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Mercredi
3 novembre 2021

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CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 3 November 2021 / Mercredi 3 novembre 2021

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS / AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉES ET DÉPUTÉS	
Stopping Anti-Public Health Harassment Act, 2021, Bill 3, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2021 visant à mettre fin au harcèlement face à la prise de mesures de santé publique, projet de loi 3, Mme Horwath	
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	719
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	720
Mr. Gurratan Singh.....	721
Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios.....	722
Mrs. Robin Martin.....	722
Ms. Jill Andrew.....	723
Mr. John Fraser.....	723
Mme France Gélinas.....	724
Mr. Mike Schreiner.....	724
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	724
Second reading vote deferred.....	725
Correction of record	
Mme France Gélinas.....	725
 ADJOURNMENT DEBATE / DÉBAT SUR LA MOTION D'AJOURNEMENT	
Northern highway improvement	
Mr. Jamie West.....	725
Mr. Michael Parsa.....	726
 ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR	
Working for Workers Act, 2021, Bill 27, Mr. McNaughton / Loi de 2021 visant à oeuvrer pour les travailleurs, projet de loi 27, M. McNaughton	
Miss Monique Taylor.....	726
Mr. Michael Parsa.....	727
Mr. Ian Arthur.....	727
Ms. Andrea Khanjin.....	728
Mr. Kevin Yarde.....	728
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	728
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	728
Mr. Mike Schreiner.....	729
Ms. Andrea Khanjin.....	729
Mr. Jamie West.....	729
Mr. Mike Harris.....	730
Ms. Doly Begum.....	730
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	733
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	733
Mr. Sheref Sabawy.....	734
Mr. Jamie West.....	734
Mr. Mike Harris.....	734
Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios.....	734
Mrs. Robin Martin.....	736
Mr. Kevin Yarde.....	736
Mrs. Robin Martin.....	736
Mr. Kevin Yarde.....	737
Hon. Lisa MacLeod.....	738
Mr. Ian Arthur.....	738
Mr. Aris Babikian.....	739
Mr. Jamie West.....	739
Mrs. Robin Martin.....	739
Ms. Doly Begum.....	739
Ms. Catherine Fife.....	740
Mr. Mike Harris.....	741
Ms. Doly Begum.....	741
Mrs. Robin Martin.....	742
Mme France Gélinas.....	742
Mr. Michael Parsa.....	742
Mr. Ian Arthur.....	743
Mr. Deepak Anand.....	744
Ms. Doly Begum.....	744
Ms. Christine Hogarth.....	744
Ms. Doly Begum.....	745
Mr. Lorne Coe.....	745
Ms. Doly Begum.....	745
Mme France Gélinas.....	745
Mr. Gurratan Singh.....	747
Second reading agreed to.....	748

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 3 November 2021

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 3 novembre 2021

Report continued from volume A.

1800

PRIVATE MEMBERS'
PUBLIC BUSINESS

STOPPING ANTI-PUBLIC HEALTH
HARASSMENT ACT, 2021
LOI DE 2021 VISANT
À METTRE FIN AU HARCÈLEMENT
FACE À LA PRISE DE MESURES
DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE

Ms. Horwath moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 3, An Act to prohibit harassment based on enforcement or adoption of public health measures related to COVID-19 / Projet de loi 3, Loi visant à interdire le harcèlement fondé sur l'application ou l'adoption de mesures de santé publique liées à la COVID-19.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Pursuant to standing order 101, the member has 12 minutes for their presentation. I return the floor to Ms. Horwath.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thanks so very much, Speaker. I wish we didn't have to be putting private members' bills in place to cover off what the government should have done a long time ago.

I'm going to cover some more about this government's inability to act swiftly on anything throughout COVID-19, but first I want to talk about why we think this measure is necessary—and of course, it's not just us. Many people have called for this kind of measure in our province. Why? Because every single Ontarian deserves access to health care, an ability to go to school, to support their local businesses, to go to work in a manner that is safe and peaceful. People shouldn't be harangued as they just try to do what they need to do to have a decent life in our province.

But of course, we saw—all of us—terrible, terrible shots, videos and pictures of people literally harassing other folks who had been doing the right thing, stepping up, getting vaccinated, wearing their masks, social distancing, doing all the things that we were asked to do. People worked really hard in this province to protect themselves, to protect their families, to protect their communities, to protect each other.

But there's a small group of people that, unfortunately, this government seems unwilling to put in their place, who think the right thing to do is to force people who have done

everything right to walk a gauntlet of hate, because they are protesting in an organized fashion, in a coordinated fashion, the very people who have stepped up and done right—yelling and screaming obscenities at them. We saw hordes of people outside hospitals shouting angrily at our health care heroes as they were trying to get to work and save the lives of the patients in the hospitals.

We saw small business owners who have been through so much, Speaker, watch in horror as they, their staff and their customers on patios were treated so vilely by these anti-vaxxers, these organized throngs of protesters. It was horrendous. It has been horrendous. It has been awful, and it's been happening in communities all across the province, but this government prefers to put its head in the sand. Why? Because it never wants, in any way, to offend the anti-vaxxer movement. As we know, there are people who are no longer sitting on those benches from this particular party because of their views in this regard.

When we're in the situation we're in now, a global pandemic, the thing that gets us out of that situation is listening to the science, listening to the experts, doing everything we can to stop a deadly virus from spreading—and most Ontarians stepped up and did that, Speaker. They did that.

Now, there are some, of course, as we all know, who didn't do that, and what we shouldn't be doing is giving those folks more oxygen. What we should be doing is protecting the people who did do the right thing and not expose them to this kind of anger and ugliness. It was really troubling to see some of those protests. To be frank with you, Speaker, watching workers trying to get to work at a small business and being harassed like that was awful. Kids, parents, educators being harassed: That's not on, Speaker. Cancer patients being harassed by anti-vaxxers: That's what happening in our great province.

Now I could talk a lot about some of the seeds of the hate that's been sown by political people actually, and I'm not just talking about what happened down south of the border. We've all paid attention to see some political people fan the flames of hate. At the federal level it was happening with the former Prime Minister. It's happened in this Legislature. It happened in the last provincial campaign. So shame on politics for having gotten down in the dirt like that and making it normalized to spew hatred on one another. We shouldn't be doing that. Certainly elected people, people in leadership positions, shouldn't be doing that. It's shameful.

But now we have the fruits, if you will, of that terrible behaviour, and it's being spewed against hard-working

folks, health care heroes, kids, small businesses that are just trying to make it through.

Back in August, we saw a local business owner in Toronto posting videos online of extremely horrible, violent harassment of their staff because this particular owner of this particular restaurant spoke up in favour of vaccine mandates. I'm not going to use her name because sadly it'll just bring more hate upon her. And so, I'm not going to use her name; I'm going to be thoughtful about that.

But what she said—she expressed shock that municipal and provincial politicians were doing nothing to protect her business: “I am in ~shock~ that” the mayor of Toronto and the Premier of this province “are leaving us to deal w/ this—ZERO help from cops, by-laws or ... anything at all. An abandonment of leadership.” Well, I would agree with this woman 100%.

We saw not only protests in front of hospitals here in Toronto, places like Kingston and Cornwall—in fact, apparently there was a fully infected anti-vax protester at the Cornwall protest, which was discovered following that protest, making it a very dangerous and unsafe place for all of the other anti-vax protesters.

But, Speaker, it didn't have to be that way. We could have sent the signals in this province a lot earlier that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable in the context of public health measures that are being, yes, imposed upon all of us in order to fight a deadly global pandemic.

This bill specifically speaks to ensuring that those protests can continue. People have the right to protest in Ontario. People have the right to free speech, and this bill, in fact, outlines very clearly that that's not what we're talking about. But what we are saying is at the very least, we should put safety zones around these institutions, these workplaces, these schools and any other location that happens to require that kind of a measure because of organized protests, because of these horrible, horrible groups of people making life so difficult for everyone else.

It's a one-page bill. In fact, we should just pass it today because it's a one-page bill, it makes a lot of sense, it provides for fines and it lays out exactly what we are talking about when we are talking about anti-public-health-measures organized protests and how we need to move them away from hospitals so that health care workers can get into the hospital and do their job. Ironically, sadly, the next day that health care worker might be going into the ICU to take care of one of the very anti-vaxxers who was outside protesting the previous day.

That's what we are dealing with: people who are exhausted, who are run off their feet, who are leaving their profession in droves because they've been disrespected by the low-wage policies of this government. That's what's happening. They have been dealing with a lot: the stress, the anxiety, the loss of patients, being the only one through an iPad letting family members know that their loved one didn't make it and lost their life to COVID-19 in the ICU. And we're just allowing these vitriolic, vile protests to add insult to injury and disrespect these workers even more.

1810

But you know what? I don't have a lot of hope that this government is, in fact, going to act or step up because they didn't act or step up throughout the whole COVID-19 pandemic. Even today, they are emboldening anti-vaxxers by not mandating vaccines in our hospitals and health care systems. Again, they're on the side of the anti-vaxxers.

But, you know what, we saw it from day one: dragging their feet, never getting out ahead of anything. They were slow to make the decisions and, many times, they were the wrong decisions. I'm just going to read a quick list—and this is what I just got off the top of my head a few minutes ago in my office.

They didn't stop staff from working in multiple homes in long-term care until weeks and weeks late. They weren't hiring PSWs to actually put that iron ring around long-term care, and, as a result, 4,000 seniors lost their lives to COVID-19 in long-term care.

They didn't make schools safe last summer, and they still didn't make schools safe this summer. As a result, our children were out of school the longest—the longest on the entire continent, Speaker.

They walked us right into the third wave because our Premier doesn't believe in science and doesn't believe in taking that advice. Instead of making sure that he was doing the right thing, making the right decisions, he decided to bring in a police state and close down our playgrounds.

They made a mess of the vaccine rollout. It was the Hunger Games. And I'm fearful that the same thing is going to happen as our little ones get their vaccines in the next couple of weeks, Speaker, because this government doesn't have it together. They are slow off the mark.

They didn't allow PPE to be provided to workers or didn't require it to be provided to workers.

At the end of the day, we need to send a message that people who did the right thing should be protected, they should feel safe and they shouldn't be faced with violence. Anyone who is behaving that way should be subject to a fine of \$25,000 if they are within a safety zone.

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

Ms. Christine Hogarth: It's my pleasure to join in this debate for the opposition's bill entitled An Act to prohibit harassment based on enforcement or adoption of public health measures relating to COVID-19.

Firstly, Speaker, I believe that it is vital for me to state that this government strongly condemns harassment in any form and at any time. We take matters of harassment seriously. It is a criminal offence to threaten, intimidate or harass individuals, no matter the location. There are no regulated or unregulated locations where any of these criminal acts are to be tolerated.

Unlike what the opposition party has proposed in this bill through the establishment of a harassment-free safe zone, we do not believe there should be safe zones against harassment because that only means to condone harassment outside those safe zones. Speaker, we believe that the official opposition's proposition would set a precedent that

harassment can be tolerated in certain areas while unacceptable in others. We strongly refute this because harassment should never be tolerated anywhere.

This government fully supports the front-line workers who have been working tirelessly around the clock to provide essential care and the health services to those affected by COVID-19, and we thank them for their work. We are very aware that this has not been an easy task and continues to be a massive undertaking. And again, we thank them for their continued efforts.

Combatting this pandemic has required incredible resilience from our front-line workers in the face of monumental challenges as they are working to save the lives of millions of Ontarians. Ontarians should be working together to combat this pandemic by following established COVID-19 regulations and by rolling up their sleeves to get vaccinated. We are extremely disappointed to see that hospitals and staff were the target of protests after all the sacrifices they have made during the pandemic. It has been an incredibly difficult time for both patients and health care workers all across Ontario. Adding the additional stress by intimidating and obstructing people from accessing and delivery of their care is shameful and is completely unacceptable.

Speaker, we are aware of the protests, and the Solicitor General understands that public safety partners felt that there was no credible threat of violence. But that doesn't change the fact that those who are targeting our front-line workers are demonstrating selfish, reckless behaviour and our hospitals deserve to be left alone.

Ontarians are better than this, and I implore everyone to work together to combat this pandemic, not pose obstacles to it. We are committed to the safety of our health care workers, and we will always prioritize it. But our efforts to protect front-line workers will not be restricted to safe zones near hospitals, because they deserve to feel safe and protected at all times, not when the leader of the official opposition believes it's convenient to protect them. This government does not work on a mandate of convenience. Speaker, we intend to ensure that our front-line workers are safe regardless of where they are situated.

When it comes to protecting individuals, this government has immense trust in the ability of our police officers to serve and protect Ontarians at large. This includes health care workers, who are at the forefront of this fight against COVID-19. The mandate of our police force is not limited to safe zones. There are no restrictions placed on when and where police officers can take action to help anyone in need. Where the police are required, they have always been present to provide the appropriate services. Speaker, I'd like to extend my gratitude to the men and women in uniform for their efforts, even amongst the challenges posed throughout this pandemic.

This government supports the police and has never hesitated to provide them with the tools they need to keep our communities safe. All of us can rest assured and rest easy every day, knowing that our police have the authority and the best practices to restore order whenever it is required, while ensuring the safety of all those who are

involved. Anyone who is facing targeted harassment or is in need of assistance: We encourage you to call 911. Individuals who are in need of protection should never hesitate to contact the police for help, including cases where they are being threatened. Should our police forces inform us that they require new tools or resources to help protect front-line workers, we will always find ways to support their needs and their requests. That is a conversation we are always willing to have.

Speaker, we cannot support this bill proposed by the official opposition because it is unnecessary. Our front-line workers deserve better than an arbitrary piece of proposed legislation which seeks to divide harassment into two categories and which establishes a precedent for condoning harassment.

Ensuring the well-being and safety of our front-line workers amidst this pandemic has been the centrepiece of this government's pandemic efforts, and we will continue to do so.

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

Mr. Gurattan Singh: I need to start off by saying that it is ludicrous to suggest that fining anti-vaxxers who are harassing the most vulnerable in our society—cancer patients; people who are dealing with sicknesses; and the people who sacrificed the most in our society during COVID-19, front-line workers—somehow condones harassment. That is a ludicrous position to take. It is shameful that the Conservative government would make that suggestion.

And it's shameful that the Conservative government doesn't have the guts to stand up to anti-vaxxers. That's what's most shameful about this whole conversation that's happening right now. For the Conservative government to repeatedly say that this somehow condones the harassment occurring further demonstrates how tone-deaf they are to the lived reality of individuals who have to be subjected to so much vile hatred, violent intimidation. We all saw the videos. We saw the videos of just down the street, of people filling up University Avenue, filling up the street, preventing people from getting the care they needed in a location that is not political.

Hospitals are not political. Hospitals are a place of care. Hospitals are a place where people go when they are most desperate, when they're in need. Hospitals are run by people who have sacrificed the most in this pandemic. For the Conservative government to try to suggest that those people don't deserve protection, that providing a safe zone to them is somehow infringing upon people's rights to live their life, is completely ridiculous.

1820

That's why I'm so proud of our leader. I'm so proud that she stood up, and is standing up and is fighting for people who are most desperate, who need protection, who need safety—and, frankly, filling in for the lack of action from this Conservative government, the lack of action from this government who continually dog-whistles to anti-vaxxers, continually dog-whistles to—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw. We don't make that—

Mr. Gurratan Singh: Withdrawn. I'll say it a different way: This Conservative government continually refuses to stand up to anti-vaxxers, refuses to stand up to anti-maskers, and instead is condoning their actions, because if this Conservative government votes down this private member's bill, they will be providing so much oxygen to the anti-vax movement. They will look at this as an opportunity to continue their actions in front of hospitals. That is wrong. That is shameful.

What we're saying—this is very clear: We need to create these safety zones. We need to protect those who are in the most desperate situations. I'm so proud that the NDP is putting this leadership forward and putting this private member's bill forward, because this is what people in desperate situations need. It is incumbent upon government to take this step. The Conservative government refuses to do so. We in the opposition are filling in this gap. We're going to stand up for front-line workers. We're going to stand up for people who are in desperate situations who need to access the hospital. Hopefully, the conscience comes in to the Conservative government and they stand up and support health care workers and support people who need medical care as well.

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

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: I'm happy to be able to speak on Bill 3 this evening. Speaker, I'm not surprised the opposition is putting this bill forward, because given the left-wing trajectory of this government and its lack of courage, it's clear that the opposition believes that the government will just keep following their lead.

For three years, this government has vilified anyone who disagrees. First, the attack on free speech was just inside baseball; it was just attacking those within their party. Then it was MPPs who disagreed getting kicked out. Then it was those in riding associations who spoke out. And now, for the last 18 months, we see this government vilifies Ontarians too.

This bill wants to extend the Liberal bubble zone idea, but this time to put them around hospitals and schools, and for it to be imposed on anyone who has a differing opinion from what public health and the mainstream media have been pumping out with regard to COVID-19. The opposition leader might find support from this government, because they support bubble zones and other clampdowns on free speech, but for me, this bill is an attack on free speech.

In this day and age, when everyone is speaking about equity and fairness, it is disappointing to see this bill tabled in this Legislature. The majority of the individuals who are exercising their right to free speech are not, as Premier Ford said on September 12, "selfish, cowardly and reckless," or whatever other name you want to sling at them. They are people, people who are losing or who have lost their jobs, people with their own opinions and reasons for not disclosing their medical status.

This bill is yet another attempt by one of Ontario's establishment political parties to shut down dissenting voices. For that reason, I will not be supporting this bill.

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: As always, it's my pleasure to rise in this chamber to speak on the issues that come before us. It's interesting in this debate to hear the one side from the member from Cambridge and the other side, sort of, recently from the member from Brampton East, who clearly we know does not believe in the police forces and, worse than that, actually insults them. But I'm particularly pleased to stand and to join my colleague and friend the parliamentary assistant to the Solicitor General in talking about how this government is working to continue to keep Ontarians healthy and safe.

Let's be clear: Protesting at hospitals is inappropriate, and protesting at hospitals to oppose life-saving vaccinations is wrong. Our health care heroes certainly deserve praise for all that they have done. They have kept our patients safe and healthy at the hospitals, and they shouldn't have to deal with the protests and should never be subjected to harassment.

We can all agree that the sacrifices our front-line heroes have made during this pandemic will not be forgotten. Health care workers have been on the front lines in our whole fight against COVID-19, and we will always have their back. Any additional stress such as what might come from intimidation and obstruction of our health care heroes from accessing or delivering care is shameful, and it's completely unacceptable. This government fully condemns those actions, and we strongly believe that nobody should be harassed or feel unsafe for following public health guidelines—guidelines that keep all Ontarians safe.

This government has been clear: Nothing will stop Ontario from having our successful vaccination campaign. As everybody knows, we have given 22 million doses already, and we have over 88% of people with one dose, and 84.5%, I think as of today, with two doses. So it's been a very successful campaign.

It's clear when it comes to COVID-19 vaccination that the people of Ontario do support our health care heroes and not the protesters, who are a small group. Proper action to keep our hospitals, their workers and patients safe has already been taken. This is an issue that bubbled up for a little while and really is not an issue anymore, but the opposition wants to keep it going.

This government supports the police, unlike my friends opposite, and has never hesitated in giving them the tools that they need to keep our communities safe. When the police are needed, they are there.

The bill put forward by the member from Hamilton Centre is rather limited and talks about establishing a safe zone. But I think we can all agree that harassment of people anywhere is out of bounds. It's already a crime to intimidate or threaten people, and the police are charged with keeping public order and have the authority to ensure that safety is maintained wherever it needs to be. That is what my colleague has already said.

Individuals should not hesitate to call 911 if they need the support of the police, including cases when they are being threatened or harassed. And if people feel a need to protest, there are plenty of places to do it that don't include hospitals.

Our front-line medical staff and police have the same objective during these challenging times: keeping Ontarians safe. COVID-19 has been a challenge for everybody, and we have all had to face it together.

I don't think we should forget the fact that we are all residents and citizens of Ontario. I don't like the words I hear sometimes from members in the opposition. The member from Hamilton Centre said earlier that people need to be "put in their place." I find that kind of dialogue about our fellow citizens offensive and unnecessary.

People need information. They need to understand why vaccinations are a good solution. They need to have their questions answered and their concerns addressed. We all need to work together to make that happen. And it's unfortunate that some people feel the best way to raise these objections is in a way that negatively impacts on our health care heroes by adding substantial stress to an already difficult job: helping us deliver care in the most appropriate way.

All Health Canada-approved vaccines are safe, effective and dramatically reduce the risk of getting severe illness or being hospitalized if you get COVID-19. Vaccination is our best way back to normal. Protesting, harassing, intimidating people who are making this a reality is not appropriate and not helpful.

Ontario's policing professionals have all the tools and resources they need to keep people safe, and I don't think that this bill is necessary for any reason. I also think it is just another way to try to drive a wedge between Ontario citizens, and I don't think that's going to get more people vaccinated. I think we need to try to educate as much as possible, provide information, answer questions and be kind to each other, because it's been a very difficult few years. Thank you.

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

Ms. Jill Andrew: The member across the aisle from Eglinton–Lawrence says that we need to be more kind. I want to say that this is exactly what this bill is attempting to do. I'm very proud of our leader from Hamilton Centre as well for putting forth this bill calling for safe zones so that people can go to work; they can enter schools; they can enter businesses, our small businesses in our community that have been crushed—many of them—during this pandemic; they can enter hospitals and save lives without people being unkind to them at the entrance. This is exactly what this bill is trying to do.

The member from Eglinton–Lawrence is stuck on this narrative of, "Well, we don't want harassment to happen. It's wrong." Well, then say yes to our bill calling for safe zones, calling to keep our schools safe—the students in our schools, the caring adults, the parents, the grandparents bringing the kids to school.

1830

I remember in my community of St. Paul's, we had a wonderful restaurateur who simply said, "Hey, if you are not vaccinated, do you mind sitting outside?" And the kind of hate she received online was unbelievable, from people who, by the way, do not believe in science.

Interjection.

Ms. Jill Andrew: I hear a member saying, "You can't make that assumption." I'm going to say something: Anti-vaxxers are not to be confused with people who are vaccine-hesitant and simply need someone to talk to, to have their questions answered. There's a big difference. We live in a community, we live in a world where many of us—and I include myself—have had differential experiences with our health care system. We know the histories that have sometimes caused individuals—Black, Indigenous, other racialized folks—to question the health care system. But we also know that there are organizations like the Black Physicians' Association of Ontario that are reaching out and talking to community groups and breaking through. So I'm not accusing people who are vaccine-hesitant of being anti-vaxxers. But what I am saying is, we need this bill to protect our communities.

This government saying no to our safe zones is them saying no to protecting our kids, and it's them saying no to protecting our front-line health care workers—something they were saying throughout the pandemic. I think about being at the SEIU rally at North York General Hospital and speaking to nurses there, and nurses throughout our community—nurses who were told no, in some cases, to PPE, and who had to wear the same PPE used all day, in and out of rooms.

This government needs to say yes to the most vulnerable people amongst us. Those are the front-line health care workers in St. Paul's and across Ontario. They are the education staff. They are the convenience store workers. They're the small business owners who are just trying to get by, who didn't get any direction from this government—and when they tried to tinker with direction, it was broken telephone; the message changed every second. So our schools stood up and tried to do the rest on their own. Our public health units were doing the jobs of the government. Our front-line health care workers were doing the jobs of the government.

Enough is enough. To me, this is a no-brainer. If you say you don't want harassment to happen, then pass this safe zone and be kind to our front-line health care workers, our educators and our small business owners.

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

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to thank the Leader of the Opposition for putting this bill forward. I'll be supporting Bill 3 because I believe the government needs to act to protect access to our hospitals, schools, child care centres and other health facilities—and, actually, any place where vaccinations are given.

In late summer, we all saw a number of anti-vax, anti-public health protests take place outside hospitals and schools across the province. Families and workers were harassed, and their access was impeded. Our schools and hospitals are services that all of our families rely on and have a right to. That's why I put forward a private member's bill as well—Bill 2—that was modelled after existing safe zone legislation. I felt it was important to establish reasonable limits that were already tested and could withstand a court challenge.

Bill 3 is somewhat broader than my bill because it also seeks to include private businesses. While I agree that some businesses will and could need protection, I have to say, I have a certain level of concern that extending this legislation to them may be deemed not reasonable in court.

There's a lot that relies on regulation in this bill. Throughout this pandemic, I think we found that the government has demonstrated very clearly an inability to act decisively and quickly. So I'm not entirely convinced that if we pass this legislation the government can actually do what needs to be done with it. And I think it's important that we codify those places that we want to protect in law. We're going to be approving vaccinations very shortly for five- to 11-year-olds. We're going to be vaccinating kids in school. I don't know why the government is not moving to protect those places.

As I said, I'm going to support this bill. I urge the government to take action. Thank you for your time.

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

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was quite disheartening to listen to the members of the Conservative Party talk about how we would be setting a precedent if we had safe zones around hospitals.

I don't think that was news to anybody. We already have safe zones around hospitals that provide abortions and pregnancy interruptions. We already have safe zones in health care. That doesn't mean that the protesters cannot continue; it just means that they have to be 150 metres away, so that the women who come don't have to go through those protests to access care. To say that we would create a precedent by putting safe zones, that it would mean that we are condoning harassment outside of the safe zones—none of that is true. We live in Ontario. We have tested the safe zones around health care facilities before. They work. People are allowed to continue to do their protests. They just have to be 150 metres away.

Right now in my city, in Sudbury—I am really proud of Sudbury public health units. They have this partnership with the local buses and they bring vaccinations to all sorts of places. They go to the malls. They go to the parks. They go to where people gather. They advertise where they are going to go, and they are being followed by anti-vaxxers.

I can tell you that when my son brought my 12-year-old granddaughter to get her vaccine, because she was really happy to—the 12-year-olds were allowed, and she turned 12 and she was allowed to go. They had to face those anti-vaxxers. She started to cry. She didn't know what was going on. She was very uncomfortable with everything that was going on.

This is wrong, and this is happening right here in Ontario right now. We can change this. We can change this today by passing this piece of legislation that says, "Stay 150 metres away," so that the next time a dad does the right thing and brings his 12-year-old daughter to get the vaccine, she is not going to start to cry and she is not going to be all worried because there are all those people holding signs, saying things that are not always very polite, with language that I would not be allowed to use in this House.

This is what this bill is all about. It's not going to be a precedent condoning harassment elsewhere or anything like this. It exists. It just needs to now exist for people—who have a right to protest public health measures. Just don't do this where people need to access care. Don't do this around a school, where kids go, because they need to have free access. And don't do this around businesses that have agreed to be supportive of public health. That's it. It's not going to condone anything. It's not going to change anything. It's just going to make things safer for all of us, and we should do this today.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise today to speak in favour of Bill 3. And in doing so, I call on the Premier to take action now to protect hospitals, health care centres and vaccine clinics, so people can access the health services they deserve and people can access the workplaces where they go to care for our loved ones.

We wouldn't need this bill, Speaker, if the Premier had responded to a letter I wrote months ago calling for him to ensure that people have access to health care services. We can't sit back and let our nurses and other front-line health care workers continue to take this kind of abuse. As a matter of fact, Speaker, I would argue—and I hope the government is listening—that we need to take actions that even go further than this to protect nurses who are working on units and on floors who are experiencing unprecedented levels of abuse and violence, just trying to do their jobs.

1840

And so, yes, let's provide access, but let's also ensure that the people who care for and protect our loved ones are cared for and protected on the wards and units in which they're doing their jobs.

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

I'll return to the member for Hamilton Centre, who has two minutes to reply.

Ms. Andrea Horwath: Thanks very much, Speaker. I want to first thank the members who understand how important it is to not only talk a nice talk around protecting our health care workers, our education workers, our kids, our patients, our small businesses, but understand that we have to do something to actually make it happen. Just talking about it isn't good enough. And I do appreciate, then, the comments from the members from Brampton East, St. Paul's, Nickel Belt, Ottawa South and Guelph.

But I do have to say that there was a misinterpretation, maybe, of what this does and doesn't do. It does not prevent people from expressing their opinion. It doesn't prevent peaceful protests. It doesn't prevent protests at all. What it does, as my colleague from Nickel Belt described, is create a buffer zone. Really, that's all it does: It creates a buffer zone. And, yes, there is precedent in our province for those kinds of measures to be implemented.

It's troubling that once again we have a government refusing to step up and do their jobs, talking a good game but not putting in place the necessary protections that would show our health care heroes that we are protecting them; that would show our small businesses that we're

prepared to step up and make sure that their businesses aren't threatened, that their customers aren't chased away; to make sure that our kids can go to school and patients can go into hospitals without having to walk a gauntlet of hate. We should be showing all of those folks—not just talking about it, showing them—that this can be done. And so it's disappointing to hear once again that the current government is not prepared to do the work necessary.

And I can just say that a great way to show respect to our health care workers is to scrap Bill 124.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Ms. Horwath has moved second reading of Bill 3, An Act to prohibit harassment based on enforcement or adoption of public health measures related to COVID-19.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

A recorded division being required, the vote on this item of private members' public business will be deferred until the next proceeding of deferred votes.

Second reading vote deferred.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

M^{me} France Gélinas: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I made a mistake: My granddaughter was 12; she turned 13 this August. If she found out that I made a mistake, I'd be in big trouble. She was 13 this summer.

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

Pursuant to standing order 36, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

NORTHERN HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Sudbury has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Transportation. The member for Sudbury has five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister or parliamentary assistant may reply for up to five minutes.

I recognize the member for Sudbury.

Mr. Jamie West: Today I asked the Premier to show leadership on the four-laning of Highway 69. For context, Highway 69 is the main artery from the GTA to Sudbury and back. It's critical to the economy of Sudbury, and it's also important to saving lives and reducing highway fatalities.

Sudburians have been advocating for a four-lane Highway 69 for a very long time. In 2003, the Liberals were

elected on a promise to complete the four-laning by 2007. Spoiler alert, Speaker: They failed to deliver on their promise. Then, during the 2007 election, the Liberals updated the completion date from 2007 to 2013, just six more years. Spoiler alert again: They failed to deliver on that promise. In 2011, Liberals punted their 2013 promise down the road for just five more years, to 2018—this time for sure. You get the theme now. They failed to deliver on that promise, too. The transportation minister at the time, Steven Del Duca, who most people know now as the new leader of the Liberal Party, just couldn't get it done. To be fair, they were close, but let's be fair: They added 10 years to their original deadline, so anyone would have been close.

In 2018, there was just 68 kilometres of Highway 69 remaining to be tendered. That seems like a simple thing to solve. In 2018, the Conservatives won the provincial election. While campaigning, when the Premier was in Sudbury, he promised the good people of Sudbury that he'd finally complete the four-laning of Highway 69. All he has to do is tender the last 68 kilometres of Highway 69, Speaker. How hard could that be? Spoiler alert: They have currently failed to deliver on that promise.

I was elected in the summer of 2018. During my inaugural speech, my very first speech in this chamber, I spoke about the need to complete the four-laning of Highway 69. And then a few months later, in 2019, I asked the government for a commitment to tender the final 68 kilometres of Highway 69. There was lots of fluff in the government's response but no action. In 2020, I asked again, and again lots of fluff in the government's response but no action. It is now 2021.

I am fortunate to live in Sudbury. We have some of the nicest, some of the friendliest people in the world, some of the most patient people in the world. But at some point, enough is enough. The good people of Sudbury are fed up. They're fed up with 15 years of Liberal broken promises. They're fed up the Conservative government promising to get it done and then happily failing to make any progress.

And so, Speaker, when I heard about the Bradford Bypass, I stopped being patient and I felt fed up too. Because when you've waited nearly two decades for a highway project to be completed, when you keep being told it's complicated, when you keep being told to be patient, you get fed up. When you find out that, at the drop of a hat, the Premier can rush through a \$1.5-billion four- to six-lane highway right through the southern Ontario greenbelt, you get fed up. When you realize that if he can do that for his buddies, then why can't he tender even one single kilometre of the remaining 68 kilometres of Highway 69? Today I pointed that out, Speaker. Today I asked the Premier the same question I always ask about Highway 69: Will the Premier finally keep his promise to the people of Sudbury and tender the last 68 kilometres needed to complete the four-laning of Highway 69? And again today there was lots of fluff in the government's response, but there was no action. Except today, I didn't accept their fluff.

Every week, like thousands of people, I drive on Highway 69, and every week the member from Nickel

Belt reminds me there is only 93 kilometres left to complete. Speaker, I worked in construction for about a decade, and after that I worked at an industrial site for nearly two decades. So I understand construction. I understand project management. I understand complicated projects with lots of moving parts. And one thing I'm keenly aware of, when France Gélinas reminds me that there is still 93 kilometres to be completed—knowing that there is 68 kilometres that's not tendered, I can do the math: 93 minus 68 is 25.

I know from experience that once that final 25 kilometres of construction is completed, if the 68 kilometres haven't been tendered, the construction crew will demobilize. They'll pack up and they'll go home. And I know from experience, and experts will confirm, that the cost of demobilizing and remobilizing in a construction project can be cost-prohibitive, to the point where you can't get the project done.

Speaker, the good people of Sudbury have been patient for nearly two decades, and today they're fed up with broken promises: fed up with Liberal broken promises and Conservative broken promises. It's time for the Premier to finally keep his 2018 promise and tender the final 68 kilometres of Highway 69.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Now I turn the remarks to the parliamentary assistant and the member from Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I appreciate the opportunity to rise and respond to comments brought forward by the member for Sudbury. Speaker, our government is committed to building, rehabilitating and improving our highways in northern and southern Ontario. This government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, has made a historic commitment to building highway infrastructure across the province. Our government is investing over \$21 billion into highways over the next 10 years.

Speaker, in 2021-22 alone our government is committing \$641 million to expand and repair northern highways, which we expect will support more than 4,440 jobs in northern Ontario. This investment builds on the additional \$25 million we allocated for highway rehabilitation projects across the province, which is part of Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19. This money is going towards several projects under way to expand northern highway corridors such as Highway 11/17 between Thunder Bay and Nipigon, Highway 17 from Kenora to the Manitoba border, and Highway 69 south of Sudbury. Let me be clear: We're working to widen Highway 69 between Parry Sound and Sudbury to four lanes to improve safety and operations.

1850

The widening of a 14-kilometre section of Highway 69 south of Alban and the realignment of the Canadian National rail line at Highway 522 continues. This portion alone represents a \$200-million investment into Highway 69. Seventy kilometres of Highway 69 have already been widened to four lanes, and the ministry is working to complete the remaining 68 kilometres. These additional sections are in the engineering and property acquisition

phases as ministry staff work with First Nations to negotiate land acquisition and work through federal environmental approval.

Speaker, across the north our government is committed to rehabilitating and improving highways for Ontarians living in these regions. For example, in the member for Algoma–Manitoulin's riding, our government is investing over \$15 million into the Highway 548 St. Joseph Island bridge rehab, over \$33 million into the rehabilitation of Highway 631, and over \$2.9 million into bridge rehab on Highway 540.

In the member for Mushkegowuk–James Bay's riding, our government is investing over \$23.5 million into the Highway 11 Groundhog River bridge replacement and culvert repair.

In the member for Nickel Belt's riding, our government is investing over \$173 million to widen Highway 69 from two to four lanes.

In the member for Thunder Bay–Atikokan's riding, our government is investing over \$4.7 million into culvert replacement on Highway 588 and Highway 595.

Finally, in the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane's riding, the government is investing over \$24.3 million into the rehab of Highway 11 in Black River–Matheson township, \$18.1 million into Highway 11 north of Highway 570, over \$12.2 million into rehabilitating Highway 64, and over \$7.1 million into rehabbing Highway 65.

Speaker, these are just a few of the many commitments our government has made to get the job done and build the highway infrastructure that northern Ontarians and all Ontarians need. On this side of the House, we are committed to those who rely on their cars to get around, and as our province continues to grow, our government will continue to expand and repair our infrastructure to keep up with this growth.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you very much to both speakers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WORKING FOR WORKERS ACT, 2021

LOI DE 2021 VISANT À OEUVRER POUR LES TRAVAILLEURS

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 3, 2021, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 27, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters / Projet de loi 27, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi, le travail et d'autres questions.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Returning to the member from Hamilton Mountain, who had the floor when this debate last was heard.

Miss Monique Taylor: I appreciate the opportunity to be able to finish off my 20 minutes. I will do a quick recap of where I left off this morning. The schedule that I was talking about in Bill 27 is schedule 6, the WSIB portion,

which will give premiums back to the employers instead of helping injured workers.

So I was raising my bill that I put forward earlier this year, which was the Workplace Safety and Insurance Amendment Act (Access to Mental Health Support for Essential Workers), 2021. That bill would have provided presumptive legislation for front-line workers who went to work day in and day out throughout the pandemic while the rest of the province was in their homes, worried about what was happening outside. Particularly at the beginning, there was so much unclarity of what was happening and there was so much fear in our communities.

I particularly think about how that would affect a young grocery store worker who is there every day, in harm's way, not getting proper PPE that they needed, not understanding the infection protocols that hadn't even been in place yet. How would that young worker have felt? We know that many young workers were traumatized by that and now have PTSD. This legislation would have provided mental health supports through the WSIB system. PSWs went and have seen the most horrific scenes throughout the pandemic, day in and day out. Many of them have PTSD. Again, they would have been covered under WSIB with presumptive legislation.

So I put forward this bill which this government voted against, but during the debate—I'm going to quote from one of the members that spoke. He said, "This would be the most expensive standard in Canada." That was Mr. Randy Cuzzetto—sorry, the member from Mississauga-Lakeshore.

Yet here we are saying that the government could not have that money, that \$6 billion in surplus, given to our front-line workers to help them with their mental health. Instead, we're going to give it back to employers.

As I said earlier, there are many ways that they could be helping employers and small businesses throughout this time; using money that should be used for injured workers to help support small businesses in our community is a lame excuse. It's absolutely lame. Our injured workers in this province have been put into poverty for years and years and years, and the only people who ever get anything back from the WSIB have been the employers.

I read earlier into the record from Willy Noiles, who is the president of the Ontario injured workers. They were told, "ONIWG was assured by WSIB leadership that when the unfunded liability was resolved, they would make injured workers whole." Never has that happened. That is shameful. We have watched everything increase, except the benefits of WSIB.

And now I'm going to read from one of my constituents. I'm going to try to get through this in the two minutes I have left, because this is the scenario of how WSIB treats the people of this province. My office received an email from a constituent outlining his complicated dealings with WSIB. He was injured and suffered a traumatic brain injury in April 2015. WSIB claimed that they started his benefits claim that day; however, he didn't see cheques for months and was forced to sell his house. When he met with a WSIB work transition specialist, he felt threatened and

like he was being forced to return to work before he was physically capable of doing so. He felt intimidated. The work transition specialist did several other problematic things, including arranging a meeting with the constituent's employer, knowing that he wasn't medically cleared to drive that distance.

WSIB forced the constituent to return to work on three separate occasions and threatened to cut off his benefits if he refused. He was left without an income. When he did try to show up at work, his employer sent him home 10 minutes later after visibly witnessing the difficulty he was having. Eventually the WSIB case manager accused him of being uncooperative and cut off his benefits completely. After involving a paralegal firm and one and a half years of fighting, an appeals resolution officer at the Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal ruled in his favour on all accounts, ordering WSIB to pay him. This ordeal has caused my constituent considerable stress and suffering. He reached out because he wants to see WSIB reform.

Where in this Working for Workers Act is the WSIB reform that is needed by injured workers in this province? That is the shameful piece of this legislation: People are being left out. Injured workers get up for work in the morning, go to work, play by all the rules. They get injured on the job—not their fault. These are the situations that we see happening to injured workers every single day.

The government could have done better in this bill by making sure that they helped injured workers, and they didn't.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): It's now time for questions and responses.

1900

Mr. Michael Parsa: Speaker, we've heard from immigrants and those who work with them that barriers to recognize foreign credentials need to be struck down. The previous government had the opportunity and didn't act. Our government has been putting solutions forward to make sure that we remove these barriers, and I've heard from several of my colleagues, certainly in here and elsewhere, for this issue to be addressed. I'm wondering if my colleague agrees with me and if she will be supporting this.

Miss Monique Taylor: Earlier in my debate I talked about this section of the bill and how important we all know that accepting foreign credentials is for our communities so that people have the ability to bring those skills which we need to Ontario. We believe that the government didn't go far enough to include health care workers, where we're going to see more of a shortage of health care workers in our province that the foreign credentials could have assisted—to ensure that they were able to provide medicine here in Ontario. And yet the government failed to include that piece in the legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ian Arthur: This bill does a lot of things, but one of the ones that I was kind of shocked to see in the bill that purports to be for workers was the removal of section 97(2), which requires WSIB to make its payments even when it has insufficient funds to do so and then recoup that later.

If WSIB is unable to make its payments and those workers don't get their payments, could the member give some explanation for how that could possibly be working for workers? I don't believe it is.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you to the member from Kingston and the Islands for the question, because that is exactly what we're seeing today, yet they have a \$6-billion surplus and they're giving \$3 billion of it away. And we still have injured workers in this province that are going to bed hungry, that are losing their housing, that aren't able to feed their children, that are ending up on ODSP. If we end up back in the unfunded liability, those workers are still never going to be made whole.

That is the problem with the legislation: There is nothing to ensure that injured workers are made whole. And right now, they have billions of dollars in surplus. Injured workers should have been first on the list.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Barrie-Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: You know, I'm learning quickly, while hearing these speeches, that there's one consistency amongst the NDP, and that's the inconsistencies. They say there's too much in the bill, there's too little in the bill. We introduce a bill on WSIB; they opposed that one.

Now, the member opposite and her members have been talking about temporary help agencies for quite some time. We're addressing it in the bill. I've heard countless people saying how great this is, because it's time to stop the exploitation of vulnerable workers. This will address this.

So, my question to you is, where are you going to be in the consistencies? We had our member from Sarnia-Lambton that worked day and night to support workers with line 5. I know it was a bit of a question who supported, who didn't support on that side. But today will you support the workers, especially help get them the protections they need on temp agencies?

Miss Monique Taylor: The only inconsistency that's been happening in this House is that the government has finally decided to support workers. Imagine, seven months before an election and the government has come to its senses and wants to be the worker-friendly government, when we know very clearly that coming into this office, they cut the minimum wage; they cut paid sick days. They have hurt workers in every direction.

I was talking about injured workers. Why wouldn't the member want to talk about injured workers? I have not heard members on the other side want to talk about injured workers. I know their offices hear from them, because they're hearing from around the province. Why is it that this government is so inconsistent in their policies?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Brampton North.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank the member from Hamilton Mountain for her speech on this bill. I want to ask you a question because a lot of people who can't get WSIB end up on social assistance. I've seen that time and time again, even in my riding of Brampton North. So what would you like to see changed in the bill to ensure—we're talking about working for workers—that these people

don't end up on social assistance? Because obviously there are some loopholes in this bill, which is what is actually happening to people who can't get WSIB benefits.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you to the member from Brampton North, because he is absolutely right. I actually have a meeting booked, Friday coming, with one of my constituents who is an injured worker, talking about how he is on ODSP when he very clearly should be on WSIB. That is now on the public purse, that person having to claim ODSP instead of insurance that is clearly provided there for injured workers. So when the WSIB is not providing that money, then the government is paying that money. And we all know that they don't like to pay people on ODSP because those people are in poverty also. So I think it's really unfortunate that the government didn't do the right thing by workers in this bill and ensure that WSIB truly covered injured workers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Sarnia-Lambton.

Mr. Robert Bailey: I had a question. I met with the injured workers in Sarnia-Lambton many times when I first got elected almost 15 years ago. I'll be honest: I had to put on a staffer full-time cleaning up the mess the Liberals left. I had a pile of WSIB issues this high that they had left and never resolved. So I had a staffer come on that had worked in HR. She worked virtually pretty well full-time to clear that up. We finally got them all resolved, but there's still work to do, and I would be the first to admit that. So I will be a strong advocate for that.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Question?

Mr. Robert Bailey: Do I have time for a question now? Anyway, I guess I would like to say—maybe we can speak about temporary help agencies. What do you think about the work we're doing there?

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, this is the contradiction and these are the problems that we see coming out of this government. The member just talked about the huge files that they had in WSIB, the major problems that were in WSIB, and yet he has done nothing to advocate for those same workers. What did he want to do? He wanted to change the conversation again to temp workers.

Now, I understand the temporary workers and the agencies are a major problem; it is something that New Democrats have been advocating for and fighting for for years, to try to see changes there. We're grateful to see the changes. The changes don't go near far enough and will still allow loopholes of people to be able to get through that system.

But this is a perfect example of a member that should be advocating because he knows better and still refuses to do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): The member for Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I want to thank the member from Hamilton Mountain.

We were talking about injured workers. There's a huge loophole in this legislation, which is actually fairly consistent for this government. If someone is injured or dies on the job, as the member pointed out that temp workers

did at Fiera Foods—five people died at Fiera Foods—there's no record of that particular employer's WSIB ratings. So Fiera Foods, even though they are a terrible, reckless employer that uses 70% temporary workers, is a company that would qualify for the WSIB \$3 billion worth of rebates. So you have actually left the door open for an employer that has a terrible track record on employee safety to qualify for WSIB payments, and that is very disrespectful to these injured workers.

What would you, the member for Hamilton Mountain, say to the family members when this is actually going to happen in Ontario?

Miss Monique Taylor: I appreciate the comments and perspective of the member from Waterloo, because she is absolutely right. And you know what I would tell those workers' families who are so desperate for change? That when New Democrats are elected in 2022 we'll make sure that we make those changes and we will make sure that we protect these workers who are forced into temp agencies and forced into poverty when it comes to WSIB.

No worker should go to work and not come home at the end of the day. And when this government is going to reward those same companies, that is absolutely shameful. New Democrats will make sure that we close those loopholes and protect the workers of this province each and every day before elections, after elections and all the way through—not like this come-lately government.

1910

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour to rise to participate in the second reading debate of Bill 27. Speaker, I want to say that, after 19 months of front-line workers putting themselves at risk to keep our economy moving, we absolutely need a bill that works for workers. And so at second reading, when I have an opportunity to suggest amendments to the government, I'm going to invite them to work across party lines to actually put in place a bill that works for workers.

Let's start with the schedule on temporary workers. Let's bring in a ban on permanent temping. Let's make sure we have equal pay for equal work. And let's ensure that employers are held liable for the injuries of temporary workers on their premises, including WSIB liability.

Speaker, let's talk about the schedule for foreign-trained workers, because right now we face a nursing shortage; we face a shortage of health care workers. As a matter of fact, the government uses that as their excuse to not do the right thing and bring in mandatory vaccines for health care workers. So why are nurses not included in the opportunity to recognize foreign credentials?

Let's talk about WSIB. Let's talk about the fact that so many injured workers come to my office because they can't access the benefits they deserve, and the pressure that puts on taxpayers, because oftentimes then they end up on ODSP; they end up putting more pressure on the health care system. Not to mention—and this is what breaks my heart—the fact that so many of them lose so much of what they worked for throughout their whole life, because

of the workplace injury they experienced and the fact that practices like deeming prevent them from receiving the benefits they deserve.

Let's talk about the section on the right to disconnect. If that was truly a right there would be legal protection enabling that right. This doesn't do anything about providing workers with a guaranteed legal right to refuse work, to be able to disconnect, so let's actually put that in the bill.

I believe delivery drivers deserve a right to a bio break. I also think transit drivers and gig workers deserve a right to a bio break. Why aren't they included in the bill?

Finally, Speaker, when it comes to migrant workers, why don't we talk about bringing in enforceable standards, especially when it comes to living conditions?

Let's improve this bill at committee.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: There is a lot in that speech. But just when it comes to credential recognition, we're taking the first step here. I know the member mentioned health care workers. They're kind of in the middle of a pandemic right now. So, to be able to address that certainly would distract them from the main goal right now, which is the pandemic. But be assured that a lot of members in this House recognize that that this is an issue.

In fact, the member from Mississauga—Erin Mills has spoken many times of his wife's journey, her coming to Canada as a doctor and not being able to practise. We're starting something here which is much needed. It's actually a federal lead, but Ontario yet again is picking up the slack from the federal government and actually doing something about foreign credential recognition, so there is something in here.

I just want to ask the member opposite: Doesn't he think this is the first step towards addressing some of the labour shortages, including in the agricultural sector, which I know the member is very passionate about?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Speaker, it's always good to take a first step. I won't argue against taking a first step. I actually think that during a pandemic, when we're facing a labour shortage in the health care sector, that would actually be a very good time, maybe even the perfect time, to take the second step and enable foreign-trained health care professionals with equivalency qualifications to be able to help address the labour shortage we're facing in our health care sector. Now is the time when we need to take the second.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and comments?

Mr. Jamie West: Thank you to the member from Guelph. He talked about injured workers and reminded me of Tiny from Sudbury. Tiny was one of the first people to come to my office with a WSIB claim that had gone back decades. He carried in these giant boxes to show me how long he had been fighting. Tiny was injured as a police officer responding to domestic abuse. He'd been injured and fighting with WSIB for more than two decades. Last week, on Friday, when WSIB groups were protesting and

coming to visit MPPs' offices, I went out to meet with Tiny and he let me know that he finally got an appeal.

Are you comfortable with the fact that the Conservative government is allowing people like Tiny to be pushed back in the hole by creating a new unfunded liability?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'm not comfortable with that at all. As a matter of fact, it reminds me of somebody I ran against in the last election, actually, the candidate for another party. The reason he had decided to run was that he was working on a ladder one day at work and the proper safety precautions were not put in place. He fell off that ladder and pretty much destroyed his back. It was pretty much impossible to work, but WSIB over and over again kept saying, "Yeah, you can go to work. You're not going to access the funds you deserve," even though he physically couldn't work. As a result of that, he lost his house, he lost his family, he lost his quality of life. That's the price that people pay when you have a system that doesn't work right.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Mike Harris: It sounds to me like the member from Guelph isn't going to be supporting the legislation, but I'd like him to maybe further explain a little bit more to the members of this House and folks who are watching on TV why he wouldn't be supporting a bill that clamps down on temp agencies taking advantage of folks who are coming to our country from other countries. I'd really, really love to hear why he wouldn't support and stand up for that.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Excellent question, Speaker. You know, one of the things I love about second reading debate is whether a bill is going to go to committee. If the member opposite had closely listened to the beginning of my presentation, I said that here is an opportunity for us to come together across party lines in this House and amend this bill to actually make it a bill that works for workers. Absolutely, we want to crack down on temp agencies. But we also want to make sure that permanent temp jobs are not allowed anymore. We want to make sure that irresponsible businesses are held liable for the injuries that take place in their workplace. We want to ensure that temporary workers have equal pay for equal work. So, let's take a commitment to actually amend this bill at committee and make it a bill that actually works for workers.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Ms. Doly Begum: I rise on behalf of the great people of Scarborough Southwest, the hard-working people of Scarborough Southwest. I hope the government members will listen up because they're not putting up, Speaker.

My notes are all over the place but I do have the bill here with me, because it is an important bill. I am so proud to represent the hard-working people of Scarborough Southwest and to represent their concerns and bring them to this House. People from so many different parts of the world have come to Ontario, and many of them live in my riding of Scarborough Southwest—people who moved from different provinces just for a good life, just to make

sure that they can work hard to be able to have a decent income and get by and take care of their family.

So, it is a particular honour for me to be able to debate this bill, Bill 27 the Working for Workers Act. They could have done a better job with the title of the bill. But let me start by expressing my deepest gratitude to the front-line workers, from grocery workers to transit drivers to health care workers, temporary workers, migrant workers—all the different people who were on the front lines who sacrificed so much throughout this pandemic.

There are critical parts this bill touches on that my colleagues in the NDP, myself and many of the people in our communities have been calling on this government for for many, many years: support for workers, specifically migrant workers and internationally trained workers. This bill also includes some problematic parts of the WSIB and the exclusion of essential workers in important parts of the bill.

1920

In the limited time that I have: From the local community members, I have heard many concerns—and I hope in this limited time that I'm able to share some of these concerns. Since I have been elected, Speaker, one of the biggest issues, one of the key concerns I have been calling on this government about is to recognize and help internationally trained professionals across trades, academia, engineering, accounting, agriculture, medicine and all of the different categories that the federal government recognizes, who deserve to have the ability to practise in their fields when they come to Canada.

Their professional designations and experiences are given the priority throughout the immigration process, Speaker. Yet, for decades, immigrants who go through this immigration process, who go through the point system and actually qualify using those skills—once they come here, they face an uphill battle after coming to the province, regardless of how skilled they are, how many years of experience they have. Deskilling, working minimum wage jobs and many different odd jobs becomes the norm for many immigrants who come here, and this is a universal truth for many, many years now.

I would like to commend the Minister of Labour, and I want to thank the government for actually listening at some point, because just weeks ago I asked the Premier this question and I asked the Premier to recognize this concern, this issue, and to actually support internationally trained professionals. So I want to thank the Premier and the minister for recognizing that and coming forward with a bill that is actually looking at this and recognizing this issue and listening and taking, I think, a small but critical step forward with this amendment.

Now, let me focus on this: At a glance, when you look at this schedule, you're talking about removing the need for Canadian experience and repeated language testing, which is a great step. I want to actually read the bill, because I've heard from government members who have been jumping up and down and really excited about this. Just for the record, I want to read the actual schedule of it.

It's the amendment to the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act, 2006, which "is amended in respect of various matters, including the following:

"Regulated professions are required to ensure they comply with any regulations respecting English or French language proficiency testing requirements. Regulated professions are also prohibited from including Canadian experience requirements as qualifications for registration unless an exemption from the prohibition is granted." And I want to make sure that I point out that there is an exemption for this prohibition that's being granted. "Compliance orders may be issued if a regulated profession imposes requirements that are prohibited under the act.

"A section is added describing some ways in which the minister may support the access of internationally trained individuals to regulated professions and providing that the minister may make related grants."

Speaker, I want to note that the minister has a lot of power here, and I hope that it will be used wisely. We're looking forward to the regulations that will take place, because this is a very short little section in the bill that actually talks about this.

There are also various related amendments that are made, including to the regulation-making powers. Again, this gives a lot of power to the minister.

So then there's a lot of meat that will be in the regulations, and that is very important for us to note. I hope there is committee for this bill, because it will be so essential to listen to the many different trained professionals who come forward and talk about the specific struggles, the specific barriers that they face, which will help us, inform us to make the right type of regulations, because that's missing here.

Now that we have looked at the bill—and I think it was really necessary for some of the government members, for my colleagues on the other side to learn that. Speaker, after so many years, when we finally have this change coming forward—it is a great step. I'll give you that. It is a great step, and I'm so glad that you're listening to all of us to make that step forward. Yet the schedule completely ignores medical professionals. And I cannot even begin to debate this section or any part of the bill without pointing out that medical professionals did so much during this pandemic, and right now we're facing such a huge shortage of doctors—and nurses, such a huge shortage of nurses. We need to do so much more to be able to support them, especially the internationally trained physicians and nurses who have so much experience they could bring to help us in this province right now.

So, Speaker, when we look at some of the feedback that we have gotten, it's so important for me to highlight some of that. I had a chance to speak with some of the individuals who are internationally trained physicians, for example. And I want to thank the Internationally Trained Physicians of Ontario, ITPO, for their time and dedication in working on this.

Dr. Makini McGuire-Brown who, when I talk about this bill—and we've been working together for a while now,

along with many of the other organizers in this group, as well as through other organizations. We have been drafting and really working on different ways that we can support internationally trained professionals. As soon as she looked at this bill, she was heartbroken. She was so disappointed with the announcement because it explicitly excludes health care professionals.

The founder of ITPO, Ayesha Mohammad, was one of the other individuals who gave so much time and effort fighting for this and actually has moved away from the province because of how disappointing it was, after many years of waiting, looking into this. She is a young immigrant doctor who had to leave the province because of the barriers she faced. She just could not continue to wait.

I also want to recognize Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, the co-founder and program manager for the Internationally Trained Medical Doctors, ITMD, who is managing the bridging program at Ryerson University. He was so disappointed, looking at this bill. One of the things he said was that this bill will add to barriers that internationally trained physicians face, which "impacts gender, racial, and cultural parity in the health care system," because it will just move them back to square one, and does not even take a look at the first step, does not even understand or have the time to look at what they have been facing.

Another doctor I want to thank is Dr. Ahmad Al Khatib, who has helped us go through some of the planning and look at other jurisdictions as well. And Dr. Luca Salvador—the amazing work that all of them have been doing to highlight the issues that many of the physicians, many of the medically trained professionals have been facing.

The reason I am pointing this out—and I will go to the other professions—is because a bill is not incremental. We don't know when it will change again, when this amendment will be looked into again. So my question is: Did we consult with the different colleges? Did we not have enough time? Because we've been here almost four years now, talking about this issue. I brought it up in 2018. Why didn't we consult with some of the big colleges that could have given us the feedback that was necessary, that was important to understand how we include them and what kinds of barriers they face? And I have shared many of those ideas in this House as well.

If we're going to try to address this issue, we have to start somewhere, and that is why it's such a big disappointment that we don't have medically trained professionals included in this bill, Speaker.

Now, if I'm to look at the other professions—and I did recognize the ability of the minister to have this, and I do appreciate that. So now let's look at the other professions.

The sheet metal workers talked about this bill, and the way they described it was that this change to schedule 3—they say that it's "window dressing," and that employers don't recognize Canadian experience if it's gained outside of apprenticeships. There is no enforcement of recognition in the legislation.

The other thing I want to point out and the reason I read this specifically was to highlight to the government members on the other side that this bill is for the regulatory

body and not the employer, and there is no way to enforce it.

You will know that when we look at different professions, there are many different professions, from accountants, to engineers, to horticulturalists, all different professions. Many of them who come here using the points system are recognized by the federal government, but after they come here, the province, when they look at it, some professions—their certification process is already recognized. The province does that. You have to go through an evaluation process of your transcript, and when you go through that process, you have that recognition. However, because you don't have Canadian experience, you are not able to get a job with an employer. But this bill does not address that concern that they have, which is, when you need that Canadian experience to go to an employer, it only looks at the regulatory body or the colleges. So removing the need for Canadian experience for a job application, for the licensing part, may seem helpful, but how will it be in practice?

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I talked to a few people from other professions. Let's start with Ben Corpuz. He's an accountant and a community activist who works to empower the Filipino Canadian community. He has been talking to many other accountants and those who are in similar professions as well. He came to Canada as an experienced and credentialed accountant previously working in senior roles. But after coming here, he was trying to settle into a new country, raising three children and making time for his family, all while trying to take courses at different universities just to be able to get accredited again by the CPA. His degrees and credentials did not count. He had to start from scratch—and don't even get me started on the fees, the thousands and thousands of dollars he had to pay just to be able to have the certification process in this recognized. So when we look at all of the work that you're doing here, for Ben, this would not have helped, because he needs to go back to university, he needs to get his whole education again just to be recognized.

So when we look at the bill and we pat ourselves on the back, let's hold back a little bit and make sure that we get it right the first time, because I don't know the next time we'll have this government's ears to actually make sure that we are understanding the issues and addressing them.

I also want to talk about Dr. Mohammed Ali, another professional I talked to, who talked about how his licensing process went through. He's a horticulture expert. When he talked about it, he said, "Well, maybe it's good for me to go and get some Canadian experience, because when I had the type of farm that I worked, the type of crops that I dealt with—it's a little different in Canada, so I want that experience. But I wasn't able to get any opportunity to get Canadian experience." So maybe we need to create apprenticeship and internship opportunities that are easier, or bridging programs that actually make it easier for people to get that experience they need, because the employer looks at that training as well. For him, it was

really important to do that, and he's actually internationally recognized. He has developed a new way of pollinating that's in the international journals, and yet he cannot get a job in his field in Canada.

I also talked to Mr. Saifur Rahman. He works for city water and has gone through the educational system, has done so much work and worked in so many different places that he has built his résumé, finally, after many, many years, to be able to work for the city of Hamilton, and I congratulate him. But it breaks my heart to see the amount of time and dedication he had to put in just to go through all of that because his credentials were not recognized from the beginning.

I also talked to Mr. Titu Khandaker, who talked about his experience. He said, "Canadian experience would be great, because then I could try to get the licensing process—and here I can actually say I don't need Canadian experience because the government tells me I don't need to." So that's great. And I'm glad you're listening, because that's what I mean when we look at different professions.

Let me tell you about Mr. Azizur Rahman, a graduate from Bangladesh. He's frustrated with the way that you have to go through so many different circles. He said, "I feel like I'm going in circles all the time." The main problem is building a network. He recognized that he had to go through the system, but the biggest barrier that he faced was the amount of costs for all of those things to get to the system—and when he wants to get a job, every single time it comes back to Canadian experience by the employer.

I also talked to Dr. Abdul Awal, who is an agriculturalist. Same thing—he talked about the fact that sometimes, when you're finally able to get a job, for example, you face things like racism, you face things where you're not able to actually showcase the expertise and the skills that you have, which is why we need to have the Anti-Racism Directorate and fund that and make sure that it's actually incorporated within the different ministries and we work hard to acknowledge that.

I talked to Mr. Nowsher Ali, who is an engineer. He talked about how employers are asking to get that degree validation again. Do you know that when you come here, you have to get your degree validation? You actually have your transcript—all of that validated. But then again, when you come to the province and you want to get a job, you go through the same process where an employer tells you, "I want to go to this organization, get your transcript validated, so that we have an equivalency of your transcript." That's a cost that's added on you. Why can't we work with the federal government and actually come up with a system that works for all of us?

All of them are working through different types of jobs while trying to make ends meet, trying to raise a family, working hard. I don't even have enough time to go into the mental health aspect, what it means for community members. These are people who are highly skilled, who come with so many years of experience that they could contribute to the province.

When I looked at this bill, I felt like, finally, we have something where—and I have to say that the Liberal government, for many, many years, ignored this issue. It was very heartwarming for me, and I was so excited that we're finally looking into this issue of internationally trained professionals and recognizing their credentials—but we have to do it right. Just like the sheet metal workers have said, this is window dressing. We could have done so much better. Why aren't we doing that? You have a majority government; you could have done so much better.

It's the same thing with the different schedules in the bill as well. When we look at the schedule—and I'll end off with this schedule, because the important part is, we're at least getting started here. I applaud you for that, but then when you look at the other section of providing support for delivery workers, for example—many international students, many people who have lost their jobs across the province were in the situation now, during the pandemic, who were Uber drivers delivering food, for example. They talked about washrooms. They talked about the fact they did not have the ability to access washrooms, but there were lots of taxi drivers and Uber drivers who were on that as well. Why aren't they included in here? Why have we excluded taxi drivers?

Government members are nodding with me. You could have taken just a little bit of time and actually said, "You know what? Let's do this right. We could have actually included people who need to be able to have that support." Taxi drivers have to go to a store, pay for something and then hope there is a washroom.

It's the same thing with our subway stations, for example. Many of the subway stations either have washrooms that don't work or you can't even access them unless you go into the subway and pay a fare. Why would a cab driver do that? These are all the different types of barriers that we have that prevent people from doing their jobs, doing them well and being able to stay healthy.

I can't believe I ran out of time, Speaker. There is just so much in there.

There is the amendment to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and I have a huge section on that, but I've run out of time. So I'll thank you, Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to talk about this important issue.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): It's time for questions and responses.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Speaker, you will know that in the region of Durham we have a number of groups who have done significant work in the area of foreign credentials. For example, we have two welcome centres, one in Ajax and one in Pickering, and we have a multicultural resource centre. Clearly, they think we got it right, and they've been working in this field for years. That's supported also by the view of the partnership council on diversity and immigration—all situated in the region of Durham, the largest geographically in the province, with close to a million people.

I'm pleased that the member from Scarborough Southwest spent a lot of time talking about foreign credentials, because just a few weeks ago, Speaker, the

member addressed a question to the Premier, and I quote: Will the Premier "commit today to addressing the challenges that immigrants face, help foreign-trained professionals find jobs in their field and make it easier for them to find work"—

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. I turn to the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: I'll add to what the member was talking about, because I did raise this issue. I thank you for remembering that, and I thank the Premier for at least hearing me out and for bringing this forward, because immigrants have faced such an important—it's heart-breaking to see what they have faced. When they are recognized, they will be able to contribute so much more.

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One of the things I said in that question a few weeks ago, Speaker, was that medically trained professionals volunteered their time. Like many others, they volunteered their time just so they could contribute. Many of these people work minimum wage jobs just to get by, just to make ends meet, and some of them are moving away from the province.

These kinds of supports, making sure that we recognize them, can go so far in supporting them and making sure that they're able to contribute.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Clearly, this member is very passionate about foreign-trained professionals. She has been consistent on this issue for her entire time here.

I want to bring to our attention the submission that was made by OCASI, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. In their submission, they talk about many of the challenges that face internationally educated or foreign-trained professionals. I want to highlight in particular their first recommendation, which is to commit to inclusive labour market integration, which this member knows full well. At the same time that we see all of these foreign-trained professionals in health care and elsewhere who are looking to contribute to the Ontario economy, we know that they have deep-seated and systemic problems with racism and discrimination in Ontario. They make the recommendation for this government to adequately support the Anti-Racism Directorate and to enable the full implementation of the Anti-Racism Act.

I would ask the member to address those comments and tell us how important they are.

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to thank the member from Waterloo for her question, because we could have just added a few more provisions in this bill that would have done exactly that. We could have also funded the Anti-Racism Directorate enough so that it's supporting our province in the way we need it to.

I briefly talked about some of the professionals who I talked to, who shared their experience in working in jobs that they were overqualified for. Yet they took on the job just so they could build on the Canadian experience part of it. But what happened was that they were facing racism or they were not able to showcase all of their talents, so it

was harder for them. That meant years and years in this position just so they could find the position that they were actually qualified for.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

Mr. Sherif Sabawy: I would like to thank the member on the other side on all the examples you talked about and all the enthusiasm about the medical field professionals. I can assure you that I have worked with an enormous number of pharmacists, doctors and scientists who came to Canada and have been struggling with the system.

I have Dr. Ahmad, an anesthetist who is still working in Munich General Hospital in Germany. He goes for a two-week locum there and comes to Canada to work in real estate because he can't get any medical job here. He runs four operation rooms simultaneously, but he is here in real estate.

I have my story and my wife's story: seven years in Manitoba to be able to come back to Ontario.

My question is, I have been doing that for many years. Where were you guys when the Liberals were here for 14 years? And nobody was doing something for those guys.

Ms. Doly Begum: We were sitting in opposition, just like you guys were. And Speaker, we were actually raising the issues for many, many years. I can tell you, if you look at the Hansard—I'm sure the leader has, and myself. In fact, the member prior quoted me raising this issue. So, yes, we were here talking about the importance of foreign credential recognition and making sure that internationally trained professionals are able to practise.

And then the member talked about people who are overqualified. I mentioned Nowsher Ali, for example, who was an operations maintenance engineer in Saudi Arabia and then he was programming planning engineer. He is very highly qualified, but when he came here, he had to go through that whole transcript process and get the qualifications.

Why doesn't this bill include that part, so that you can make it easier for that cost, for example?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Sudbury.

Mr. Jamie West: I want to congratulate the member from Scarborough Southwest on her debate. She started off by saying, "I don't feel fully prepared," and then for 15 minutes talked about individuals in her community who are foreign-trained professionals who are being left behind by this bill that she had called and contacted—for 15 minutes. I'm sure there's a long list—I can see her laptop from here—of people she's talked with.

It makes me wonder, Speaker. I know she's first-class as an MPP, but we have a bill called "working for workers" and the government failed to speak with the OFL. It's the largest federation of labour in Canada. They represent over a million workers. My question to the member is, if you can do that much work with a bill that's just been tabled and handed to you, why can't the government talk to the largest federation of labour on a bill that's called "working for workers"?

Ms. Doly Begum: That would have solved so many problems in this bill, because, trust me, we want to be able to support it. And in this House, we do propose so many solutions. Talking to the OFL, the Ontario Federation of Labour; talking to the different colleges; talking to different professionals; talking to different immigrants who are facing this problem, for example; talking to migrant workers; talking to transit workers, for example—all of that would have made this bill excellent. You could have done a fantastic job and actually tabled something that helps Ontarians, that helps workers across this province.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I look to the member from Kitchener—Conestoga.

Mr. Mike Harris: I can tell you, for one, I'm proud of this bill, because I've heard from constituents as well. Barbara Stevens, who is a constituent of mine, wrote me a note the other day to let me know her husband is now going to be able to find work here in the province because of this bill. I think it's fantastic that we're taking the right steps, the necessary steps and the first steps to get something like this done.

I will say the member from Scarborough Southwest did a fantastic job in debate today, and she was very prepared. I was really happy to see her talk about this so passionately, because there are more people that we need to help and I think this is a great first step in that direction. The Liberals, well, quite frankly, in 15 years, didn't really do anything to address this. We're addressing it now and I'm hoping that she will get up and vote in support of this when it's time.

My question to her is, does she think this is a great first step in the right direction to be able to help workers in this province?

Ms. Doly Begum: This is why—I want to go back to what I was just saying—if we consulted the organizations; if we consulted people like the OFL, the organizations that have been fighting hard for internationally trained professionals or doctors, for example; if we consulted with so many of the workers across this province, we could have done a better job with this bill.

I mentioned briefly about the fees that a lot of people face. This bill will not address that. I talked a little bit about racism. The thousands and thousands of dollars that Ben, for example, had to deal with while trying to help his family, while trying to raise three children—that will continue, and we could have done better in supporting people in the certification process, in making sure that when they have a bridging program, they don't have to repeat the education and go through the same education system.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: I'm pleased to be participating in this debate this evening on Bill 27, put through by the Minister of Labour.

I don't know where to begin, so let's start at the beginning. The committee put together to make recommendations for this bill was a committee of six: two lawyers, three university lecturers or professors, and an executive from a big bank. They were supposed to come

up with recommendations to lead the future of work in Ontario, and some kind of recovery after three years of this government putting people out of work and bankrupting businesses.

Now, all the committee members are accomplished individuals—good for them—but in the committee that referred these changes, there was no representation from small businesses, no representation from medium-sized businesses, no start-ups, no entrepreneurs, no representation from the industries and the players that are the backbone of our economy. The committee needed representation from people who know what it is like to hire and fire, who have employees, who know the challenges of the job market. Lawyers, professors, executives at big banks and politicians are not the backbone of our economy, yet that is who provided the recommendations to the minister on how to revamp our labour laws.

So, as one would expect, what we see here in this bill is more red tape, more big government, more Premier Dad-like solutions to micromanage our employers and job creators and to bring further barriers into Ontario's economy.

What a shame, Mr. Speaker, to think that 2.3 million people voted in 2018 for a change in government and a change in direction and, instead, they got a government that is determined to move along on the same trajectory as the last Liberal government—no change at all. This bill clearly shows this PC government isn't blue and they are certainly not for the people of Ontario, Mr. Speaker. "Not blue and not for you" should be the motto of this government.

1950

As is evident with this government, like the Liberal governments of 15 years before, it's the same, basically. They don't like diversity. They don't like different choices made by different people and different businesses. They want a one-size-fits-all, my-way-or-the-highway approach, and this is what we have here.

Number 1: Helping immigrants get licensed by removing barriers, in some professions, by removing the requirement for Canadian work experience. When we have so many Ontarians out of work because of this government's policies and mandates, and don't forget the three economy-killing lockdowns; when we have Ontarians being threatened with job loss, without any ability to collect employment insurance which they have paid into for many years, due to them exercising their right to not disclose their vaccine status or their right to choose to not get vaccinated—so Ontarians are losing their jobs, and the Minister of Labour has said on multiple occasions that we have a labour shortage of 293,000 jobs. This PC government is encouraging these employers to put through COVID-19 vaccine mandates and at the same time removing requirements of Canadian work experience for access to some professions?

Why not leave it up to the professional bodies to set these requirements of entry into their professions? A good idea would have been to legislate measures to ensure these professional licensing colleges do not have the ability to

clamp down on free speech by their professionals and do not have the ability to mandate speech and certain conduct or certain political philosophies—and thus kicking their members out for not obliging with groupthink. But instead, this government shows it isn't interested in protecting free speech or diversity of thought. This government wants to let the professional bodies do a one-size-fits-all model, but at the same time make it easier for individuals to qualify to practise in those professions. If the government was worried about the labour shortage, it wouldn't allow employers to be firing their employees on medical choices. Instead, they create the labour shortage and fix it like this, by punishing Ontarians.

Number 2: Mandating that companies disclose their policies as to when employees can disconnect from work. Talk about the very definition of red tape, the very definition of micromanaging a business—or of big government, really. I guess we shouldn't be surprised. This is the same government, after all, that decided to make laws to tell people how many people can come over for Thanksgiving, to tell businesses how many people they can seat and what hours they can open, and that bankrupted businesses and that closed down businesses, and opened them and closed them, and opened them and closed them.

They want to run every single business in Ontario when they can't even properly run the government. The new policy will be forced on businesses and does not take into account the different workplace scenarios where this doesn't even make sense. Here we have the government that claimed to be for the little guy and to cut red tape now implementing more red tape and additional paperwork for small business owners. These additional restrictions that the PC government will be imposing on corporations will be passed down to the workers.

Speaker, allow me to read a quote from Matthew Lau, who wrote an article titled "What Works for Workers is Letting Them Choose" in the *Financial Post*: "The government does not help workers by mandating that their compensation mix include a disconnection policy; the revealed preference of many workers is that they would find this counterproductive, as evidenced by the fact that they currently choose to work for companies that don't have these policies."

Some companies cannot allow for disconnection. Their employees are on call for emergencies. This bill will lead to employees losing the hours and opportunity to abide by this policy, making it more expensive for a business to operate. These extra costs and burdens are passed on to the consumer at the indirect cost to the employee.

Every situation is different, and in the case of companies where the worker finds less value in the policy than the cost for the company to implement the policy, it is a loss for the worker. The cost is passed down or the company's labour costs increase at the expense of higher salaries, in order to keep the same level of employment and productivity. If there was a labour shortage and workers demanded this policy, it would be reflected in the market with employers providing this type of policy gaining a competitive advantage over companies that do not. If

workers choose to work for companies without these policies, there's obviously a reason: higher pay, perhaps the work environment, culture, work from home. This bill kills these choices and stamps out innovation.

Number 3: Banning non-complete agreements. Again, putting more restrictions around companies and limitations around workers using a one-size-fits-all mentality, similar to the last top-down big-government solution, micromanaging how businesses operate. Banning non-competes is a terrible idea. Workers find compensation in signing non-competes. They get extra value, including increased severance when entering into these agreements. It is not pro-worker to strip these options from workers.

Furthermore, some companies need these agreements to survive, to protect their property, to protect and encourage innovation. This bill would put a chill on new hires related to new inventions. Without a non-compete, an employer would wait to hire someone for fear of giving away the ideas and then watching the employee leave to compete. This then hurts the consumer, who is denied the benefit of the invention hitting the market sooner.

Number four: forcing companies to open their washrooms to delivery drivers who stop there. Ontarians will be happy to know that while the government will ensure delivery drivers can use washrooms of businesses—because it must have been a problem before—this is the same government that won't allow parents to accompany their own children to the bathroom, help them get ready for sports or watch them play unless they have a COVID-19 vaccine passport, apparently. This government fails to recognize diversity and differences between people and businesses, fails to respect people's freedom to choose and fails to recognize the importance of a free market—unbelievable, really, from a formerly right-of-centre party.

And the most obvious argument for why this bill is total nonsense, especially coming from this government, is that within their own political party, or within their own ministries and government operations, do you think the Premier or his cabinet minister have on their own implemented policies on disconnecting and not being available after 5? Absolutely not: quite the opposite.

So, a little competition in the private sector is okay, non-competes are bad in the private sector, but for this government and their political party, restrictive covenants and working after 5 are expected.

Speaker, I see I only have four seconds left. I will not be supporting this bill. Thank you for your time.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Time for questions and responses.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to the member from Cambridge for her comments. I read the article you referred to by Matthew Lau and I also read the article by Howard Levitt. I think it might have been in the same paper, and I have the Howard Levitt article here.

Howard Levitt argues that the non-competition clause is a good provision. Ultimately, what's happening with these non-competition clauses—and the reason we eliminated them is because they are basically being used for junior employees as a way to prevent people from being

able to move from one job to another as a barrier to labour market efficiency. They're being used for things like McDonald's and other things and especially in the IT sector. The legislation allows non-solicitation agreements to continue, and protection of IP rights. So even for more senior executives, those rights are protecting the things that they need to have protected and will not be a barrier to employment, according to the great employment lawyer Howard Levitt.

So I ask the member if she has looked at that article and if she doesn't consider it a good policy.

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: Thank you to the member for Eglinton–Lawrence. It is the very definition of this government: not living up to the standards they place on everyone else and not even living up to their name, which is to be Conservative.

The fact that these laws were created by Liberal governments is yet more proof that the governing Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario has a desire to just be a copy of the Liberal parties in Canada. This bill is yet another example of this government just taking a Liberal legislative idea and amplifying it a bit more.

Mr. Speaker, my only question after three years of watching bill after bill copy the Liberals is, for the MPPs on the government benches: Wouldn't it have been easier for all of you if you just ran with the red party?

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and responses?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: My question is to the member opposite. This bill, as you know, is called Working for Workers Act, but I'm not sure which workers the government is working for, because they aren't working for our injured workers or claimants of WSIB.

Schedule 6 removes the obligation of the WSIB to make payments from reserve funds when there is insufficient money available in the fund. My question to you is, how will our injured workers receive the support that they need in that situation?

Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: Thank you to the member for Brampton North. I understand the NDP's position and concerns with schedule 6, but I have really good news: The other side, the government benches, flip-flops so much it's very likely you may get what you want anyway. We've seen this multiple times during the pandemic and even over the last three years. So I'm going to say, hang tight. Hold your breath, but you're going to be able to release it soon. It's very likely we're going to see another flip-flop very soon.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and responses?

Mrs. Robin Martin: I of course listened intently to all of the things that the member mentioned, and I know the member thinks that she has a monopoly on what a Conservative is, but I would argue that she does not and that these pieces of legislation are Conservative and are supported by Conservatives, including Howard Levitt, who I quoted from in the last question that I asked.

I think what we've seen before—and I don't know why the member answered my question by suggesting that this

was Liberal legislation, because there's no Liberal legislation here. This is a Working for Workers Act brought forward by the Conservative government, a Conservative government that represents all kinds of people, and workers are included in that. I would ask why the member thinks Conservatives can't speak and represent workers.

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Mrs. Belinda C. Karahalios: Thank you again to the member for Eglinton–Lawrence. I'm not going to have an argument on who is more conservative or what a Conservative is, but I will say that Conservatives typically don't like big government inside business, micromanaging business. We should be allowing businesses to make their own rules, to know what's best for business.

You have a committee that was made up of individuals who don't own small and medium businesses. It wasn't represented by hard-working Ontarians. It was lawyers; it was an executive from a big bank. Again, these individuals have done well for themselves and good for them, but you cannot create legislation for workers and not have workers included in building that legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. There is not enough time to get a question and answer in; my apologies. Further debate?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I'm just going to set my stopwatch because I can't see the clock from here without my glasses. We need to support optometrists.

It's an honour to rise to speak on Bill 27, as well as to rise on behalf of the great people of Brampton North to discuss Bill 27, the Working for Workers Act.

What is this bill proposing for the workers of Ontario? What I'm going to do, Mr. Speaker, is I'm going to go through some of the different schedules. There are quite a few, so I won't go through all the schedules, but I'll just go through some of the important schedules here.

Schedule 1 of this bill would allow for the recruiter of a foreign national to be liable for any fees applied to anyone seeking employment. It also empowers inspectors to issue orders against recruiters and employers to further restrict recruiters found to violate these rules from future recruitment of foreign nationals.

Some of the biggest industries in Brampton are advanced manufacturing, retail administration, logistics information and communication technologies. We also have food and beverage, life sciences and business services. According to Statistics Canada, a lot of temporary workers are employed in the agriculture sector. We still see many in Brampton in manufacturing, retail, logistics, IT and the food and beverage sectors.

While these provisions may help them, I find that there is a lack of enforcement details or an enforcement mechanism in the act, and I don't see any significant penalties attached. That is a big concern with this bill. Without that, I'm afraid that the bad actors will continue to exploit the foreign nationals. We saw that during COVID.

I've heard the Premier mention countless times that we are seeing a worker shortage in Ontario. Then why couldn't this government do more to support our foreign

workers? There are many stories in Brampton of wage theft and exploitation of these foreign workers, especially in the restaurant and trucking fields. I'm not going to name the name of the company, but there is one trucking company in Brampton where the company is facing wage theft and illegal deductions and unsafe working conditions, but even after being ordered by the government to pay their workers what they are owed, company X continues to evade their legal obligations and refuses to budge. This is something that the government should be looking at: making sure that companies pay their workers. That is not, unfortunately, in this bill.

This is why some workers in Brampton formed a collective called the Naujawan Support Network to rally against the wage theft and exploitation. The government wasn't going to do it for them, so they had to do it on their own.

I've also heard concerns about employee privacy—this is something which is not in the bill, as well—and how this bill falls short on protecting privacy. Employee surveillance technologies have expanded rapidly since the pandemic has forced many Ontarians to start working from home. This increase in surveillance has caused greater levels of stress, anxiety and depression in workers, according to a paper by Kristie Byrum published by SSRN. This government needs to do more to protect the privacy and mental health of the workers of Ontario by regulating employee surveillance in hybrid models of work. This is one aspect, employee surveillance, that is not in this bill and, as you can see, it is huge. It is a vast and very important issue that needs to be addressed.

Let's take a look at schedule number 2. It requires employers of 25 or more to produce a written policy on how their employees can disconnect from work. It also prohibits employers from requiring non-compete agreements. There's also a change requiring the recruiters mentioned in schedule 1 to be licensed. Again, I don't see any enforcement mechanism or monitoring for compliance for these provisions.

The 25-or-more-employee limit also excludes many smaller employers and workplaces. The Brampton Employer Survey states that the average number of employees per business establishment has stayed around 17—not 25, 17. This means that many of my constituents will not benefit from this policy and can't disconnect from work. It seems that this government is once again leaving Brampton behind as they have done with our health care system and our rising auto insurance rates, of which I've spoken many times here in the House.

Let's move on to schedule number 3. It promises reform of foreign credentials for skilled workers, mostly professionals regulated under the new Skilled Trades Ontario. I welcome a reform that makes it easier for skilled workers to have their foreign credentials recognized, allowing newcomers and immigrants to find opportunities and prosper in their new home country.

Brampton is home to a large and vibrant immigrant community from all sorts of skilled backgrounds. While

some are fortunate to have their foreign credentials recognized, many are denied a chance to contribute to our society.

What's happening with this bill is it's excluding health professionals, which my colleague from Scarborough Southwest just mentioned not too long ago. Excluding these skilled professions is something they need to rectify because we are in dire shortage of health care professionals. The people of Ontario continue to suffer from this Ford government's cuts and refusal to spend by sitting on billions, as we know, in pandemic funding. During this pandemic, we had thousands of health care workers leave their jobs due to their pay and this government's legislation limiting their annual salary increases. According to Statistics Canada, the health care and social assistance sectors had more vacancies than any other sector in January 2021. So we should be focused on helping foreign-trained health professionals to contribute their skills at a time when our province needs them the most.

I just want to mention a quote from Dr. Shafi Bhuiyan, who's the co-founder and manager of Internationally Trained Medical Doctors. He talks about this. He says, "The exclusion will continue to add to barriers that internationally trained physicians face, which impacts gender, racial and cultural parity in the health care system."

We've had a health care crisis declared in Brampton, as we all know, before the pandemic; however, this Ford government continues to cut our health care and neglect our people in Brampton. Earlier this year, the Premier made an announcement claiming that his government would build a new hospital in Brampton, and when I looked at the 2021 budget, I saw the announcement for what it really was, just another election promise. The only mention of funding for Brampton's health care was a \$1.5-million planning grant and up to \$18 million to expand Peel Memorial's urgent care centre to 24/7 operations. But in Brampton, we need more than that. This extension promised by the Premier is not sufficient nor is it a new hospital. Also, it does not start construction until 2023. What Brampton needs is for Peel Memorial to be converted into a full-fledged hospital, and we need another new stand-alone hospital.

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I'm just going to skip to schedule number 4, which allows the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to collect personal information regulated under FIPPA, which is the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. My colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane spoke at length about this and the concerns that there are no details or any evidence of a plan. This government needs to provide a plan, because they're going to be having farmers who are going to be inspected and who are going to be ridiculed and asked questions that they shouldn't have to be asked.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I have a couple more schedules to go through, but obviously, I can see—

Interjection.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: —and I can actually see—that I have about 10 seconds left. So I'd like to continue to

advocate for the workers of Ontario to get the respect and support that they need.

I want to thank all my colleagues for speaking to this bill as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I'd like to acknowledge the help of all sides tonight. Thank you very much.

Questions and responses?

Hon. Lisa MacLeod: It's been a while since I've been able to engage in debate. I actually do like this new format. As somebody who has been here for 15 years, I do want to provide my compliments to the government House leader for this type of debate. It's very effective.

I will also say, after having spent 13 years in opposition, I am in awe and in wonderment of the New Democrats today. They have taken more positions in the last week than there are in the Kama Sutra. They have been nothing more than a group of pretzels at the cinema. I've never seen anybody take as many positions as they have.

Speaker, I must ask this member opposite—I once worked for John Baird when he was the Minister of Community and Social Services and, of course, the MPP for Nepean. Back then, in 1999, we were dealing with foreign training credentials. Not once when I sat here under the Liberal government, for three years aided and abetted by his party, did we talk about foreign credentialing. Why can't they just say yes for once?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: As I mentioned—and I don't believe the member opposite was listening; she was talking to her other colleagues—what we need to have in this bill is foreign training credentials for health care professionals. That's what we're saying. We haven't seen it in this bill.

We've seen what happened during COVID, the shortage of health care professionals, and this is something which the government needs to put in, plain and simple. Why they're not doing it—in Brampton, we have many health care professionals who are now working other jobs because they can't get the qualifications necessary to work here in Ontario.

So they can laugh on the other side all they want, but this is very important. They need to make sure that foreign health care professionals are recognized in this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Thank you to the member for his contribution to this debate.

I want to talk briefly about the right to disconnect that's in it. If you're going to do something, do it. Follow through on it. Put an enforcement mechanism in there. But instead, what this government has done is they put a shiny object in the window that sounds really good for workers, and businesses will have to develop a policy, but there's no enforcement mechanism attached to that. So the only way that this is cutting red tape is by cutting it up the middle. You're adding another layer for businesses to deal with. You're not giving them an enforcement mechanism. Would the member speak to how this could have been done better?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank my colleague from Kingston and the Islands. You pretty much just answered your question. What the government should have done, what they should do with this bill, is make sure they put, enshrined in law here in this bill, that they have protections for workers, because we're not seeing the protections for workers. Businesses which are fewer than 25 employees—as I mentioned, in Brampton, we have about 17 employees on average per business. They're not going to get the protections. They're not going to get the supports that this bill purports to have. So the government needs to look at fewer than 25 employees and include everybody in this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions?

Mr. Aris Babikian: Thank you to my colleague from the opposite side for his presentation. The accreditation issue, it is something that has been going on for a long time—at least, I remember, for 35 years, during my association with the Canadian Ethnocultural Council, which is an umbrella organization for the multicultural communities in Canada. They represent 33 different organizations. We have been trying so hard to change the attitude, to change this whole structure, but unfortunately, the regulatory bodies are the biggest obstacle to change.

Finally, there is a government that is challenging that attitude, that *modus operandi*, and they are doing something about it. Wouldn't you agree that it is a good first step? Let's work on this bill. Let's pass it and expand it after that.

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank the member for his question. I'm going to sound like a robot here, but—because I guess you're just not listening to what I'm saying. What you need to have in this bill here is to make sure that doctors, trained doctors, are provided the assistance to work in Ontario. We have a shortage of trained doctors in Ontario. However, there are many trained doctors who come from other countries that are not being recognized, and it's not in this bill. You could easily put it in this bill so that we wouldn't have this deficit of doctors in Ontario. So, think about it. Make sure you put it in, because it's something we definitely need.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Sudbury.

Mr. Jamie West: Thank you to the member from Brampton North. Through his debate, he was talking about the need for a hospital in Brampton, something I hear continually from the member from Brampton North as well as from the member from Brampton East. I think one of the things—if you're going to build a hospital, get an additional hospital, what you need are nurses.

If the government is truly committed to helping workers—because they have been pushing them down the stairs for the last three years and they're pretending now to finally come to the rescue. But if they're truly committed to helping workers, wouldn't a first good step be to repeal Bill 124 so that health care workers can make a decent wage and not fall behind?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank the member from Sudbury for that question. Our leader, Andrea Horwath,

called for a vote to start a massive hiring of nurses, and this is something which the government voted against. The plan would include hiring thousands of nurses and personal support workers, a retention plan to ensure skilled nurses stay in the sector, and funding to put enough nurses on every shift in every health care setting to prevent worker burnout. We've put forward bills and motions and plans. However, at every turn, the government turns it down. And these are things, if they were enshrined in this act, that would make things much better for workers in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions?

Mrs. Robin Martin: I was listening intently to the member opposite as he was making his comments, and I realize the bill doesn't contain everything. This is one bill that we're bringing forward. It isn't the bill to have all things done in it.

I know we are working on changes for health care workers, but that can't be part of this legislation because they're not under the ESA, the Employment Standards Act, which is what this legislation is about. But we are working on other legislation with respect to health care workers, and we think it's very important.

But the members opposite have been talking about health and temporary health agencies as a problem for that too—that don't follow rules. Our proposed changes in this legislation would do exactly what the opposition has been asking for: clamp down on temporary agencies who exploit vulnerable workers. So can the member opposite please explain why you won't support protecting workers with that legislation?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: Thank you for the question opposite. We support all workers in Ontario. Obviously, this government did not support paid sick days, and it's obvious that if they had supported paid sick days, then they'd be showing that they support workers.

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Last year, we broke ground by tabling legislation echoing our campaign which demands four employer-paid sick days, plus 14 additional days during the pandemic. Soon after, the Liberal Party followed with their own paid-sick-days bill, and in response, what did this government do? Well, his caucus voted down permanent sick days no less than 25 times.

So when you talk about supporting workers, we on this side are supporting workers. On the other side, they're basically saying, "It sucks to be you."

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, we consulted many experts on this bill. I just mentioned a list of experts who helped us understand the barriers that they face in getting their credentials and experience recognized, so I want to thank these experts for their contribution to the province, for their hard work and dedication.

One of the things they mentioned was the barrier of cost: repeating education, getting their transcript equivalency here through different organizations. The cost is

huge, so my question is: Would making sure that we consulted with many of these professionals and actually figuring out how we can support with this cost be a really important part of this schedule?

Mr. Kevin Yarde: I want to thank the member for her question. Obviously, the government didn't consult with health care workers or the OFL, so that's why we are in the situation we're in right now. They didn't consult, and there are so many loopholes in this bill. If they had consulted workers and professionals, we wouldn't be sitting here today talking about these problems with this bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Just before we move forward, I'll just offer a couple friendly reminders. Again, please remind yourselves of the language and keeping it civil at all times in here. And when you're not speaking, please remember to have your face mask on. Thank you.

Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to join the debate here today on Bill 27 on behalf of the good people of Waterloo. I think the context that we are debating this piece of legislation in is pretty interesting right now. For the last few days, we've seen the Conservative government really try to rebrand themselves, if you will. One of my colleagues called it a "Back to the Future" for the PC Party.

My colleague here from Ottawa South, I think, described the government of the day when we first came here in 2018 as having a wrecking ball; that the Premier was a wrecking ball to worker rights, to working conditions. I think it's a little disrespectful to Miley Cyrus, but that's an aside.

But everybody in this province, I think, will recall that one of the very first moves that the Ford government took, shortly after being elected in 2018, was to cancel the planned increase to the minimum wage, to cancel that \$15 minimum wage. One just has to reflect for a moment on what that would mean to working people in this province, to minimum wage earners in Ontario, if that \$15 minimum wage had been put in place when it was planned to be implemented, and the additional dollars that would be in workers' pockets as a result—just over \$5,000 after tax—especially at a time when we are seeing frankly unprecedented increases in the consumer price index and rate of inflation.

That \$15 minimum wage, at that time, would have made a significant difference to many, many families and workers across the province, especially during a pandemic. I have to say, I don't believe that the workers of this province are going to forget that betrayal by this government when they rolled back the minimum wage and failed to honour those increases.

At the same time that they decided to cancel the minimum wage increase, they also told employers that they don't have to pay the same rates of pay for workers who are doing the exact same work as the people who are working beside them. You changed that rule as well. They removed the equal-pay-for-equal-work provisions from the Employment Standards Act and gave the green light to

employers who wanted to pay temporary employees less than the full-time workers who were working beside them—often racialized workers; often women.

This government also scrapped the two paid sick days that workers and allies and health professionals and small businesses who recognize the importance of paid sick days to their workforce and the health and well-being of their employees—which we should fully understand now that we've gone through a pandemic, and have a comprehensive understanding that the health and well-being of your colleague, of your neighbour, will impact your health and well-being.

That's the ultimate learning from this pandemic, Mr. Speaker, and that also affects our economy. It was something that working people in this province fought so hard to achieve, and this government said, "No, no, no. We're not going to provide those permanent paid sick days." It was exhausting during this pandemic to try to get this government to understand the importance and significance of paid sick days. Ultimately, we dragged you kicking and screaming to have this kind of understanding of the importance of paid sick days.

Those little desk ornaments that the Premier gave all the MPPs at the beginning—do you remember? "For the people"—just throw them in the trash because nobody is buying what you are selling on that.

I want to talk about a number of issues that are contained within this legislation. Quite honestly, I'm relying heavily on the work of our member and the lead on this bill, the member from London West. I've been here for nine years. Maybe some of you don't know this, but I'm intrinsically connected to the WSIB, because when I came to this place, it was through a by-election. That by-election was called because Dalton McGuinty, at the time, courted Elizabeth Witmer away from this House and offered her the chair of the WSIB. You'll remember this, Mr. Speaker, because you were here. I am directly here because of those actions. Maybe some of you don't remember this, but it was really one seat between a majority and a minority, and that seat was Waterloo. And the good people of Kitchener–Waterloo said to Dalton McGuinty, "You're not going to buy a majority, and we value representation." It has been a privilege, really, to be here for these full 9 years.

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Oh, thank you.

But in 2014, a scandal was brewing around—well, there were a number of scandals, because it was a Liberal government, after all. But in 2014, Fiera Foods had received \$1.5 million of government grant money. For those of you who don't know Fiera Foods, they are a large food manufacturing and processing—they make baked goods for businesses like Tim Hortons, for instance: the doughnuts, the croissants and the egg sandwiches that the Premier always talks about. They're made here by Fiera Foods, which employs 70% of temporary foreign workers; 70% of their workforce are temporary workers, often women, often racialized folks.

We know what was actually going on in this particular organization because a reporter from the Toronto Star went undercover and wanted to find out what these working conditions were, because at the time there was such a proliferation of temp agencies in Ontario, and at that time three workers had already died there. I just want to put their names on the record: Ivan Golyashov died in 1999; Aydin Kazimov died in 2011; Amina Diaby died in 2016; a worker whose name has been withheld by the family, in 2018; and Enrico Miranda died in 2019.

Amina, though, for me, holds a special place because she was hired by the temp agency, so she was off the books at Fiera Foods—and that loophole still exists in this legislation. She was off the books, she was undertrained, and she was rushed through onto the floor. She was actually training to be a nurse, Mr. Speaker—a nurse. Imagine had her life not been snuffed out by a really irresponsible employer at this time—no training, no workplace safety and a high-intensity work environment. Her hijab got stuck in some of the equipment.

I remember her on a regular basis because she had such hopes and dreams. But because Fiera Foods was hiring temporary workers, they fell under a whole difference category. Fiera Foods, within this legislation, will qualify for the WSIB premium unfunded liability. This is a company that—your legislation will continue to allow temporary workers to not be counted. Their workplace health and safety records will not reflect what's actually happening, because temp agencies will still be part of the legislation.

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There are some penalties in this act, but it always comes down to enforcement. The fact that the government is prioritizing the unfunded liabilities and then the payback to the employers—well, we know that injured workers in the province of Ontario are fighting for their basic rights, still to this day. I'm thinking of General Electric. To date, almost half of those claims have not been honoured. These are people who have been fighting for 30, 40 years. I'm thinking of the rubber workers in Kitchener-Waterloo. The Kitchener-Waterloo rubber workers cluster first came to light in 2002. USW Local 677 had run an occupational health disease clinic for all the plants, and there were 800 claims. These claims have been playing themselves out now for decades.

If you're going to create a piece of legislation and call it "working for workers"—I don't know who's writing the titles of this legislation, honestly—why wouldn't you put worker health and safety at the centre of that? It is 2021. We know how to keep workers safe. We know how to keep employers accountable. We should not, under any conditions, be rewarding employers who think that the lives of their workers are expendable.

We're going to try to make this a better piece of legislation. There's a lot of work that's going to be involved in this, for sure. But we know who's fighting for workers in Ontario, and it's my colleagues and the people in the New Democratic Party of Ontario. The workers of this province certainly know that to be true.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses?

Mr. Mike Harris: It's great to hear a fellow colleague from Waterloo region up and take part in debate tonight. Something struck me, actually, that I haven't heard in debate almost through this entire thing. This is talking about the clause of the bill where we're talking about non-compete clauses. I wanted to read a quote from Chris Albinson, who's the newly installed president and CEO of Communitech, which is in Kitchener, of course, just next door to my riding and to the member from Waterloo's riding. He says, "Communitech is pleased to see Ontario level the playing field for workers, including tech workers, compared to other jurisdictions like California."

"Canadian founders are in a global competition for talent, so we are grateful to see Ontario setting conditions to help innovators attract and retain the best workers in North America to keep our economy growing."

If Chris is in favour of this bill, I'd like to hear why the member from Waterloo isn't.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'm going to remind the member from Kitchener-Conestoga that I'm identifying a major flaw in the legislation. I know sometimes you have selective hearing, but I want to say that a company like Fiera Foods will receive multiple rebates from the WSIB for their so-called low injury claims rate over the past decade. I hope that you and I can agree that that is not right.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I just remind all members that you should come through the Chair, please.

Ms. Catherine Fife: That is not right, Mr. Speaker, through you to the member from Kitchener-Conestoga. A company where injuries happen on a regular basis and where five lives have been lost should never qualify for a WSIB rebate. That is a poison pill right here.

Please, next time, if you're designing a piece of legislation for workers, put workers at the centre of that legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I look to the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to thank the member from Waterloo for her speech and her dedication to the people of Waterloo. I know she listens to them and she hears their concerns.

One of the things she talked about was worker safety and what happened to the woman with the hijab, and the way that this bill could have helped many, many workers. When I looked at this, I was shocked to see that it actually incentivizes employers to not give a payout so that they can have a surplus. Do you think that's actually fair to the workers who have suffered so much in this province?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you so much for that question. This is another problem that's contained within this legislation. I had talked about the 70% of the workers at Fiera Foods who are temporary. This bill, this legislation, does nothing to remove incentives for employers like Fiera Foods to create a business model that relies on hiring temp workers.

The incentives are, as I mentioned, that they don't have to pay the temp workers the same as they have to do their full-time employees, so of course they're going to do that. The other big incentive for employers to use temp agencies is that if there is a workplace injury and if someone is injured or dies on the job, as temp workers did at Fiera Foods, there's no record of that particular employer's WSIB ratings. There's no impact whatsoever. So there's no incentive, there's no barrier right here to actually create a business model that keeps workers safe. Thank you for the question.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you to the member opposite for her submissions tonight. I listened intently, and I'm really confused, frankly, by the opposition's comments on WSIB premiums, as though we could take money that belongs to somebody and give it to somebody else. Whatever you think about the benefits given to workers, the money isn't there to be distributed at will by the government. The money is paid in by employers and belongs to employers.

Anyway, there are a couple of great quotes supporting the WSIB premiums going back to small businesses. The member from Waterloo has been moaning on behalf of small businesses about how challenged all the small businesses are. So aren't you happy, like Rocco Rossi, CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, and Ryan Mallough of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, that small businesses are getting some money back to help them to carry on after a very difficult few years during this pandemic?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's so interesting, Mr. Speaker, because the member opposite always says that she is listening intently. It doesn't really matter how intently you listen; you're never going to get it. And that question you just posed to me absolutely proves my point. I would argue, as I am doing, that the WSIB unfunded liability—ask yourself where it came from. I mean, the Supreme Court of Canada says there is too onerous of a burden of proof—which was recently rejected—put on workers. The system makes it so difficult for workers to get justice and to get the compensation that they deserve.

My point, right back at you, is: If you're going to design some legislation for workers, put workers at the centre of it.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I recognize the member from Nickel Belt.

Mme France Gélinas: I would like to thank the member for Waterloo for her comments. Continuing with her train of thought, when we talk about occupational diseases, those are real. Those often affect dozens or hundreds of employees, and all of them get rejected by WSIB. They get sick because they are exposed to something at work, but yet the WSIB, which is supposed to support them through their sickness, turns them down. So when the member from Waterloo gave an example, it was really to show that, yes, apparently WSIB has a surplus, but they also have a liability to all of those workers who were made

sick at work through occupational diseases. Does the member agree that those people deserve to have compensation through WSIB?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much for the question. The answer, of course, is yes. The WSIB is now the third-largest private insurance company in Canada, and they are doing very well, I will say, as most insurance companies are, especially during this pandemic.

The burden that's placed on workers to prove that their injury, that their illness is workplace-related is well documented. When you're designing a piece of legislation, you should use the research and evidence to actually craft that piece of legislation. There is an overemphasis on workers' medical histories rather than the exposures at work. There's a disregard of cancer clusters as evidence of work-relatedness. There's ignoring workers' doctors' assessments—their own doctors are ignored—and relying instead on the WSIB board's consulting doctors.

There is so much work that has to be done, and it's well documented. And you ignored it as you designed this legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions?

Mr. Michael Parsa: Earlier today I was having a conversation with my colleague from Sarnia–Lambton who, by the way, truly sets the bar when it comes to being a public representative and is a mentor to so many of us. I highly recommend that everyone in the House take note of the way he's been representing his constituents, because, like I said—all you have to do is talk to his constituents just to see how amazing he is. Everybody in this House should look up to him as I do.

2040

Speaker, when it comes to foreign credentials—as you know, and I've talked about this many, many times, I immigrated here when I was quite young with my family. And then this ongoing issue with foreign credentials has been ever since we moved to Canada. The previous government talked about it, did absolutely nothing. I know it bothers some of my colleagues when we talk about it, but it's a fact. They did nothing. They had many, many opportunities—15 years to be exact—to make the change, to make a difference in people's lives, in particular for those newcomers who are coming in to a new culture, new country, new language. They could have done something to make a difference; they didn't.

Now they have an opportunity in this bill to be able to support us and to show these newcomers that they actually care, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This is a really interesting point, because our record on this issue is well documented. Our members have been pushing for the recognition of foreign credentials for years now. We couldn't get the Liberals to move on this because they had a majority, just like we haven't been able to get you to move on some key issues around workplace safety, around the minimum wage—although you did twist yourself into a different condition on that one—paid sick days.

So it's just an interesting dilemma that we face on this side, because we're trying to get you to design a piece of legislation that actually will meet the needs of workers, and you're using the same conditions that we have faced with the Liberal majority in the past.

Listen, there are 210 days until the election. We'll make it all right in just about that time.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further debate?

Mr. Ian Arthur: It's always a pleasure to rise and contribute to the debate in this Legislature. Thank you to all the members who so far have done so.

This bill does a lot of things, Speaker, and some of them are okay, but there are these glaring gaps in the bill, tremendous gaps in the bill, that make it extremely difficult to support. The government will claim, "How can we not support this?" And they will hang the few good things that are in there out as evidence that we should support it. But they do so at the expense of what's missing in it, and I think what's missing in it is really, really important.

This place can be a very eye-opening experience. We've heard a lot about Fiera Foods from this side, not a lot from the other side who actually has the power to do something about this, Speaker. But we have had members on this side bring it up again and again and again. Now, we would hope that no one is injured on the job. Of course we hope that, and I know that all members in this Legislature hope that some of us can do something about it when workers are injured—and some of us unfortunately can't.

Fiera Foods is a bakery, Speaker. There are some jobs that are dangerous. If you go into mining, if you go into forestry, there are dangers associated with doing those jobs and the pay is reflective of that. The pay is often or tries to be reflective of that for jobs that are known to be dangerous. Now, working in a bakery, Speaker: How is it that working in a bakery can result in losing your life on the job? It's a bakery. For someone like Fiera Foods to allow not one—which may be an accident—not two, not three, not four, but five people to die in their factory and to not be forced to have any sort of record of that on their file—how is that possible in Ontario? How is a government that is putting forward a piece of legislation that aims to address some of the shortcomings of WSIB not including provisions to deal with that sort of egregious disrespect for workers?

This bill is "Working for Workers," but it's not, because it's not working for the five people—or the future people who may lose their lives because they were temp workers. And they were temp workers; they're looking for any work they can get. So when they're sent to a place, they often are not in a position to actually be able to say no to that job.

I graduated in 2008. It was pretty hard to find work, particularly in your field, if you graduated in 2008. I took what work I could find. I remember painting for a year. Most of it was pretty okay, but then I was shoved on a fire escape to paint with fireproof paint, with absolutely no protections. I know I lost brain cells that day, because by the end of it, I was so high I probably couldn't have walked

back up those stairs on my own legs. But you take the work you can get.

When you go to a temp agency and you ask for employment, and they find something and they place you there—I don't think those people are in a strong position to be able to say, "No, I don't feel that that work is safe, and I don't feel I can do that." When the government is doing this, they will have a chance at committee to fix this, and that would go a long way to fixing this part of the legislation so that the worst actors—the Fiera Foods—have to protect their workers and have to do a better job as employers.

Through you, respectfully, Speaker, to the members opposite: I would ask them to consider if they would let their kids work at Fiera Foods. It's a bakery. Would you let your kids be bakers at Fiera Foods? I don't think you or many members of this government opposite would ever allow their children to work in a place where five people actually died. It's fairly shameful that we allow that to keep going.

I want to switch now and talk a little bit about foreign credentials. We are losing nurses in Ontario. It has been in the papers for months that health care workers are fleeing the province. We have a massive doctor shortage in Ontario. We have a shortage of trained nurses. While it is excellent that the government is recognizing some foreign credentials—and I do applaud them for that—to exempt health care workers from that is to ignore a fantastic solution to a glaring, immediate problem that we have in this province. I can understand that that's a hard thing to do in legislation. But if there's one thing this government is actually consistent on, it's leaving huge swaths of legislation to regulation and orders in council. If they were actually interested in recognizing the foreign credentials of health care workers, it wouldn't be that hard to put that in this legislation and leave it up to regulation or orders in council at some point in the future. It's estimated that there are over 6,000 trained nurses with foreign credentials in Ontario who can't work. And we are losing nurses to other provinces where they can get better pay and better benefits. We're looking at what could be a solution to some of the problems we're facing in health care in Ontario, and the government is not using their power to actually be able to address it.

I want to spend just a minute, because there's not a lot of time in 10 minutes, on the right to disconnect. I asked a question on this a little bit earlier. If you're going to do something, actually do it. I'm a little bit worried about how this has been laid out. I'm a little bit worried that the businesses that are asked to develop a right-to-disconnect policy will do so and that it will use up business resources, and then it will be put on a shelf somewhere in that business and will gather dust because there's no enforcement mechanism attached to this.

There are other places in the world—France, notably—that have enacted legislation that allows workers to disconnect and that has enforcement mechanisms attached to it. It allows something to really be done to allow workers to disconnect, because it puts actual limitations on

the businesses. It doesn't just ask them to develop a policy that, frankly, could be quite meaningless after it's written.

I don't see a path for someone who feels that they were inappropriately asked to complete work on a weekend—I don't see recourse for that worker. It sounds really good on paper. It's adding a layer of restrictions to a business. I don't really get it, Speaker. You're asking the business to do more, but you're not really providing—the government, not you, Speaker; I apologize. The government is asking businesses to do more but they're not really providing a mechanism for recourse for the workers that this provision purports to protect. That, frankly, doesn't seem to make a lot of sense, from a government who is bent on red tape reduction. It doesn't make a lot of sense at all.

2050

I also wonder, by limiting it to 25 workers or more—there has been a lot in the news about the conditions for software developers, particularly in the gaming area, and the hours that they are actually expected to work and the hours that they do work, time on end. I don't know if this government realizes it, but there are a lot of places developing games. There are some big companies—Ubisoft in Montreal and stuff like that—but a lot of the apps that are out there, Speaker, are actually being developed by very, very small groups of people, and they are some of the ones that are being asked to do huge amounts of work, to work gross hours in a week. It's an expectation. By having that 25-person exemption, those very workers in those sectors are not going to be able to take advantage of this.

So if you're going to do it, again, I would say actually do it—through you, Speaker, to the government—and make a piece of legislation that does allow workers to disconnect, provide an enforcement mechanism, provide clarity and make sure it's comprehensive. Follow through in the legislation. I feel very much that this particular schedule in this is an on-paper piece of legislation. It's meant to be rolled out for the election, but it's not really meant to contribute anything meaningfully to the workforce in Ontario. And I would question why we're adding it if we're not going to go all the way on it.

I'm just about out of time, so thank you, Speaker, for allowing me to contribute to this debate. I do hope that the members opposite listen to the contributions of this side and that we really do see a back-and-forth and meaningful changes to this legislation in committee, because it really needs it. It could be so much better.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Far too long in Ontario, underground operators have put workers at risk, and it disadvantaged those who followed the rules. We are proposing the changes to close the loopholes which the previous government knew about all those years. I want to thank Minister Monte McNaughton for being a champion for workers.

My question for the member opposite is very simple: Are you going to stand for workers and vote yes to Bill 27?

Mr. Ian Arthur: This place sometimes is the death of nuance. Yes, I will stand for workers. I would really like to stand for the five people who died at Fiera Foods.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses?

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to thank the member from Kingston and the Islands for his passion. I know he works hard to represent workers across the province, not just his riding, and he's dedicated to making sure that they have a good plan so that they're supported and they're safe in their workplaces. One of the things that's really astounding in this bill is how it really favours employers, especially big corporations, instead of workers. What would you recommend that the government had done to support workers and keep them safe?

Mr. Ian Arthur: Thank you for that question. I think a good place to start would have been actually consulting more workers on this legislation. I think that would have been a really fantastic place to start, be it labour organizations or just workers.

This Legislature has this way of streamlining everything into the narrative that either the opposition wants or that the government wants. The way it's set up, it kind of crushes the diversity of views and sometimes it crushes the diversity of experiences. I think a really good place—and that's why I asked that question, Speaker, of if they would let their kids work at Fiera Foods. I think they need to go and talk to the workers at Fiera Foods, listen to their stories and use that to inform the legislation.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I look to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence—oh sorry, Etobicoke–Lakeshore; my apologies.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: That's me. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Robert Bailey: Same initials: E–L.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: That's true.

Anyway, I just want to thank the member opposite for his comments tonight. I appreciate that you said that this bill had a couple of good things in it and that they're there.

You talked about foreign credentials and how you thought that was a good idea. I just really want to comment on what others have said about this bill. Jan De Silva, from the Toronto Region Board of Trade, said, "Talented newcomers are locked out of skilled trades & reg professions because they haven't worked in Canada before, leaving us w/ a shortage of engineers, electricians, plumbers..."

"Good on" Minister McNaughton "for addressing our skills shortage w/ this bill!"

We have pages—pages—11 pages of quotes from people all across this province who are very supportive of this legislation.

We talked about consultations. The minister and the parliamentary assistant have consulted all across this province, getting input from workers. We get input from our constituency office from our workers about how we can make their jobs easier.

My question to the member from Kingston and the Islands: What do you like about this bill, as you mentioned that there are a few good things in here that you would

support, and will you support this bill when it comes to a vote?

Mr. Ian Arthur: I think that we would have to wait and see whether this government actually took the committee process seriously and amended the legislation to remove the poison pills that are in it. It's not a binary conversation, Speaker; it's not zeros and ones that we have in here. It is supposed to be nuanced and complex, so this idea that because there are parts of this bill that are favourable we suddenly can't have a problem with other parts of the bill is kind of silly, frankly.

No. If the bill stands as it is, no, we will not be supporting it. Or I won't be.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and responses?

Ms. Doly Begum: The colleague of mine from Kingston and the Islands talked about internationally trained professionals, and members opposite talked about consultation. Let's talk about a group of people who are dentists that we heard from. While health care professionals are not mentioned in this bill, just as an example, over 30% of dentists surveyed by an internationally trained dentists' organization shared that they were up to thousands of dollars in debt. Almost 24% shared that they were in debt ranging from \$20,000 to \$60,000, accumulated trying to make ends meet. These are people who are qualified, who come here using that qualification recognized by the federal government, yet they are hugely in debt because they are not able to practise in their profession or have a path.

To the member: Would he be able to shine some light on some of the other people we have talked to who shared their frustration with this bill?

Mr. Ian Arthur: Absolutely. That's exactly the point I'm trying to make here, Speaker. We should be able to have this discussion and not be forced into these binary answers.

We've had extensive conversations with nurses and doctors, and this exclusion of health care workers doesn't make sense. If you're not ready to actually figure out a framework for recognizing their credentials, then at least enable the legislation to do it at some point down the road. That's incredibly important, and we need to see a lot more of that going forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and responses?

Mr. Lorne Coe: Forty per cent of my riding is multicultural. I hear regularly from many of the residents there, and from groups like the Women's Multicultural Resource and Counselling Centre that represent many of them, that barriers for recognizing foreign credentials need to be struck down.

We all know here tonight that for 15 years, the Liberals did nothing about it at all—zero. Our government has engaged with regulatory colleges to find a solution reflected in the legislation. Can the member from Kingston and the Islands please explain why they want to continue to hold up barriers for those individuals that I describe to succeed economically?

Mr. Ian Arthur: I think that dentists and nurses and doctors would disagree that they've had barriers to entry into the workforce removed. I don't think that they would agree with that at all. They're not included in this legislation. While some folks can now use their foreign credentials and access the job market here, there are whole swaths that can't. I would put back to the government: Why did they pick and choose? If they're going to lift those barriers for foreign credentials, why didn't they do it uniformly across the board? It's really important.

2100

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Further questions and responses?

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to ask the member to talk a little bit about Fiera Foods and some of the ways we could have improved this bill. It's really fascinating when we talk about the safety issues and what the struggles are with WSIB and, I think, just common-sense things that my colleague from Niagara Falls, for example, talks about all the time. I just don't understand, when we talk about issues with a bill, why is it that the government members really lose it? It's like you cannot criticize something and work together. Why can't we sit down and actually improve this piece of legislation so that everybody across the province can benefit? I want to give the member a chance to talk a little bit about that.

Mr. Ian Arthur: Thank you for that question. I spent a lot of time on Fiera Foods, because I think it's a really important point on how this legislation could actually be made better. If the overtures that the government side made to listening to opposition and having our input on stuff were actually true, if they could actually follow through on that, that's an incredibly simple thing to do. To make a company that is responsible for the death of their employees have at least a record that they were responsible for those deaths—that's such a simple thing to do, something the government could step up and do right now. They could amend this legislation. They could move forward with it. It would make it a better piece of legislation. I would urge them to do so.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): There not being enough time for another question and response, I go for further debate.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Ça me fait plaisir de mettre quelques commentaires au sujet du projet de loi 27, la Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi, le travail et d'autres questions. J'aimerais commencer en ordre, avec l'annexe 1, la Loi de 2009 sur la protection des étrangers dans le cadre de l'emploi.

J'aimerais commencer avec des bonnes nouvelles. La semaine du 7 au 13 novembre c'est la Semaine nationale de l'immigration francophone. Cette année, le thème est « Une francophonie aux mille saveurs » et bien entendu, avec une francophonie aux mille saveurs, du 8 au 12 novembre, il y aura le partage de recettes d'ici et d'ailleurs qui se fera sur des pages Facebook locales.

Mais j'aimerais inviter tout le monde, surtout dans la région de Sudbury et de Nickel Belt, le 9 novembre pour une formation qui s'appelle « Atelier de formation des

allié.e.s ». C'est un atelier qui vous aidera à reconnaître votre identité unique, vos privilèges et à mieux comprendre la marginalisation et les inégalités, ainsi que des pistes pour devenir de meilleurs alliés. C'est offert en collaboration avec le Service de santé publique de Sudbury et du district, le Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury, ainsi que le Contact interculturel francophone de Sudbury.

Je vous parle, monsieur le Président, de cette formation parce que, surtout avec le Contact interculturel francophone de Sudbury, ils ont aidé beaucoup, beaucoup de nouveaux immigrants à, je vous dirais, départager, souvent de façon très difficile, comment on fait pour finalement avoir un emploi.

Je suis très fière de ma communauté. Dans notre communauté, on a des gens qui viennent de partout. C'est sûr que Nickel Belt, on est reconnu pour l'industrie minière, mais si vous vous rendez dans n'importe quelle mine du Nickel Belt, vous allez avoir du monde de partout. Je me souviens d'être allée au SNOLAB, qui est dans la mine Creighton, à peu près à deux kilomètres sous terre. Quand je suis arrivée là, il y avait environ 115 personnes qui travaillaient, et les 115 personnes qui étaient là parlaient, je ne me souviens plus si c'était 92 ou 94 langues différentes. C'étaient des gens qui venaient de partout autour du monde, qui étaient tous dans le même laboratoire sous terre, mais qui travaillaient tous ensemble. C'est une statistique qui m'était restée en tête, parce que d'avoir 92 langages parlés, c'est quand même beaucoup.

Je vous raconte cette histoire-là parce que ça n'arrive pas tout seul. C'est tellement difficile de faire venir des gens pour venir travailler. Il y a beaucoup de postes en ce moment dans l'industrie minière qui ne sont pas comblés. S'il y a des gens qui écoutent en ce moment, je peux vous dire que Sudbury, c'est une communauté d'accueil. On va vous aider. Je ne rends pas ça plus facile que ça ne l'est. Non, ce n'est pas facile pour un nouvel immigrant d'être accepté, d'être reconnu comme ingénieur ou reconnu comme—il y a toutes sortes de travailleurs en géologie etc. qui travaillent dans nos mines. Ce n'est pas facile, mais on va vous aider. On va vous appuyer.

Le projet de loi qui est mis de l'avant vise surtout les compagnies qui aident à recruter des gens à l'extérieur pour se rendre dans nos communautés, mais je voulais quand même faire une petite parenthèse pour dire qu'il y a des communautés où on fait déjà beaucoup de ça. Si tu te promènes à Sudbury, tu as des, je te dirais, mini-communautés de bien différentes places avec différents langages et tout ça, et on s'entend tous bien ensemble. Donc, j'invite les gens à venir immigrer dans notre région. On a de l'emploi, puis on aime ça. C'est ma petite communication positive pour commencer.

Maintenant, j'aimerais passer—ça passe vite, hein, 10 minutes?—à la Loi sur la santé et la sécurité au travail, qui est « modifiée afin d'exiger que le propriétaire d'un lieu de travail donne accès à une salle de toilette ». Ça, ça semble très simple, mais je vais vous parler de mon comté un petit peu. Si tu arrives dans le nord de mon comté, tout le monde connaît—j'espère, en tout cas—un peu le

« watershed ». Ça c'est la place où toute l'eau qui part de là va s'en aller vers le Nord, vers l'océan Arctique, tandis qu'au sud du « watershed », ça redescend vers le Sud. Je vous dis ça parce qu'il y a une place pour aller à la toilette au « watershed ». Mais c'est la seule. Donc, si tu es avec des enfants, tu vas avoir été dans l'auto pendant deux heures de temps, puis il n'y a rien. Je ne devrais pas dire ça. Il y a de beaux lacs; il y a de beaux arbres. Il y a toutes sortes de belles affaires. Mais il n'y a ni restaurants ni places pour t'arrêter. C'est une petite route à deux voies qui n'a même pas d'épaules ou rien de ça, jusqu'à temps que tu arrives au « watershed ».

Au « watershed », tu as un restaurant qui a une salle de bain—yay! Mais ce n'est pas raisonnable de penser que tout le monde qui voyage sur la 144 va avoir accès à cette salle de toilettes. Donc, le gouvernement provincial a mis des toilettes. Mais pendant tout le temps de la COVID, les toilettes, elles sont fermées. Tu n'y as pas accès. Qu'est-ce que tu penses qui arrive quand ça fait deux heures que tu voyages en auto avec tes enfants et qu'il n'y a eu aucune place pour t'arrêter sauf cette place-là, puis tu t'arrêtes là, puis la toilette, elle est fermée? C'est le bordel total. Partout autour du terrain, c'est—bien, il n'y a pas d'autre façon de le décrire. Je ne sais pas vraiment comment ils vont traduire ça, mais c'est dégueulasse, monsieur le Président. Il y a du papier toilette puis des Kleenex puis tout ça à terre partout.

Donc, le gouvernement peut mettre des projets de loi qui disent : « Les commerces devront accepter que les gens utilisent les toilettes », mais il y a des toilettes qui sont entretenues par le gouvernement provincial qui ne sont pas ouvertes.

Juste un petit peu à l'extérieur de Sudbury en s'en allant vers l'Ouest, juste entre Beaver Lake puis Nairn Centre, il y a un beau centre touristique : même chose. Ça a été les résidents locaux qui ont entretenu la place pendant tout l'été pour que les gens puissent aller à la toilette, pour que les gens puissent s'arrêter, sinon tu n'aurais eu nulle part pour arrêter pour aller à la salle de bain.

Donc, oui, le gouvernement peut dire aux commerces : « Vous devez laisser certaines personnes », mais ce serait bien pour le gouvernement provincial de s'assurer que les toilettes sont entretenues et que les gens peuvent les utiliser.

2110

My last two minutes will be very quick, to talk about WSIB. I have to talk about recognizing occupational diseases. Occupational diseases are something that Sudbury and the mining industry have been dealing with for a long time. Whether you talk about Jean Gagnon, who was there in the sintering plant—every single worker who has ever worked at that plant died, Speaker. And do you know how long it took before we got WSIB to recognize this? It was 40 years, Speaker, before we got WSIB to recognize them.

We're fighting a similar battle right now with the—

Mr. Jamie West: Particulate matter.

M^{me} France Gélinas: No, no, no.

Mr. Jamie West: McIntyre Powder.

M^{me} France Gélinas: McIntyre Powder—thank you. It's the same thing. McIntyre Powder was basically aluminum that we forced workers to breathe in. I don't know who ever had that bad idea. Now we know that breathing in aluminum is not good for your neurological system. But it took a family to really push this forward before the government would even look at it.

We have to change WSIB so that we include industrial diseases and don't let people go through 40 years—most of those men, because they were all men, are dead. For their widows to get a \$100,000 cheque does not bring their husbands back. We need to do better for those workers.

Let's not send the money back. Let's look at all those industrial diseases for which we haven't compensated those families and use the money to do the right thing. The right thing to do is to compensate those families who got sick at work or died from the diseases they contracted at work.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses? Questions and responses? Questions and responses?

Further debate?

Mr. Gurratan Singh: I want to talk a little bit about the issues that Brampton workers are facing. One of the biggest issues we see that folks in Brampton are facing is this issue around temporary work agencies, and I want to talk a little bit about why this is such, quite frankly, a terrible avenue for employment for Brampton workers, and for workers across the board.

In temporary work agencies, the experience is completely insecure. Someone will work at an agency and they don't know if they're getting work the next day. They're not getting any benefits or any form of support. They have no security in their employment and they're often working in really unsafe conditions. The result of it is what we've seen across the board: workers being injured, workers dying, workers being put in some of the most terrible conditions.

In Brampton, in my community, it is almost epidemic. In Brampton, it is almost epidemic, the amount of workers who are forced to work within these terrible conditions. In Brampton, it is almost epidemic—it is epidemic—the condition of workers and how they are forced to work in temporary work agencies, in these precarious conditions, under unsafe conditions, and really risking their lives every single day because they have to put food on the table. They have to provide for themselves and their families, and the only avenue for employment is these insecure, unsafe work agencies.

That's why, for years now, workers have been calling for greater support, for greater regulation, to crack down on these agencies. I'll just say it as it is: These temporary work agencies are bloodsuckers to the community. They are making money off the extremely exploited work of people who are in precarious situations, people who are struggling to make ends meet and have no other option available to them but to work in these unsafe conditions. That's why, for years now, I'm proud to say that the NDP has been fighting for workers, has been fighting against

these temporary work agencies and their exploitative policies, the exploitative way in which they just really put workers into some of the worst conditions. We've been fighting for years, and we're going to continue fighting until workers get the protection that they deserve.

Another issue that I've been advocating on for quite some time now is washroom access, for workers across the board, particularly our brothers and sisters in trucking. When the pandemic first started, I remember, in March 2020, getting calls from a lot of folks who I know who work in trucking. They were calling me and they were saying, "We are delivering essential products." They are delivering groceries, delivering the essential things you need to run a household, but when they were dropping off their loads or picking them up, they were not given the opportunity to use the washroom. That is something that is such a terrible position to put someone in who is an essential worker. Because these truckers were risking their lives every day, going to work, putting themselves at greater risk of exposure to COVID-19, they were allowing other people to work from home because they were the ones who were transporting the essential goods people relied on. Things like, at that time—you all remember the empty shelves—toilet paper, the groceries that we needed to eat, to everything that we needed in the household. These individuals working in trucking were doing this hard work, but then they were not given the dignity of access to washrooms.

I remember talking to folks in this field, talking to a lot of individuals I know who worked in trucking, and putting as much pressure as possible to say that people who work in trucking need access to this basic necessity. It's almost shameful to have to ask, to say people who are essential workers—it's so obvious. They should have access to washrooms. The fact that this is something that workers had to fight and advocate for is a shameful thing. It's important we continue to fight to make sure workers across the board, but especially those in trucking, those who are putting food literally on our tables every single day, have the dignity to go to work and have something so basic and fundamental like washroom access.

I also want to talk about foreign education. It's a sad state of affairs across Ontario, across Canada, where the saying goes, "If you want to get access to a doctor, just jump into a taxicab," or an Uber or any of these kinds of areas of work. The reality is we have such a high degree of foreign-educated individuals coming into Ontario, but that education is not being recognized. The result, as we have seen time and again, is that folks who are doctors, nurses, engineers are not getting their education recognized because it's a foreign education, and the result is they're either driving taxis or Uber or in other professions that—frankly, they themselves are saddened, because they were trained their whole lives in a specific field and they don't have the ability to now work in that field.

These are areas of work that we actually have a great need for in Ontario. We know that there's a shortage of doctors and nurses. But because of this lack of foreign recognition, the result is these workers don't get their

education recognized and they are not able to properly contribute in the way they want to in our province, because their education is not recognized, and they're also not able to fill a great need in our province. So it's something that's so important, that we make sure we are continually pushing to ensure that foreign education is recognized and we have policies and procedures put in place to make that process as seamless as possible.

I also want to talk for a minute about this change in tone we've seen all of a sudden from the Conservative government. I just want to remind individuals of the track record of the Conservative government. When they got elected, they took decisive action that really hurt workers. We're talking about cancelling minimum wage—we're talking about a freeze, a 1% freeze on public sector worker raises, including front-line health workers. We're talking about immediately cancelling paid sick days. The Conservative government had their initial three-year, three-and-a-half-year mandate plowing over the rights of workers, and now, conveniently, six months before an election, we see this too little, too late response from the Conservative government. We see not enough for people who have been at the front lines, in precarious positions, working day and night.

Now, once again, we're seeing the Conservative government very conveniently presenting itself as a pro-worker party, despite the fact that their track record is one in which they have trampled on the rights of workers since day one. Cancelling an increase to minimum wage, freezing public sector raises at 1%, cancelling paid sick days—that, to me, does not sound like a pro-worker party.

The reality is that people are seeing through this all-of-a-sudden change in direction by the Conservative government, and they're calling it out for what it is. These are political decisions being made in the hopes of pulling the wool over people's eyes six months before an election. But people see through it, and beyond seeing through it, they know they deserve better.

We have seen people struggle so desperately over the past months, and we now know that people deserve the dignity to be able to work and live with dignity. We know that \$15 is something that is not enough for people to have that kind of livelihood, to have that kind of support, and that's why they deserve better. We're going to be fighting to make sure—we in the NDP are committed to making sure that workers get the support they need, that they can live and work in dignity, and making sure that they have the ability to be compensated fairly in that way. That is the commitment of the NDP. That's what we're going to be fighting for, and that's our commitment to workers across our province.

Now, I want to just quickly touch on a point that I talked about at the beginning, and I really want to re-emphasize it. In Brampton, when I talk to people about their experiences with temporary work agencies, they themselves describe these agencies as bloodsuckers. They say these are agencies that take the people who are in some of the most precarious situations, people who are struggling to put food on the table, and they put them in a position where they have to work in insecure conditions. They don't know when they're getting their next day of work. They don't get the benefits they deserve. They don't get the security of employment that they deserve. Instead, they are frankly exploited in the worst of ways. That's why it's so important that we stand up for workers. We in the NDP are committed to fighting these temporary work agencies and ensuring that workers get treated with the dignity that they deserve.

I want to end in the final 30 seconds to say this: The NDP has demonstrated their commitment to workers. We are committed to making sure that workers in Ontario get the supports they need. The last months have demonstrated, especially because of COVID-19, that front-line workers are the backbone—the backbone—of getting us through this pandemic. They need to be supported and compensated accordingly. That's our commitment from the NDP, and we're going to make sure that workers get the support that they need.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Questions and responses?

Further debate?

Mr. McNaughton has moved second reading of Bill 27, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment, labour and other matters. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): I need to look to a minister of the government to direct to what committee, please? The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy. Is it the pleasure of the House?

Interjection: Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): Thank you. Orders of the day?

Hon. Paul Calandra: No further business.

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bill Walker): There being no further business, I declare this House adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 2123.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker
Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, Peter Sibenik,
Meghan Stenson, William Wong
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

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Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
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Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Berns-McGown, Rima (NDP)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins	
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	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough-Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
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
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Elliott, Hon. / L'hon. Christine (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
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
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre
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
Fullerton, Hon. / L'hon. Merrilee (PC)	Kanata—Carleton	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
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 / Solliciteuse 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	
McDonnell, 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	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
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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Christina Maria Mitas, Judith Monteith-Farrell
Michael Parsa, Randy Pettapiece
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Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Ernie Hardeman, Mitzie Hunter
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Committee Clerk / Greffière: Julia Douglas

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Goldie Ghamari, Faisal Hassan
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Laurie Scott, Vijay Thanigasalam
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Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

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Comité spécial de la surveillance de la gestion des situations
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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