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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The next item on the agenda is private members' public business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS'
PUBLIC BUSINESS

NON-PROFIT SECTOR
APPRECIATION WEEK ACT, 2021

LOI DE 2021

SUR LA SEMAINE DE RECONNAISSANCE
DU SECTEUR SANS BUT LUCRATIF

Mrs. Wai moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 9, An Act to proclaim Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week / Projet de loi 9, Loi proclamant la Semaine de reconnaissance du secteur sans but lucratif.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member will have up to 12 minutes to make her presentation, and then we'll move on from there. I recognize now the member on the floor, the member for Richmond Hill.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: It is a distinct honour for me to have this opportunity to speak today on private member's bill, Bill 9, An Act to proclaim Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week. My colleagues will recall that I initially introduced this legislation back in May, passing second reading with unanimous support. I thank you all for it. I had support from both sides of the House. Thank you again for the support, and I hope you will again vote in favour of this legislation.

The purpose of this bill is to recognize and appreciate the dedicated service of the professionals working in Ontario's non-profit organizations. Mr. Speaker, Ontario's non-profit sector is composed of organizations and charities that operate for our collective social benefit. Their work impacts all of our daily lives, even though we may not notice it. They are a major contributor to economic innovation and job creation. Their one million professionals, driven by their mission, are experts in delivering social, economic and environmental solutions, especially in the local community.

They enrich our quality of life by promoting mental and physical health, social equity, education, the arts, sports, child development, senior care and much more. They serve millions of Ontarians every year, in every corner of the province.

The professionals who devote themselves to this sector are among the most reliable and enthusiastic workers in

the province. They are driven by vision and a mission to carry out their responsibilities with a deep sense of pride, passion, and persistence. Their work is indispensable and heroic, but it is often very invisible. They are, Mr. Speaker, our invisible champions. We need to celebrate these invisible champions in our communities.

If passed, the bill will proclaim the third week of February each year as Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week. This special designation will provide Ontarians with a week-long opportunity to express their gratitude and encouragement to the non-profit workers who have impacted many lives and played a role in building our province.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to also bring attention to the significant impact the non-profit sector has on jobs and our economy. Ontario's non-profits employ more than one million workers, of whom 600,000 are full-time workers. These jobs contribute to 2.6% of Ontario's overall GDP, which is more than \$50 billion in economic impact.

Another important fact to note is that 45% of the income earned by non-profit organizations is done so through sponsorship and fundraising. By recognizing and appreciating them through an appreciation week, we will be strengthening their credibility and thus enabling them to be more self-reliant.

The work done by the non-profit sector has become more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their responsibilities are already demanding in normal times, but this past year, they have gone above and beyond their limits to continue to deliver critical supports and assistance to the most vulnerable in our communities. Now, more than ever, they need our support and encouragement. While navigating the complex challenges of operating under such strenuous circumstances, they have helped those who are suffering from isolation and loneliness to find purpose and meaning in their lives. Yes, the work has doubled, but the donations have diminished a lot, I would have to say, because of this pandemic.

To all the professionals in the non-profit sector: You truly have been instrumental in helping our communities stay positive and hopeful during such a dark period. I want to say thank you.

As the MPP for Richmond Hill, I have announced great funding news to some of the non-profit organizations in Richmond Hill, including the Richmond Hill food bank, the Legion, Yellow Brick House, Carefirst, Mon Sheong, Richmond Hill Soccer Club, Richmond Hill Canoe Club, and many more. In fact, financially, it's what they need, but it's not the most important thing for them. They really

need encouragement and appreciation from us. They need donations and volunteering from the community. This is what they're looking forward to. We will do our best to support and fund them, but the appreciation is a lot more valuable for them.

The CEO of one of the organizations shared with me that she was worried that she had only enough funds for two more months—but just at that time, there was a donor coming in with a donation. What supports her is not just the money, the financial part this donation provides her; it is the encouragement and appreciation and partnership from this individual that gives her a lot of passion to continue what she's doing.

Mr. Speaker, Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week will help ignite the passion and the performance of the workers who are understandably exhausted and feeling burnt-out. It will help boost the morale of the organizations and charities that have been forced to downsize and lay off employees. Our simple gesture can be a source of strength and persistence for these unseen warriors.

With this appreciation week, we want to demonstrate to the next generation's youth that the non-profit sector is really valued. This is also a great way to set an example for the younger generation—that they can fulfill their own passion and perhaps help others in joining this sector and contributing to the growth of our province.

We also want to encourage Ontarians to volunteer, to donate and to foster impactful change in their own communities. The non-profit sector has helped build our province. Now it is our turn to build them up.

I would like to take this time to share a little bit of my own personal experience. I began serving in my community as a teenager in Hong Kong. My passion in serving grew stronger as I arrived in Canada, now nearly 40 years ago. I volunteered in a cancer support group supporting special-needs children.

1810

But being a volunteer is different from running a non-profit organization. I had this experience when I was on maternity leave. At that time, I was invited to start a Christian newspaper ministry called Herald Monthly. During maternity leave, I took care of this newspaper. This newspaper helps immigrants so that they know how to settle in Canada and how to merge into the community better. Not only did I have to produce this publication from scratch, I had to promote it in order to bring in advertising to finance it for the printing. I worked with the support of a Christian organization, but I was the only staff, with no pay. I had to recruit many volunteers to work with me. I had to share my vision and seek donations to support the operation. I know and understand the challenges of running a non-profit organization; however, the encouragement we received inspired us to plow through many challenges.

It brings me great joy to know that today Herald Monthly continues to have a positive impact on so many lives. Today, the organization employs six staff. They produce 35,000 printed copies in Canada east and 25,000 in Canada west. It has also developed an online version, as

well as audio and video programs. It has been one of the most respected Chinese media in Canada.

I'm happy that through this bill we can motivate and encourage non-profit organizations. This bill is supported by the province's leading non-profit sector advocates, and they assisted me in supporting and getting this bill through. They include the United Way, the Bhayana Family Foundation and the Ontario Nonprofit Network, to name just a few. They share my sentiments, and they have been shining lights in the sector. They have been working very hard together with me on this bill. Many of the non-profit organizations are very excited as soon as they hear about this, that we're going to recognize them. I can see their responses are so overwhelming. In fact, I know that they're watching me now, and I will continue to do the best together with them once this bill is approved. We will be going and promoting this for the non-profit organizations.

I hope at this time the members across the aisle will also join me together in this effort and support this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Congratulations to the member from Richmond Hill on her motion number 9, Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week. Speaker, I'm delighted to stand on behalf of my constituents in London–Fanshawe to talk about this bill.

It's very important to understand that non-profits serve an important role in our communities in keeping people safe, housed, fed and clothed. In my office, like all of us MPPs, we know how vital these organizations are in helping our constituents with finding employment, information, community and mental health.

The non-profit sector specifically contributes \$65 billion to Ontario's GDP. To say non-profits are the lifeblood of our communities is an understatement. Of course, these organizations deserve recognition, but they also deserve more. We rely on them to be our community's safety net, but over my last decade as an MPP in London–Fanshawe, I've noticed a disturbing trend: The help available is dwindling. More and more, I see that folks have to be in crisis before they actually qualify for help. Anyone who believes that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure will tell you that this is troubling, and it has gotten worse during the pandemic.

For example, Anova, a women's shelter in London, reported a doubling in people accessing their help due to an increase in domestic violence, while the food bank reported a 20% increase in people needing food hampers over the past six months.

Mojdeh Cox, the executive director of the Pillar Nonprofit Network in London, told the London Free Press today that many non-profits had to close their doors during the pandemic. Many have had to have massive lay-offs, while this sector already finds it hard to attract and retain talent.

According to the Ontario Nonprofit Network, almost two thirds of non-profits reported an increase in demand for programs and services. At the same time, half reported

pandemic-related losses in revenue. She said: “An increase in clients says the demand is up.

“Donations are down. Staff is minimal. Colleagues are tired. This is the state of who helps those who need the help.”

Some 69% of organizations surveyed by the Ontario Nonprofit Network say that they did not receive any provincial supports, which is no surprise, because this government spent \$427 million lower than budgeted for social services last year—this on top of the \$15-million cut from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in 2019, which slashed the budgets of community groups.

During the pandemic, not-for-profits were left to live on the front lines with little to no support. Throughout the pandemic, the opposition implored this government to ban all evictions until the end of the pandemic, to implement a utility payment freeze, to issue an emergency 75% commercial rent subsidy. Non-profits should have had access to all these subsidies and grants for small businesses. There should have been a made-in-Ontario permanent sick day plan. Instead, we heard of non-profit front-line workers having to beg and plead for masks and PPE to keep them safe, while the province sat on billions of dollars meant to go towards the pandemic relief.

Yes, recognition is important, but respect is better, initiative is better, action is better.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos: I’m pleased to join the debate on Bill 9, introduced by my colleague the member for Richmond Hill. She has introduced a bill to establish a Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week, which could not be more timely.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck Ontario, we’ve all been reminded of the hard work performed by non-profits, their staff and their volunteers. We’ve also been reminded about the essential work this is to people who need help in Ontario. Non-profits are part of the glue that keeps our province and our communities together, about one million committed, dedicated staff and volunteers in every part of Ontario. They help individuals, families and seniors. They protect our environment and green spaces. They organize amateur sports for kids. We enjoy the fruits of their work when we visit museums, galleries and historic sites. Non-profits make life better for millions of people across Ontario, and they provide the opportunity for volunteers to give back and to care for others in their communities. Their staff and volunteers have done this for many years, and for all of that, we are thanking and recognizing them with this bill.

Speaker, they deserve to be honoured. They have done great work. They’ve done selfless work. But then COVID hit Ontario hard, and everything that non-profits were doing became so much more important. Thousands in our community were isolated by lockdowns. Seniors, short of food, still needed that delivery from Meals on Wheels. Families whose breadwinners lost their jobs needed to supplement from food banks, and our non-profits stepped

in to fill that need. They kept their services going. Volunteers and staff still showed up every day. They made their deliveries. They helped those individuals who are more vulnerable in our community.

Non-profits during COVID kept help flowing to those who needed it, and our government knew that non-profits needed our help. We knew their staff were working on the front line, doing what no one else could do, so we provided the tools and resources to keep them going.

Here is some of what we did to help:

- over \$1 billion through the social services relief fund to help Ontarians affected by COVID-19, including those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless;

- \$176 million to enhance access to mental health and addiction supports;

- \$17 million for 300 Seniors Active Living Centres to fight off isolation and assure safety;

- \$5 million for food rescue organizations; and

- \$43 million to support festivals and cultural events across the province, to help people reconnect with their communities.

1820

Non-profits stood by Ontarians, and I’m proud our government stood by them.

One of the things we know about non-profits is that they know our communities. They are on the ground, working with people and solving problems every day. They are the heart of our communities, and they are vital to the success of our society. During COVID, we funded many of them directly and through the social services funding we provided to municipalities. It was a true partnership among governments and local groups.

I can think of many of these non-profits that continue to do great work in my own community of Oakville North—Burlington:

- food banks and providers, such as the Salvation Army, the Burlington Food Bank, Food for Life and Food4Kids;

- Meals on Wheels, with their volunteers who have been delivering hot meals to seniors for 45 years;

- non-profits who protect the vulnerable, such as Halton Women’s Place for abused women, the Halton Children’s Aid Society, and the Kerr Street Mission;

- all of the sports leagues whose volunteers organize soccer, baseball, hockey, cricket and many sports; and

- our environmental champions—BurlingtonGreen, OakvilleGreen and the Halton Environmental Network—planting trees, preserving rivers and streams, cleaning up our parks.

I think of the many not-for-profits that work through our religious institutions, our temples, mosques, and churches. I think of the food programs for seniors at St. Luke’s Anglican Church and organizations such as the Vaishno Devi Temple, the Halton Sikh Cultural Association and the Dar Foundation, and the work done by cultural groups such as the Oakville Chinese Network, the Coptic churches in Oakville and Burlington who delivered food to those in need during COVID, and so many others.

There are too many groups to name them all, but I thank them and all of their volunteers and staff for the work they've done. I want them to know that we at Queen's Park recognize and appreciate all that they have done and continue to do, and it's why our government made sure they had the necessary supports to get through the crisis.

Through our social services funding and resilient communities program, under the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we made sure they were supported. Here are just a few in my own community: \$238,000 for Food for Life; \$83,000 for Halton Food for Thought; \$100,000 for Oakville Meals on Wheels; \$87,000 for Acclaim Health's programs for people with dementia; and for Community Living Burlington, \$110,000.

We know the value of the work they do and the difference they make in people's lives. This bill has my full support, and I look forward to honouring non-profit organizations during non-profits appreciation week every February. I'd like to say a personal thanks to the member from Richmond Hill for her compassion, all the work she's done in the not-for-profit sector over the years and for introducing this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Burch: I want to thank the member from Richmond Hill for putting this private member's bill forward. It's an issue that's near and dear to my heart. Just as we start, I think the member talked about some of these statistics, but it's worth repeating again that 2.6% of Ontario's gross domestic product is from this sector, which is really an incredible number—\$50 billion in economic impact and over one million workers, as the member mentioned.

Yesterday and today have been a bit of a trip down memory lane for me. Yesterday, I got to talk about my experience with front-line health care workers from 2000 to 2010, and in 2010, I decided on a career change. So I left the labour movement after about 15 years in the labour movement and took a management job, which I still get ribbed about from some of my friends in the labour movement. But I took a job as an executive director and CEO at a not-for-profit called the Niagara Folk Arts Multicultural Centre, which is a settlement agency for newcomer and refugee families. We offered a full range of settlement programs, federally funded and provincially funded.

I'm glad the member talked about the staff and really focused on the staff, because I've worked all over the place and there really is no sector like the not-for-profit when it comes to fantastic staff. At this agency, when I started, we had a budget of about \$1.7 million and about 25 staff. Then the Syrian refugee crisis hit, and when I left, we had a \$3-million budget and 45 full-time staff, just incredible people. Forty-two of them were women; more than half of them were newcomers who had been hired. Often, settlement agencies hire newcomers after they've gone through the programs—just fantastic staff.

I was very proud that we kept full-time employment. Almost 100% of the employees were full-time. We were a living-wage employer.

Staff spoke 14 languages, which blew my mind. I had an executive assistant who spoke six languages and couldn't get a job for several years when she came to Canada from Lebanon. When I met her, she was working at a call centre. I found out she knew six languages. She worked for a huge company in Lebanon and had just not found a job because she was a newcomer. She became kind of the right-hand person in the agency.

With the member's experience in the not-for-profit sector, I know that she knows how fantastic employees and volunteers are in that sector, so I'm really supportive of this bill. I want to keep it positive and just say it's a private member's bill, and having a week when we can recognize these workers and the fantastic work that these agencies do will help bring recognition to a sector that doesn't always get the recognition they deserve.

I do want to talk briefly—I have about a minute left—about the Trillium grants, because I know, for me, those grants were really important. If there's one thing this government could do, it's to pump a little more money into those Trillium grants. We renovated an entire heritage building with Trillium grants; we saved a heritage building where our programs ran. We started an environmental agency for newcomers. We had innovation grants where we helped female newcomers start businesses and entrepreneurial programs. Those Trillium grants, all of the envelopes that they offer, are so important for not-for-profits, so I hope that's something the government will consider going forward.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour to rise today to speak in favour of Bill 9, the Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week Act. I want to thank the member from Richmond Hill for bringing this bill forward.

The non-profit sector is near and dear to my heart, Speaker. I oftentimes talk about my life prior to politics as an entrepreneur and a small business owner, but I also started non-profit organizations and have served on the boards of many non-profit organizations. I feel like non-profit organizations are often underappreciated organizations in our communities, even though people in our communities highly value them—highly, highly value them—and I think during the pandemic, more so than ever.

Just coincidentally, this morning I had the opportunity to speak with a group of non-profit leaders in my riding of Guelph. I meet with them on a regular basis. They reminded me this morning that there are over 58,000 non-profits and charities operating in communities in Ontario. They have over 5.2 million volunteers actively engaged in their communities. They employ over one million workers, and I can guarantee you, from my own experience in being the vice-president of a non-profit organization, the staff are incredibly dedicated. They work long, hard hours, oftentimes for pay where they deserve far more than they receive because of their dedication and commitment to the

work they do and the care they have for the community and the people they serve.

1830

Non-profits contribute over \$65 billion to Ontario's GDP, as has already been stated. That's more than many of the vital economic sectors that we think of in our economy. Without a doubt, non-profits are the backbone of our communities. They do so much for our communities. They keep the most vulnerable fed. They help to house people. They make sure our children have access to recreation and arts and other activities. They ensure that arts and culture are alive and well. They make sure that our environment is protected. They educate people and they serve people.

But they're under threat right now, and so this is the one thing I would like to say: Can we work across party lines? Can we work together to support non-profits? According to the Ontario Nonprofit Network, 61% of non-profits lost volunteers during COVID. In my own riding of Guelph, 72% of non-profits reported a loss in volunteers. Financial revenues for many non-profits are down because of COVID—because of the economic fallout and the challenges around fundraising.

So I would ask the members opposite to work with us and provide the stabilization funding that the non-profit sector is asking for, to work with ministers in your government to ensure that the Ontario Small Business Support Grant eligibility is expanded to include non-profits that have oftentimes fallen through the cracks or haven't been included in that kind of support. The non-profit sector is asking for micro-grants of \$1,000 to \$10,000 to support volunteer-only run organizations that have been especially hard-hit during COVID and oftentimes don't have the staff capacity to keep themselves going.

Like the member who just spoke, if we could talk about increasing the amount of money available through the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support non-profits—I can't tell you how many non-profits in my own riding that the OTF grants have been a lifeline for during this pandemic.

I too want to keep today's debate positive. I want this bill to pass and I want an appreciation week for non-profits, but I'm also hoping we can all agree that the economic, community, social and cultural values that non-profits provide our communities deserve additional financial support.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Donna Skelly: I want to begin by applauding the member for Richmond Hill for bringing this private member's bill to the chamber. It is an initiative that recognizes work done by people within the non-profit sector by establishing the Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week.

During the pandemic, our non-profit organizations and, in particular, their volunteers stepped up to support the most vulnerable in our communities. I think of the many volunteers in my riding of Flamborough—Glanbrook who

have been preparing meals for seniors and just helping out the disabled throughout the pandemic. I also want to talk about the work that volunteers and workers within the non-profit sector have done to help feed the hungry, to help house the homeless and to deal with mental health issues, all of which were exacerbated throughout the pandemic. These men and women truly are our unsung heroes.

There are more than 58,000 registered charities in Ontario. They make up organizations that are there when we need them the most. They are there to further the collective good.

I'd like to speak right now about a couple of amazing women that work at not-for-profits in my hometown of Hamilton. I know that the member from Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas will probably know these women, including Denise Christopherson, who is the CEO of the YWCA, a woman who is absolutely passionate about her job. She has worked tirelessly to help other women and girls who need some help. She's there 24/7. And my very dear friend Julie Shea Samson, who is one of the founders and operators of Centre[3], an artist-run centre that helps create social change through the arts. Both of these women could work in pretty much any sector in a senior executive role making some pretty serious money, but they chose to work at the not-for-profits that they do because they are passionate about what they do and they believe in these organizations. They believe they can make a difference, and they have.

Mr. Speaker, as we've heard throughout the afternoon and now going into the evening, not-for-profits are critically important contributors to our province's economic innovation and, of course, job creation. A million employees work in the not-for-profit sector in Ontario. They are experts in delivering social, economic and environmental solutions, especially at the local level. Animal rights advocates, environmentalists, groups that support seniors, people who are impoverished and refugees wanting to build a new life in Canada are just a few of the organizations within the non-profit sector. Anyone who has faced a cancer diagnosis or is dealing with a debilitating cognitive condition, such as Alzheimer's, knows how valuable the support offered by non-profit agencies can be.

As the name suggests, non-profits are organized for a public or mutual benefit, rather than producing profits for investors. Nearly half of the income generated by non-profits is earned through sponsorship and fundraising. But throughout the pandemic, donations have plummeted, while the demand for service has exploded.

Non-profits can be informal neighbourhood associations, soup kitchens, self-help groups or large umbrella groups, such as the United Way. These organizations and the people who work for them enrich our communities. They enrich our quality of life by promoting positive initiatives in mental and physical health, the arts, social equity, education, child development and much, much more. They better the lives of millions of Ontarians each and every year. They are professionals and volunteers who are devoted to the non-profit sector, and they are among the most committed and enthusiastic employees right

across Ontario. They are driven by a vision and a mission, and they have a deep sense of dedication to the people they serve.

I'd like to share another example of the great work within the not-for-profit sector, work we are all aware of, by the Red Cross. Whenever there is a major fire or a flood or any other natural disaster that has left people homeless, the volunteers with the Red Cross are there to help.

The work performed by non-profit organizations is crucial, but often it's invisible. For the most part, the general public doesn't really see the vital work they do.

Mr. Speaker, a week of recognition for the non-profit sector may inspire others to get involved in these organizations. It may inspire others to get involved by donating their time and their skills to people in need. Again, I'd like to thank the member from Richmond Hill for bringing this private member's bill forward, and I want to thank the many people who work in this sector. They do make Ontario a better place to live.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Further debate?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I do want to also thank the member from Richmond Hill for reintroducing this bill. We supported it the first time, and we will be supporting it again.

I'm proud to say I worked also, as many here, in the not-for-profit for many years. I worked at the Social Planning and Research Council, which is an organization that, for 60 years, has been dealing with issues of inequity, like poverty and especially child poverty. I think we all in this House need to acknowledge that one in four, about 25%, of kids in Ontario can be living in poverty. If you are from a lone-parent family, if you're a racialized kid, rural, remote, Indigenous, you can be living in worse situations than 25%. But the kids who are living in the deepest poverty in this province are kids who are growing up living on social assistance.

Last week, I co-hosted the second in a series of town halls called Frozen in Time. I co-hosted that with Tom Cooper from the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the Hamilton Social Work Action Committee. Really, it just needs to be said that rates for Ontario Works and ODSP have been woefully low for years, ever since Mike Harris took a wrecking ball to rates. And then, after 15 years of Liberal governments with no increases, we had this government come in and slash in half a planned increase. So the question is: How could anyone survive on \$733 a month in this province without the help of not-for-profits?

1840

The Hamilton Food Share tells us three out of four people visiting food banks are on Ontario Works. What does this look like? This looks like kids going to school hungry. And who is filling their stomachs? Not-for-profits. They are the ones that are working to fix this gap, organizations like Food4Kids that makes sure that kids go home on weekends with backpacks full of healthy food.

In my community of Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas, there are three community fridges. One is Today's Family; that offers a fridge full of nutritious food for families to

access. Neighbour to Neighbour, a wonderful organization run by Denise Arkell and all kinds of dedicated volunteers and folks, they have a food bank. They also have the Hamilton Community Food Centre. I was very proud to serve on the board that worked to make that community food centre a reality.

A big issue in all of our communities has to be housing and homelessness. Despite what seems to be the Premier's message that building highways will fix homelessness, it is the not-for-profits in our community that are addressing this issue.

The YWCA has been serving women for over 130 years and they work to fill this gap. They create incredible and innovative programs to address a need. The most recent example of that is the midwifery program for homeless women that they're running out of the YWCA.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the dedication from Denise Davy's book called *Her Name Was Margaret*. The dedication reads: "To Margaret and every person who calls the streets their home."

I would also like to salute, myself, all the not-for-profits that are addressing housing and homelessness: Good Shepherd, Mission Services, Interval House, the Salvation Army, Wesley Urban Ministries—I know I have forgotten some, Mr. Speaker. There are so many, because we know there aren't enough shelters in our community to fill the need.

Finally, what I would like to end by saying is that this government has not stepped up to the plate the way that not-for-profits have during COVID, to support our not-for-profits. Yes, let's create a week to recognize the not-for-profits. Seven days, great, but we need to support these organizations 365 days a year. They're there for us; we need to be there for them as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The time allotted for debate on the bill has expired. The member for Richmond Hill will have two minutes to respond to what she heard this afternoon.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: Thank you to all the members who have spoken. I really thank you for your support.

I understand that, yes, the non-profit organizations have had a difficult time during the pandemic because they really serve a lot and also the volunteers diminished at that time.

When I first put out this bill earlier this year in May, we were hoping to do this special appreciation week in October. Now, since I am presenting this bill again, I want to put it up—not in October anymore for next year, but I would like to have it in February because we want them to know that, because of what they have done, they need our encouragement sooner than later.

Our government really sees the value of all of these non-profit organizations and how much they have contributed. I thank the member from Oakville, who pointed out in very good detail about the amount that we have put in. Actually, I have listed, just in my own riding—what I have been telling the organizations—the support that we will be giving them. We will continue to do so.

As the PA for the Ministry for Seniors, I have been calling people around the province and supporting them with what we call the SCG, which is the social community grant. So we are supporting them to do programs and we'll do it together with them.

I would like to thank all the members for their support. Thank you. We will work together, non-partisan, and make these non-profit organizations know that we support them and we realize their efforts.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mrs. Wai has moved second reading of Bill 9, An Act to proclaim Non-Profit Sector Appreciation Week. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): This bill will be referred to the Committee of the Whole House, unless the member from Richmond Hill has another committee to which she would like the bill referred. I return to the member for Richmond Hill.

Mrs. Daisy Wai: I'd like to have it in the rules and regs committee, please.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The member wants to refer the bill to regulations and private bills. Agreed? Agreed.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: What now?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): I'm sorry?

Ms. Sandy Shaw: What now?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): Oh, "what now." Well, normally we would adjourn. However, pursuant to standing order 36, the question that the House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

LAND USE PLANNING

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): But the member from Guelph has expressed dissatisfaction with an answer given earlier by the government House leader. The member from Guelph will have up to five minutes to make his case, and a member of the government, a parliamentary assistant or a minister will have up to five minutes to respond.

We turn now to the member from Guelph.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's always an honour to rise in this House, especially to discuss critically important issues. Speaker, a lot of people have asked me: Why am I so passionate about opposing Highway 413? It's because Highway 413 will be an economic, financial and environmental disaster for Ontario, bottom line.

And I appreciate the passion in response to my answers. The government House leader has spoken about his efforts to preserve farmland in the Rouge National Urban Park, so I would encourage the government House leader to exhibit the same kind of passion to supporting and protecting the 2,000 acres of prime farmland that are threatened by

Highway 413. And that's not even counting the acres and acres of farmland that will be lost because of the sprawl unleashed by Highway 413.

Immediately in the summer of 2020, when the government said that they were going to fast-track the approval of Highway 413, I started speaking out against it. I remember one of the local mayors saying, "There is no way you're going to stop this highway, because there's so much local support for it." Well, since the summer of 2020, the municipality of Halton Hills, the city of Mississauga, the city of Orangeville, the city of Toronto, King township, Vaughan, Halton region and Brampton have all come out against Highway 413 because they recognize how destructive this highway will be.

The food and farming sector employs over 870,000 people in this province, contributing \$50 billion to Ontario's GDP, and yet we're losing 175 acres of farmland every day in Ontario, a province where only 5% of our existing land mass is suitable for growing food. That's the equivalent of five family farms a week. We simply can't afford, economically, to pave over the asset base that generates all those jobs and all that wealth, not to mention our food security—and I would argue that a country that cannot feed itself is just as insecure as a country that cannot defend itself. We cannot continue to pave over so much farmland at such an unsustainable rate in the province of Ontario. That's why it will be an economic disaster.

Why will it be a financial disaster? Who would spend \$6 billion to \$10 billion, at a time when we know the province's finances are under stress, to build a highway that would save commuters 30 seconds? Thirty seconds. Why don't we spend that money on the health care system, on long-term care, on public transit, on increasing nurses? There are so many ways in which we could spend \$6 billion to \$10 billion that would do more good for this province than saving commuters 30 seconds. As a matter of fact, many transportation experts are predicting that it will actually make congestion worse, because every time you build more highways you just unleash more sprawl, which leads to more gridlock. So there are so many more financially responsible things we could do in this province than spending \$6 billion to \$10 billion on a highway that will save people 30 seconds.

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Finally, Highway 413 will be a climate disaster, unleashing 17.4 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions between now and 2050. That's more than the city of Toronto emitted in 2018 alone. We're facing a climate emergency. The world is coming together next week to talk about how we can urgently address the climate emergency that's costing us more and more each and every year. We simply can't afford to unleash this level of climate pollution and have any hope of leaving a sustainable future for our children—not to mention the financial cost and threats to our homes, our property, our public infrastructure, people's lives. With this highway, the air pollution health costs alone are \$1.4 billion. So the costs are too high.

Let's build a sustainable future and an affordable future—and it doesn't include Highway 413.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): The parliamentary assistant, the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill, will respond.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I welcome the opportunity to respond to the comments brought forward by the member for Guelph.

Speaker, Ontario today has a population of nearly 15 million people, and it continues to grow. As a House, we should appreciate that our province and the greater Golden Horseshoe, the GGH, are some of the fastest-growing regions in North America. That should be no surprise to any of the members of this House. We all know that Ontario is the greatest place to live, work and raise a family.

As more and more people choose to call Ontario home each day, it is expected that by 2051 the population of the GGH alone will grow to 14.8 million. It is vital that our public transit and road infrastructure keep up with this growth. Without more transportation infrastructure, Ontario will suffer from far worse gridlock, even with all the currently planned public transit and transportation investments. The major highways in Peel and York region are all forecasted to be operating over capacity by 2031, and without more transportation infrastructure, the level of congestion on those roads in the GGH alone will double from its current levels by 2041.

On this side of the House, we believe in alleviating congestion before it gets worse for commuters and the environment, unlike the opposition, who want people trapped in congestion for decades, with no end in sight.

Speaker, make no mistake, this is a pro-transit government. We have never wavered from our promise to build transit. That's why, over the next 10 years, Ontario is investing \$61.6 billion into public transit and has shovels in the ground on meaningful projects like the Scarborough subway extension.

But we know that transit alone is not the solution. We must also rely on a robust highway network. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown to all members of this House how

important it is to ensure our products, goods and services can get to where they need to go. Ontario's businesses, like our logistics and trucking industries, depend on the reliable and efficient movement of goods through our highway system for their workers and to remain competitive in our global economy.

Speaker, as our government continues to lift people up and get our province working again, Highway 413 will be a key job creator and will support over 3,500 jobs during construction and will generate up to \$350 million in real GDP during construction.

On this side of the House, our government will always support our highway workers.

I appreciate the member for Guelph's passion for the environment. That is why I'm proud to be a part of the government, under the leadership of Premier Doug Ford, that is growing the greenbelt. I appreciate all the work that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is doing in this regard to grow the greenbelt and enhance the many vibrant green spaces found in our province and in the GGH.

Speaker, the opposition may not want us to take population growth seriously, but on this side of the House, our government does. While the opposition wants to roadblock this project, our government has the backs of hard-working Ontarians who rely on cars to get to work and the businesses in the region that need a strong, robust and efficient highway network to get their goods moving to market.

That's why I ask all members of this House to stand with us to say yes to building the vital transit and transportation infrastructure our growing region needs; say yes to supporting the thousands of workers and their businesses in Halton, Peel and York who will rely on this infrastructure; and say yes to addressing the transportation needs of today and tomorrow for the people of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Percy Hatfield): There being no further matter to debate, I deem the earlier motion to adjourn to be carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 1856.

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Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
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Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
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Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
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Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation (Transit-Oriented Communities) / Ministre associé des Transports (Aménagement axé sur les transports en commun)
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
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Fee, Amy (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
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Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gravelle, Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hassan, Faisal (NDP)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor—Tecumseh	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Hillier, Randy (IND)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Solicitor General / Solliciteure générale
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karahalios, Belinda C. (NBP)	Cambridge	
Karpoche, Bhutilla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Ke, Vincent (PC)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kramp, Daryl (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Kusendova, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga- Centre	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
MacLeod, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa (PC)	Nepean	Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries / ministre des Industries du patrimoine, du sport, du tourisme et de la culture
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
McKenna, Hon. / L'hon. Jane (PC)	Burlington	Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues / Ministre associée déléguée au dossier de l'Enfance et à la Condition féminine
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Miller, Norman (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	
Mitas, Christina Maria (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	
Monteith-Farrell, Judith (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Morrison, Suze (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	

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Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (IND)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (IND)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Phillips, Hon. / L'hon. Rod (PC)	Ajax	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Associate Minister of Digital Government / Ministre associé délégué de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines, des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises et à la Réduction des formalités administratives
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	Deputy Speaker / Vice-président

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
Wynne, Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Yarde, Kevin (NDP)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	
Vacant	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vacant
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Lorne Coe, Rudy Cuzzetto
Goldie Ghamari, Randy Hillier
Christina Maria Mitas, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Thushitha Kobikrishna

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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Vacant
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Stephen Crawford, Catherine Fife
Ernie Hardeman, Mitzie Hunter
Logan Kanapathi, Sol Mamakwa
Jeremy Roberts, Dave Smith
Vijay Thanigasalam
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

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Will Bouma, Guy Bourgouin
Chris Glover, Mike Harris
Logan Kanapathi, Sheref Sabawy
Amarjot Sandhu, Mike Schreiner
Daisy Wai
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Deepak Anand, Aris Babikian
Gilles Bisson, Lorne Coe
Wayne Gates, Robin Martin
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Amanda Simard, Marit Stiles
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Randy Pettapiece, Donna Skelly
Gurratan Singh, Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
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Rima Berns-McGown, France Gélinas
Goldie Ghamari, Faisal Hassan
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Laurie Scott, Vijay Thanigasalam
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John Fraser, Christine Hogarth
Daryl Kramp, Robin Martin
Sam Oosterhoff, Tom Rakocevic
Donna Skelly, Sara Singh
Effie J. Triantafilopoulos
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell