

Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

F-5

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

F-5

**Standing Committee on
Finance and Economic Affairs**

Build Ontario Act (Budget
Measures), 2021

2nd Session
42nd Parliament

Friday 3 December 2021

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

Loi de 2021 visant à protéger
nos progrès et à bâtir l'Ontario
(mesures budgétaires)

2^e session
42^e législature

Vendredi 3 décembre 2021

Chair: Ernie Hardeman
Clerk: Michael Bushara

Président : Ernie Hardeman
Greffier : Michael Bushara

Hansard on the Internet

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

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

Index inquiries

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

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

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

Renseignements sur l'index

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

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



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

CONTENTS

Friday 3 December 2021

Build Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2021, Bill 43, Mr. Bethlenfalvy / Loi de 2021 visant à protéger nos progrès et à bâtir l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 43, M. Bethlenfalvy	F-61
--	------

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

Friday 3 December 2021

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

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

Vendredi 3 décembre 2021

The committee met at 0900 in room 151 and by video conference.

**BUILD ONTARIO ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2021
LOI DE 2021 VISANT À PROTÉGER
NOS PROGRÈS ET À BÂTIR L'ONTARIO
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)**

Consideration of the following bill:

Bill 43, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 43, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I call this meeting to order. We're meeting today for clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 43, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

Julia Hood from legislative counsel will be on the call to assist us with our work should we have any questions for her. We will also have ministry counsel on the call with us today.

To make sure that everyone can follow along, it is important that all participants speak slowly and clearly. A copy of the numbered amendments filed with the Clerk has been distributed electronically. The amendments are numbered in the order in which the sections and the schedules appear in the bill. Where there are multiple amendments of the same section, they have been ordered based on time of receipt. If the members indicate that you wish to move additional amendments, we will take a short recess to allow the member to consult with legislative counsel to draft a motion. Are there any questions before we start?

If not, as you will notice, Bill 43 is comprised of three sections and 21 schedules. In order to deal with the bill in an orderly fashion, I suggest that we postpone the first three sections in order to dispose of the schedules first. This allows the committee to consider the contents of the schedules before dealing with the sections on the commencement and the short title of the bill. We would return to the three sections after completing the consideration of the schedules. Is there unanimous consent to stand down the three sections and deal with the schedules first? Hearing no objection, we'll accept it as a unanimous consent.

Before we begin schedule 1, I will allow each party to make some brief comments on the bill as a whole. Afterwards, debate should be limited to the section or

amendment under consideration. Are there any comments on the entire bill? MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Good morning, Chair, and good morning, committee members. We have a long day ahead of us, and I have to say that I wish this was a piece of legislation that met the needs of Ontarians, especially as we are in the midst of a fourth pandemic.

In this piece of legislation of the fall economic statement, there was no long-term plan to address and improve health and education. There was no permanent wage increase for personal support workers, workers who your Premier calls heroes, and there was no relief around high gas prices, no affordability measures, and certainly we feel strongly that it's the wrong plan for highways. Highways should be built after extensive research and evidence proves that they will improve the lives of Ontarians, and building Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass does not do that. Also, on a really disappointing level, to see the base-funding education cut of \$467 million after really challenging times in our education system is obviously something that we could never support.

The tenor and tone of how we are moving legislation through Ontario's Legislative Assembly has really taken a turn. Obviously, if you wanted us to be supportive of Bill 43, you would have repealed Bill 124.

Yesterday, I met with nurses from across Ontario. We are 22,000 nurses short in Ontario. So you can build all the beds and you can say that you're building those capital infrastructure projects, but if you don't have the people to support them, then you will not be able to reach our collective goal of serving an aging demographic and their complex health care needs.

My colleague MPP Bourgouin will address the inconsistency and the lack of leadership on the Franco-Ontarian piece, but I'm going to leave my comments at that. We are going to be making some amendments, Chair, to this legislation to try and make it a better, more comprehensive piece of legislation that meets the needs of Ontarians. I will tell my colleagues that given the track record on this committee, we do not have high expectations of those amendments being honoured and those voices being honoured, because they reflect the true needs of Ontarians. But we're still going to do the work to make it happen. Merci beaucoup. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much. Anyone else? Mr. Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je ne répéterai pas ce que ma collègue M^{me} Fife a mentionné, mais définitivement, la

communauté franco-ontarienne est déçue du projet de loi concernant l'annexe 13. On voit qu'il y a beaucoup de demandes qui avaient été faites pour améliorer la Loi sur les services en français puis que le gouvernement a décidé de ne pas les instaurer dans la loi.

Je vais réserver mes commentaires, parce qu'on a fait beaucoup d'amendements, mais je peux vous dire que ça va sans dire que la communauté est déçue. On vient d'en passer, puis une en particulier—bien, plus qu'une en particulier, mais je vais réserver mes commentaires. Je passe à travers les annexes. On espère que le gouvernement va supporter les amendements quand ça vient à la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Ça fait 30 ans que la loi n'a pas été modernisée, ce qui est trop longtemps. C'est sûr que, dans le projet de loi, il y a certaines choses qui sont bonnes. Ça serait mentir de dire le contraire. Mais il en manque. Il en manque trop. Ça fait que, j'espère que le gouvernement va supporter les amendements qu'on apporte pour soutenir la communauté franco-ontarienne.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I echo what my colleagues MPP Fife and MPP Bourgouin have said, so I won't repeat them. But I did want to say that we had presented for schedule 13, which is the French Language Services Act modernization. It doesn't happen often that we modernize it, like my colleague said—it's been over 30 years—and I think this is really a miss. We apparently consulted the francophone community but didn't listen, because there is only one thing in there that was actually asked for, and this is not a partisan issue.

MPP Bourgouin and the NDP and the Liberal Party made so many consultations. We took, basically word for word, what the stakeholders asked us—and it was unanimous in the requests—and we put it in separate bills. We did private members' bills. We addressed those concerns that were—you heard the witnesses, right? That's what they asked. We're really disappointed, because they were asked for even before the schedule was prepared. We're disappointed that that wasn't included, so we've presented amendments.

And I did want to say—I'm mindful of my colleagues' time—that I had submitted many amendments, but one of them was my bill, which did cover all of the demands as a schedule. But I won't be moving it today. I'll try to focus on getting it passed and done in the future. I've presented other amendments that we'll hopefully be debating that cover the asks of the community for this particular schedule.

But it's really disappointing, because MPP Bourgouin and I hadn't even prepared the bills together, and we came up with almost the same demands. So it proves that we went out and consulted and listened and gathered everything, and it was just shocking when the minister came back with something completely different. So we're really disappointed about that, but we will work with what we have today and try to improve what's already there. I hope that my colleagues will support it, so that we can improve it.

So yes, I just wanted to say that I won't be moving that 32-page bill, just so everybody knows, but I will be presenting the other separate motions. And I want to thank my colleague MPP Bourgouin for also presenting important amendments.

0910

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Any further comments on the whole bill? If not, we will proceed, starting with schedule 1.

There were no amendments to sections 1 to 3 of schedule 1. Therefore, we propose to bundle sections 1 to 3 in the vote. Is there agreement to bundle 1 to 3, where there are no amendments? Hearing no objection, any debate on sections 1 to 3? If there is no further debate, are the members ready to vote? All those in favour of sections 1 to 3 of schedule 1? All those in favour put up their hands. Opposed? The motion is carried.

We are voting on schedule 1 as a whole. Is there any further debate? Are the members ready to vote? All those in favour, hands up. All those opposed? The schedule is carried.

Schedule 2: There are no amendments to sections 1 and 2 of schedule 2. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Do we have agreement to bundle them? Hearing no objection, is there any debate? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 2, sections 1 and 2, inclusive, carry? Is there any debate? This is the vote. Is everybody content with the vote? Okay. All those in favour, raise your hand. All those opposed? Sections 1 and 2 are carried.

Section 3 of schedule 2: I believe we have a motion. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 3(1) of schedule 2 to the bill be amended by adding the following section to the Business Corporations Act:

“Public registry of beneficial property owners

“Land owner transparency plan

“140.1.1(1) Within six months after the day this section comes into force, the minister shall develop and implement a land owner transparency plan to establish a public registry of beneficial property owners in Ontario which will require corporations, trusts and partnerships that own real property to disclose individual owners.

“Timeline for registry

“(2) The plan will require the minister to establish the public registry within one year after the plan is developed.

“Publication

“(3) The minister shall publish the plan on a government of Ontario website.

“Content of plan

“(4) The plan shall include the following:

“1. The steps the minister plans to take in order to establish the public registry.

“2. The timelines the minister will follow in establishing and implementing the plan and establishing the public registry.

“3. A plan for consulting relevant stakeholders, including the Ontario Real Estate Association and Transparency International Canada.

“4. Such ... matters as the minister considers advisable.

“Progress report

“(5) Within six months after the plan is developed, the minister shall prepare a progress report on the plan and table the progress report in the assembly.

“Same

“(6) The progress report shall include the minister’s progress in establishing the public registry.”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Fife, if you could reread section 4, on page 2.

Ms. Catherine Fife: “4. Such other matters as the minister considers advisable.”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Thank you.

The committee has heard the amendment. Debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: The committee heard fairly clearly that Bill 43 misses an important component of creating a more transparent real estate section. We all know that housing is going to be one of the number one issues that we face today, tomorrow and in the future, and certainly it will be a major election issue given how people are feeling in our communities.

This amendment, just so that members know, adds MPPs Bell, Begum and Karpoche’s private member’s bill, which is entitled Anti-Money Laundering in Housing Act, to the government’s changes which establish a beneficial ownership registry in Ontario. The move is supported by Transparency International Canada, which said that the changes in schedule 2 are welcome, but don’t go far enough.

The Anti-Money Laundering in Housing Act requires the minister to develop and implement a landowner transparency plan, which is a plan to establish a public registry of beneficial property owners, and the aim of the bill is to increase transparency of homeownership, to hold those who profit from Ontario’s housing market accountable and ensure that they are fully compliant with all laws, rules and tax requirements. This can help make the housing market more accessible to all Ontarians.

I was just reviewing my notes from when Transparency International Canada came to the committee, which I believe was perhaps last Friday. They said that they viewed the empty safety deposit boxes in the sky as a means to protect dirty money. So Ontario, because we have not addressed anti-money laundering in the housing sector, is facilitating stealing from other jurisdictions and other countries. These are people who are using Ontario essentially to hide dirty money, and this can’t sit well with anybody on this committee. It certainly doesn’t sit well with us.

We fully support, of course, our own members who brought forward this private member’s bill. We need a tool—a mechanism, if you will—to address these laundering tactics, which are essentially stealing homes from Ontarians. I would be curious to hear what my colleagues have to say about this issue and why it wasn’t included in the original legislation, when it’s well known and well documented that this issue is ongoing in Ontario, particularly in really big cities like Toronto, where I think we

found that 25% of new housing stock is being held outside of mainstream public accessibility for housing, and the total in the last 10 years was \$9.8 billion.

We bring this amendment to the floor for your consideration, and hopefully you will listen to common sense on this issue.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

0920

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I just wanted to add that I think that this is a great amendment. A few weeks ago, I asked the legislative counsel to prepare a bill about this, because BC has already been doing this. They have an act. I think that the way my colleague has put it in here is a great, simpler way to ask for this. So I will support this.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Not hearing anything from the PC caucus members really is surprising, because I know that there was some interest when Transparency International Canada came to delegate on this. I would hope that the members who are on the finance committee would take this issue back to cabinet, because it is truly a missed opportunity. The fact that I’m not hearing any good rationale for not moving this amendment—which is not even that onerous. This gives the minister some leeway and some autonomy to actually develop a strategy with the underlying goals of addressing laundering that’s happening in the housing sector.

I’m pretty disappointed. I thought that this might pass, because it makes so much sense, and honestly, it appeals to what is becoming a false narrative around fiscal responsibility that we’re seeing from this PC government.

Thanks, Chair. I’m going to ask for a recorded vote on this, please.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? Is the committee ready to vote? We’ll put the question, and we’ll ask for the roll call.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is carried.

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): No, the motion is lost. My apologies. The motion is lost.

Is there any further debate on section 3? Shall section 3 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

There are no amendments to sections 4 to 7 of schedule 2. I therefore propose that we bundle those sections. Is there an agreement? Hearing no objection, is there any

further debate on sections 4 to 7? If there's no further debate, I shall put the question. Shall schedule 2, sections 4 to 7 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Schedule 2: Any further debate on schedule 2? If not, are the members ready to vote? Shall schedule 2 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

We'll move on to schedule 3. There are no amendments to sections 1 to 3 of schedule 3. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Seeing no objection, is there any debate on sections 1 to 3 of schedule 3? If there is no debate, I shall put the vote. All those in favour of sections 1 to 3 in schedule 3? All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried.

Schedule 3, as a whole: Any debate on schedule 3? If not, I'll ask the vote. Are the members ready to vote? Seeing no objection, shall schedule 3 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Schedule 3 carries.

On to schedule 4. Section 1 of schedule 4: Any debate? Seeing none, shall I call the question? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

On schedule 4, section 2, we have a government amendment. Is there anyone putting the question? MPP Parsa.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I move that section 2 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by striking out "December 9, 2002" and submitting "January 1, 2020".

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Parsa, if you could reread the second line of the motion.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I move that section 2 of schedule 4 to the bill be amended by striking out "December 9, 2002" and submitting "January 1, 2020".

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): You said "submitting."

Mr. Michael Parsa: Oh, sorry—substituting "January 1, 2020".

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. You've heard the motion, the amendment. Any discussion? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chair, just a question for the government members: Is this essentially something that you missed in the first round and you're just correcting it?

Mr. Michael Parsa: Chair, this is basically on the advice of the officials that this goes too far back. It's a retroactive date, and we just want to make sure that that loophole is closed and that it's not too far back. So that's why we're bringing it down to the 2020 date instead.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. Any further discussion? If not, we'll put the question to the amendment. Are members ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

0930

Shall schedule 4, section 2, as amended, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Shall schedule 4, as amended, carry? Is there any debate on schedule 4? If there's no debate, is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Schedule 5: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 19 of schedule 5. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Hearing no objection, we will bundle sections 1 to 19. Any debate on sections 1 to 19? Seeing none, is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Discussing schedule 5, as a whole: Any debate on schedule 5? If no debate, are you ready to vote?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, MPP Kusendova, did you have comments on schedule 5?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: No, sorry. My apologies. I got confused.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): No problem. Thank you.

If there are no further questions, we'll call the vote. Shall schedule 5 carry? Hands up. All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Schedule 6: There are no amendments to sections 1 and 2 of schedule 6. I therefore propose to bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Is there any debate on sections 1 and 2 of schedule 6? If there's no debate, are the members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 6, sections 1 and 2, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Shall schedule 6 carry? Any debate? If there's no debate, are you ready to vote? All those in favour, put up your hands. All those opposed? Schedule 6 is carried.

Schedule 7: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 4 of schedule 7. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Is there any debate on sections 1 to 4 of schedule 7? Are the members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 7, sections 1 to 4, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 7 carry? Any debate on schedule 7? If not, shall schedule 7 carry? Are you ready to vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 7 carries.

Schedule 8: There are no amendments in sections 1 to 3 of schedule 8. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement? Is there any debate on sections 1 to 3 of schedule 8? If there's no debate, are the members ready to vote? Shall schedule 8, sections 1 to 3, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 8, as a whole, carry? Any debate on schedule 8? If not, all those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 8 is carried.

Schedule 9, section 1: I believe we have some amendments suggested. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 1(1) of schedule 9 to the bill be amended by striking out paragraph 2 of subsection 23.1(1) of the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and substituting the following:

"2. From October 1, 2022 onwards, for the classes of employees listed in subparagraph 1 ii or iii, the amount determined under subsection (4).

"3. For a class of employees listed in subparagraph 1 i or iv,

- “i. on or after October 1, 2022 but before May 1, 2023, \$16.00 per hour,
- “ii. on or after May 1, 2023 but before May 1, 2024, \$17.00 per hour,
- “iii. on or after May 1, 2024 but before May 1, 2025, \$18.00 per hour,
- “iv. on or after May 1, 2025 but before May 1, 2026, \$19.00 per hour, and
- “v. on or after May 1, 2026 but before May 1, 2027, \$20 per hour.”

0940

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You have heard the amendment. Is there any debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Chair. I do want to say that this is our effort to try to undo some of the damage that was done by the government in 2018 when they rolled back the minimum wage, and hurt minimum-wage workers across the province of Ontario. This moves our amendment to increase the minimum wage to \$20 by 2026, starting with \$16 in October 2022 and then a dollar-a-year increase from May 2023 to May 2026. It will also get rid of the separate wage for students—something my former colleague MPP Forster fought for before her retirement in 2018.

We are moving the amendment because \$15 an hour is no longer good enough. Our lowest-earning workers need a hand up, and a higher wage will improve their quality of life and, in fact, grow the economy.

We have seen the minimum wage yo-yo in this province between political parties, between partisanship, and from 1997 to 2003, under the PCs, it was frozen. Then we get some growth with the Liberals, but then it's frozen by them from 2010 to 2014. There were moderate increases again before a big jump by the Liberals in 2017 ahead of the 2018 election, but then frozen again by this government. We feel strongly that it is time for the wage to grow in a stable and predictable way for people and businesses, and our amendment will do just that.

I will say that we have done an extensive amount of consultation on this model. What we heard loud and clear from the business community is that they want predictability, and it is worth noting that because of the pandemic, we are seeing employers recognize that livable, respectful wages are a very good way of retaining employees, something that this government has not seemed to recognize.

We have seen the cost of living, as well, go up significantly, with inflation at an 18-year high between June 2018 and October 2021. The cost of all items has increased by 7.7%. Shelter costs alone have increased by 12%. So this would be an acknowledgement from this government that people are hurting. Even when they are working full-time with multiple jobs, it is becoming more and more difficult to make ends meet and to pay for your housing, your food, your shelter.

We have also seen this year the Canadian American economist David Card winning the Nobel Prize in economics for his work refuting the conventional notion that increasing the minimum wage leads to job loss in low-paying industries. In fact, their research—David Card,

Joshua Angrist and Guido Imbens—demonstrated empirically that the idea touted by conservative economists, that higher minimum wages mean fewer jobs, is not based on fact.

So the case can be made—and I can argue all day long on this—that, for a higher minimum wage, we will benefit as a whole, as a province. In the announcement that our leader, Andrea Horwath, and Peggy Sattler made earlier this week with Chris Glover, it should be noted that we will also be supporting businesses through this transition. So it is possible, if this government wants to recognize, wants to acknowledge, that their wage suppression policies have hurt the most vulnerable and, indeed, have hurt the economy. We look forward to having the support of the government in this endeavour, and I will be asking for a recorded vote, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, Monsieur Chair. Écoute, ça va sans dire que quand le gouvernement Ford est entré au pouvoir, ils ont annulé les 15 piastres de l'heure, puis trois ans après, ils le ramènent, ce qui n'est pas suffisant aujourd'hui quand on voit que l'inflation est beaucoup plus élevée. Les salaires doivent être augmentés, comme on propose dans l'amendement.

Je crois qu'on devrait supporter cette motion. Je demande au gouvernement de supporter cette motion. C'est la bonne chose à faire. Quand on entend le premier ministre dire lui-même qu'il n'est pas capable de vivre à 15 piastres de l'heure, pourquoi est-ce qu'il l'imposerait aux commettants et à la population de l'Ontario comme salaire minimum? Il y bien des entreprises qui payent déjà plus que 15 piastres de l'heure.

Il faut faire des bonnes choses. Mettons des amendements comme qu'on propose là, qui sont raisonnables puis qu'on peut monter la qualité de vie aux Ontariens en mettant des augmentations graduelles, pour que les entreprises s'adaptent. Ceux qui en arrachent, on peut leur donner des opportunités, de l'aide pour les amener à 20 \$ de l'heure. On sait qu'une pénurie d'emplois—les employeurs ont besoin d'attirer. Ceci adresse le problème.

Mais si qu'on dit qu'on n'est pas capable, si le premier ministre lui-même dit qu'il n'est pas capable de vivre à 15 piastres de l'heure, pourquoi est-ce qu'on imposerait 15 piastres de l'heure?

C'est une bonne motion. Je demande au gouvernement de la supporter. Et c'est la bonne chose à faire avec ce qu'on vit aujourd'hui, avec l'inflation qui est au plus haut qu'on n'a jamais vu depuis 18 ans. Il faut faire la bonne chose, ce qui fait que, encore, j'espère qu'ils vont supporter la motion. Merci, monsieur le Président.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to say that if you consider the schedule of increases to the minimum wage in this amendment, it addresses some of the backlash that the government received by just pulling this increase without giving any notice to businesses. The predictability piece is

there, the consistency piece is there and it removes the politics from the minimum wage. It gives businesses an opportunity to plan for and address some of the cost pressures that they've been facing.

Certainly we saw through the pandemic that many of them required support. They didn't receive that support, and so with whatever plan that would come out of this amendment, which we're in the process of working through, we should be transparent and open and the qualifications should be really clear.

I will say that I know the government received some negative feedback from businesses, because they just reversed this policy. In this upcoming year, we would almost be at \$16 an hour had the government not frozen and rolled back the minimum-wage increases. We actually heard from OSSTF during the committee that over the last three and a half years, because of that move, Ontario's minimum-wage workers lost between \$6,000 and \$7,000 out of their pockets before tax because of this change. If they're part-time, they lost \$3,200. So there is some urgency here to address this economic escalator, if you will.

If you believe the research—which we do, because we're trying to establish a policy based on evidence—and if you look at the research that was done by the Canadian economist who won the Nobel Prize for economics, one of the quotes from that report says, “Ensuring minimum living wages through statutory processes or collective bargaining is crucial to ending poverty; reversing the long-term trend of declining labour income shares; increasing demand; and building the basis for recovery—with jobs, decent work...” That's a quote from Sharan Burrow.

If the government wants to see an inclusive economic recovery, this is your opportunity to do that right now, particularly for racialized and marginalized workers who are—based on the stats that we get from Stats Canada and the Ministry of Labour—are on the front lines. So there is absolutely an urgency to get this done, to take it out of the political sphere and make sure that businesses in Ontario know that this is what will happen.

0950

The May 1 date, for instance, came from the business community. Restaurants said to us, “If you're going to do this, then make sure that the increase happens in May just before we move into patio season.” This is reflective of what we heard, and it's worth noting that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business—back in 2017, Mr. Chair, 65% of their employers were already paying over \$15 an hour. So it is time now to move that agenda and to ensure that we are really addressing what front-line workers who serve us, who keep the province going—they are deserving of a respectful, living minimum wage, which is what we are committed to doing. We're doing that through this amendment, and we're giving the government members an opportunity to come on board.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Further debate on the amendment?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Recorded vote, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): If there's no further debate, is the committee ready to vote? This is on the amendment.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The amendment is lost.

We have another amendment on section 1. MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that subsection 1(4) of schedule 9 to the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“(4) Subsection 23.1(4) of the act is amended by,

“(a) striking out ‘2020’ and substituting ‘2022’; and

“(b) adding ‘listed in paragraph 1 ii or iii’ after ‘class of employees’.”

Did I get it all?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Thank you. Debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Very quickly, this amendment needs to pass in order for this—actually, it would be a good opportunity to mention that the government should work to ensure that deemed injured workers should not be negatively impacted by the minimum wage increase.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: This is an important amendment and should be passed. Deemed employees, injured workers, are already impacted enough, so the government should support this motion. We already know that they are giving billions away that should have been coming to these injured workers, so this motion should also be adopted by the government, and supported. It's a great motion, and it should be.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: A request for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. If there's no further debate, we'll call the vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Shall schedule 9, section 1 carry? Debate? If there's no debate, are you ready for the question? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 1, schedule 9 is carried.

There are no amendments to sections 2 and 3 to schedule 9. I therefore propose that we bundle the sections. Are there any objections? If not, is there any debate on sections 2 and 3 of schedule 9? If there's no debate, are you ready for the vote? All those in favour of sections 2 and 3 of schedule 9? All those opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 9, as a whole, carry? Any further debate on schedule 9? If there's no further debate, I'll call the question. Are you ready? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 9 is carried.

Schedule 10: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 13 of schedule 10. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Any objections to the bundling of 1 to 13? Is there any debate on sections 1 to 13? If there's no debate, are the members ready to vote? Shall schedule 10, sections 1 to 13, inclusive, carry?

Is there any debate on schedule 10?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Schedule 10, sections 1 to 13.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Is there more?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Sections 1 to 13, because we haven't voted on the—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Are you ready to vote on all the sections in schedule 10? Any further debate? If not, all those in favour? Opposed? All the sections carry.

Shall schedule 10 carry? Any debate? If there's no debate, ready for the vote? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 10 carries.

Schedule 11: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 8 of schedule 11. Therefore, I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Seeing no objection, is there any debate on sections 1 to 8 of schedule 11? If not, are you prepared to vote? We'll call the question on schedule 11, sections 1 to 8. All those in favour? All those opposed? Carried.

1000

Shall schedule 11 carry? Any debate on schedule 11? If not, are you ready for the vote? All those in favour of schedule 11? Opposed? Schedule 11 carries.

Schedule 12: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 4 of schedule 12. Therefore, I propose that we bundle this section. Is there an agreement? Is there any debate on sections 1 to 4 of schedule 12? If not, are the members prepared to vote? All those in favour of sections 1 to 4 of schedule 12? All those opposed? Carried. Sections 1 to 4 of schedule 12 carry.

Shall schedule 12 carry? Any debate on schedule 12? If there's no further debate on that, are you ready to vote? All those in favour of schedule 12? All those opposed? Schedule 12 is carried.

Schedule 13, section 1: I believe we have some amendments. MPP Simard, do you want to debate?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Yes. Thank you, Chair. I have it in French here, but I can also say it in English, if that's easier for people.

Je propose que l'article 1 de l'annexe 13 du projet de loi soit modifié par adjonction du paragraphe suivant :

«(2) Le préambule de la loi est modifié par remplacement de “institutions de la législature et du” par “institutions publiques et au sein du”. »

Est-ce que je l'explique maintenant ou après? Do I talk about it now or—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Okay. This one makes sense, because it does come first in the legislation, but it's because we want to adopt the definition of it later on. It's to include professional orders—I don't know how to say it in English—les ordres professionnels, donc « institutions de la législature » n'est pas clair, et l'AJEFO et l'AFO, the witnesses, have told us that it wasn't clear what is meant by that, and so we need to clarify it. Many of my subsequent amendments will be consequential amendments relating to if we decide to change “institutions de la législature” for “institutions publiques,” and then we give what is an “institution publique” to clarify, because it's important that we are pretty clear with what we mean right now—what an institution of the Legislature is—so we change it to “institutions publiques et au sein du,” and then my next amendment is about what that definition is.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Bourwin?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Thank you, Mr. Chair—and it's “Bourgouin.” It's easier if you say “burr-going” in English, just to help you with it. Sometimes it's complicated. But good morning. I forgot to tell you “good morning” this morning.

But that being said, écoutez, la proposition vient de l'AJEFO. L'AJEFO, ce qu'ils nous ont dit en témoignage, dans les dépositions qu'ils nous ont faites, c'est pour clarifier. Il y a trop d'ambiguïté dans la loi. Il faut refléter les « institutions publiques au sein du ». Pourquoi? C'est pour enrayer l'ambiguïté et aussi pour empêcher de pouvoir amener des appels pour essayer de clarifier la loi. Je demande au gouvernement de supporter—écoutez, on a entendu en Chambre qu'ils sont le gouvernement des francophones, qu'ils sont le parti des francophones. Fait que, je m'attends à ce que le gouvernement fasse la bonne chose et supporte tous nos amendements aujourd'hui. En étant le parti des francophones, ce sont des actes concrets qu'ils peuvent faire. Je demande qu'ils supportent ça, parce que ça vient directement de l'AJEFO. Vous l'avez entendu dans les dépositions. Il y a une raison spécifique, puis ça enlève l'ambiguïté. Si vous votez contre ça, c'est clair que vous voulez que votre projet de loi reste ambigu pour que la communauté francophone ait moins de services et aussi que ça nuise à leurs services et au bien-être de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Just in support of my colleague MPP Bourgouin: There's no reason for the government to oppose this amendment that's been brought forward by the independent member. Essentially it just changes the definition of “service” in section 1 and modifies it by replacing “legislative institution” with “public institution,” which makes sense if you truly are interested in being inclusive of the French language.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I want to thank my colleagues for weighing in on this. I just wanted to mention, as the AJEFO has told us and the lawyers have told us, that the way it is right now is going to have a lot of cases come in and a lot of appeals trying to figure it out, when we have the opportunity to do this right now. So I think it's really important to clarify. That's why we're here. It's okay that it wasn't clear at the beginning. I mean, we would have expected that it was clear, but that's why we're here trying to improve the legislation.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. MPP Bourgouin?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Again, l'AJEFO is very clear, and they're lawyers. It's to avoid litigation. The government should support this. But I'm asking for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate, are we ready to vote?

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Shall schedule 13, section 1 carry? Any further debate on section 1? Are you ready to vote? All those in favour of section 1? All those opposed? Section 1 is carried.

Section 2 of schedule 13: We have a motion from MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Je propose que l'article 2 de l'annexe 13 du projet de loi soit modifié par adjonction du paragraphe suivant :

« (1.1) La définition de "organisme gouvernemental" à l'article 1 de la loi est abrogée et remplacée par ce qui suit :

« "organisme gouvernemental" S'entend de ce qui suit :

« (a) les organismes, commissions, bureaux ou conseils ayant pour mandat d'exercer des fonctions gouvernementales ou de fournir des services gouvernementaux sous le régime de la loi provinciale ou en vertu des pouvoirs du lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil; **1010**

« (b) les ministères du gouvernement de l'Ontario, les sociétés de la Couronne créées sous le régime de la loi provinciale et tout autre organisme désigné comme mandataire de Sa Majesté du chef de l'Ontario ou placé sous le contrôle du lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil ou du ministre;

« (c) les municipalités et les conseils locaux au sens de la Loi sur les affaires municipales qui ont adopté un règlement en vertu du paragraphe 14(1) de la présente loi;

« (d) une personne morale sans but lucratif ou une organisation semblable qui fournit un service au public, qui reçoit des subventions prélevées en tout ou en partie sur les deniers publics et qui est désignée par les règlements en tant qu'organisme fournissant des services publics, y compris les universités et les collèges d'arts appliqués et de technologie.

« Sont exclus, à moins d'être désignés par les règlements en tant qu'organismes fournissant des services publics :

« (e) les établissements psychiatriques;

« (f) les foyers de soins de longue durée au sens de la définition donnée à ce terme dans la Loi de 2007 sur les foyers de soins de longue durée;

« les foyers municipaux ou les foyers communs visés à la partie VIII de la Loi de 2007 sur les foyers de soins de longue durée;

« (h) les foyers de soins spéciaux au sens de la Loi sur les foyers de soins spéciaux;

« (i) les fournisseurs de services au sens de la Loi de 2017 sur les services à l'enfance, à la jeunesse et à la famille ou les conseils d'administration au sens de la Loi sur les conseils d'administration de district des services sociaux. ("government agency") ».

This is to clarify what a government agency is, because we refer to "government agency" in the bill. So again, this is a motion to clarify.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): If I could just ask the MPP, on page 2, you need to reread the letter G—that section.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Sorry. Okay: « (g) les foyers municipaux ou les foyers communs visés à la partie VIII de la Loi de 2007 sur les foyers de soins de longue durée; ».

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much. Is there any further debate? MPP Kusendova.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Alors, le terme « organisme gouvernemental » est utilisé dans l'ensemble de la Loi sur les services en français et une telle modification peut changer la portée des entités assujetties à la loi. Un tel amendement peut entraîner des problèmes de confusion ou d'interprétation, alors le gouvernement ne va pas supporter cet amendement.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, MPP Bourgouin?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I was going to ask for a recorded vote, mais aussi que je pense que c'est important qu'on clarifie les agents gouvernementaux. On semble voir que c'est un gouvernement qui ne semble pas clarifier certaines choses. On a assez de difficultés à avoir des services dans la francophonie, et de dire que ça va créer des problèmes, je pense le contraire.

On a entendu l'AJEFO essayer de clarifier—on a traité avec un amendement justement à ce point-là pour essayer de clarifier, enlever l'ambiguïté, essayer d'arrêter, d'avoir moins de « litigation » ou des cours pour essayer de clarifier certains points. Fait que, je ne comprends pas la position du gouvernement. Mais ceci dit, je demanderais un vote enregistré.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I just wanted to address the comments by the government. I think it doesn't make any sense because we're actually trying to clarify, right? So there is no confusion on what the interpretation is, when you're adding clarity. And this is actually coming from the lawyers. The lawyers are the ones who are having to deal with all this litigation and they're telling us, "There's a problem here that we're trying to fix." So I think that's exactly what we're doing: trying to clarify and avoid an interpretation that is not correct.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there is no further debate, is the committee ready to vote? We'll call the vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

We have another amendment proposed. MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Thank you, Chair. Now, this is the definition part that I was referring to where, when we discussed public institutions, to substitute it everywhere in the act. The definition would be:

Je propose que l'article 2 de l'annexe 13 du projet de loi soit modifié par adjonction du paragraphe suivant :

« ... L'article 1 de la loi est modifié par adjonction de la définition suivante :

« "institution publique" Une institution mandatée par une loi de l'Assemblée législative pour exercer des pouvoirs législatifs, exécutifs ou judiciaires dans l'intérêt public. Sont compris les ordres professionnels, les fonctionnaires de l'Assemblée législative et l'administration des tribunaux. ('public institution') ».

So this is, again, what is the definition of a public institution, to clarify, and one of the main elements that came up with the witnesses and over the years—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): If I could stop you, MPP Simard. If you could read the number in the proposal—

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Oh, sorry.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): —in the second paragraph.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Yes. It's section 2 of schedule 13, but it is number 3: « (3) L'article 1 de la loi est modifié par adjonction de la définition suivante »—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. That's got enough. Thank you.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Okay. I just wanted to say that this is where we mention "les ordres professionnels," and I need the translators to help me with what is "ordre

professionnel" in English, but we have seen with the years—this is not from today; right?—this should have been clarified many years ago too, that the professional associations or les ordres professionnels need to be included in there and clarified. That is why it is in the definition, and I will ask for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. Any further debate?

MPP Bourgouin?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Écoute, ça revient encore à la définition. Ça vient de l'AJEFO. Le comité a entendu les dépositions : pourquoi, la raison. La raison, c'est que les francophones rentrent dans des situations où ils n'ont pas les services. En mettant des définitions de même, ça va être clair que s'il y a des « litigations » ou s'il y a de l'ambiguïté, mais là, au moins, on le clarifie, pour qu'on puisse arrêter de tout le temps aller à travers la cour pour essayer de clarifier les services auxquels on a droit. On pense que la loi les couvre, mais pourquoi, quand ça arrive pour les services, on n'a toujours pas les services? Pourquoi? Parce qu'il y a de l'ambiguïté dans la loi.

Ceci clarifie. Je ne comprends pas pourquoi le gouvernement ne veut pas clarifier la loi pour—pas pour améliorer, mais pour identifier les services auxquels on a droit. Le gouvernement semble dire que ces lois-là existent déjà, que la loi les couvre ou que la loi est suffisante. Mais l'AJEFO, les avocats, ils ont été très clairs. Elle n'est pas suffisante. Il faut enlever cette ambiguïté-là en définissant les institutions publiques. C'est ça que l'amendement dit ici. La proposition est claire. Elle enlève ça. Ça va améliorer les services.

Si le gouvernement dit qu'ils sont le gouvernement pour les francophones, je ne vois pas pourquoi ils ne voteraient pas pour une clarté de même, pas pour améliorer, mais pour faire certain qu'on a nos services dans ces institutions-là. Merci, monsieur le Président.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you. MPP Kusendova.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Merci, monsieur le Président. Alors, encore une fois, le terme « institution publique » n'est pas utilisé dans l'ensemble de la Loi sur les services en français et n'a donc pas besoin d'être défini à l'article 1 de la loi. Une telle modification peut modifier la portée des entités assujetties à la loi et entraîner des problèmes de confusion ou d'interprétation.

1020

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je ne comprends pas la position du gouvernement. Au contraire, ça la clarifie. Si le gouvernement n'est pas prêt à supporter ça, c'est signe qu'ils sont satisfaits avec une loi qui est ambiguë, qui nous cause des problèmes comme communauté francophone d'avoir nos services. C'est très clair : ce sont les avocats qui nous demandent de clarifier ce point-là. Pourquoi? Parce qu'on rentre dans ces problèmes-là continuellement.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Yes, I just wanted to clarify, because in the next amendment, we do want to change the word “service” to, you know, “public institution”—in the definition of service. So that’s why we still presented the amendment, to respond to the government’s point.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? Are we ready for the question? We are. I will put the vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I declare the amendment lost.

I think we have another amendment? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: These are all consequential amendments, but this is exactly to change “service” for “institutions publiques.”

Je propose que l’article 2 de l’annexe 13 du projet de loi soit modifié par adjonction du paragraphe suivant :

« (4) La définition de “service” à l’article 1 de la loi est modifiée par remplacement de “institution de la législature” par “institution publique”. »

C’est pour les mêmes raisons qu’on vient de discuter : c’est que là c’est dans la définition. C’était dans la définition de « service ».

So that was the “service” definition. We want to change “institution of the Legislature” in that definition to “public institution.” And I’ll—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Interjection.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Sorry, I just wanted to say that I ask for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Is everybody happy? Any further debate? MPP Kusendova.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Dans l’ensemble de la Loi sur les services en français, les termes « institutions de la législature » au pluriel et « institution de la législature » au singulier sont utilisés, alors que « institution publique » n’est pas utilisé. Le terme « institution publique » n’est pas utilisé dans l’ensemble de la Loi sur les services en français, comme j’ai dit, ni défini en vertu de la loi. Il n’est donc pas nécessaire de l’inclure dans la définition de « service » à l’article 1 de la loi.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there is no further debate, are you ready for the question? I’ll call the vote.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I declare the motion lost.

Shall schedule 13, section 2 carry? Debate? No further debate? I’ll call the vote. All those in favour? All those opposed? I declare the section carried.

There are no amendments to sections 3 to 5 of schedule 13. Therefore, I propose that we bundle those sections. Is there an agreement? Is there any debate on sections 3 to 5 of schedule 13? If not, are the members prepared to vote? We’ll call the vote. All those in favour of sections 3 to 5 of schedule 13? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Schedule 13, section 6: We start off with a number of proposed amendments. The first one, I think, is a New Democratic one, motion 9: MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that subsection 6(1) of schedule 13 to the bill be amended by striking out subsection 5(1) of the French Language Services Act and submitting the following:

“Right to services in French

“(1) A person has the right in accordance with this act to communicate in French with, and to receive available services in French from, any office of the government agency or institution of the Legislature that is a head or central office.”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Bourgouin, could you read, in the second line—could you read the whole line again?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: The second line?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The second line: subsection 5(1)—

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: So you just want subsection 5(1) of the French Language Services Act and submitting—sorry, and substituting.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That’s where we’re having the problem; it’s not “submitting.”

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Substituting, sorry. Substituting the following.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Thank you for that. Okay—

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The second-last line of the motion: “French from, any office of a government agency,” not “the”.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: At “and to receive”—is that where you want me to start?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, if you could just read the second-last line.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: The second-last line: “with, and to receive available services in French from, any office of a government agency”.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Perfect. Okay.

You’ve heard the motion—debate?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, thank you very much. MPP Bourgouin, the floor is yours.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: This motion is to enshrine the francophone services in the French Language Services Act.

C'est juste pour renforcer, parce que comme c'est là, la Loi sur les services en français, le langage est très faible. Cet amendement-là renforce le langage de la Loi sur les services en français.

If I may, I'll just say it in English also. What it is—in the current French Language Services Act, the language is weak. This proposal enforces or strengthens the language to have French services.

1030

Mr. Chair, I'm asking for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Kusendova?

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Thank you, Chair. The proposed motion actually narrows the scope of offices that are subject to the right to French language services provided for in the section.

Je vais répéter en français. La motion proposée restreint la portée des bureaux assujettis aux droits aux services en français prévus au paragraphe 5(1) de la Loi sur les services en français. Ceci est contraire à l'intention des modifications proposées.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to clarify—because I do think this is an important amendment, but I want to make sure that it doesn't reduce the scope. If we had changed the definition of government agency, that would have been great because that's exactly what's in here.

Si M. Bourgouin peut juste clarifier si en ce moment—comme là on dit le « central ». De ce que je comprends de votre intention, c'est que toutes les agences gouvernementales et les institutions de la législature offrent les services en français et on peut avoir les services en français, mais que, également, le « central » doit offrir le français. Donc c'est pour ajouter ou clarifier que le « central » doit. Ce n'est pas pour réduire juste au « central ». C'est ça?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Bourgouin?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Tu as lu la motion exactement comme elle est écrite. Le gouvernement dit que c'est pour réduire. Non ce ne l'est pas. Je pense que c'est très clair. C'est tout le « central ». C'est pour ça qu'on—

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: OK. Donc c'est la députée du gouvernement qui ne comprend pas que ce n'est pas une question de réduire, c'est une question—on ne dit aucunement dans cette motion que ça réduit. Ça dit : « has the right in accordance with this act to communicate in French with, and to receive available services in French from, any office of a government agency or institution of the Legislature that is a head or central office ». So I don't see anywhere in this motion that it reduces the scope or it reduces any sort of services. I'm just wondering where that's coming from, and I saw it as adding or just clarifying

what the “central” was. I'm just confused why the government would think that.

M. Guy Bourgouin: L'intention de la motion c'est de renforcer et non de réduire.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Chair. I just want to clarify. I have no idea why the government would put that out there, that this restricts access. What this amendment from MPP Bourgouin does is that it enshrines Ontarians' rights to receive services in French. It is actually replacing weaker language that currently exists in the government legislation, and given the amount of amendments that we've had to bring forward on schedule 13, it's incredible to me that the government can defend any action that they've taken with regard to language rights for French people in Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Thank you, Chair. I'm just re-reading this motion many times because I want the government MPP, MPP Kusendova, to identify in this motion where it restricts any sort of service.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: This proposed amendment does not address rights in respect of non-central, non head offices of government agencies or institutions of the Legislature that are located in a designated area or that is an office expressly designated by the regulation and hence this amendment would indeed narrow the scope.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Chair?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Chair, it doesn't mention that it's adding. It's not restricting it in any way, and you don't have to be a lawyer to understand that. So I'm just confused why the government thinks that, and it makes me worry about other legislation that they're producing. How can we trust the competency if they can't understand that this isn't restricting any sort of right? I'm confused.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Écoute, je pense que la motion est claire. Elle n'est pas compliquée. Elle vient assurer, elle vient—en anglais ils disent « enshrine » dans la Loi sur les services en français que le langage, il est faible. Je comprends pourquoi le gouvernement a des problèmes : parce qu'ils veulent garder la Loi sur les services en français le plus ambigu possible. On a traité avec des amendements au début pour essayer de la renforcer, puis ils ont voté contre. On a une liste qu'on va passer à travers pour améliorer les services en français, puis on s'acharne pour une motion, puis une motion qui est claire, qui n'est pas difficile à comprendre. La députée Simard a raison. Tu n'as pas besoin d'être un avocat pour la lire. Mais on s'acharne le plus possible de mettre de l'ambiguïté. Il n'y a pas d'ambiguïté dans cette motion-là. Elle est claire et simple. C'est pour augmenter les services.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? There's no further debate. Are you ready to vote? We'll put the question.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost. I believe the next one is an independent motion. MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Since we've already been through the public institution discussion, and the government doesn't want to include it and clarify it to help Franco-Ontarians in litigation and all the subsequent issues that will arise from that, I will be skipping the amendments relating to the public institution. I'm mindful of my colleagues' time.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Are you are suggesting you don't want to read that one into the record?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: No.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. That's both 10 and 11?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Yes. To simplify your life, Chair: 10, 11, 14 and 15 are all related to public institutions, and they're all consequential amendments. So since we decided—reluctantly, I guess; we had the recorded vote—that we weren't going to include that, I want to be efficient, and I won't be proposing those.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, so then we have amendment 12, a New Democratic amendment. Mr. Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that section 6 of schedule 13 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

“(3) Section 5 of the act is amended by adding the following subsections:

“Exemption

“(4) A government agency or public” institute “is exempt from its obligations under subsection (1) if all reasonable steps have been taken and all reasonable proposals have been made to comply with this act.

“Condition for exemption

“(5) A government agency or public institution that intends to avail itself of an exemption under subsection (4) shall show reasonable steps and proposals that have been made to comply with this act in its French-language services plan.

1040

“Stable funding

“(6) The minister shall ensure that stable and suitable funding is provided for the delivery of government programs in French.”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Could you reread the first line in section 4? Just under “Exemption.”

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay. “(4) A government agency or public institution is exempt from its obligations under...”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much. Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Again, this motion is to increase services. When you look at number 6 in this, it has, “stable and suitable funding.” Too many times we see that, for these services that we should be getting, the funding is not adequate, which impacts the service to the francophone community. But this motion is to improve the services to the francophone community and to make sure that suitable funding is there so that we are not constantly in a situation where the funding is not there and the services are impacted due to the funding.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I want to thank my colleague for bringing forward this important amendment, but I just wanted to clarify. So this exemption at number 4 is just to be reasonable, right? It's just adding a way out if someone has taken reasonable steps. Currently, what is the process? Just for the committee as well.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Well, currently, the law is not strong enough when it comes to the services. So this is why we're asking “reasonable steps,” so there is accountability, qu'il y ait plus de—c'est quoi le mot en français que je cherche?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Redevabilité.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Redevabilité—merci, Amanda—pour que, s'ils demandent des exemples d'être exclus, mais qu'il y ait un «accountability», qu'ils soient capables de démontrer qu'ils ont fait les étapes nécessaires, parce que trop souvent dans la loi, c'est trop facile de dire : « Bien, écoute, on n'est pas capable de donner des services » ou bien « On ne trouve pas de monde. » Bien souvent, la réponse qu'on entend c'est qu'on n'est pas capable de trouver du monde pour donner les services. Fait que, les efforts ne sont pas faits pour donner ces services-là. C'est pour ça qu'on a mis ça [*inaudible*] pour renforcer la loi.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Donc, en ce moment, des exemptions sont possibles, mais on ne dit pas selon quel critère. C'est ça?

M. Guy Bourgouin: C'est ça.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: OK, parfait.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Parce que c'est trop facile, parce que la loi—c'est pour ça qu'on demande qu'ils donnent leurs raisons, parce que c'est trop facile de dire—

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Puis on est raisonnable, vous savez. On veut—

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): If we could go through the Chair. We're getting a bit of back and forth here.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Oh, sorry, Chair. Sorry. I think it's the Zoom format that makes me a little bit thrown off. I see you, but, you know, you're the same size as everybody else. We should put you on big.

So, Mr. Chair, I just wanted to add a comment. I have a question.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: So, we do refer here to “public institutions” in the amendment. Does that mean that in the act, contrary to what we’ve heard from the government, there is a reference to public institutions?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: No, we want to add “public institutions.”

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Oh, okay. Got it. Just making sure, because I think this is a really important term, and that’s why we tried to put it in. But I approve of this amendment, and I’ll ask for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Further debate? If there is no further debate, is the committee ready to vote? With that, we will call the vote on the amendment number 12.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Babikian, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I declare the section lost.

Shall schedule 13, section 6 carry? Any debate? There’s no further debate. Are we ready for the question on schedule 13, section 6? All those in favour? Opposed? Section 6 is carried.

New section 6.1: We have an amendment from the opposition. Mr. Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I will withdraw, because this section was addressing point 12, the previous section, to strengthen the language to be able to replace—that was what we were asking in amendment 12, so I’ll withdraw to expedite the process.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Because it’s a new section, it’s not to be voted on, because there’s nothing to vote up or down.

We will go to schedule 13, section 7. The first one has been withdrawn, so we’ll take the NDP one. It would be the next one. That’s amendment number 16. Does somebody want to address that? Mr. Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that subsection 7(3) of schedule 13 to the bill be struck out.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any debate on that? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to remind government members that research and evidence demonstrates that access to public services in your language is a direct determinant of one’s health and well-being. MPP Bourgouin has been working very closely with the Franco-Ontarian community. He’s trying to reflect their direct concerns around access, and that is why we’ve had to introduce successive amendments. So I would encourage the government to pay attention to the concerns that have come forward from the Franco-Ontarian community and

remember that access to public services for all Ontarians should be a shared priority that we all have.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: This section is to eliminate the current 26 designated regions.

C’est pour donner aux francophones à la grandeur de la province des services en français. Ça vient directement de la communauté francophone. Ça faisait partie du libellé, ça fait partie des projets de loi du NPD et des libéraux, puis c’est une grosse demande que la communauté—il y a des francophones à la grandeur de la province. Il n’y en a pas juste dans 26 régions. On a besoin de ces services-là. C’est un droit constitutionnel. Puis je ne comprends pas pourquoi on ne devrait pas avoir ces services-là à la grandeur de la province. Je pense qu’on est rendu au point que la communauté a évolué, puis on est rendu à ce point—puis la province devrait suivre, puis accepter de passer cette motion-là. Pourquoi? Parce qu’on a besoin de ces services-là, trop souvent. Puis on vient de vivre une pandémie. On vient de vivre une pandémie, puis on a besoin des services en français. Dans bien des coins dans la province, on n’avait pas de services. C’est inacceptable. Ça fait que c’est pour ça qu’on demande dans cette motion-là d’enlever la « subsection » 7(3) de l’annexe 13 pour qu’on puisse avoir tous les services à la grandeur de la province. Il est grand temps que ça se fasse. C’était une des demandes primaires de la communauté francophone. Je demande au gouvernement de supporter cette motion, puis je veux avoir un « recorded vote ». I want a recorded vote.

1050

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I want to thank my colleague for presenting this, because this whole issue of designated areas is in both of our bills, I believe—our private members’ bills that we’ve introduced—because we travel all across the province. Yes, we live in a certain area, but there is no reason why the signs and other things are only in one language in one area, and the other—it frankly doesn’t cost that much more. There are so many reasons why the designated areas are outdated.

The response from the minister and the government was shocking. They said, “We just don’t have the ‘main-d’oeuvre.’ We just don’t have the workforce, the resources, the people to do it,” as if it wasn’t even a worthy objective. You could have said, “Yeah, sure, this is good, but we can’t do it right now. Let’s make a plan, in five or whatever years it takes to do it, and get there.” But what the government is telling us is it’s not even worthy of a plan, or a worthy objective. So this is really disappointing to the community, because you’re just turning the page. You’re saying, “Oh, we don’t have the workforce, we don’t have the ‘main-d’oeuvre.’” On tourne la page.

Si le gouvernement croit vraiment que c’est un objectif qui en vaut la peine et que c’est important, on va trouver une façon. When there’s a will, there’s a way. It may take time. It’s a plan, but dismissing it as not even a worthy

objective is really shocking. I think that we need to be working together to make a plan to realize this, not tomorrow, not next year or the year after. If we don't have the workforce, then we do it for X number of years. I do believe that it starts now to even make an objective. I think that this is a good step forward, and if we do enact it, then we'll find a way to do it.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Yes, MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je trouve ça aberrant que c'est silence radio de la part des conservateurs sur ce point-là, qu'ils n'ont aucun commentaire qui vient pour désigner toutes les régions. C'est inacceptable. On a entendu en Chambre—comme j'ai dit deux fois comme c'est là—qu'ils sont le parti pour représenter les francophones. Si vous êtes le parti des francophones, vous devriez supporter cette motion-là.

Comme la députée Simard vient de dire, on a des moyens pour faire les choses. Il y a du financement pour faire les choses. Si on a les valeurs à la bonne place puis on dit qu'on va donner ces services-là, on est capable de le faire. Mais il n'y a pas de volonté de ce gouvernement pour améliorer les conditions des francophones en Ontario. Il y a un gros manque de volonté, puis on peut voir que—ça a pris 30 ans pour améliorer la Loi sur les services en français, puis de toutes les recommandations qui ont été amenées par la communauté francophone, c'est minime, ce qui a été pris. C'est inacceptable.

Ça fait que, commençons par désigner toutes les régions, faisons la bonne chose pour la communauté francophone, donnons des services—oui, ça va peut-être prendre un peu de temps, mais au moins ça va être dans la loi puis on va travailler pour avoir un but de donner ces services-là à la communauté. Mais de juste ne rien dire puis voter contre, c'est inacceptable, puis je demande au comité—au gouvernement et à tout le monde—de voter en faveur de cette motion.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Just very briefly in response to my colleagues across the aisle, I just wanted to say that nothing could be further from the truth than what was said. The government is actively working on a francophone and bilingual workforce strategy. As you are very well aware, we are currently training francophone PSWs, francophone nurses, francophone RPNs to enter the workforce. Some of this the government is funding directly, especially for the PSWs. I visited a long-term-care home in MPP Simard's riding where these PSWs are working, and they're in the living classroom.

So this bill is one of the steps that we are doing to achieve the targets that we have set forth. However, we are also working in conjunction with our francophone strategy, and we are working with different municipalities that want to see voluntary designation. One of these municipalities which has recently been designated is Markham. Another one that is in process of getting designated is Sarnia. So we are working in conjunction with our municipal partners who are seeking voluntary designations, but

currently we do not have the capacity to designate the entire province. Everyone—all of the stakeholders—understands that, and they're willing to work with the government to enforce our strategy.

That's why, in this bill, we also have a targeted approach that will allow us to designate more organizations outside of the designated areas so that we can help to fill some of these gaps. For example, in my region of Peel, we have a gap in francophone services, and I'm actively working with Trillium Health Partners to ensure that we have some designated beds in long-term care, which has not been done, ever.

So just to respond once again: We are using a targeted approach, and we have a strategy on the bilingual workforce, and that's all I'm going to say.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Nothing that the government said addressed the question of whether or not it was an objective for the government to remove the designated areas. They say "targeted," but what's the target? At the end of the day, you're doing all this with the bilingual workforce and addressing it, and that's great, but what's the plan? Do you want to eliminate the designated areas or not? When addressing the question of the designated areas, you're just saying, "Well, we don't have the workforce," and that's it: "We're building it, but we don't really have a target. We don't have a plan, really," which is really on brand with the government.

But we're trying to deal with this legislation specifically and do what we can with what we have, and I think that it's really important that we get more than just, "We're doing this and we're doing that." Yes, but what's the plan? For what? And when you're answering the question about the designation area, why are you just saying, "Well, no, we simply don't have the workforce"?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This discourse is really interesting for me, because the questions still remain, MPP Kusendova: How are you choosing jurisdictions? How are you prioritizing which area is going to have an accelerated French-language accessibility plan? Where is the overall strategy?

And I would have to say that this was some of the core work of the French Language Services Commissioner, who you fired. One of the first things you did in Ontario was fire the French Language Services Commissioner, whose job it was to create a province strategy. So you replaced a province strategy with these one-off comments about who will qualify for an accelerated language plan, which isn't very well communicated in English or French. Literally, the government has no credibility whatsoever on this file to date.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Mr. Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Écoute, quand ça vient à des paroles vides du gouvernement, les francophones en ont ras-le-bol. On a entendu trop souvent des belles promesses de ce gouvernement-là, puis quand arrive le temps, on sait qui paye : c'est encore la communauté.

Ma collègue, elle l'a très bien dit, une des premières affaires dont ils se sont débarrassés—on se souvient du jeudi noir—c'était notre commissaire et l'université. Ils sont revenus après plusieurs années. Ils sont revenus avec l'université, mais c'est grâce au fédéral, qui a payé pour qu'elle reprenne, et là, ils se pètent les bretelles.

Mais ceci dit, on traite avec des désignations. On a besoin d'un plan. Il faut avancer. Mais c'est drôle qu'ils n'ont rien proposé de ça, et M^{lle} Simard l'a très bien dit. S'ils disent qu'ils ont un plan, bien qu'ils le démontrent, le plan; qu'ils nous le donnent, le plan; qu'ils le mettent sur papier, le plan. Parce qu'on sait qu'avec eux autres, les promesses vides, on l'a vécu assez souvent. C'est pour ça qu'on demande de supporter cette motion, qu'au moins on dise que la province va être désignée, puis après ça on peut travailler pour faire les plans, et au moins que le gouvernement va avoir les mains attachées pour dire qu'il va falloir délivrer sur les régions.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Just very briefly, in the interest of time: I encourage my esteemed colleagues across the aisle to go on our government's website and read Ontario's French-language services strategy, which outlines our plan precisely.

1100

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further—MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: We have read it, and we've discussed it, and it's not a plan. And when the minister responds that there is just not the workforce to eliminate the designated areas, that's not a plan to eliminate the designated areas. So it's not responding to our question here.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there is no further debate, are we ready for the vote?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): So we're ready to vote, and I'm reminded to make sure that everybody understands that only the properly designated sitting members of the committee can vote.

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): And properly substituted members.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes, and properly substituted, at the right times. Sometimes we get substituted based on hours, and when that time expires, we can no longer accept that person voting. It doesn't take away from their ability to debate in the committee, but it does take away the ability to vote on the issue.

So with that, if we're ready to vote on amendment number 16, I'll call the question. All those in favour of the amendment? All those opposed?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): No, it's a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, it's a recorded vote. My apologies.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Next item: Shall schedule 13, section 7 carry? Debate? Does anybody have any further debate on section 7 of schedule 13? If there is no further debate, I'll put the question. All those in favour of schedule 13, section 7?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The vote is on schedule 13, section 7. Any further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Just for clarification, we have another amendment to move—

Interjection.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: That's schedule 7 also. But I just want to clarify.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That was a new section you were putting—

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay. So that will be next?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Yes.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes. Right now, we're just voting on schedule 13, section 7.

I'll call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Now there is a proposal for a new section 7.1. I believe it's the opposition that wants to put that forward. It's amendment number 17, for those keeping track. MPP Bourgouin?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I move that schedule 13 to the bill be amended by adding the following section:

“7.1 The act is amended by adding the following section:

““Consultation

““10.1(1) The Franco-Ontarian community has the right to be consulted on the development of the principles of the application of and the revision of programs promoting the advancement of the equality of status and use of French in Ontario society in an open and participative manner.

““Minister's action

““(2) The minister shall take any action that the minister considers appropriate to provide for the public consultation referred to in subsection (1).

““Duty to consult

““(3) A government agency or public institution shall consult with representatives of the Franco-Ontarian community if the government agency or public institution intends to develop and implement a new policy, program, service” to activities and ““directly or indirectly impacts or is relevant to the Franco-Ontarian community.

““Same

““(4) Consultations under subsection (3) shall include consultations with the Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario and with the Association des communautés francophones de l'Ontario for each region where the new policy, program, service or activity is likely to be implemented or carried out.

“Definition

“(5) In this section,

““Franco-Ontarian community” means the community of individuals residing in Ontario whose mother tongue is French and of individuals,

“(a) whose mother tongue is neither French nor English and who,

“(i)” speaks “French but not English, or

“(ii) although they may speak” French, “speak French, alone or in combination with languages other than English, in the household,

“(b) whose mother tongue is not French but who” speaks “French fluently; and

“(c) who meet any prescribed criteria.”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): If we could, we’ll just go through them here quickly. On page 1, under “Duty to consult,” the second last line, you’ll want to read from “service” on.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: From “service”? Okay. “Consultation?”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): “Duty to consult.”

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: “Duty to consult,” okay. And you want me to start from “service?”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): “Service or.”

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay. “Service or activity that directly or indirectly impacts—”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That’s fine. I think there’s another one on the next page. Under (a)(i), read that line, and then in (ii), read the top line.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: On the second page?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Yes.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay, so you want the (i)?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): (i) and (ii).

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay. “(i) speak French but not English, or

“(ii) although they may speak English, speak French, alone or in combination with languages other than English, in the household,”

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, now could you read the (b) line too?

1110

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Okay: “(b) whose mother tongue is not French but who speak French frequently”—oh, sorry; “fluently”.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): “Fluently”, yes.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It’s “fluently”.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Thank you.

That’s read into the record. Now, debate?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): We just have another MPP who arrived. MPP Anand has arrived. If you could introduce yourself, MPP Anand, and tell us where you are.

Mr. Deepak Anand: This is MPP Deepak Anand from beautiful Mississauga–Malton, magically appeared.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Thank you very much.

With that, we’ll start the debate. We’ll start again. Would the introducer of the motion like to speak? MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, Chair. Ça, ça vient de mon projet de loi que j’avais déposé. C’est pour faire certain, s’il y a des changements à la loi qui affectent les communautés franco-ontariennes, qu’elles soient consultées avant que les lois soient implémentées. Parce que, trop souvent, on a vu dans le passé qu’il y a eu des amendements qui ont été faits et la communauté n’a pas été consultée, puis ça l’affecte, la communauté franco-ontarienne. C’est pour faire certain, et ça identifie avec qui ils devraient consulter pour faire certain que la communauté franco-ontarienne puisse adresser ses « concernes » quand ça vient aux amendements ou aux changements à la loi qui pourrait impacter la communauté franco-ontarienne.

L’autre amendement que je propose, c’est que la communauté franco-ontarienne a évolué—vous savez, avec l’immigration et tout. Je vais vous donner un exemple. J’avais un assistant à Queen’s Park qui était argentin. Sa femme est québécoise; ses deux enfants sont des francophones. Ils parlaient toujours français à la maison. Il parlait toujours français au travail. Il s’adressait toujours en français. Mais quand ça venait pour se faire recenser, par exemple, à cause que sa langue native était l’espagnol, il n’était pas recensé.

Il faut qu’on reflète la communauté ontarienne d’aujourd’hui, avec l’immigration, parce que trop souvent les francophones ne sont pas identifiés comme francophones—puis ils s’identifient comme francophones, puis ils parlent la langue souvent. C’est pour ça que pour l’autre, le dernier amendement, c’est ce que je propose comme changement à la loi, pour être capable d’identifier la francophonie d’aujourd’hui.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I want to thank my colleague for presenting this amendment, and I support every section. I just had a question on the definition for the Franco-Ontarian community, just because we have to be consistent. The definition that we use here has to be in line with everywhere else that we use it. I’m just wondering—so “Definition”, subsection 5 to (b):

I know what the member means with “(a) whose mother tongue is neither French nor English and who,

“(i) speak French but not English”.

I think of maybe some of the new members of the community. So there’s a reason why you specified “but not English” here. And then you say, “although they may speak English, speak French, alone or in combination with languages other than English, in the household,” which means that—okay, first, you say “speak French but not English, or” if they speak English, they’re speaking French “alone or in combination with languages other than English, in the household”. And then, to me, it seems like (b) is a bit contradictory or—not fluff, but it’s “de trop,” just because “whose mother tongue is not French but who speak French fluently” would include a large proportion—any anglophone who speaks French fluently.

If the roles were reversed, does that mean that I'm an anglophone because I speak English? But really my mother tongue is French. I don't think that makes a lot of sense, so I'm just trying to see if (b) is necessary in here because (a) covers basically everyone in the new community that we would think of. I'm just trying to clarify why the (b) is there: To capture who, right?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: C'était pour faire certain qu'on répond à toutes les personnes qui s'identifient et aussi qui parlent la langue. Comme je vous donnais l'exemple—mon assistant, c'est certain qu'il parlait l'espagnol aussi à la maison, mais la langue dominante est—il s'adressait en français, mais il était exclu. Il y a beaucoup d'autres communautés qui parlent d'autres langues. C'était pour faire certain qu'on capte toutes les personnes qui parlent français pour refléter la communauté actuelle de la francophonie.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Merci à mon collègue, mais the example you gave would be covered under (a)(ii) because they spoke Spanish and whatever else. I just wonder if we could do—because that means every single person, even if they only speak English. I'm just trying to see who you're trying to capture. I get your objective of speaking more than one language, especially if there are three or four, but why do we put "speak French but"? Everything in (a) is there for a reason, I understand that, and it captures everyone I think you want to capture. Then (b) could actually stand on its own without the (a) because you're capturing everybody that speaks French fluently. Right? That would include everybody.

I just think the two sections are doing basically the same thing, and I think (a) actually does the majority of it. So I would propose, if I can, an amendment. Can I do an amendment to the amendment?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I'm told you can propose an amendment to the amendment, but if you're to do that, we must have a recess to get it redrafted with its change.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Okay, so then can I ask my colleague—I mean, I support it; I just think from a legal perspective it's just doing the same thing and it's just redundant. So I'm just going to put that in the record that I think it's redundant and I think the first, the (a)(i) and (ii), does the job, so in the future when we do present the bill and when we debate your bill, Mr. Bourgouin, I'll be raising this.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just wanted to say, when I read through this I thought that (b) was just trying to be inclusive of someone who—perhaps if my French language lessons were going better and I only chose to speak French, I would be able to have options. I saw it as an inclusive part of the motion.

I was just going to add that the government is not going to support it anyway, given their track record, so let's move forward. When we have an opportunity to design legislation, we'll truly make it inclusive, MPP Simard.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: I just want to bring it to the attention of my colleagues that consultations are actually dealt with in another part of the act, which is under "review of act" and which sets out that "at least every 10 years, the government of Ontario shall review this act," and specifically mentions consultation: "As part of the review, the minister shall, in a manner the minister considers appropriate, inform the public that this act is being reviewed and solicit the views of the public with respect to this act."

There are further provisions listed there, but also there is a requirement of a report: "Within one year after a review is completed, the minister shall prepare a report setting out the findings of the review and deliver the report to the Speaker of the assembly, who shall lay the report before the assembly at the earliest reasonable opportunity."

1120

And I just wanted to address the consultations. We have consulted very vastly and broadly before putting this modernization bill forward. The minister held in-person consultations with our key stakeholders. I personally have consulted in the long-term-care sector. We have also had online opportunities for les intervenants, the stakeholders, to submit their feedback, and we've received close to 1,000 such submissions, which were all considered when we put this modernization forward.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Mr. Bourgouin?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I appreciate the comments from the députée Kusendova, but this would enshrine it in the law, dans la Loi sur les services en français. I understand we all did consultations, but at least now it would be specific, right in the law. It would be enshrined.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I just wanted to say the government may have consulted, but they haven't listened. That was pretty clear from the testimonies, the witnesses that appeared before this committee, what they were asking. They were consulted, and they're the main organizations, and they don't even have their requests in this law. It doesn't matter the number of consultations; you need to take those back and address them and put them in your proposals. This is just reinforcing, and I think we need to—if you're going to do it, that's fine, so why are you opposed to putting it into law?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: I'd encourage my colleagues to read the written submissions from our two key stakeholders that are by and large, for the most part, in support of what the government is doing in this modernization bill. As I said, the aspect of consultation is being dealt with in a later section of the act.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? If there's no further debate, is the committee ready for the question? MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: A recorded vote, Chair, please.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, we'll put the question.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Simard.

Nays

Anand, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

There are no amendments to sections 8 and 9 of schedule 13. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement to that? No disagreement on it. Debate on sections 8 and 9 of schedule 13? Is there any debate on those? If not, are you ready for the question? Shall schedule 13, sections 8 and 9, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 8 and 9 are carried.

We're now on section 10, schedule 13, amendment number 18 in your package, from the independent. Do we have somebody to read it into the record? MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Je propose que l'article 10 de l'annexe 13 du projet de loi soit modifié par remplacement de « fait rapport » par « présente chaque année un rapport » dans le passage qui précède l'alinéa a) de l'article 12.0.1 de la Loi sur les services en français.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, you've heard the motion. Any debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: This is simply a technical amendment, just because it wasn't specified. So this is a non-controversial amendment. It's really just to clarify at what frequency the report is, because it's not said in the bill, in the current proposed bill. This is what the lawyers at AJEFO had realized, and so they proposed that we just add the word "annual."

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You've heard the debate. Any further debate? No further debate? If there's no further debate, then are you ready for the question? MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Just the last thing I'll say is that I want a recorded vote. But I would think that it's just one word and it's just to clarify what the frequency is. If the government is not supporting it, they need to explain what is the frequency and why they didn't put it in the bill. I think this is just unanimous in the community and the lawyers who are drafters are saying to add the "annual." So I'd like to hear what my colleagues have to say if they can't add the word "annual."

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Is there any further debate? If not, are we ready for the question? We'll put the question. All of those in favour of the amendment?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mademoiselle Simard.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): All those opposed? Did we miss one?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Mr. Bourgouin had his hand up as well for the vote. Sorry. I missed him.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Our apologies. Every vote should be counted. It's the principle that we live by. All those opposed?

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Sorry, Ms. Fife had her hand up and we didn't catch her either.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Let's try it again.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Anand, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is lost.

Shall schedule 13, section 10 carry? Debate? No further debate? If there's no further debate, are you ready for the question? All those in favour of section 10 of schedule 13? All those opposed? Section 10 of schedule 13 is carried.

The next one is schedule 13, section 11, and we have amendment number 19 in the package from the official opposition. MPP Fife?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 11 of schedule 13 to the bill be amended by adding the following subsections to section 12.0.2 of the French Language Services Act:

"Independent French Language Services Commissioner

"(2.1) The committee shall, within three months after the day section 11 of schedule 13 to the Build Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2021 comes into force, report to the minister on what steps are required to,

1130

"(a) restore the French Language Services Commissioner and the office of the commissioner to the roles they had before section 2 of schedule 20 to the Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act, 2018 came into force;

"(b) ensure that services are available in French from any board of health; and

"(c) ensure that no person is appointed to the position of Chief Medical Officer of Health or Ombudsman unless the person is fluent in both French and English.

"Same

"(2.2) The minister shall, within three months after receiving the report referred to in subsection (2.1), take the steps mentioned in the report."

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): That's a perfect read. Thank you very much. You've heard the motion. Debate? MPP Fife, did you want to speak to the motion?

Ms. Catherine Fife: My colleague MPP Bourgouin will speak to it.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, very good. MPP Bourgouin?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Écoute, je pense que la motion est assez claire. C'est qu'on demande qu'il y ait un comité qui soit formé puis qu'ils nous amènent des recommandations de comment on va ramener notre commissaire des services en français, notre commissaire indépendant, avec tout son bureau, tel qu'il était avant que le gouvernement Ford l'ait retiré—ou qu'il l'ait éliminé, je devrais utiliser le terme. Ça c'est la première demande : qu'il y ait un comité formé pour amener ces recommandations-là pour qu'on ramène notre commissaire indépendant et qu'il ne soit pas sous le Bureau de l'ombudsman.

Le deuxième amendement, c'est qu'on demande que le comité fasse aussi des amendements puis qu'il nous amène un plan pour que les Ontariens puissent recevoir des services en français de « any board of health » de la santé. On dit que souvent on manque de service. Ça fait que le comité nous amènerait un plan pour faire certain que, quand ça vient à la santé, on puisse avoir les services en français.

Le troisième, l'autre amendement, dit que « no person is appointed »—il n'y aura aucun appointment de fait pour le médecin en chef de l'Ontario s'il n'est pas bilingue, et que l'ombudsman doit être bilingue aussi : que les deux parlent bien le français et l'anglais dans ces deux positions.

C'est ce qu'on demande. Il y a aussi que « The minister shall, within three months after receiving the report referred to in subsection (2.1), take the steps mentioned ». Donc, que trois mois après qu'ils ont eu le rapport, ils mettent en place les recommandations.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Very good. Further debate? MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I want to thank my colleagues for bringing forward this amendment, and to thank MPP Fife for moving it. I know she's a very strong francophile and I appreciate it. I think that this was a very huge, very big issue—and it still is—about the French Language Services Commissioner, so that's important.

But the thing that really catches my eye and my attention here is the chief medical officer and everything surrounding it. I just want to give the example of when the pandemic started, because this doesn't just affect francophones, this affects everybody, because we're all feeling the consequences if people don't follow the health recommendations.

What was happening in my riding, where there are a lot of francophones, is the government, in this health crisis, waited many, many weeks to even offer interpretation of their press conferences—and translation. So my constituents, many of them, were listening to François Legault, the Premier of Quebec, for their information and the guidelines, the directives, that they were supposed to follow. If the government wants people to follow the guidelines and the directives, they need to make sure that people understand them. So that was a huge no-no for public health, because it's not even the same health measures that were being imposed. That was a big red flag for me and it just stressed the importance of having the bilingual conferences, but also having someone who is able to communicate and answer questions in French.

Also for the French reporters, les journalistes qui demandent leurs questions au chief medical officer, it's really important that they have access to those answers as well and are able—thankfully, most of them speak English—I think all of them—which is great. I think this is really important that we address this.

For the Ombudsman—I'm going to support this motion, but I also have another motion amending the Loi sur l'ombudsman, because there are two ways to do it: There's this way and then there's with the Ombudsman. But this is a request, again, from the stakeholders that the government supposedly consulted, so I think that we should all support this amendment.

And I will ask for a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to say, I think I'm the only MPP on this committee right now who had access to the French-language commissioner. Every year we would meet and we would learn, so this is something that your new members of the Legislature have been denied, because one of the first things this government did was fire the commissioner. It was a huge blow, I think, for the community to see that this individual, whose sole purpose as an independent officer of the Legislature was to educate MPPs—because if we get educated, if we have access to that information, to research, to gain it from lived experiences of Franco-Ontarians, then we will become better legislators. We would create better laws that are more inclusive.

I would just urge my colleagues on the finance committee and who are on this call today to give some thought to what kind of trust could be rebuilt with the French community in Ontario if you brought back the French Language Services Commissioner, because it has been a gap that we have seen in the last three and a half years and it has weakened our perspective as lawmakers in Ontario.

With that, I'm glad that it's going to be a recorded vote, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ça va sans dire, quand ça vient aux médecins en chef—au niveau fédéral, elle parle les deux langues, puis les médias pouvaient le faire. La députée Simard l'a très bien dit, parce que moi aussi, dans mon comté, on a une communauté à 60 % francophone et il y en a beaucoup qui ne parlent pas anglais. Comme eux, ils allaient à Radio-Canada, ils écoutaient les nouvelles à Radio-Canada, ils écoutaient TVA pour essayer d'avoir l'information, puis c'était l'information du Québec. On voyait que ça a pris plusieurs mois avant qu'on ait accès, même si c'est très clair dans la loi. C'est clair qu'on a le droit à des services équitables quand ça vient à ça, et on n'était même pas capable d'avoir l'information en français. C'était déplorable.

Oui, aujourd'hui, le médecin en chef parle bien français, ce qu'on apprécie. Mais le prochain, va-t-il parler français? C'est pour ça qu'il faut le mettre dans la loi. Il faut l'insérer dans la loi pour que ce soit clair. Même chose

pour l'ombudsman. L'ombudsman est bilingue, oui; c'est parfait, et on veut qu'il continue. On sait que la ministre a dit qu'elle a fait des recommandations, mais ce n'est pas assez. Il faut le mettre dans la loi. Il faut que ce soit inscrit dans la loi pour que les communautés franco-ontariennes aient ces services-là et, si jamais on fait face à une autre pandémie, qu'on ne soit pas dans la même situation, pour que les journalistes puissent demander des questions pour adresser les «cernes» de la francophonie et qu'on ait les mêmes services, adéquats et équivalents à ce que les anglophones ont.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Kusendova.

M^{me} Natalia Kusendova: Je voulais juste prendre l'opportunité pour remercier, au nom du gouvernement, la commissaire aux services en français Burke. On reconnaît son excellent travail acharné.

Certaines de ses recommandations se trouvent d'ailleurs dans notre projet de loi pour moderniser la Loi sur les services en français, et tel que démontré par son dépôt de son premier rapport, la commissaire Burke représente les Franco-Ontariens de manière efficace et indépendante.

1140

La commissaire est une alliée de la francophonie ontarienne, et il n'est nullement approprié de tenter de nier sa crédibilité. Tel qu'a été souligné dans son rapport, plusieurs enjeux soulevés par son bureau ont été résolus grâce à la coopération du gouvernement de l'Ontario pendant la crise sanitaire. Alors, vraiment, on remercie la commissaire Burke pour son travail acharné et sa coopération.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ça n'a aucun rapport avec les compétences de M^{me} Burke. Au contraire, M^{me} Burke est très qualifiée. Elle fait un très bon travail.

Il faut vous souvenir qu'il y a une raison pourquoi on avait notre commissaire indépendant avant, parce qu'avant, il était sous l'ombudsman et on avait le même problème. Les personnes changent, les budgets changent, puis toutes les fois, c'est qui qui paye? C'est les francophones. C'est la raison pourquoi on avait un commissaire indépendant pour les services en français, que votre gouvernement a éliminé. Si on se souvient des arguments, c'était une question financière—que vous n'avez jamais démontrée.

La communauté demande ça. Vous le savez. Vous avez consulté—on a tous consulté—avec les mêmes entités. Elles nous ont toutes dit qu'elles veulent ravoir le commissaire. Oui, on sait que l'AFO a dit : « Oui, c'est un bon pas dans la bonne direction. » J'ai posé la question au président de l'AFO. Il a répondu : « Le but, c'est de ravoir notre commissaire indépendant. » Il y a une raison pour ça.

Ça n'a rien à faire avec la compétence de la commissaire Burke. Elle est très qualifiée. Elle fait son travail avec ce qu'elle a. De nous dire qu'on questionne les compétences de M^{me} Burke, c'est déplacé. C'est déplacé, puis ça vient offenser les personnes qui amènent

des affaires de même. Ça nous offense. Pourquoi? Parce qu'on est là pour améliorer les services en français dans la communauté. On dit que la communauté [*inaudible*]. C'était leur demande. Ce n'est pas nous qui l'inventons, là. Vous les avez vues autant que nous, ces demandes-là. Ça n'a rien en rapport avec les compétences de M^{me} Burke puis le travail qu'elle fait, qui est exemplaire.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I just wanted to echo MPP Bourgouin's comment. C'est complètement honteux que la députée du gouvernement dise qu'on essaie de discréditer la commissaire actuelle, qui n'est pas indépendante—ce n'est pas de sa faute. Mais elle est excellente. Elle fait un excellent travail avec ce qu'elle a. On est très fiers d'elle. En plus, elle vient de ma région et j'en suis très fière.

Ce n'est pas à propos de la personne, et on l'a dit à plusieurs reprises, même avec François Boileau. Il était excellent comme commissaire, mais ce n'était pas à cause de lui qu'on voulait garder le poste. Oui, il était super, mais c'est vraiment l'institution, c'est vraiment de garder cette institution de la législature indépendante.

C'est pour ça que c'est complètement ridicule que la députée dise qu'on essaie de discréditer M^{me} Burke. On n'a jamais fait ça. Alors je pense que, avant de dire de telles choses, ce serait important de réfléchir et de s'assurer que c'est vrai.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there's no further debate, are we ready for the question? There is a recorded vote, so if the committee is ready for the question, we'll call the question.

Ayes

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa, Simard.

Nays

Anand, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I declare the motion lost.

The next question is, shall schedule 13, section 11 carry? Is there any debate on the section? Seeing none, are you ready for the question? All those in favour of schedule 13, section 11? All those opposed? The section is carried.

There are no amendments to sections 12 and 13 of schedule 13. I therefore propose that we bundle those sections if there is agreement. Everybody is agreed with that? Shall schedule 13, sections 12 and 13 carry? Is there any debate on sections 12 and 13? If not, are you ready for the question? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried.

Now we're going to section 14. We have an opposition amendment. It's in the package. It's number 20. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I move that section 14 of schedule 13 to the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

“14. Subsection 14(1) of the act is amended by striking out ‘that is in an area designated in the schedule’.”

I can quickly speak to it, if you wish.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Go ahead. Speak to it.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This amendment around section 14, schedule 13 was brought forward to ensure that French-language services are available across the whole of the province, not just in the current 26 designated regions.

Really, I guess we should have just withdrawn this, because the government has already expressed no interest in ensuring that language rights are across the entire province. However, it’s still worthy of a discussion, because it gives us another opportunity to demonstrate why this government is not adhering to their consultation process and not listening to the Franco-Ontarian community.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Mr. Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Ma collègue a absolument raison. Ça vaut encore l’opportunité de débattre. Le gouvernement dit qu’il est à l’écoute de la communauté franco-ontarienne, mais je peux vous dire que ça, c’était une des demandes primaires que la communauté demandait. On a des francophones à la grandeur de la province. Ils méritent les mêmes services. Puis on voit que c’est un gouvernement qui—ils n’ont pas supporté. Jusqu’à maintenant, tous les amendements qu’on a amenés, que ça vienne des indépendants ou que ça vienne de l’opposition officielle, ils ont voté contre. Et ils se disent à l’écoute. C’est déplorable. C’est ce que la communauté demandait. Pourquoi? Parce qu’on a des francophones qui ont besoin de services à la grandeur. On peut passer cet amendement-là pour refléter toutes les régions puis travailler ensemble, travailler tous ensemble, pour que les services se fassent à la grandeur de la province.

Si le gouvernement est franc—ils disent qu’ils sont tout le temps prêts à travailler avec nous. Ils disent tout le temps qu’ils veulent travailler avec nous, mais ça, c’en est une où on travaillerait ensemble, c’est sûr et certain, quand ça vient à desservir la population franco-ontarienne.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If there’s no further debate, are you ready for the question? All those in favour of the amendment? All those opposed? The motion is lost.

That’s the only amendment for that section. Shall schedule 13, section 14 carry? Any debate? If no further debate, we’ll call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

1150

There are no amendments to sections 15 and 16 of schedule 13. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement on that? Hearing no objection, debate on sections 15 and 16? Any debate? Are the members ready to vote? Hearing no objection, we’ll call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 15 and 16 are carried.

Section 17: We have an amendment from the official opposition.

Ms. Catherine Fife: We are going to withdraw this amendment. If we couldn’t get the government to enshrine language rights for health care or for the Ombudsman, then I don’t know why they would do it for housing services, so this amendment is withdrawn.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay, then. Shall schedule 13, section 17 carry? Is there debate? If there’s no further debate, is the committee ready to vote? All those in favour of section 17 of schedule 13? All those in favour—did we have a comment from MPP Fife? Did I miss that?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. All those opposed? Section 17 is carried.

We’re now at section 18 of schedule 13. Any debate? There’s no debate. Is the committee ready for a vote? Hearing no objection, all those in favour of section 18 of schedule 13? Opposed? Section 18 is carried.

Shall schedule 13 carry? Is there debate on the whole schedule, schedule 13? Any questions? Comments? If that’s all through, are you ready for the vote? All those in favour of schedule 13? All those opposed? Schedule 13 shall carry.

We are now on to schedule 14. There are no amendments to sections 1 to 4 of schedule 14. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement on the bundling? Hearing no dissent, we’ll bundle them. Is there any debate on sections 1 to 4? Any debate on those? If not, are the members prepared to vote on sections 1 to 4? If we are, we’ll call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 1 to 4 shall carry.

We’re now at section 5 of schedule 14. Is there any debate on section 5? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: We are recommending that the committee vote against section 5 of schedule 14 of the bill. Perhaps the government missed this as they were crafting legislation, but section 5 of schedule 14 would make Ontario’s rules out of sync with other provinces in Canada. In fact, the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association requested an amendment so that the language is harmonized with other provinces and territories. If we just don’t vote for this right now, then the government can correct it at another time.

With regard to schedule 14, we all know that insurance is a major issue right now in Ontario. Businesses have had a hard time finding commercial insurance to open. Auto insurance rates continue to rise despite the fact that during the pandemic many people were not driving. There is a disturbing trend where the government is looking at ways of reducing auto insurance and bills by allowing insurance companies to reduce coverage instead of by reducing these companies’ profits. So we have some issues with this schedule, but specifically the fact that the section 5 of schedule 14 would not be harmonized with other provinces.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate on section 5?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I’ll ask for a recorded vote on this, Mr. Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Any further debate? If there's no further debate, are you ready for the question on section 5 of schedule 14? With that, I'll call the question.

Ayes

Anand, Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Bourgouin, Fife.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Section 5 of schedule 14 is carried.

We have agreed to adjourn for lunch until 1 o'clock.

The Clerk pro tem (Ms. Julia Douglas): Recess for lunch until 1 o'clock.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Oh, yes. I got the wrong word. I was hoping not to have to come back. We'll recess for lunch and we will reappear here at 1 o'clock. Thank you all very much for this morning—a very productive morning.

The committee recessed from 1159 to 1300.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Good afternoon. I hope everybody had time to enjoy their leisurely lunch. We're back here, and as we all will be aware, we're here today doing the clause-by-clause for Bill 43. We made very good time this morning, going through it.

We just finished schedule 14, section 5, so we will be starting off this afternoon with going to sections 6 and 7. There are no amendments of sections 6 and 7 of schedule 14. Therefore, we're proposing we bundle those sections. Is there any disagreement with that? If not, we will bundle them. Then we go to: Is there any debate on sections 6 and 7? Again, seeing none, are the members prepared to vote? I'm seeing a lot of shaking of heads, so we will put the question then: Shall sections 6 and 7 of schedule 14 be approved? All in favour? All those opposed? Sections 6 and 7 are carried.

We have to vote on schedule 14 as a whole. Is there any debate on schedule 14 in its entirety? If not, we will vote on schedule 14. All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 14 is carried.

Now, we're at schedule 15. There are no amendments to sections 1 to 7 of schedule 15. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement to that? If yes, any debate on sections 1 to 7 of schedule 15? No debate. Is the committee ready for the question? The vote is on sections 1 to 7 of schedule 15: All those in favour? All those opposed? The sections are carried.

Since those were all the sections of 15, we are now on schedule 15 as a whole. Is there any debate on schedule 15? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: As we all know, schedule 15, by the very nature of it, says that all expenditures made or recognized under the act must be charged to the proper appropriation. Especially given the documentation from

the Financial Accountability Officer and the Auditor General thus far from this government, it gives us pause, because this government clearly is not spending the appropriate allocation that they put into finance bills nor are they ensuring that funding flows in an accountable and transparent way. We need look any further than the Auditor General's report that came out on Wednesday.

To date, there has been a general lack of scrutiny and oversight, in particular, with the government's COVID support programs, including the \$210 million that was being paid to ineligible recipients of the Ontario Small Business Support Grant and grants that were not reflective of revenue loss with over 51,000 businesses. The government spent \$939 million compared to the reported \$225 million in losses. As well, the Ontario Together Fund was paid to businesses despite warnings of financial risk. In two cases, perceived conflicts of interest were not identified. There were no objectives for what the funds were to do, with regard to the tracking, and in particular, essentially, with the small business support grant.

I'd have to say, every MPP on this committee and in the Legislature dealt with very worried businesses who could not figure out how this program was allocating funding, what the criteria were for that funding, and then we find out that \$210 million was allocated and spent to 14,500 ineligible businesses.

Even on the property tax and the energy rebate, only \$340 million of the \$905 million was approved and sent to 31,000 businesses. Even for the main street PPE strategy that the government touted as being very effective, the Auditor General found that there was no basis for the \$1,000 maximum.

So this really leaves us questioning, especially with regard to the \$467 million, almost half a billion dollars, that's being cut from base funding for public education in Ontario. Within the context of a health care crisis, particularly with our nurses, when we're 22,000 nurses shy of where we should be right now, we'll be voting against schedule 15 in its entirety because we have no faith or trust that this government is actually going to follow through on places that they said that they're going to invest or not invest.

With that, I'll conclude my comments, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? If not, is the committee ready to vote—oh, MPP Fife.

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

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Is the committee ready to vote? We'll put the question. Shall schedule 15 carry?

Ayes

Crawford, Kanapathi, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is carried.

The next one is a motion that has not been moved, so we'll just move it along. It presently does not exist in the bill.

The next one is schedule 16. There were no amendments to sections 1 to 3 of this section. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there agreement to that? Is there any debate? Are the members prepared to vote? If they're prepared to vote, shall schedule 16, sections 1 to 3, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 16 carry? For that, we'll open debate. Seeing no debate, is the committee ready to vote? If they're ready to vote, all those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 16 carries.

1310

Schedule 17: There are no amendments in sections 1 and 2 of schedule 17. Therefore, I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Everyone agrees with that. Is there any debate? If not, shall schedule 17, sections 1 and 2, inclusive, carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Shall schedule 17 carry? Open for debate; no debate coming. Ready for a vote? The committee is ready for a vote. All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 17 is carried.

We have an addition, a new schedule 17.1 to the bill. It's being introduced by the independent. MPP Simard?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: Je propose que l'annexe 17.1 soit ajoutée au projet de loi :

« Annexe 17.1

« Loi sur l'ombudsman

« 1. L'article 2 de la Loi sur l'ombudsman est modifié par adjonction du paragraphe suivant :

« «Maîtrise du français

« «(2.1) L'ombudsman doit maîtriser le français.»

« 2. La présente annexe entre en vigueur le jour où la Loi de 2021 visant à bâtir l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires) reçoit la sanction royale. »

Do I talk about it now?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is considered out of order. The amendment is inadmissible if it proposes to amend a statute that is not presently before the committee, and that part of the act has been not opened up in this legislation. I therefore rule that the motion is out of order, because the bill does not open the Ombudsman Act. We can't make changes to an act that's not open.

MPP Simard, comment?

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I just wanted to ask for unanimous consent to at least just simply consider this addition.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): I can ask the committee for unanimous consent that's being asked by MPP Simard. Do we have unanimous consent? I saw noes, and I guess that works the same. Since we do not identify them when we hear them, I can do no more than that this morning. Watching the shaking of the heads, I'm going to have to assume it was no.

Now we're going to schedule 18. There being no amendments to sections 1 to 15 of schedule 18, therefore

I propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement to bundle them? Seeing no objection, is there any debate on schedule 18, sections 1 to 15? Is there debate? If there is no debate, is everybody ready to vote? Hearing no objection to that, we will be voting on schedule 18, sections 1 to 15. I call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

Shall schedule 18 carry? Any debate on that? If there's no debate on that, is the committee ready to vote? If we are, we're voting on schedule 18. Shall schedule 18 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Schedule 18 shall carry.

Schedule 19: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 11 of schedule 19. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement?

Any debate on sections 1 to 11 of schedule 19?

Interjection.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): MPP Fife, sitting in the corner up there. I didn't see you.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Chair.

On schedule 19, I just wanted to comment that this schedule and these amendments—the bill itself, the Securities Commission Act, hasn't even come into force yet and the government is already making amendments to the legislation. I just want to point out that that's the point of having these committees and that's why we bring forward amendments: to make sure that we get it right the first time so we don't have to bring it back.

This is a government that's fairly fixated on red tape, as I pointed out. For a piece of legislation that hasn't even come into force yet, we're already having to make amendments to it through this committee. I think there are lessons to be learned here—getting it right the first time instead of having to bring it forward multiple times, even after the process of consultation has happened. As had been pointed out in this morning's session, you can consult, but if you're not actually listening, then you're going to get it wrong.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Hearing none, is the committee ready to vote? If the committee is ready to vote, we're going to vote on sections 1 to 11 to schedule 19. I call the question. All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 1 to 11 carry.

Shall schedule 19 carry? Debate? Hearing no debate, is the committee ready to vote? If they're ready to vote, we'll call the question. Shall schedule 19 carry? In favour? Opposed? Schedule 19 carries.

Schedule 20: There are no amendments to sections 1 to 7 of schedule 20. I therefore propose that we bundle those sections. Is there an agreement to that? Seeing no objection, is there any debate on sections 1 to 7 of schedule 20? MPP Fife.

1320

Ms. Catherine Fife: I just want to say, schedule 20 is the supplementary interim appropriation for 2021-22. Given what this province has been through with this pandemic, from a health care crisis to an education crisis and a climate change crisis—which we should be planning for and investing in to prevent the kind of infrastructure

damage that we've seen in BC—the schedule around these expenditures really misses the mark. There is no sort of plan to protect the environment, to fight climate change, to address a transition to net zero. In fact, the word “climate” appears four times in total in the fall economic statement and the word “environment” only appears 12 times, but the word “highway” is mentioned 58 times.

There was no mention, as well, or no measures in this Bill 43, the mini budget, if you will, to address the pressures around costs for Ontarians, be it from insurance to the minimum wage piece—we did try to bring forward this proposal around a minimum wage, in good faith to the government to address some of the inconsistencies that we've seen. Some people may call some of the changes that the government made back in 2018 callous, but there was an opportunity today to address those hardships that the government brought forward when they did not honour the increase to the minimum wage.

We struggle with the way that this government is putting forward expenditures. As we saw from the Auditor General's report, these measures are happening without the kind of oversight that we need from a government and that they're not addressing the pressure points that we're seeing across Ontario, be it from health care, in particular. I think that if the government wanted to address the human resources crisis that we see in health care, they would have included repealing Bill 124 in this piece of legislation.

With that, we obviously will not be supporting it, because it doesn't serve the people who we are elected to serve.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Mamakwa.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Chair. Meegwetch, everyone. I've had a good morning, just to listen to what's happening and where we're going with the finances in Ontario.

I'll just go off MPP Fife's comments about highways. You are all lucky to have access to city roads. You are all lucky to have access to provincial highways. I don't have access to provincial highways, but I do have highways in the sky; the Ministry of Transportation has these airports that they run, but they're gravel runways.

There is no way, in Ontario—you would all be crying if you were paying \$3.09 for a litre of gas, but that's how much people pay. It's as high as \$4 a litre, and there's no one here who would pay that amount.

When we talk about First Nations and Indigenous issues—I listened when the fall economic statement was presented. Good words were there—good words, yes—“reconciliation,” yes, but “action,” no.

I know that as part of the economic recovery from COVID, they're focusing on the north. I know that. When we talk about lands and resources, timber or whatnot, it's at the expense of our ways of life as First Nations people. It's at the expense of our treaty rights. I know this government is really pushing for the Ring of Fire without the proper free, prior and informed consent. I think that the tactics that are being done by this government, the divide and conquer, is not the right approach. What it does is First

Nations become stronger, First Nations begin to stand up. There is no way development is happening with this approach that you guys are taking, and I think it's not going anywhere. I'm just warning you. I'm just telling you. That's the way it goes. Your approach, colonialism, the oppressive approaches that you take as government towards First Nations are not going to work. It's going to make us stronger. Bring it on. Meegwetch.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Any further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Recorded vote, please, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. Any other further debate? Is the committee ready for the question? Hearing no objection—

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Shall sections 1 to 7, inclusive, of schedule 20 carry? That's the question before you. If there's no further debate on that, we'll call the question.

Ayes

Crawford, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Sections 1 to 7 in schedule 20 are carried.

Shall schedule 20 carry? Open for debate. If there's no further debate, does the committee—MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: We're voting on all of schedule 20. That's what we're doing now, right?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): On all the sections of schedule 20.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Then I'd like a recorded vote.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Okay. If there is no further discussion, we will put the question. Shall schedule 20 carry?

Ayes

Crawford, Kanapathi, Kusendova, Parsa, Dave Smith, Thanigasalam.

Nays

Bourgouin, Fife, Mamakwa.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): The motion is carried.

We now go to schedule 21. There are no amendments to sections 1 to 15 of schedule 21. I therefore propose that we bundle these sections. Is there an agreement? Is there any debate on sections 1 to 15 of schedule 21? Are members prepared to vote? Shall schedule 21, sections 1 to 15,

inclusive, carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Sections 1 to 15 of schedule 21 are carried.

1330

Next question: Shall schedule 21 carry? Let's open for debate. MPP Crawford, do you have a comment?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I'm sorry?

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): You must not have had a comment. You have a hand up in the corner.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Oh, I'm sorry. No.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Is there any further debate on schedule 21? If not, we'll call the question. Shall schedule 21 carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

That concludes all the schedules. We're now going to go back to consider the sections. The first one is, of course, section 1 of the bill. Is there any debate? If there's no debate, is the committee ready to vote on section 1 of the bill? Shall section 1 carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 1 is carried.

Section 2 of the bill: Any debate on section 2? If there's no debate on it, is the committee ready for the question? Shall section 2 of the bill carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 2 is carried.

Section 3, the short title of the bill: Any discussion? If not, is the committee ready to vote? Seeing no hesitancy, shall section 3 of the bill carry? All those in favour? All those opposed? Section 3 of the bill is carried.

Shall the title of the bill carry? Any debate on the title of the bill? This is an opportunity to get a new title. Seeing none, I'll put the question. Shall the title of the bill carry? All those in favour? Opposed? Carried.

Shall Bill 43, as amended, carry? Any debate? No debate. Are we ready for the question? If we're ready for the question, all those in favour of Bill 43, as amended? All those in favour? All those opposed? Bill 43 is carried.

Interjections.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Carried, as amended. We don't want to forget the amendment.

Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House? Any debate? MPP Kusendova.

Ms. Natalia Kusendova: Just very quickly, I wanted to state on the record, with the imminent third reading of this bill and its eventual passing, the Minister of Franco-phone Affairs is making good on her promise to modernize the French Language Services Act within our first mandate. The previous Liberal government had 15 years to do so, but it is our government, under the leadership of Minister Mulroney and Premier Doug Ford, that has made well on our promise to modernize the French Language Services Act. This bill is a result of consultations with hundreds of stakeholders and has received a high level of support. Thank you to all members for participating in today's committee, and I look forward to the third reading of this bill in the House.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: This has been a very interesting and challenging bill to work through, especially given the fact the government could not justify their changes or their

lack of willingness to address Franco-Ontarians' requests for a more inclusive model of languages in Ontario.

More importantly, actually—and I want to thank MPP Kusendova for opening the door in this respect. The fall economic statement and Bill 43 make promises around highways with no costing. This includes Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass. The initial audit submission recommends that those two highways can cost between \$10.9 billion and \$13.2 billion. When we first questioned the finance minister at the beginning of this process, he said that he could not reveal how much these projects would cost because of commercial sensitivities, because of the opening up of the contracts. Please remember that both the 413 and the Bradford Bypass were projects that were turned down by the previous government based on the fact that Highway 413 would save commuters possibly 10 to 15 seconds. The government has refused to re-engage with Highway 407, which Highway 413 would run parallel to, which means that when in the latest negotiations with Minister Mulroney and the corporation that runs the 407, the government of Ontario chose not to pursue \$1 billion worth of penalties to invest in the needs of Ontarians, nor did they even opt to negotiate lower rates—for instance, even the trucking industry, to use the 407 at less cost.

This is a government that has been intransigent in their ability to actually put the needs of Ontarians first. We have an incredibly transactional Premier who is running this province, who unfortunately has condoned the actions of bringing forward legislation that misses the mark on the health care needs of Ontarians, the educational needs of Ontarians, the needs of addressing colonialism and partnering with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit folks in this province. And the fact that MPP Kusendova can read a press release at the end of this process when this entire piece of legislation misses the mark is truly disrespectful to the people of this province.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Simard.

M^{lle} Amanda Simard: I wanted to thank my colleague MPP Fife for her comments, which I agree with. She saw it as a press release; it sounded more to me like a paid government advertisement. I think it's shameful that the government put the modernization of the French Language Services Act in a schedule to the fall economic statement, which they know very well the opposition can't support, in order to make this a partisan and political issue. That is shameful.

It should have been a separate law, and there's no reason that it's not a separate law. It's very unusual to plug it in with the fall economic statement, which doesn't really relate to it. It's a modernization of the French Language Services Act, and so it shows the importance of it. It's basically just a plugged-in schedule somewhere. The only reason we can see is that it's because they want to be able to say that we voted against it, which I don't think is fair. That's not why we're here. We're here to represent and work together on improving things for our community. I don't think it should have been a political and partisan issue and I think it should have been separate, so I would

appreciate—I think we should be reviewing this act at least before the next 10 years.

1340

But I wanted to thank my colleagues in the opposition for the amendments that they brought forward and for working with us, regardless of political party, because this is not a partisan issue.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? MPP Bourgouin.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je veux remercier mes deux collègues, les collègues Catherine Fife puis Amanda Simard. Puis aussi merci à la députée Kusendova de nous ouvrir la porte puis d'avoir donné, comme on dit, un autre bon coup de pied sur la question de la modernisation de la Loi sur les services en français.

Quand on pense qu'ils ont mis ça dans une section dans un projet de loi omnibus, quand ça devrait être un projet de loi unique, ça démontre son importance à ce gouvernement-là, où il se situe quand ça vient à la communauté franco-ontarienne. Ça démontre que ça a été poussé vite fait juste pour remplir son mandat. Puis aussi, je pense que la députée Simard l'a bien dit, c'est juste pour être capable de dire : « Ils ont voté contre la modernisation de la Loi sur les services en français. »

Quand ils ont écouté les mêmes commettants que nous, les mêmes personnes, les mêmes associations que nous, qui ont fait des recommandations—les recommandations que ce gouvernement a voté contre aujourd'hui sont les recommandations qui venaient de l'AFO, qui venaient de l'AJEFO, qui venaient de l'ACFO, qui venaient de toutes les communautés franco-ontariennes demandant d'établir ça. Mais ils ont voté contre tous les amendements qu'on demandait. Il y en avait que ce n'était pas la mer à boire. Ça venait de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Puis qu'ils glissent ça dans une section dans un projet omnibus, c'est un gros manque de respect envers la communauté. Ça aurait dû être un projet de loi unique parce qu'on modernise la loi. Ça fait 35 ans. Puis là, on se pète les bretelles que le Parti libéral ne l'ait pas fait dans 15 ans. Oui, il aurait dû le faire pendant 15 ans. Mais il reste que, pour le gouvernement de le faire à travers un projet omnibus, de ne pas adresser les gros points en litige que la communauté nous demandait puis de voter contre tout aujourd'hui, je pense que c'est un gros manque de respect envers la communauté.

Une autre affaire que j'aimerais poser—je pense que c'est ma collègue qui en a parlé très bien—c'est le milliard de dollars qu'ils ne vont même pas aller chercher de la 407. Un milliard de dollars pour les communautés autochtones, tu sais comment tu peux aller loin avec ça, comment on peut adresser la question du « housing », la question de l'eau potable? Mon collègue Mamakwa en a parlé en Chambre à multiples reprises, du manque d'eau potable. Il y a des communautés où ça fait 25 ans qu'ils n'ont pas d'eau potable. Un milliard de dollars réglerait le problème à cette communauté-là. Puis qu'est-ce que vous faites? Vous faites un cadeau encore. Puis on a vu dans le rapport de l'auditrice—voyons, c'est quoi le mot que je cherche?

Interjection.

M. Guy Bourgouin: La vérificatrice, merci—qui démontre des millions de dollars encore qui ont été donnés, qui n'ont même pas été poursuivis pour qu'ils reviennent à la province, qu'on aurait pu investir dans les communautés ou encore pour donner une troisième vague de financement. Et aujourd'hui, que l'on vienne faire un commentaire comme ça? Je pense que c'est un peu déplacé du gouvernement. Aujourd'hui on voit bien que ce gouvernement-là, c'est toujours leur agenda. Ce n'est pas pour travailler avec l'opposition officielle et les indépendants. « C'est notre agenda qui compte » puis c'est tout.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? Mr. Parsa.

Mr. Michael Parsa: I want to start by thanking all my colleagues for being a part of this process and contributing to this, and I want to thank Minister Bethlenfalvy for his work and, really, the Premier as well, for confirming that we will do whatever it takes as a government to make sure that Ontarians are protected. We make this promise, and this is once again proof that we will.

Chair, if you look at this bill, it consists of making sure that the progress that we've made as a province through the sacrifice and hard work of many Ontarians does not go in vain by making sure that the investments are there in our health care after many, many years of neglect by the previous government. Our health care sector was left on life support by the previous government. I have to say this, because when I hear the outrage by members of the NDP across, my colleagues, it really surprises me, then, when they had the opportunity time after time after time to put a stop to it, when they could have, they chose not to. But the outrage that they show in the Legislature, in committee, really is surprising.

Chair, we're talking about making investments in health care by having 8,000 personal support workers added, and 5,000 registered RPNs and RNs to the sector that we need so much support for. We're talking about support for businesses who are absolutely in need of it, and funding for infrastructure. When I hear some of my colleagues—I've heard them object to building highways. I've heard them, in the past, object to building transit—which, if you look at the transit proposal we put forward to Ontarians, it is the most ambitious in the entire country. Ontarians deserve nothing but the best. It really is surprising.

But again, I want to thank all my colleagues for taking part in this. I certainly thank the Premier for his leadership, and the Minister of Finance. We need to get this bill passed so that we can continue on our progress. The work is not done. Sometimes when I hear some of my colleagues, it's as though this pandemic has wrapped up. It hasn't. The fight against the pandemic is not over. We need to continue fighting. We need to make sure that these resources are in place for everyone who needs them. We need to continue to work together, every member of this Legislature. Ontarians are looking to us to work with one another during a pandemic.

This is once-in-a-generation, Chair. This isn't a time for partisan politics. This is a time for us to work together.

We've demonstrated that in the past. We need to continue doing that to make sure we get the work done, and then there will be opportunities for us to be able to put our—and there will be. Months from now, we'll have another opportunity where we will go to Ontarians and we all will be judged. But we've got to make sure, at a global pandemic, every single one of us works with one another.

This is a good bill. It needs to pass. It's good for the people of Ontario.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Thank you, everyone, for the comments, but also this process itself. I know that, certainly, I have 14 long-term boil-water advisories in my riding. And I know that when we talk about these issues, I've seen children cry—eight years old, nine years old. They want two things: They want clean drinking water; and then, when they got evacuated for 61 days from this one particular community, they wanted to go home. I didn't know what to do. And then, not once did the minister or anybody from this government phone and say, "How can we help?"

I just want to thank you for showing me that racism exists. Because we're brown, because we're on reserve, we don't deserve water? Thank you for showing me

oppression. Thank you for showing me the approaches of colonialism and its inaction. I say that because Ontario still wants consent to take up the resources in our traditional territories, but does not want to be part of the solutions of the issues that we face in First Nation communities. How can we build your so-called path to prosperity when you leave the original people, First Nations people, behind? Meegwetch.

The Chair (Mr. Ernie Hardeman): Further debate? No further debate? Then the question: Shall I report the bill, as amended, to the House? All those in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried, so I will report the bill to the House.

This concludes the business of today. I do want to say to the whole committee, to everyone involved and those who are still at the meeting and those who subbed in over the number of days that we've had this, thank you for a great job done and for representing the interests of the people of Ontario to get the best we can get out of reviewing these bills. Thank you very much for your participation.

With that, the committee stands adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1351.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Chair / Président

Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford PC)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président

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

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

Mr. Will Bouma (Brantford–Brant PC)

Mr. Stephen Crawford (Oakville PC)

Ms. Catherine Fife (Waterloo ND)

Mr. Ernie Hardeman (Oxford PC)

Ms. Mitzie Hunter (Scarborough–Guildwood L)

Mr. Logan Kanapathi (Markham–Thornhill PC)

Mr. Sol Mamakwa (Kiiwetinoong ND)

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

Mr. Dave Smith (Peterborough–Kawartha PC)

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam (Scarborough–Rouge Park PC)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Mr. Deepak Anand (Mississauga–Malton PC)

Mr. Aris Babikian (Scarborough–Agincourt PC)

Mr. Guy Bourgouin (Mushkegowuk–James Bay / Mushkegowuk–Baie James ND)

Ms. Natalia Kusendova (Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre PC)

Mr. Michael Parsa (Aurora–Oak Ridges–Richmond Hill PC)

M^{lle} Amanda Simard (Glengarry–Prescott–Russell L)

Clerk pro tem / Greffière par intérim

Ms. Julia Douglas

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Stefania Arlotto, legislative counsel

Ms. Julia Hood, legislative counsel