi
Jim McDonell, Christina Maria Mitas
Sam Oosterhoff, Kaleed Rasheed
Sara Singh, Donna Skelly
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tonia Grannum

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent
des comptes publics**

Chair / Présidente: Catherine Fife
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: France Gélinas
Deepak Anand, Jill Andrew
Toby Barrett, Stephen Blais
Stan Cho, Stephen Crawford
Catherine Fife, France Gélinas
Christine Hogarth, Daryl Kramp
Michael Parsa
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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

Chair / Président: Deepak Anand
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: John Fraser
Deepak Anand, Toby Barrett
Will Bouma, Stephen Crawford
John Fraser, Laura Mae Lindo
Gila Martow, Paul Miller
Billy Pang, Dave Smith
Jamie West
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Isaiah Thorning

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

Chair / Présidente: Natalia Kusendova
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Aris Babikian
Aris Babikian, Jeff Burch
Amy Fee, Michael Gravelle
Joel Harden, Mike Harris
Christine Hogarth, Belinda C. Karahalios
Terence Kernaghan, Natalia Kusendova
Robin Martin
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tanzima Khan

**Select Committee on Emergency Management Oversight /
Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations
d'urgence**

Chair / Président: Daryl Kramp
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Tom Rakocevic
Robert Bailey, Gilles Bisson
John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Lindsey Park
Tom Rakocevic, Sara Singh
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell