

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

F-71

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

F-71

**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Building Opportunities
in the Skilled Trades
Act, 2021

1st Session
42nd Parliament
Friday 28 May 2021

**Comité permanent
des finances
et des affaires économiques**

Loi de 2021 ouvrant
des perspectives
dans les métiers spécialisés

1^{re} session
42^e législature
Vendredi 28 mai 2021

Chair: Amarjot Sandhu
Clerk: Julia Douglas

Président : Amarjot Sandhu
Greffière : Julia Douglas

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<https://www.ola.org/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7400.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7400.

House Publications and Language Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service linguistique et des publications parlementaires
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

ISSN 1180-4386

CONTENTS

Friday 28 May 2021

Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021, Bill 288, Mr. McNaughton / Loi de 2021 ouvrant des perspectives dans les métiers spécialisés, projet de loi 288, M. McNaughton.....	F-3391
---	--------

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

**COMITÉ PERMANENT DES FINANCES
ET DES AFFAIRES ÉCONOMIQUES**

Friday 28 May 2021

Vendredi 28 mai 2021

The committee met at 0900 in room 1 and by video conference.

**BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES
IN THE SKILLED TRADES ACT, 2021
LOI DE 2021 OUVRANT DES PERSPECTIVES
DANS LES MÉTIERS SPÉCIALISÉS**

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 288, An Act to enact the Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021 / Projet de loi 288, Loi édictant la Loi de 2021 ouvrant des perspectives dans les métiers spécialisés.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting to order. We're meeting today for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 288, Building Opportunities in the Skilled Trades Act, 2021.

We have MPP Roberts with us in the committee room and the following members participating remotely: MPP Cho, MPP Hunter, MPP Mamakwa, MPP Smith, MPP Thanigasalam, MPP Gates, MPP Harris, MPP McKenna and MPP Fife. Catherine Oh from legislative counsel will be here on the call to assist us with our work should we have any questions for her.

To make sure that everyone can follow along, it is important that all participants speak slowly and clearly. Please wait until I recognize you before starting to speak. Since it could take a little time for your audio and video to come up after I recognize you, please take a brief pause before beginning.

The Clerk has distributed the amendment package to all members electronically. The amendments are numbered in the order in which the sections appear in the bill. Where there are amendments seeking to amend the same subsection, they have been ordered based on time of receipt. If a member indicates that they wish to move additional amendments, we'll take a short recess to allow the member to consult with legislative counsel to draft a motion. Are there any questions before we start?

Seeing none, before we begin with section 1, I will allow each party to make some brief comments on the bill as a whole. Afterwards, debate should be limited to the section or amendment under consideration. Are there any comments? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Good morning, Chair, and good morning to the committee members. I just want to say, I've been on a number of finance committee sections these days

and I think that generally we did try to work together to try to make Bill 288 stronger. I feel, though, that the government side did not hear the voices from, in particular, the construction and building trades council, where they specifically asked for amendments that are not found in the amendment package.

I hope that the government members today are willing to exercise their own discretion and listen to the voices that were concerned around the definition of compulsory and non-compulsory trades and the connection to risk management and safety. I was surprised that the government did not submit amendments given the discourse and, quite honestly, the genuine effort that we all put forward during the delegations. So I'm looking forward to today and hopefully receiving some co-operation from the government side.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, everybody. Yes, it's been an interesting quick two weeks. We put a bill together—took our time for two years and then threw it together on a Thursday afternoon with very little notice for, quite frankly, our party and other parties to make sure it's the best bill possible. We're not arguing the facts around trades. We can argue the fact of whether we need 100,000 skilled trades. Some people are saying that number is fabricated. But the important thing is that it could give us an opportunity to get it right and to make sure that the people that are getting into the apprenticeship program, hopefully younger people, women, those racialized and those with disabilities—all those things that I think we need to do. But unfortunately, we were asked to put something together.

I want to say that the unions, particularly in the compulsory trades—it's about protecting them. When they saw that the government got off skill sets, they, without seeing the bill, quite frankly, put out some quotes. As we've seen in the amendments that were brought forward to your government, the Conservative government that's currently in power—I don't see them here. I don't see them as part of your presentation today for amendments. So I'm really concerned that you're not listening to the trades that you had said that you would work closely with.

On getting off the phone with a number of those trades that gave you quotes—they're not happy with what you've done here. They don't feel they're being listened to. They're very, very concerned about some of the—I call

them weasel words; I know some people don't like that, but it's a word that I've used my entire career in bargaining—some of the weasel words that are in this agreement that may give you the opportunity to go back to skill sets. I think that's very clear, and that's a real concern for the trades that I'm talking to, particularly compulsory trades.

On the ratios, we're really concerned around the health and safety of the workplaces. When the ratios are lowered, we know that more people get injured. Nobody's talking about that. Nobody's talking about the fact that, over the course of the last few months, we've had a number of deaths in construction, both in residential and commercial, where we've lost, I believe, seven lives—it may be six; I'm going off the top of my head and I don't have it in front of me now. And we lost young people. I know for two of those deaths one was 19, and one was 21. One had a young family with a child. I think we're missing the boat here on safety when we talk about ratios.

I think we went way too quick with this bill. I think we've illustrated, quite frankly, that as a party we're willing to work with you. As a matter of fact, I think everybody is, quite frankly, because we understand the importance of making sure that—our economy needs some skilled tradespeople, and we've got to find a way to get them there. But I think rushing this through, like you have, you certainly missed the boat.

And you certainly missed the boat on listening to the trades, especially the union trades that you guys love to quote. You love to quote Jerry Dias and Pat Dillon. These are the same guys I'm talking to who are upset this morning because you didn't listen to them on their amendments, so I'm not sure you're going to get the same quotes going forward. I know they're very happy that it looks like you got off skill sets, but I know language pretty good and you didn't make any changes with this particular opportunity to make amendments changing that we secure skill sets.

That's obviously what some of our amendments are for: We're trying to make the bill better. We're trying to make sure that we protect compulsory trades. We're trying to make sure that workers who go to work every day get to go home to their families and that we're not burying 19-year-olds and 21-year-olds with small families. I think we can do better. I'm hoping today we do. I'm looking forward today to all parties supporting our amendments and making the bill better, stronger and safer for workers in the province of Ontario, and sending a clear message to unionized—and non-unionized, quite frankly—workplaces that we want to make sure that this is the best bill possible.

Thank you very much for giving me a couple of minutes to let you know how we're feeling. I think it's been rushed. Certainly it's been rushed with me. I know there's so much to do, so much importance around trades and safety, and I think the bill could be a lot better if you vote for our amendments today. I'm sure that's the direction you're going to go as we move forward this morning. I'm looking forward to seeing those votes.

Thank you very much again. I'm looking forward to the day.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Hunter.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Thank you, Chair, and good morning, everyone. I really felt that there was a lot of input that was brought forward in a short amount of time from the trades sector, from all sides, and that there is support for Bill 288, even from those that put forward solutions to strengthen the bill, so I would hope that the government has listened and will include some of these thoughtful amendments.

There is no question as to the importance of the skilled trades here in Ontario and the need to do more in supporting the sector, particularly when it comes to attracting young people to the trades. We should be doing all that we can to support them to become journeypeople and certified tradespeople. There were a lot of ideas and suggestions put forward to help keep us on track to do just that.

I do think that, as it relates to the functionality of the legislation as we move forward, it's surprising that the government did not respond to the lack of a purpose clause and take it forward and do the work to make sure that that is fixed, because that will only help in terms of the smooth implementation, how the Ontario Labour Relations Board—and everyone else, frankly—will interpret the act. That seems to be unfortunate, that you haven't taken that advice, despite witnesses pointing that out and providing suggested language.

Whether or not the number of tradespeople that are needed is 100,000, what we do know in Ontario and which has been put forward by evidence across many trades, is that we have an aging population in our trades, not just in construction; in many trades in Ontario—arborists, for instance. We need to do a better job of attracting people to the trades at younger ages. There is a lot of work that needs to be done and coordination that needs to be done to make sure that Ontario has the people who are needed in places where there are opportunities.

0910

That includes diversifying, making sure that we recruit—there was such a strong presentation from the Indigenous community that talked about a willingness and a desire to participate in the trades, and to be heard, frankly. The government should be listening. Certainly, the Black population has also expressed that. There is more support that is needed to make the trades a more inclusive and welcoming place for people of all backgrounds and for them to feel supported. Really, that includes all groups and also, especially, women. There were some incredible women who showed that it can be done, but we need to see that on the increase, and more programs to support them.

That being said, I remember asking the minister, Minister McNaughton, about what he would do to make sure that the board and the governance for this new agency, crown corporation, is representative, that it actually reflects the full diversity of Ontario and the diversity that we want and need in the trades sector. He assured that that was something he was supportive of and that that would be done.

Making sure that women and racialized people are represented on the oversight board is something that is very important. It's a recommendation of an amendment that I am putting forward today in direct response to the minister's agreement.

Thank you, Chair, and I look forward to our meeting today.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Any further debate? Seeing none, we'll move through the sections now. There are no amendments to sections 1 to 5. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Agreed.

Is there any debate on sections 1 to 5? Seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of sections 1 to 5, please raise your hands. All those opposed? Carried.

We now move to section 6. I see there is an NDP amendment of section 6 of the bill. Can I have a motion? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'll just read it into the Hansard?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, please.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 6 of the bill be amended by adding "or" at the end of clause (a), by striking out "or" at the end of clause (b) and by striking out clause (c).

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A motion has been moved by MPP Fife. Is there any debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd like to speak to it, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Sure.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This amendment is the first of many of the amendments that we've brought forward that reflect what we heard from the building and construction trades, the very people who are responsible for building up the skilled trades by keeping workers safe. This amendment, particularly, will remove the discretion of the scope of skill sets practised by compulsory trades. This was specifically brought forward by the Ontario construction and building trades council.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, I think from the beginning when we started to review this bill, we had serious concerns with the level of power that has been granted to the minister by defining compulsory trades and their scope. We know that the minister had made promises to labour, probably a number of promises. But from the presentations we heard—and I want to be clear on that—from the employer groups and the associations, they seem to think—and this is what my concern is with the scope—that there's a flexibility around compulsory trades after this bill has passed. That's why I think it's so important for this particular section.

We must ensure that our compulsory trades—this is also important and I want my PC colleagues to listen to this—are protected and we have certified and quality trades in this province. This section leaves far too much room for the government to chip away at the integrity of the trades. I think that's probably the biggest issue we're finding. It did come forward from the construction and building trades, but also other organizations that are unionized that are certainly concerned around this clause.

I really believe that the skill set is still there. I think we have to make sure that it never raises its head again in the province of Ontario if we want to protect the integrity of compulsory trades. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Even though this amendment appears to be minor, it would result in making the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program—a pre-apprenticeship program which attracts more young people and those from underrepresented groups like women and Indigenous to the trades—illegal to operate. So obviously it would discourage new apprentices from coming forward, and that's why we are voting against this.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That comment genuinely surprises me. The government can work hand in hand with the Ontario skilled trades. There's a further motion coming up, an amendment, around making inclusion a priority for the government for women, for Indigenous and for minorities in the province of Ontario. So that is a ridiculous statement on the part of the parliamentary assistant. If we want to make this bill stronger, this definition needs to be incorporated into the bill.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I certainly do appreciate my colleague. She's absolutely right. I'm a little surprised at the response by the government. We certainly want to get young people into the trades, but again, having the scope of work and skill set maybe jeopardized is a concern. We're going to end up with young people who really aren't being trained properly and safely to perform the work. Having other people do your work in different classifications, different unions, I think, is only going to cause the same problem, quite frankly, that we've had over the last number of years.

We want to make sure we take away all that. If it's done by a trade, it's done by a trade, whatever that particular trade is. If you're going to expand it—but to be talking about what Jane had talked about, young people, really, it's a terrible reason why you're trying to say this is why we're voting against it.

I appreciate the time.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd like a recorded vote on this amendment, please.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Sure, a recorded vote. Are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of MPP Fife's amendment, please raise your hand.

Ayes

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

Nays

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): The motion is lost. I see another NDP amendment of section 6 of the bill, on page 2. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Fife.

0920

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 6 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

“Interpretation

“(2) In this section, ‘engage in the practice of a compulsory trade’ includes the performance of any practice that is in the scope of practice of the compulsory trade.”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Do you wish to make some brief comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Very quickly. Once again, this amendment is reflective of what we heard from the skilled trades community. The goal is to define the scope of practice to protect the compulsory trades, and I would remind the government members respectfully that this was a theme that we heard from delegations over the almost two days of delegations. Protecting the compulsory trades should be the goal and will instill confidence in skilled trades on a go-forward basis.

We also heard some very compelling testimony from Skilled Trades Ontario. In particular, one delegation was talking about crane operators and how, prior to being deemed a compulsory trade, the safety record of that trade was abysmal. Obviously when you do have tragedies and health and safety issues on work sites, that impedes economic opportunities, so protecting the compulsory trades—this status, he said, made the profession safer, and you can’t argue that that is not true.

The evidence is fulsome. It’s part of the research package that we actually have as legislators, and I feel like it is irresponsible on the part of the government to disregard that research and that evidence, given the purpose—although we certainly don’t have a purpose clause in this piece of legislation, but the stated goal of making the skilled trades safer. By making them safer, you actually will instill confidence in more people to enter the skilled trades, so they are intertwined.

I hope the government looks at this amendment that embeds the interpretation language that we have put forward, given the feedback that we have heard from the skilled trades. Thank you, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you very much, and thanks to my colleague. I think what we’re missing here, quite frankly—and there hasn’t been a lot of talk about it—is the health and safety of whoever is going to become involved with this. That’s what this is about. This is really reflective of our first amendment. It directly says that we need to better define the scope of practice in the language of this bill.

You’ve heard me do an hour lead. I know the difference between “may” and “will” or “may” and “shall,” and we want to make sure that it’s fully understood what we need in this bill. It relates to ensuring the appropriate protection of the compulsory trades in this province, which is vital to health and safety, and the quality of the work that’s done

here in Ontario. And that’s also important. We want to make sure that the quality of work is second to none. Quite frankly, I think the consumer wants to know that. If you take a look at—

Failure of sound system.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Gates, we can’t hear you. Can you turn off your video, please?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we can hear you now. Can you turn off your video, please?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Can you hear me?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we can hear you now.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I’m sorry.

We have to ensure that the sections of bills have comprehensive language that will help to show that they are actively listening to all—and this is key—all stakeholders in the sector and not just one group.

Hopefully, you guys will vote for our amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes. This links to scopes of practice that already exist in the bill in section 27(3). Bill 288 already outlines that every trade will have a scope of practice and this will be enforced through the Ministry of Labour’s health and safety inspectors. That’s the reason we are opposing it.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Further debate? Seeing none—MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: A recorded vote, please, Chair.

Ayes

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

Nays

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): The motion is lost.

Is there any debate on section 6 as a whole? Seeing none, shall section 6 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hands. All those opposed? It’s accordingly carried.

We’ll now move to section 7. I see there’s an NDP amendment on page 3. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 7 of the bill be amended by adding “or” at the end of clause (a), by striking out “or” at the end of clause (b) and by striking out clause (c).

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Do you wish to make some brief comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just briefly: We put this amendment in just in case the government did not recognize our first amendment, which they did not. I think it’s important to note that we genuinely came to the table to try to make this piece of legislation a stronger piece of legislation.

We heard very strongly throughout the delegations that Bill 288 does not name the construction trades in the

compulsory trades or the non-compulsory trades. We heard from some delegations that this was potentially by design, leaving that door open for potential skill sets, given the previous record of this government when they were dealing with the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act, followed by the Apprenticeship and Certification Act.

We were trying to ensure that the possibilities of future skill-setting, of breaking up the trades to skill sets and not recognizing trade qualifications and the apprenticeship system, would not happen again, so that is why we put forward this sort of “insurance” amendment. Obviously, the government is not amenable to it, and I would say that, collectively, that is disappointing. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Any further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you very much. Again, thank you to my colleague for her comments. I think she hit it right on the nail. This is simply a duplication to our first amendment, hoping that just in case you guys voted against our first amendment, that you’d consider your mistake and support it here.

I think it’s easy. It’s ensuring that section 7 and also subsection (c)’s removal will allow us to cover the same issue of both scope of practice, which has been raised by the government, but also direct work being completed by compulsory trades. This is directly from stakeholder engagement. Even with this very limited—and I mean very limited—time frame from the government, we must ensure that you listen to those affected by the legislation—and again, not just one group.

The direction that this government initially wanted to take was skill sets. You can’t argue that with us. You argued that for almost two years, quite frankly. I think the only reason why you got off skill sets—and I’ve said this in my presentations; I’ve said this in my hour lead—is because you found out that the big three, the \$5.6 billion that was invested in Ontario—quite frankly, no thanks to the government; thanks to Unifor—you found that if you had skill sets in this bill, that you would jeopardize that investment into the auto sector. That has come across clearly to me from Unifor’s skilled-trades reps. So that’s why the concern with skill sets, I think, was changed.

But what you did in this legislation is that you’ve allowed some weasel words that are going to allow you to, quite frankly, go and use skill sets. This should give concern for everybody, that you’re just really trying to please people to get into the next election and go right back and revert to your previous agenda.

I believe—and I’m sure a lot of other people, now that they have read your bill, have that same concern—that you’re going to go back to skill sets. I believe you promised it to some businesses. I think you might even have promised it to a union. But this is why we put this in. This is why we put it in again.

0930

We’re hoping, after listening to our arguments and our debates—which are coming from stakeholders. They’re not coming from MPP Fife or MPP Gates; they are coming

from stakeholders, stakeholders that your government was very happy to quote in support of Bill 288.

I know you didn’t vote on our first amendment. This is giving you a second opportunity to correct that mistake and send a clear message to all stakeholders that you are not going back to skill sets. With the language that is currently in this bill, you can certainly go back to that, because the words are allowing you to do that. The language will allow you to do that. You know it. I know it. Your lawyers know it. Everybody knows it. You haven’t fooled the stakeholders, particularly unionized stakeholders, on this bill. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just a recorded vote, please, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Sorry, I wanted to further the debate.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Sure.

Ms. Jane McKenna: This proposed motion would remove the authority for the minister to make a regulation exempting individuals from the prohibition. This amendment would make the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and pre-apprenticeship programs—which attract more young people and those from under-represented groups, like women and Indigenous, to the trades—illegal to operate. That’s why we’re opposing this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Hello, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, you can go ahead.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Sorry, I think my connection went out. Can you hear me?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we can.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Once again, that argument against supporting this amendment makes zero sense. What is actively a deterrent for young people to enter the trades is the lack of regulation around safety. We’ve all said at this committee—it’s only been two weeks but it feels longer—that we want to strengthen the skilled trades. We want the skilled trades to be a place that students, especially as they are going through the education system, see as a viable career, not only because they can make a good living but because we as a province need these skilled trades to build up the economy.

Safety has been listed as an issue on a go-forward basis. There is nothing to stop the OYAP program from ensuring that students enter that, especially if they put in the needed financial supports to make that pathway more clear. The government’s argument to not support this amendment makes zero sense from our perspective. Thank you, Chair.

A recorded vote, please.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. A recorded vote has been requested. Any further debate? No? All right.

Ayes

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

Nays

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): It is accordingly lost.

Any debate on section 7 as a whole? Seeing none, shall section 7 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hands. All those opposed? It is accordingly carried.

We'll now go to section 8. Is there any debate on section 8? Seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? Shall section 8 carry—oh, MPP Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, I've got a question as well before I make some comments around section 8. Are there any independents on the call here?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes. MPP Hunter, I believe, is on the call.

Mr. Wayne Gates: So there is an independent?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, MPP Hunter is on the call.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I appreciate that.

On our motion number 1, as we noted in our debate on this bill and in the presentations before committee, we have concerns about the government's continued approach to 1-to-1 ratios right across the board. We know that many of the non-union sector—this would jeopardize the quality of training, their safety and their work sites. We also know that in the non-unionized sector, as opposed to the unionized sector, there's about a 30% ratio of even completing their apprenticeships. I know that hasn't been highlighted in your presentations, but it has been highlighted in ours. In a unionized environment, it is about 90%.

One of the things that comes up during our presentations from every union is they said very clearly that the 1-to-1 ratio—although I might not agree with their rationale on this, they said that every one of their collective agreements has at least a 3-to-1 ratio. There's a reason for that: because of safety concerns. There's a reason around making sure that that young person, no matter whether they're a woman, racialized, no matter who it is taking that apprenticeship, is getting the appropriate training to make sure that they're not being put in an unsafe condition. I have no idea why the 1 to 1 is such an issue with you.

We may have some arguments that the ratio allowed us to feed more apprentices into the trades. Numerous skilled trades and workplace safety experts have highlighted that these ratios can lead to apprentices—think about this—doing work they are not trained to do and not getting appropriate hands-on training. The hands-on training comes from making sure there's a journeyman available to train them.

I'm going to give an example. I'm not going to mention the name because I don't have the name in front of me. This happened last June. I'm sure the MPPs, I think, from the Toronto area would know about this. We had a young

man. He was 19 years old. He wasn't registered, but he was performing electrical work, and he didn't have a journeyman with him. They assigned him to do an electrical job that required him to climb a ladder and to fix a light overhead. He had no supervisor with him and no journeyman with him. Now, think about that. What happened? He made the wrong move; he got electrocuted, fell off the ladder, and he died at 19. That's the problem that you have when you don't have proper ratios in a workplace. That particular incident still is not resolved. The family called our office asking for help, because as you guys know, I was a critic for health and safety.

Now, think about it: I don't think any of my colleagues want to see that happen in the province of Ontario. I don't think any of my colleagues want to see a 19-year-old—I know Catherine Fife and I think MPP McKenna, as well, have talked very passionately about their kids and how proud they are of getting into the trades. I think MPP McKenna talked about how he got into the trades, and I think he started his own business. But I still think all of us want to make sure that if it's our young sons, our daughters going into these trade situations, into these workplaces, that we know they're getting properly trained, that they're going to be safe on the job and they're going to come home to our hot meals—

Failure of sound system.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Gates, you're cutting out again. MPP Gates, can you hear me?

Mr. Wayne Gates: —at suppertime, from Mom and Dad—

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Can you turn off the video again, please?

Mr. Wayne Gates: We're recommending voting against section 8 of this bill.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Any further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Are we debating our motion, or are we debating the—

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): We're debating section 8.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay. Can I have a recorded vote on this, please?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes. So no further debate? Shall section 8 carry?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): It's accordingly carried.

0940

There are no amendments to sections 9 to 16. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Agreed. Is there any debate? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall sections 9 to 16 inclusive carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

We now go to section 17. I see there's an NDP amendment. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 17(3) of the bill be struck out.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Do you wish to make a brief comment?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, thank you very much. This specific amendment was sought by the building trades. Members of the committee will know that this amendment would prevent non-certified workers from performing certified tasks, or, as the building trades put it:

“Section 17(3) allows provisional C of Qs to be extended beyond one year. Such situations have caused significant safety problems in the past because the practice discourages apprentices from completing their C of Q examination and encourages unsafe work environments.

“In addition, contractors will be forced to pay journeypersons' wages to individuals who have completed their apprenticeship but have not obtained their licence after passing the Red Seal exam. This inevitably devalues the Red Seal Program within Ontario and across the country.”

I remember the delegations on this very clearly. I think that they were surprised that they actually had to bring forward this amendment. We, in trying to work collaboratively and co-operatively with the government on Bill 288, were surprised that this amendment was not addressed in the amendment package from the government. I think if we all want to ensure that the skilled trades are an appealing career pathway for young people or for second or third careers for workers in the province of Ontario, this amendment needs to be addressed in a meaningful way, and so that is why we have moved that subsection 17(3) of the bill be struck out.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thanks again to my colleague, MPP Fife, for really talking about the building trades and actually quoting exactly what they said on this bill. We've already talked about it for the last hour, that you're not listening to the very stakeholders who you decided were important for you, when you had the press conference on that Thursday just before Mother's Day, quoting how they support what you did.

Here's a perfect example that we're bringing an amendment forward on that says the building trades are not in support of this, and the question becomes, “Why aren't you listening to all stakeholders?” Again, I don't have the note in front of me, but I think the building trades represent about 150,000 tradespeople across the province of Ontario. You're not listening to them. It makes absolutely no sense to me.

We've been concerned that this section would allow the provision of certifications of qualification to be extended beyond one year. This is a serious concern, and this could encourage unsafe work environments—I've talked about safety a lot over the last little hour—and prevent apprentices from completing their C of Q examinations.

I also know, thanks to the essential Ontario building trades, that there is a delay for writing the C of Q exam. This is an issue the government should be addressing with the help of those in the industry. I also know that that help has been offered. Why hasn't the government taken them up on that offer? I don't understand that. I don't understand why you wouldn't do that, other than that you don't want them to become journeypersons and end up paying them what they deserve to be paid. Ultimately, we feel this could inevitably devalue the Red Seal Program within Ontario and right across the country. I'm asking the government—and the independent candidates, if they're on the call—to support our amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: There are times when people are sick, or an apprentice needs to care for a loved one, or the apprentice is on maternity or paternity leave or having to self-isolate due to COVID-19, when apprentices aren't able to write their exams soon after completing their apprenticeship program. Under this provision of the legislation, OCTAA apprentices who have completed the requirements of their apprenticeship and received their certificate of apprenticeship were known as journeyperson candidates, as they had provisional licences to practise their trade until they could write their exams.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: I just want to point something out that I find very interesting. The NDP and the opposition members here keep wanting to quote things that they heard at committee, but quite frankly, they're cherry-picking these quotes and deciding what they want to put forward. There were so many stakeholders who came to committee in support of many of these amendments or schedules of this bill. I think it was, in my estimation, quite lopsided in the amount of people who were in support versus the couple that came and weren't as supportive.

So maybe instead of trying to focus on the very small minority of people that the NDP keep putting forward, their cozy stakeholders, maybe they should focus on the actual people who came to speak to this bill, the majority that are in support of it and all of the people that are so happy to see the College of Trades be disbanded. We're actually going to be able to move forward and make some serious progress with getting people into the trades in this province. It's extremely frustrating for me to hear these comments, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Well, thank you very much, Chair, and MPP Harris for almost making our point. When we are speaking on behalf of almost 150,000 trades in the province, that is not cherry-picking. The delegations, while

obviously supportive of moving towards another model and hopefully strengthening the skilled trades in the province of Ontario—there are many champions who want to see skilled trades be successful in this province, but much of that support was conditional on ensuring that the skill sets, the portability of the skill sets and the definition of what is a compulsory and a non-compulsory trade were actually addressed in this bill, because collectively, the entire community heard that this had been tried time and time and time again, under the Liberals, with the college and the pushback that the skilled trades gave to them on OCOT, and some of the changes that were proposed but were never acted on.

I thought we collectively agreed as a committee that if we were going to open this up and create a whole new entity and try to strengthen skilled trades, we were going to do it right. Doing it right means addressing in particular this one amendment because, as I've said and as my colleague has said—and we've been consistent on this—if safety is not built into a skilled trades model going forward, then we will replicate the Liberal record with the College of Trades. So respectfully, it isn't cherry-picking when you're bringing the voices of Ontarians to this place—which is virtual right now—and trying to honour those concerns that informed voices came to the committee with.

I'd like a recorded vote on this please, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Smith.

0950

Mr. Dave Smith: It's really interesting because there have been some comments from both the opposition and the independent member about making sure that we make this as accessible for somebody who is from one of the groups that doesn't take part in trades. Here's a prime example of where we recognize that somebody may get pregnant or may have a child near the end of their apprenticeship program. We're making it easier for them to still be able to complete and do their exam.

That, I would think, is a barrier, if it's not made easier. It's a barrier for someone who is considering going into a skilled trade but also wants to start a family, and may want to have a maternity leave or a paternity leave. This makes it easier for someone—this removes part of that barrier, and yet the opposition has come forward and said this is a bad idea. It's not congruent with what they had said earlier, and I'm really surprised by that.

I think that this is an excellent section of the bill because it does take into account that your life may change while you're getting your education. But once you become a tradesperson, you have a career for life. So why wouldn't we take into account that there may be changes to your circumstances at one stage of your life, for a short period of time? Why would we not take that into account so that you have that opportunity to have a lifelong career, and not put a barrier in front of you like that that doesn't need to be there?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, first of all, I'd like to thank you for giving me a chance to talk again. I'll address the last comment.

You know there is a severe backlog to get their C of Q examinations. You know that you haven't addressed it in the three years you've been in government, that's for sure. That is coming from the unionized workplaces that we're aware of. To say that I'm cherry-picking when 150,000 trades are saying that, I think maybe you should call Mr. Dillon and tell him that we're cherry-picking what's important to their membership.

As far as the cherry comment, I'm glad you raise cherries, because it gives me an opportunity to say here in Niagara we produce the nicest cherries, the best cherries in the province of Ontario, so I'll address that.

Address the backlog. That's the issue. You've been offered help to do it, and you haven't responded to it. I want to be clear on that. Address the backlog. You've had help from organizations that will make sure they get to write their exams. You've got an obligation to do it.

On the bill, it's our job, quite frankly, to not only take what's positive in the bill, because if you don't—as there are some sections that we've agreed to, but it's also to make the bill the strongest it can be. We're not going to have another bill come to skilled trades for a while. We want to make sure that the bill gets done correctly. We want to make sure that it's strong and that you're listening to all the stakeholders, not just a select few, particularly around skill sets, because skill sets, I think, are still in the back of your mind.

I think you're going to use skill sets at some point in time. You're going to use the labour relations board to do it, and that's why it's important that the official opposition is bringing what I consider very-well-thought-out amendments to make the bill better and make it stronger, and to listen to all the stakeholders, not a select few. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: MPP Gates, if there were sections of this bill that you agreed to, I don't think you guys have voted in favour of any of them yet, so looking forward to seeing when that's going to happen.

But I will say there's one thing that we can probably agree on today, Wayne: I will agree with you that Niagara does have some good cherries.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? Seeing none, are members prepared to vote?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote has been requested. Shall section 17 carry?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Sorry, I apologize. Shall MPP Fife's amendment carry?

Ayes

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

Nays

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): The motion is lost.

Any debate on section 17 as a whole? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall section 17 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? It's accordingly carried.

There are no amendments to sections 18 to 27. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Agreed. Is there any debate? None. Are the members prepared to vote? Shall sections 18 to 27, inclusive, carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

We'll now go to section 28. I see an NDP amendment on page 5. Can I have a motion? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 28(10) of the bill be amended by adding "and" at the end of clause (a), by striking out "and" at the end of clause (b) and by striking out clause (c).

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Any brief comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just very quickly, Chair: This eliminates proposed subsection 10, specifically and most problematically 10(c): "any other factors it considers relevant, having regard to the public interest."

Once again, we are trying to bring in the voices of the informed and lived experience of those who are on the front lines of the skilled-trades movement, if you will, trying to make this piece of legislation stronger.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? Seeing none—oh, MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes, I just wanted to be able to say that we recognize that the labour board's adjudicators should be able to consider factors of the public interest, like the expertise of regulators like the Electrical Safety Authority, or other pieces of relevant legislation, like the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? Are the members prepared to vote? MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just a recorded vote, please.

Ayes

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

Nays

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): The motion is lost.

Any debate on section 28 as a whole? No debate. Are the members prepared to vote? Shall section 28 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

There are no amendments to sections 29 to 39. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Agreed. Is there any debate? MPP Smith.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like a recorded vote on this, please, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote has been requested. Are the members prepared to vote? Shall sections 29 to 39, inclusive, carry?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Accordingly carried.

We'll now go to section 40. I see there's an NDP amendment. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 40 of the bill be amended by adding the following paragraph:

"8.1 To promote inclusivity and diversity in relation to trades and apprenticeship, including better representation of women, Indigenous and other racialized groups, and equity-seeking groups."

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any brief comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Very quickly: This came up in the first debate, on second reading of the bill, that the bill is silent on promoting inclusion in relation to trades and apprenticeships on a go-forward basis. We feel strongly that embedding these principles and a direction of ensuring that everyone has a clear pathway—and a streamlined pathway, if you will—into the trades is important, and that the legislation should clearly articulate on a go-forward basis that the skilled trades are a viable and important way for folks to actually reach their potential.

Many of you heard me speak about how proud I am of my son, that he has entered the trades. He's around 400 hours shy of his 9,000 hours to become an electrical apprentice. Ironically, he is doing trade school in the house right now, virtually. I watch him and his friends experience some barriers, especially when he's looking at those second- and third-year careers of folks who want to get involved in the trades.

Right now it is primarily a male-dominated profession. We've seen through this pandemic that women have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. We've talked about the she-cession that is currently undergoing in this province and I think that we should clearly say that under-represented groups should be a part of the solution going forward. Clearly stating that in the legislation would send signals out to the entire sector that this is a viable and profitable and really sustainable way to actually create a future in the skilled trades.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: When I take a look at what we've put forward here, it really shows that the bill was put together pretty quickly. I cannot understand how we missed this, quite frankly, in the bill. This amendment is very straightforward. It should not be a political issue. There's no reason not to support this. We have all discussed the need to ensure that those under-represented in the trades are there. We should have a direct clause that ensures we

are promoting the inclusion of equity-seeking groups in this province.

And I just want to beat my colleague, MPP Fife, to this one: I would really like to see a recorded vote on this one.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: I have an amendment that I would like to move. I would like to take a brief recess to consult with legislative counsel.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Legislative counsel, do you think 10 minutes will be appropriate for you to draft the amendment?

Ms. Catherine Oh: Yes, I do, Chair. Ten minutes will be fine. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Harris, do you have any comment? Okay. We will recess for 10 minutes, and we will come back at 1013.

The committee recessed from 1003 to 1013.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Welcome back. MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Thank you so much, Chair. After consultation with legislative counsel, I move that motion 6, which amends section 40 of the bill, be amended by striking out paragraph 8.1 and substituting the following:

“8.1 To promote inclusivity and diversity in relation to trades and apprenticeship.”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Can you send that to us in writing as well, MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes, we can.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. Any debate on MPP McKenna’s amendment to MPP Fife’s amendment? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: If I’m to understand the amendment to our amendment, MPP McKenna is suggesting that we remove “including better representation of women, Indigenous and other racialized groups, and equity-seeking groups” from our amendment. Is that correct?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, it is correct.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Perhaps MPP McKenna can speak to why she wants to remove the specificity of our motion. We thought “women, Indigenous and other racialized groups, and equity-seeking groups” was important to be articulated in the legislation.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: When we’re talking about diversity and inclusivity, we want to make sure that we are including everyone.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just so the committee does know, we did extensive consultation on this particular amendment. We did reach out to women-led businesses, women in the construction sector. We consulted and are reflecting the Indigenous component based on what we heard at committee. We included “other racialized groups” based

on consultation as well, and in case we did miss somebody, “equity-seeking groups” is a catch-all. We specifically included the “better representation of women, Indigenous and other racialized groups, and equity-seeking groups” intentionally so that the legislation very clearly articulates what our collective goals should be as legislators, as those who make laws in the province of Ontario: for it to be inclusive. The fact that the government is removing that language is obviously concerning to us, and we would not be receptive to this amendment, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Well, it shouldn’t be concerning. We just want to make sure that everybody is included. Obviously, you just mentioned, MPP Fife, that that’s what you had here, but the reality is that we want to make sure that nobody is excluded, like somebody living in poverty. I mean, the list just goes on and on. That’s why we’ve made this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I appreciate that, MPP McKenna, but that’s what equity-seeking groups are. Those who live in poverty in the province of Ontario are seeking equitable opportunities to reach their potential, financially, economically and socially. We did try to capture that, and that’s the point that I’d like to make to you, that there is no harm in the government accepting this amendment as it was originally crafted. There is harm by saying, “To promote inclusivity and diversity in relation to trades and apprenticeship.” That does not clearly articulate the groups who have traditionally not found their place or their pathway into the skilled trades.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Just so I’m clear—because I hear what you’re saying, but the reality is my amendment is all about inclusivity and diversity. Just for one example, we want to make sure—if we’ve learned nothing else, everybody needs to be part of what we’re doing, and that’s why we made this change with the amendment. “Equity-seeking groups” is not clear and not a defined term; just use the example of LGBTQ, people living in poverty. That’s why we’re doing that.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Hunter, do you wish to make any comments on this, because you were—

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Can you hear me, Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we can hear you now.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Okay. Sorry about that.

I do wish to speak to this amendment that the government has brought forward. I believe that it is very important that, in the legislation and in the act, we have language that really makes it clear that the skilled trades in Ontario are inclusive, that they are diverse, that they are seeking to expand the work environment to be more attractive to women, to Black, Indigenous, people of colour, racialized groups, equity-seeking groups. I believe that that type of language is very important, and it is important

for this new crown agency to understand that that is its mandate and its function: to do just that.

If this is the best language that the government can come up with to make that explicit—I think that we have to have language that does that in this bill, because we have heard the challenges. Every group came forward saying, “We struggle with this. We need help with this,” and there’s no better way of doing that than to make it explicit in the legislation, as well as in the recommendation that we’ve put forward in terms of the inclusion of diverse people and women in the actual board governance and oversight.

1020

I just want to say that if this is the best the government can do in terms of inclusive language, we have to start somewhere. Given the huge weight of the majority that you have on this committee, we need language, we need inclusive language as part of this bill and as part of the diversification that we need within the skilled trades sector.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: The government is trying to water down an amendment that specifically addresses MPP Hunter’s concern around the value of stating very clearly which groups have traditionally been excluded from the skilled trades. The government wants to just say “promote inclusivity and diversity in relation to trades and apprenticeships.” That has no weight, I would argue to MPP McKenna, regardless of what her intentions are.

This is not a government that is known for promoting diversity or supporting inclusion. In fact, you just voted down my motion diversifying procurement and the supply chain not three weeks ago. It is so important to state very clearly what this new agency’s mandate will be, what their goals will be, and the legislation has to clearly articulate that in order to build trust with communities and equity-seeking groups who have traditionally been excluded from this pathway.

So I’m rejecting the language. I’m rejecting this concept that watering down an amendment which clearly captures what we’ve heard at committee, watering it down intentionally so that you can hold your nose and vote for it, is leadership. It is not the leadership that we need to promote inclusion in the skilled trades. We will not support this watered-down amendment by the government. The government can and should support the original amendment, because it achieves what MPP McKenna just said was so important to her and to the government, which means you clearly articulate it, state it and put it in the law on a go-forward basis.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Again, I want to join in on this very important debate. I’m actually shocked at what the PC Party came back with. I think “watered down” is the word that’s being used. We heard this from almost every group that made presentations. If you take a look at what we propose, after “trades and apprenticeship,” there’s actually a comma, which means it’s making the language stronger. It’s a plus. I’m trying to maybe give you a little lesson in

what type of language there should be when you’re bargaining. It’s “including,” so it’s a plus. You’ve already got the top line. It’s a plus to say it’s “including better representation of women, Indigenous and other racialized groups, and equity-seeking groups.”

I don’t know how, quite frankly, the PC Party or anybody who’s on this cannot support this. This shouldn’t be political. You say, “We want to work together. We want to come across party lines.” There is nothing more important than doing that in this particular motion that’s been brought forward—not the PC motion; ours.

I’m almost lost for words, which doesn’t happen to Wayne Gates very often. I’m actually shocked where the PC Party has gone here. Quite frankly, I’m not sure they’re going to be able to defend to the public, as well.

Thank you very much.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chair, I’d just like to please request a recorded vote on this.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour of MPP McKenna’s amendment to MPP Fife’s amendment, please raise your hand.

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Hunter, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam

Nays

Fife, Gates, Mamakwa.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): It’s accordingly carried.

We’re going to debate amendment number 6, as amended. Is there any debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I just want to ask a question, because I’m not sure, and I apologize for not knowing, but that’s why we have a Chair on these committees, because the Clerks are right there. Would we not have to vote on our motion first and then have it turned down and then go to MPP McKenna’s amendment?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): If MPP Fife’s amendment is voted down, then MPP McKenna will not be able to bring her amendment to your amendment.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay, that’s fine. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All right, any other questions? Any debate on amendment number 6, as amended?

Are the members prepared to vote? Shall section 40, as amended, carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

All right, we’ll now go to—MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes, I thought we asked for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Who requested a recorded vote?

Ms. Jane McKenna: MPP Fife.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): I didn't hear that. MPP Fife, did you request—

Ms. Catherine Fife: I did. Sorry, Chair. I had requested a recorded vote on the amendment to the amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we already voted on that.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Exactly. And then you just moved section 40, right? And so that went unrecorded.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, as amended.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay, that's fine.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All right, so we'll now go to section 41—

Interjection.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Hi. Sorry, Chair, I thought that was a recorded vote for what we did right now, so I would like a recorded vote.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Is there any debate on section 40, as amended? MPP McKenna has requested a recorded vote on section 40, as amended. MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chair, I'm sorry, we've already voted on section 40 and you've already moved on to section 41, so we can't go back. We've tried to get you to go back in the past, and you haven't.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Sorry, there was a mistake on our end. We still had to vote. We voted on two amendments, actually, so we voted on MPP McKenna's amendment to your amendment and then the amendment, as amended, and then we still have to vote on section 40, as amended.

All right, so a recorded vote has been requested by MPP McKenna. Shall section 40, as amended, carry?

1030

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Hunter, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? It's accordingly carried.

We'll now go to section 41. I see there is an independent amendment. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Hunter.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Can you hear me?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Yes, we can.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I move that section 41 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

“Required members

“(1.1) The board must include at least,

“(a) one member who is a woman; and

“(b) one member who is Black, Indigenous or a person of colour.”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Do you wish to make a brief comment on your motion?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: Yes, Chair. I think that, just as we've been discussing, the importance of—our skilled trades sector in Ontario must be one that is inclusive, that is open, that welcomes women, welcomes diverse people

of various backgrounds who have historically contributed a great deal to the sector and may not have felt that they've been recognized. I think of Indigenous people and the incredible work that they've done as construction tradespeople, as ironworkers, as the builders in our province and across North America. I think of people like my dad who immigrated to this country and brought a skill as a licensed mechanic. He didn't continue on as such but certainly worked in the trades sector.

Oftentimes, people feel that their contribution is not as recognized and that the pathway is not necessarily welcoming to them, so I believe that the legislation needs to be explicit about this. It needs to lead by example right from the top, in terms of the board and the leadership and the governance. The minister himself said, in my questioning to him in the first hour of the review of this bill, that he was committed to doing so at the governance level, at the board level. So this bill needs to include this amendment that makes it explicit. We need women in the trades—they are welcome; they have a voice at the table—and also people of diverse backgrounds.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Well, it's interesting. The previous motion would have stated in law and stated the mandate of the Skilled Trades Ontario new entity. We're going to support this motion to make sure that at least there's some representation at the table, but without including those groups in the legislation, and walking back the mandate of the inclusivity around skilled trades, I'm somewhat doubtful that the government will move forward in that direction. That said, representation matters, language matters, and ensuring that the board must include at least one member who is a woman and one member who is Black, Indigenous or a person of colour is the very least that we can do.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: I just first of all want to say that thanks to my amendment we have included everyone in Ontario, and we obviously do not want to leave anybody behind.

On to this amendment, appointments should always be based on competencies. The appointments process will follow the Agencies and Appointments Directive, just like any other public appointment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Hunter.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I respectfully disagree, Chair, with the comments that have come forward. I'm just shocked at them, in fact, given so much evidence about our agencies, boards and commissions lacking diversity, and it is not due to competence, I can tell you that. It is not due to competence, and I'm shocked I'm hearing that from the honourable member. It is not due to the lack of competence that there is not diversity and inclusion on our existing roster of boards, agencies and commissions at the leadership level. It is through the leadership of governments making it part of the legislation, part of a requirement and a standard and an expectation that will change it. It is not due to the lack of competence or of finding qualified and skilled people.

It is setting the expectation at the leadership, at the governance level that is needed.

We have a panel that the government has set up. Thankfully it has 40% women, but there are no racialized and equity-seeking groups on that panel. It's not just going to happen. We need to require it and make it happen through this legislation and through this amendment.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just about fell off my chair when I heard MPP McKenna talk about competencies around securing diverse and inclusive voices around board committees and boards as a whole. You only have to look at the public service and look at the representation to know that inclusion has not been a priority.

The competency comment is astounding. Equally as astounding, though, is the comment that the previous motion did anything whatsoever to promote diversity and inclusion. The government actively removed including better representation of women, Indigenous and other racialized groups and equity-seeking groups from an amendment to make skilled trades more inclusive. You couldn't make this stuff up. I'm sure my mother is the only one watching right now, but it is astounding to me that the government would, at the very least—this is just basically trying to ensure that there is some inclusion and representation around the board table, hopefully as a catch-all to make up for the removal of including better representation of women and Indigenous and other racialized groups and equity-seeking groups.

It defies all logic and evidence and research that we have on those who are from the equity-seeking groups who have tried to enter the skilled trades and who have experienced barrier after barrier after barrier to entering the skilled trades.

We're going to support MPP Hunter's motion, but we will maintain that the watered-down version of amendment 6 is not going to solve the problem.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Hunter?

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: I just want to also say—I have to speak on behalf of equity-seeking groups and racialized people in this province—that it is not due to our lack of competency that we are not represented on boards and oversight bodies in this province. It is insulting, in fact, to say that. In the process of drafting legislation and law that could rectify the inequities and the imbalances that we experience, it is shocking that the government does not actually understand that and does not understand that there is a problem here that needs to be fixed.

I agree with you, my esteemed colleague from the NDP, that the previous amendment doesn't fix it. It's just that we need something to express that this sector is open to people of all backgrounds, especially to women and especially to racialized and equity-seeking groups in this province, and that we need more and better representation. My simple amendment is a minimum threshold. It is not setting maximums. It is only setting minimums that, at a minimum, an 11-person board will include at least one woman and at least one member from a diverse background. That's all it does.

It won't fix all of the issues. Clearly there are systemic issues across our institutions, including those within our government, that need to take this issue on and see it for what it is: that there are inequities, that there are systemic imbalances that are long-standing and historic. We are at a point of inflection in this province, in this country, in this world where we need to change that. This is a small step towards doing that here in Ontario.

1040

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Harris.

Mr. Mike Harris: Do you know what? It's very interesting that the former minister of this portfolio sits here and wants to virtue signal and do all of these things. She had an opportunity to be able to break down these barriers for people to get into the skilled trades, but she and her government perpetuated the College of Trades, went out there and touted from the rooftops that it was a good thing. Now, she wants to sit here and say that this government isn't doing enough.

We have a very equitable plan moving forward. We have a 50-50, I believe—men versus women, spot on—on the WSIB board. The Skilled Trades Panel that was put together to help inform the direction of this bill also has several women who sit on it. There are racialized, if you will, people who are also on that board. So I'm really not sure where she gets the right to just sit here and say that this government is doing nothing, when we are legitimately trying to move forward with the skilled trades here in the province of Ontario, and for 15 years her government, and she as the minister, sat there and did absolutely nothing.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's a very interesting conversation, but I want to be clear: My wife, who is a woman, is one of the most competent people I know, one of the smartest people I know. I just wanted to make sure I said that. Quite frankly, she has sat on many, many boards as a volunteer.

But the thing that's concerning me most is—I was hoping this part of the PC Party wouldn't raise its head this morning, and it looks like it has. I think that certainly is not where I thought Bill 288 would go as we try to strengthen this bill.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Mamakwa.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, everyone. Thank you for those comments. Thank you, MPP Hunter, for the submission, for the amendment. I had been listening intently, on the discussion. I know that when we talk about Black, Indigenous, people of colour, racialized people—I don't know what to call you guys sometimes when you have that discussion. I'm afraid to say "white people." I don't know what the proper term is—"non-First Nations," "non-Indigenous," "non-Black"? I don't know what the proper term is, and I'm sometimes scared to even talk about that. When we're trying to look at equity, equality for racialized, Indigenous people, sometimes it's a hard discussion.

I've only been in this system as an MPP for almost three years. I see a democracy that's there, but sometimes all we do is put down each other. Is that what democracy is? We

use that—as parties, that’s what we do. That’s what I see, anyway. That’s the system that we’re in.

I’m going to make this comment: It’s very difficult to get into these places, as a First Nations person, as an Indigenous person. This place is a very colonial system. Maybe I don’t have the competency to be here; I don’t know. But I have lived experience, and I think when you start talking about competency and how that’s what you’re going to look at, I see bits and pieces of how racism works, how oppression works, how colonialism works. That discussion that we have here is going on right now. I think sometimes I’ve been so used to just putting it as if it’s what we all expect, but we need to call it out. I think we cannot continue that type of conversation where we’re excluding people, Black, Indigenous and people of colour from being included in the board. For far too long we’ve been left off the table and given scraps from the government. That’s why I support this amendment. Meegwetch.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Cho.

Mr. Stan Cho: I hadn’t planned on speaking to this debate that we’re having now, but I find myself taking exception to two facts here: (1) that MPP Hunter’s government literally—this is a process introduced and followed by her government, but nobody’s talking about the past there in that sense. And (2) Mr. Gates paints the PC Party and decides to play politics with the same brush. I don’t know if Mr. Gates has noticed, but we have quite a few racialized members within our caucus. As I go through a situation where my constituents, my family are going through a disgusting time of Asian hate and racism towards my community, I find this discussion of virtue-signalling and talking about race as a political tool frankly disgusting.

We have not talked about the fact that the policy leads on this file are of Taiwanese and Lebanese descent. We’ve not talked about the fact that WSIB’s board has an equal split between men and women, essentially. We’ve not talked about the fact that the panel had a Black member from LIUNA and two amazing women, including the executive director of the National Electrical Trade Council. We’re not talking about the merited individuals who are from the racialized communities that have made great strides within these boards. Instead, what we hear from the opposition is a politicization of this process based on race. I thought we were better than that. I thought we could move on from that.

You can point to 191 agencies, boards and commissions. Do we need to do better? Absolutely, we do, and those processes are being put in place. Our government is willing to work with all opposition members to achieve those outcomes, but when we play political games using race, we get nowhere. Racism and discrimination are absolutely wrong. We all need to do better in this province, and we need to work together towards those outcomes. But the politics here do not help.

Chair, I’m offended, as somebody who is going through a period of discrimination in my community and in my family, and I will simply suggest that we put this to a vote, because this debate is not helpful to achieving those positive outcomes.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? Seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of MPP Hunter’s amendment, please raise your hand. All those opposed? That’s accordingly lost.

Any debate on section 41, as a whole? Shall section 41 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Accordingly carried.

We’ll now go to section 42. Any debate on section 42? Shall section 42 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

We have new section 42.1, and I see there’s an NDP amendment, number 8. MPP Fife, can I have a motion, please?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that the bill be amended by adding the following section:

“Mandatory trade committees

“42.1(1) The board shall establish a trade committee for each trade and the trade committees’ responsibilities shall be to review trade-specific curricula and to provide advice on the relevant trade to the board.

1050

“Same, composition

“(2) A trade committee established under subsection (1) shall be composed of equal numbers of persons employed in the relevant trade and employers of persons in that trade.”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any brief comments on this motion?

Ms. Catherine Fife: This creates a new subsection that would make mandatory the creation by the authority of industry advisory committees and sets out that these must be composed of an equal number of trades and employing groups. This is an amendment sought by the building trades and also supported by IBEW.

We also heard during committee, Chair, that trade boards need to be in the legislation with stronger language. The trade boards should be filled with qualified people familiar with industry, trade, training curriculum and training standards. These trade boards have been standard practice in the past, boots on the ground, reporting and keeping government informed and accountable. We heard through the delegations about how important it is to have informed voices specifically around the curricula. In the past, these trade boards have actually served the skilled trades very well.

We’re hoping that the government is responsive to this amendment because we think that it would strengthen the skilled trades going forward.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: Skilled Trades Ontario will establish industry advisory committees to ensure that stakeholders will be heard. These advisory committees can inform things like trade standards, curriculum, equivalency assessments, labour market trends, advancement in technology and others. The Skilled Trades Panel and our government heard loud and clear that OCOT was paralyzed and politicized by too many committees, so that’s why we’re opposing this.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP Hunter.

Ms. Mitzie Hunter: This was something that was repeatedly said, that this bill lacks the specificity in the role of those individuals who perform the tasks in the trades. One of the witnesses said that they're hopeful that perhaps there will be a process to hear from those individuals, particularly as it relates to curriculum development. But it doesn't explicitly state that, so having language around these committees is needed to make this bill complete.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: We certainly need language that's going to make the bill stronger. This creates a new subsection that would make mandatory the creation by the authority of industry advisory committees, and sets out that these must be composed of an equal number of trades and employer groups. This is important to realize as well: This is an amendment sought by the building trades, about 150,000 skilled trade workers, and it's also supported by the IBEW, which are the electrical workers.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? Are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of MPP Fife's amendment, please raise your hand. All those opposed? The motion is lost.

There are no amendments to sections 43 and 44. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Is there any debate? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall sections 43 and 44 carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

We'll now go to section 45. I see there is NDP amendment number 9. Can I have a motion, please? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 45(4) of the bill be amended by striking out "may establish" and substituting "shall establish".

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Do you wish to make brief comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Obviously, this is just related to our previous motion, which makes mandatory that the future CEO of the authority set up these advisory committees and turns the "may" clause into a "shall" clause. We've talked about how important language is to ensure that this bill takes skilled trades in the right direction, and that there's clarity around what the intentions of the bill are, despite the fact that there is no purpose clause. So this was one more attempt that we had to see if the government would recognize that the future CEO of the authority set these advisory committees up so that, really, the informed voices of the skilled trades are impacting the direction of the new authority. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you very much. This really relates to NDP motion number 8, that makes it mandatory that the future CEO of the authority set up these advisory committees, turning a "may" clause into a "shall" clause.

This is probably one of my favourite speeches: If you really care about making the language stronger, "may" is—and I'll say it again—nothing more than a weasel word. They may do it; they may not. They may consider it. I may have a headache. There's all kinds of things around the "may."

"Shall" is very clear. It means that you shall do it. It doesn't get any stronger; it doesn't get any clearer. It makes the legislation very clear so we're not arguing in the future, "Well, I may do it. I may not. I may consider it." It says they "shall." It's a key word in any legislation. It's a key word in any collective agreement in the province of Ontario. So we're requesting you turn the "may" to a strong word, to make it clear so that everybody understands, and change it to "shall." Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: The language in this clause may be problematic, as it would potentially require the CEO to establish an industry advisory committee for every matter relating to any object of the agency. This may be overly burdensome, impractical and would limit the ability of the agency to obtain focused industry input on required areas. The NDP is consistent in their efforts to add bureaucracy. That's why we're opposing it.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? Seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of MPP Fife's amendment, please raise your hand. All those opposed—MPP Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Recorded vote, please.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): It's already been asked now. You have to ask for a recorded vote when I ask, "Are the members prepared to vote?"

All those opposed, please? It's accordingly lost.

We have another amendment: government amendment number 10. Can I have a motion, please? MPP McKenna.

Ms. Jane McKenna: I move that subsection 45(4) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Industry advisory committees

"(4) The chief executive officer shall establish such industry advisory committees as the chief executive officer considers necessary or advisable for the purpose of advising the chief executive officer on matters relating to the objects of the corporation."

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Do you wish to make any brief comments, MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: No, that's fine, thanks.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's interesting that the government has moved this amendment. Ultimately, the difference, of course, is that they have said that the CEO can establish these committees if he or she deems it necessary.

However, the previous argument that MPP McKenna just stated around voting against our amendment to establish these industry advisory committees—she described it as bureaucracy. We do not feel that having informed committees, as traditionally was established in the past through the trade boards, is bureaucracy when you are actually including the lived experience of those who are journeymen into establishing a stronger skilled trades program. The mixed signals that we're getting from this government on the pushback when we are bringing those voices to this committee, quite honestly, is a little frustrating. It's not surprising, but it's frustrating.

1100

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate? MPP Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: To me, it looks like this is nothing more than top-down control. Again, the words that I have a big problem with: “as the chief executive officer” deems “necessary.” Again, I know that some of my colleagues on the Conservative side don’t like this, but they’re nothing more than weasel words into the language to control from the top down. We’re definitely going to oppose this. I don’t think control is where we should be going here. Again, I think these weasel words should be taken out.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any further debate?

Before we vote, MPP Martin, can you please confirm your attendance?

Mrs. Robin Martin: It’s MPP Martin. I’m here in Toronto.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you. So we’ll now vote on government amendment number 10. Are members ready to vote?

All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? It’s accordingly carried.

Any debate on section 45, as amended? Are members ready to vote? Shall section 45, as amended, carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? Carried.

There are no amendments to sections 46 to 62. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Agreed. Is there any debate? MPP Smith.

Mr. Dave Smith: Could we have a recorded vote on this, please?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote has been requested. Are members prepared to vote?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Martin, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? It’s accordingly carried.

We’ll now move to section 63. I see there’s government amendment number 11. Can I have a motion, MPP McKenna?

Ms. Jane McKenna: Yes. I move that subsections 63(5) and (6) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“Disclosure, minister

“(5) The minister may disclose personal information that is collected for the purposes of administering this act and that” it “is under the control of the ministry,

“(a) to any person employed in the administration of similar legislation in another province or territory of Canada;

“(b) to any person for the purpose of administering the act or fulfilling the minister’s functions under the act; or

“(c) to any person if, in the opinion of the minister, the disclosure or communication would clearly benefit the individual who is the subject of the information.

“Disclosure, corporation

“(6) With the approval of the chief executive officer, the corporation may disclose personal information that is collected for the purposes of administering this act and that is under the control of the corporation,

“(a) to any person employed in the administration of similar legislation in another province or territory of Canada;

“(b) to any person for the purpose of administering the act or fulfilling the corporation’s functions under the act; or

“(c) to any person if, in the opinion of the chief executive officer, the disclosure or communication would clearly benefit the individual who is the subject of the information.”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP McKenna, can you just read the second line of number (5), where it says, “Disclosure, minister”? The second line, “to any person employed....”

Ms. Jane McKenna: “(b) to any person for the purpose of administering”—

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): No, (a). Sorry, I apologize. Just number (5), actually: “The minister may disclose....”

Ms. Jane McKenna: “(5) The minister may disclose personal information that is collected for the purposes of administering this act and that is under the control of the ministry....”

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Thank you so much.

Ms. Jane McKenna: You’re welcome.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Any debate on MPP McKenna’s motion? Are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of MPP McKenna’s amendment, please raise your hand. All those opposed? It is accordingly carried.

Any debate on section 63, as amended? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall section 63, as amended, carry? All those in favour, please raise your hand. All those opposed? It is accordingly carried.

There are no amendments to sections 64 to 73. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement?

MPP Harris?

Mr. Mike Harris: Could we have a recorded vote please, Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote has been requested. Is there any debate, first of all? No? Are the members prepared to vote? A recorded vote. Shall sections 64 to 73, inclusive, carry?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Martin, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? It’s accordingly carried.

We are now on the title of the bill. Shall the title of the bill carry? Is there any debate, first of all? No debate? Are the members ready to vote?

MPP Smith?

Mr. Dave Smith: A recorded vote on this, please.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote. All those in favour, please raise your hand.

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Martin, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? It is accordingly carried.

Shall Bill 288, as amended, carry? Is there any debate? MPP Smith?

Mr. Dave Smith: Earlier on in the clause-by-clause section of this, MPP Gates said that there were a number of things that they saw value in on this. I'd like to point out that they couldn't even vote in favour of the title of this bill. Yet he says that they are trying to work with us. Something as non-controversial as the title of the bill—he couldn't even find it in himself to say yes to that. It's really unfortunate.

I understand that amendments may have been contentious and they may have decided not to vote in favour of an amendment or have something with respect to an amendment recorded, but I can't for the life of me understand how the opposition can come out and say, "We like some of the things in this bill and we're in favour of it" and yet vote against, or not vote for anything, including something as non-controversial as the title. It really is disgusting to see a lack of action that matches the words that they put forward.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Perhaps MPP Smith doesn't really understand what's gone on here. We heard almost two full days of delegations from the building and construction trades, who identified concerns with this bill, mainly the portability of the trades, the compulsory and non-compulsory definitions. They identified safety concerns if those amendments had not been met. That matters more than the title of the bill.

Nobody cares about the inside politics of the committee, but they do care how the government voted on, say, creating a more diverse board. They do care that the government watered down making the skilled trades more inclusive. They will care that because of the motions and the amendments that you voted down under a recorded vote and did not honour your relationship with the building trades and that trust that you said that you valued as a government—that's what people care about.

This bill is going to go to third reading. We are going to reflect what we heard through the delegations and we are going to be very clear about how we tried to make this bill a stronger piece of legislation. They don't care about us bickering around the title and who voted for the title.

At the end of the day, our decision as a caucus will be made as a caucus, and our lead on this bill will get to point out the fact that one of your members described cherry-picking when we were talking about 150,000 voices of skilled trade workers in this committee. Really, this is just pettiness. We're going to debate it at third reading. People are going to know very clearly how we feel about strengthening the skilled trades, making them safer and making it a more streamlined process, and certainly making it a more inclusive process.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): Further debate? Seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? MPP Harris, you requested a recorded vote, right?

Mr. Mike Harris: Let's have a recorded vote on all of the remaining votes that we're going to have.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): It has to be one by one. We'll do this one first. Shall Bill 288, as amended, carry?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Martin, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? Accordingly carried.

Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House? Is there any debate? MPP Smith?

Mr. Dave Smith: A recorded vote on this one, too.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): A recorded vote. There's no debate. Are the members prepared to vote? A recorded vote has been requested. Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House?

Ayes

Stan Cho, Harris, Martin, McKenna, Roberts, Dave Smith.

The Chair (Mr. Amarjot Sandhu): All those opposed? It's accordingly carried.

That is all the business we have for today. I would like to thank all the committee members and committee staff for their assistance. This committee is now adjourned until further notice. Have a good weekend. Stay safe.

The committee adjourned at 1114.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Chair / Président

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu (Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest PC)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

Mr. Jeremy Roberts (Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean PC)

Mr. Ian Arthur (Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles ND)

Mr. Stan Cho (Willowdale PC)

Ms. Catherine Fife (Waterloo ND)

Ms. Mitzie Hunter (Scarborough–Guildwood L)

Mr. Logan Kanapathi (Markham–Thornhill PC)

Mr. Sol Mamakwa (Kiiwetinoong ND)

Mr. David Piccini (Northumberland–Peterborough South / Northumberland–Peterborough-Sud PC)

Mr. Jeremy Roberts (Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean PC)

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu (Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest PC)

Mr. Dave Smith (Peterborough–Kawartha PC)

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam (Scarborough–Rouge Park PC)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Mr. Wayne Gates (Niagara Falls ND)

Mr. Mike Harris (Kitchener–Conestoga PC)

Mrs. Robin Martin (Eglinton–Lawrence PC)

Ms. Jane McKenna (Burlington PC)

Clerk / Greffière

Ms. Julia Douglas

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Catherine Oh, legislative counsel