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Lundi
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 4 April 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 4 avril 2022

The House met at 1015.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Good morning. Let us pray.

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I want to acknowledge that we are meeting on lands traditionally inhabited by Indigenous peoples. We pay our respects to the many Indigenous nations who gathered here, and continue to gather here, including the Mississaugas of the Credit. Meegwetch.

This morning we have with us in the Speaker's gallery Isabelle Summers, an information and education officer from the parliamentary protocol and public relations branch.

This being the first Monday of the month, I ask everyone to please remain standing and join Isabelle in the singing of the Canadian national anthem, followed by the royal anthem.

Singing of the national anthem / Chant de l'hymne national.

Singing of the royal anthem / Chant de l'hymne royal.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOMELESSNESS

Mr. Chris Glover: Spadina–Fort York is the epicentre of Ontario's homelessness crisis. It's a humanitarian crisis that was started by the Liberal government when they cut funding for housing, when they left Ontario Works rates at \$733 a month—or \$722 when they actually left it; this government was generous enough to increase it by \$10.

1020

But it's a humanitarian crisis that exploded. People have been living for years and years in the alleyways of Spadina–Fort York. They've been living under the Gardiner. They've been trying to just survive on the streets of Toronto, getting heat from heat grates.

This government has made it all the worse. They have cut half a billion dollars from an already inadequate housing budget. During the pandemic, homelessness exploded in my riding. We had people living in tents in the parks. The people of Spadina–Fort York want people to have housing, and people who have mental health and addictions issues to have supportive housing so that they can maintain that housing. But this government has not done that.

In fact, last week we just found out that this government is cutting 43 street nurses who serve people without homes

in Toronto. I can speak personally to the impact that this will have. A few months ago, I was providing meals to people experiencing homelessness. I came across a gentleman who had a badly swollen leg with lesions, and he was refusing to go to the hospital. So we called in a street nurse and she was able to provide emergency treatment for his leg, and his leg has been saved. It's that kind of life-saving support and health care that this government is now cutting.

I ask this government: Please reverse that decision, bring back those street nurses and, for God's sake, provide supportive housing so that we can bring an end to this humanitarian crisis of homelessness, not just in Toronto but across this province.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Lorne Coe: As part of its plan to fix long-term care, the Ontario government, with the leadership of Minister Calandra, will provide up to \$673 million this year to long-term-care homes to increase staffing levels, leading to more direct care for residents. This includes approximately \$5 million for long-term-care homes in Whitby and approximately \$3 million for homes in Oshawa. In Whitby, Fairview Lodge will receive \$1.8 million; Glen Hill Terrace, \$1.4 million; and the Village of Taunton Mills, \$1.1 million.

Speaker, this will allow long-term-care homes in Whitby to hire and retain more staff so they can provide more care to residents every day. This is part of our government's plan to hire thousands of new staff over the next four years to ensure that these residents living in long-term care get the high-quality care they need and deserve. Thank you, Minister Calandra, and his hard-working staff.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This month is World Autism Month and this past Saturday we celebrated world autism day. This is a month where we raise awareness and provide encouragement and support for those living on the autism spectrum. But as we celebrate World Autism Month, there are more than 50,000 children in Ontario who are still on the wait-list to receive core services—or, as the Ontario Autism Coalition puts it, there are enough children waiting to receive needs-based therapy to fill the SkyDome.

According to the Financial Accountability Office, depending upon the needs of the child, autism services can cost as much as \$95,000 a year. This is far out of reach for most families. Every day these children wait is a day missed in developmental time that they can never get back.

Jordan Glass is a friend and advocate who lives in my community. Jordan has two daughters, ages 6 and 13, who have been on the wait-list to receive core services since before the pandemic. Jordan told me he wonders if his six-year-old daughter would have been verbal had she been able to receive speech therapy over the past three years.

Speaker, every child on the autism spectrum has a unique set of needs and requires a different set of services. More than 50,000 children waiting to receive needs-based autism services in Ontario is not okay. Let's make sure they get the services now.

RHIANNAH GALLAGHER

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to recognize a very special person in my riding of Carleton: Rhiannah Gallagher. Rhiannah has been announced as a 4-H ambassador for 2022.

4-H is a non-profit youth development organization that runs in 10 provinces—Ontario and Canada—and in 70 countries across the world. 4-H is a volunteer-based organization that brings together youth from ages six to 21 from all backgrounds and experience. Youth can find a place where they can be involved, accepted and valued, and somewhere they can make a difference by developing leadership skills, public speaking, critical thinking and problem-solving.

Rhiannah has been with 4-H for 11 years, and the journey to becoming an ambassador has been challenging but no doubt very rewarding. I first met Rhiannah, her parents, Alan and Debbie Gallagher, her grandparents Dwayne and Laura Acres and her brothers and sisters back in 2016. I also, in fact, recently ran into her brother Colin, who is also keeping agriculture alive and well in Carleton. Like many of the numerous farming families in Carleton, the next generation of the Acreses and Gallaghers are keeping farming and agriculture alive and thriving in Ottawa and Ontario.

Farmers feed families, and our Ontario government will continue to support agriculture in this province.

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Sandy Shaw: This morning I stood in the rain with advocates, young and old, from across the province rallying to save farmland which is under threat from this government. Thousands of Hamiltonians from every riding participated in the largest consultation in Hamilton, which overwhelmingly showed our community wants to save, not pave, farmland. And yet the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing just last week threatened to take municipalities to the Ontario Land Tribunal for listening to the public.

This government has shown that they are prepared to strong-arm the people of the province to get their way. But it's not just Hamilton that this government is ignoring. The #StopSprawl movement is spreading, with campaigns engaging thousands of Ontarians in Halton, Peel, Simcoe, Orillia, Oxford and many more communities across the

province. This movement has support from planners and farmer and agriculture organizations across the province.

Speaker, as an MPP, my biggest priority is working with my community. It's clear that this government doesn't share the value of working with, not against, the people of Ontario. While Ontarians are building a brighter vision for how our cities grow, this government is doubling down with big highways and big houses that no one can afford. It's time for this government to look out for the people of the province, not just their wealthy, well-connected land speculators and donors looking to profit from destroying our farmland.

FIRE SAFETY

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Speaker, March 17, 2011, was one of the darkest days in memory. That's when fire took the lives of deputy district chief Ken Rea and firefighter Ray Walter. Investigations followed, and they revealed what firefighters could not have known: Behind some insulation, the fire was quickly degrading the lightweight wooden roof trusses. Collapse was inevitable. Questions turned to what could have been done to prevent future tragedies like it. The answer was soon apparent: We need to identify buildings with truss and lightweight construction systems.

In 2017, I first introduced the Rea and Walter Act. Twice it received all-party support. It took some time, but this year I was in Listowel to announce the province is taking action. First, the building code is changing to require chief building officials to notify local fire departments when new buildings other than houses will have lightweight construction systems. Second, to address existing buildings, the fire marshal is now requiring municipalities to document buildings with lightweight construction in their community risk assessments and to use that information to keep firefighters safe. Finally, the province is asking that lightweight construction identification be harmonized in building codes across Canada. Together, these changes capture the intent of the Rea and Walter Act. The goal is the same: to give firefighters more information, to reduce the risk and to save lives.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to these changes. I especially want to thank North Perth fire chief Janny Pape, former chief Ed Smith, all the chiefs in Perth—Wellington who helped us along the way and, most importantly, the families of Ken Rea and Ray Walter. By advocating for the Rea and Walter Act and then supporting these changes, they turned unimaginable grief into constructive action.

ADDICTION SERVICES

Miss Monique Taylor: The opioid crisis is an important issue in my riding of Hamilton Mountain and across the province. Last year, there were 2,426 opioid-related deaths, and in the vast majority of these cases people were alone when they passed away. In Hamilton, the opioid-related death rate has been roughly 28% higher than the provincial rate over the last several years.

1030

As of September 2021, 115 people died in Hamilton alone as a result of opioid overdose. These are Hamiltonians who are mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, friends and family members.

So far in 2022, Hamilton Paramedic Service responded to 147 incidents related to suspected opioid overdose. We cannot allow this to continue.

The number of opioid-related deaths has risen dramatically over the past decade in Ontario, and the pandemic has made things worse. The precautions to prevent the spread of COVID have led to reduced access to services for people who use drugs, causing fatal overdoses to rise. The wait time is 100 days, on average, for an adult residential treatment program for substance abuse. And hospitalizations for substance abuse-related illnesses outnumbered those for heart attacks.

Speaker, this is a crisis. It's time for this Premier to step up and declare the opioid problem as a public health emergency.

AUTISM TREATMENT

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Since I was elected two years ago, I've been meeting with advocacy groups on autism, with experts, and with families who are struggling to obtain therapy for their children.

The ratio of children with autism in the province of Ontario is 1 in 66. That means that the need for diagnosis and treatment is important and should be given the attention it deserves to address those needs. The number of children waiting for autism support has now grown to 53,000 children in Ontario. So, clearly, what this government has been doing is not bringing the relief that was promised.

The cuts in critical services and reduction of coverage that families can receive is harmful. But it doesn't have to be this way.

If you were to listen to these advocacy groups, these experts and these families, you would understand where the solutions are—like a needs-based Ontario autism program for every child that doesn't discriminate based on age, including applied behavioural analysis, occupational therapy, mental health and speech-language pathology; like reducing wait times by hiring 5,000 more special education workers; like implementing a direct billing option for autism therapy; like conducting a comprehensive reform of special education and better transitioning people into adult services. That's what Ontario Liberals are proposing to do, because we have been listening.

SCOTTISH HERITAGE DAY

Mr. Jim McDonell: Speaker, beginning in the 1700s, the Scottish Highland clearances displaced many Scots as they were forced from their homes, only to watch them burn to the ground. With no means to support their families, many looked to Canada for a new life, settling in various locations across Upper Canada and joining many

of their fellow countrymen as they fought for the crown during the War of American Independence.

Today, there are more Canadians of Scottish descent than any other.

My ancestors arrived on the ship McDonald in 1786, joining their countrymen in Glengarry, Ontario. Once they established their homes and livelihoods, they immediately set about building schools, educating their children and helping to establish the institutions necessary to build a strong and secure country.

The first post-secondary institution in Upper Canada was established at St. Raphaels in South Glengarry township.

Across the province, highland games attract thousands of people, enjoying the Scottish culture.

Our minister of tourism and culture, Lisa MacLeod, has joined me several times at the Glengarry Highland Games, the North American Pipe Band Championships.

On June 3 of last year, my private member's bill received royal assent, designating St. Andrew's Day, Scotland's official national day celebrated on November 30 each year, as Scottish Heritage Day in Ontario.

Speaker, this week millions of people across North America will celebrate Tartan Day, held annually on April 6. The day originated in Nova Scotia in the mid-1980s and has grown more popular each year, being adopted by displaced Scots across the globe.

"Lang may yer lum reek" roughly translated means "May you live long and keep well."

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Joining us in the Speaker's gallery today is a delegation of officials from the Scottish government. The delegation is led by Mr. Angus Robertson, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture and member of the Scottish Parliament for Edinburgh Central. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guests from Scotland to the Legislature today.

In the Legislature today are many cancer patient groups and patient advocates from the CanCertainty Coalition, including Rethink Breast Cancer, as well as the Canadian Cancer Society. They are hosting an advocacy day today outside on the south lawn right after question period. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's a pleasure to introduce the family of Emily, our page captain today: Chris, Tanya—parents of our page captain Emily—and their daughter Chelsea Coyle. Thank you, and welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm pleased to introduce members here today from the Ontario Autism Coalition: Robert Bruce McIntosh, Clara Anne Kirby-McIntosh, Virginia Mazzone Ahou, Amanda Mooyer and Charlie Li. Welcome to the Legislature.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I want to welcome some young leaders who are with us today, interns from the government—John, Robert, Nicholas, Michael, Jonathan, CJ, Frank, Nicholas as well, and Karishima—all of whom

have worked very hard for the past several months, and the intern coordinator, Joseph. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I would like to introduce folks from the Ontario Autism Coalition. Ryan Querin and Catherine Varrette are joining us today. Welcome to the Ontario Legislature.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: I would like to welcome to Queen's Park today parents from my riding of Ottawa–Vanier as well as several members of the Ontario Autism Coalition, including their president, Angela Brandt. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I would like to welcome my new intern from Seneca College, Caroline Eisen. As a resident of Mississauga–Lakeshore, I am happy to have her here today at Queen's Park. I wish her the best in her studies.

Mr. Jeff Burch: I'd like to welcome today, from the Ontario Autism Coalition, Naheed Fatima, Katharine Dudley, Ashley Ferreira and Jaime Santana.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: A special welcome to my staff member Alex Catherwood, also known to all of you as the MPP liaison for the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. Welcome to Queen's Park, Alex.

Ms. Judith Monteith-Farrell: I'd like to introduce members from the Ontario Autism Coalition: Michau Van Speyk, Wai-Ping Tang, Faith Munoz, Stacy Kennedy, Sarah Farrants and Emily Meeking-Leslie. Welcome to the Legislature.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to introduce my executive assistant at the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, Ms. Navita Sukhdeo. I hired her a couple of years ago, but this is the first time she has been able to actually witness question period live. Welcome.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I want to welcome our friend and chaplain Charlie Lyons.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd like to welcome Sally Carson, one of my constituent assistants, and her son, CJ, today.

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to welcome members of the Ontario Health Coalition: Lisa Devine, Antonio Stravato, Karen Botji, Angela Brandt, Curtis and Jordan Bulatovich. Welcome.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I just would like to welcome members from the Ontario Autism Coalition to Queen's Park today: Aditya Chityala, Tara Stone, Cheyne Sedlar, Jesse Thibert and Jolleen Thibert. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I would like to welcome a former campaign manager, Rebecca Grundy, who is here for a lobby day today.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to welcome Sarah Lawrence from my riding of London West, who is here today with Kathy Kellow for the Ontario Autism Coalition advocacy day.

1040

Mr. Joel Harden: I just want to join the chorus of people welcoming our friends advocating for autism today, particularly Kate Logue and Cathy Kiraly, who made it here from Ottawa to Queen's Park. Bless you for all the work you've done. Welcome.

Michau, happy belated birthday, buddy. Glad you're here too.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to correct my record. I'd like to welcome, from the Ontario Autism Coalition, Lisa Devine, Antonio Stravato, Karen Botji, Angela Brandt and Curtis Jordan Bulatovich. Welcome to Queen's Park.

WEARING OF BUTTONS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for London–Fanshawe has informed me that she has a point of order.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Yes, Speaker. I'd like unanimous consent to allow all the members in the Legislature to wear Ontario Autism Coalition buttons today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for London–Fanshawe is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear buttons for the Ontario Autism Coalition. Agreed? Agreed.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence, I understand, has a point of order.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Speaker, if you seek it, I think you will find that we have unanimous consent to allow members to wear pins in recognition of April being the Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil month and campaign for awareness.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear pins in recognition of April being the Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil campaign. Agreed? Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Ms. Sara Singh: Good morning. My first question is to the Premier. Getting support for mental health care has been out of reach for far too many people in our communities because mental health isn't covered by OHIP. Even though, during the pandemic, one in four Ontarians sought mental health or addictions support, not everyone was able to get that help.

The Canadian Mental Health Association recently found that one in three Canadians who needed help couldn't actually afford to pay for it. Others went without care because their private insurance just didn't cover the treatments they needed. It shouldn't be this way.

Speaker, why are Ontarians stuck using their credit card instead of their OHIP card when it comes to accessing mental health services?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question. Since day one, our government has said yes to finally building a connected and comprehensive mental health and addictions service system, where services are easier to access, they are of high quality and they're focused on better outcomes for Ontarians, including children, youth and families.

That's why our government launched the Roadmap to Wellness, our action plan that's backed by a \$3.8-billion commitment over 10 years. The Roadmap to Wellness lays a foundation to build a system that will offer consistent, high-quality services to Ontarians, when and where they need those supports.

In addition to that, we have included the rollout of a signature program that's unique to the province of Ontario, known as the Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program. The OSP program is the first of its kind in Canada. It's funded publicly for people over the age of 15 years. It's evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy that helps manage depression, anxiety and anxiety-related conditions.

This is the commitment of our government to build—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. The supplementary question.

Ms. Sara Singh: Speaker, universal public health care should include mental health. Experts have noted that the gaps in mental health care leave young people, particularly our children, on long wait-lists for care. Children's Mental Health Ontario estimated that the wait-lists had grown to above 28,000 children even before the pandemic.

Because of this government's inaction, students were kept out of classrooms longer than anywhere else in Canada, and we know that took a toll on their mental health and well-being. In my community of Brampton, young people are waiting up to two years to access mental health services. That's why the Children's Health Coalition called for a Make Kids Count Action Plan to address the backlog.

Why won't this government implement this call to action by the Children's Health Coalition and increase support for children who need mental health supports?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, listening to the NDP, I will take no lessons from you, nor will this government. The reality of the situation is when the opposition was in government, and perhaps they'd like to forget this fact, the government at the time when they were in charge voted no to more mental health beds. In fact, they closed 13% of the mental health beds and they closed 9,645 hospital beds in every corner of the province. In addition, they said no to more acute mental health care and cut \$53 million from several Ontario psychiatric hospitals. In addition to that, they said no to \$12 million to added new mental health beds and hospitals and to expand programs to support the mental health and well-being of seniors across the province. In addition to that, they repeatedly said no to more supportive housing and to the \$47 million for more supportive housing for individuals with severe mental health.

Mr. Speaker, we can't afford to go back to the politics of no. Our government is getting it done and saying yes to the investments that need to be made for mental health.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The final supplementary.

Ms. Sara Singh: The Minister of Mental Health and Addictions may not want to listen to the opposition and the concerns that they're raising, but they should listen to the Children's Health Coalition and the families and the children that are languishing on wait-lists for supports.

The supports that this government talks about will only work if people can afford to access them, Speaker. This is the underlying issue. There are just simply too many people in Ontario without the means to afford the mental health services that they require, but this government made it clear that they just don't get it. Experts including the Ontario Health Coalition, Addictions and Mental Health Ontario and the Canadian Mental Health Association, as well as others, have all called on this government to reverse their cuts to mental health. The best way that they can do that is to invest in a publicly funded, universal mental health care system.

Why won't this government ensure that people across Ontario have universal access to mental health care supports?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, I do not understand where the NDP comes from when they say that investments are not being made. The Roadmap to Wellness was created on March 3, 2020. The government has invested in annualized funding: \$173 million, \$175 million, \$176 million, and now is investing \$525 million annually. You talk about the service providers and the stakeholders. We've invested in children and youth mental health by building the continuum of care. We've invested in education—an unprecedented amount—to ensure that the supports are there for the youth when they need them in the schools and connected to services outside. So I'm not sure where the facts that you're getting are coming from.

A continuum of care has to be built over time, and we are building it, notwithstanding the fact that the previous government did nothing, supported by your previous supports. We are continuing to do what we believe to be the building of a continuum of care for the youth, the children, the adults and the seniors through the Roadmap to Wellness.

CANCER TREATMENT

Ms. Sara Singh: My question once again is to the Premier. Today we are joined by cancer patients and their advocates who are looking for better cancer care here in Ontario. Take-home cancer care treatments are an expensive burden on patients and their families. Many Ontario families do not have coverage for all of the medications that may be needed. This means that patients are left with undue stress on top of their cancer diagnosis. Advocates with the CanCertainty Coalition say that even assistance programs like the Trillium drug plan do not cover all of the out-of-pocket expenses for these treatments.

Speaker, why is the Premier allowing the gap to grow between those who can afford take-home cancer care treatments and those who cannot?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence and parliamentary assistant to reply.

Mrs. Robin Martin: I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. The Ontario public drug program provides access to drugs for eligible recipients. The Ministry of Health has established an evidence-based approach to making decisions, which considers the clinical effectiveness of a drug, safety, patient input, cost-effectiveness, affordability and effects on other health services. Take-home cancer drugs are funded through the Ontario Drug Benefit Program, and our government will continue to work to ensure Ontarians have access to the care that they need, when and where they need it.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Sara Singh: We know that this government has politicalized cancer treatment drugs in the past. For example, the member from Sault Ste. Marie compared these necessary, life-saving cancer drugs to ice cream for his toddlers—shameful. These kinds of comparisons are wrong.

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The right thing to do, as recommended by Cancer Care Ontario, is to close the financial gap for cancer patients and make it more equitable. That would allow all Ontarians to have equal access to the most effective approved treatments possible. Will the Premier listen to these cancer care patients and invest in the take-home medications that they need?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you again to the member opposite for this important question. Take-home cancer drugs are funded through the Ontario Drug Benefit Program, as I said. Eligible beneficiaries include seniors; individuals on social assistance; individuals residing in homes for special care, Community Homes for Opportunity and long-term-care homes; individuals receiving professional home and community care services; registrants in the Trillium Drug Program; and individuals 24 years of age and under who are not covered under a private plan.

Ontario Drug Benefit Program recipients pay the usual cost-sharing amount, as per any Ontario Drug Benefit Program claim, of up to \$2 or \$6.11 per eligible prescription and any deductible payment. Exhausting private insurance coverage first ensures that our resources can go further and provide better coverage for Ontarians. Recipients 24 years of age and under without private insurance have no copay or deductible, and the Ontario Drug Benefit Program covers eligible prescriptions for non-low-income seniors and other classes of recipients.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): And the final supplementary.

Ms. Sara Singh: Speaker, as the advocates from the CanCertainty Coalition have made clear, there are many drugs that the Trillium drug plan does not cover, and for the vast majority of Ontarians, private insurance is not an option.

Other provinces have been able to make this change and ensure that their residents get take-home cancer care medication. There is no reason that Ontario should be lagging behind. Advocates here have a simple message for the Premier: They should not have to fight this hard to access life-saving treatments in Ontario.

Cancer Care Ontario has made recommendations on streamlining these take-home drugs so that everyone, regardless of their income, can receive the best treatment possible. It shouldn't have to be this way in Ontario, where folks with cancer are fighting to access the life-saving medications they need to survive.

Will the Premier listen to these advocates and fund take-home cancer care drugs once and for all?

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you again to the member opposite for the question. As I indicated, the Ontario public drug program provides access to drugs for eligible recipients. Through this program, we are always looking at ways that we can improve access for people using cancer drugs, even cancer drugs in their home, as I've said. We have eligible beneficiaries. I went through a long list of those. It includes recipients 24 years of age and under without private insurance—they have no copay or deductible—and we cover prescriptions for non-low-income seniors. Other classes of recipient have a \$2 prescription copayment, except for children and youth, other than those enrolled in the Trillium Drug Program, who do have a copay and deductible, and, of course, our long-term-care home residents.

Our government will continue to work with stakeholders and advisers in this area to make sure that we have the drugs available for people when and where they need them.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Premier. Last Friday I joined London parent advocates Jessica Ashton and Scott Miller in their spin-a-thon. They spun for a total of 13 hours, or one second for each of the 50,000 kids who are on the Ontario Autism Program's wait-list.

As I sat on my bike, Speaker, I fully realized how tedious and frustrated and exhausted these families must be. It has been four years of waiting and broken promises, of vague answers and underspending by this government, and four years of increased debt and halted development for over 50,000 families who have been waiting without services.

When this government decided to dismantle and destroy the Ontario Autism Program, did this government intend to shatter a generation of kids with autism?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Our government is implementing a needs-based autism program, and we will continue the important progress that we're making. We doubled the funding. We have five times as many children in the program receiving support than under the previous

government. There are 40,000 children receiving supports, most of whom would have never received support under the previous Liberal government's plan.

We are dedicated and committed to making sure children with autism and their families receive the supports that they need. In fact, we have 32,000 payments that have gone out in the interim one-time funding. Some 3,365 children are enrolled in behavioural plans. Almost 13,000 families are receiving foundational family services. Through the caregiver-mediated early years programs, over 1,000 children are receiving supports—and the entry to school program, almost 1,000 children.

We are making sure that children with autism receive the support they need, despite the lack of effort by the previous Liberal government.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Speaker, the fact of the matter is that children under six [*inaudible*], then over six, they receive \$5,000, up to 17. That is not needs-based.

The other issue is, the Financial Accountability Office reported that this government underspent \$343 million on this autism program.

All that talk is not the reality of what this government has created: over 50,000 kids on the wait-list. What these families need is a program that works.

The Premier, I'm sure, is familiar with Stacy Kennedy. She spent a week camped out outside of the Premier's office, advocating for more services for her son Sam.

Leah Kocmarek's son has been waiting over 1,300 days for Ontario Autism Program services.

Tony and his wife are here today on behalf of their nine-year-old twins, Rocko and Roman. Last year, they were at a point where they didn't know where to turn. They didn't know if one of their boys could actually remain living with them. Therapy changed that.

The necessary therapy and services are important. When will this government admit that it has failed to deliver truly needs-based programs to the kids in this province with autism? They deserve those services.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members will please take their seats.

Minister?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: The facts speak for themselves. Our government doubled the Ontario Autism Program budget to \$600 million each year. Nearly five times as many children are receiving supports from the OAP today than under the previous Liberal government.

We've increased support for our diagnostic hub so that they can identify children earlier and connect them to new early intervention services that the previous government had no interest in funding. We've expanded the program so it covers more than one type of support. Besides applied behavioural analysis, families now have access to occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, mental health supports through multiple streams that reflect the unique needs and experiences of children with autism.

With the help of the OAP panel and implementation working group, we've developed a world-leading needs-

based program, one that was developed by the autism community, for the autism community.

AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

One in 10 jobs in this province is connected to the agri-food system, and these aren't just jobs in rural Ontario. There are over 10,000 workers connected to the agriculture and food sector right here in the city of Ottawa. With over 1,200 agricultural operations in the city, many of which are in my great riding of Carleton, there is a growing demand for workers for these good jobs that lead to fulfilling and oftentimes lifelong careers.

I was thrilled to hear that the minister recently announced support to help businesses experiencing challenges finding qualified employees.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us how our government is working for workers in the agri-food sector and helping Ontario businesses grow and expand?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd like to thank the member from Carleton for the question. Recently, we were joined by the member from Nepean and the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry for an amazing announcement, and it was clear: farmers in Carleton really appreciate everything that our member does on their behalf. So good job, and thank you for that.

And it matters, because she's absolutely right, Speaker: One in every 10 jobs in Ontario right now is connected to our agri-food sector. I may be a little biased, but it is one of the best sectors to look for a job in. In fact, actually, it's a fact that for every graduate coming out of a program associated with agriculture and food production, there are three jobs waiting.

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That's why it was so important to come forward just a few weeks ago with an important program called the Ontario Agri-Careers Support Initiative, a \$4-million program that has been made possible through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership program. I'll share more details in a moment.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary?

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you to the minister for that response. Without hard-working people in our agriculture and food sectors we would not be able to enjoy delicious, homegrown Ontario food that was made in Carleton and right across Ontario.

Our government is so appreciative of those who wake up and go to work every day to keep our food supply chain moving. Part of this \$4 million will be going to projects targeted to worker retention and retraining, to help more people advance their careers. Ontarians need a government committed to supporting creative and innovative employer-driven projects that are going to benefit the workers of this province. I'd like to thank the minister for taking the time to come out to Carleton and meet with some of our farming families in Carleton, and for making these exciting announcements there.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, can the minister please share more with the House about what types of projects this investment will support and how these projects will be used to develop long-term solutions for the agri-food sector?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: It's important that everybody in the House today and those watching understand that the food and beverage manufacturing sector in Ontario is actually our largest manufacturing sector by employment. There are exciting, leading-edge, innovative careers waiting for people who choose to get involved in our industry.

That said, we want to attract and retain more people. That's why we made our announcement for the Ontario agri-job support program. We are going to work with employers and manufacturers to assist them with cost-share funding up to \$80,000, and, if businesses choose to collaborate, as much as \$200,000 to introduce English-as-a-second language and to enable child care on-site to help people get to work. Also, this pilot would enable employers to help address transit and transportation issues.

We want people working in our agri-food industry, and we invite our employers to get involved in this program.

HOUSING

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: My question is to the Premier. We have been in a housing and homelessness crisis for the entirety of the past four years and it has ballooned during the two years of the pandemic. Employed people are losing their homes. Working families can't afford to buy a home. Senior citizens are being renovicted out of their homes, communities and neighbourhoods, and are unable to find other places to live.

It is absolutely shameful that the Ford government has refused to act upon the recommendations of its own housing task force. Speaker, why hasn't the Premier acted to ensure that all Ontarians can afford a good place to live?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Last week, when we tabled More Homes for Everyone, we clearly articulated as a government that the Housing Affordability Task Force report is still our long-term road map to create the conditions that I think we need to. But as well, municipalities were very unequivocal. They just weren't there yet. They felt that the Housing Affordability Task Force recommendations were too bold. We're going to continue to work with our municipal partners. We're going to continue to consult them and ensure that that Housing Affordability Task Force report is that long-term opportunity for the government.

But again, Speaker, I think it's pretty rich for that member to sit there—after all of the measures we put in place to increase housing supply, she votes against them every single, solitary time. She should be ashamed for her constituents that she hasn't supported those measures.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government side, come to order.

The supplementary question?

Ms. Rima Berns-McGown: Seriously, "too bold"? Government members really need to get out of their bubbles to actually speak to precariously housed and unhoused people before they decide what is bold and not bold. Red tape is not the reason that Ontarians are having trouble finding and keeping housing. Making life easier for developers is not going to solve the housing crisis.

We desperately need more rent-geared-to-income housing and stronger tenants' rights protections. We need serious measures to end the corporate financialization of housing. We need more missing middle housing, like duplexes and townhomes. We desperately need to build tens of thousands of deeply affordable and supportive housing.

We desperately need to ensure that everyone has livable incomes that ensure that they can stay housed. And absolutely none of this is in the government's plan.

If the NDP had been in government, the housing crisis would have been well on its way to being solved. When is the Premier going to implement measures that will actually solve the housing and homelessness crisis?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, if Andrea Horwath and this member want to unequivocally say—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I remind the House that we have to refer to each other by our ministerial titles, riding names or other appropriate titles.

Hon. Steve Clark: I will.

You know, Speaker, if the NDP, as official opposition, want to unequivocally say they want to go to war with municipalities, then why don't you just say it? Why don't you just say it? On this side of the House, we're going to work with our municipal partners. In fact, our housing prevention program that we just announced provided her city with an additional \$17 million this—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas must come to order. The member for Hamilton Mountain must come to order.

Minister, please complete your response.

Hon. Steve Clark: We need to work with these members in Hamilton, as well, to create a climate condition where we can build housing.

The fact of the matter, Speaker, again, is that not one New Democrat has stood up for our call to the federal government for our fair share of \$490 million. We've got lots of support—including your mayor; he supports our call. So why don't you join us and your mayor in asking the federal government to pay their fair share for homelessness prevention?

AUTISM TREATMENT

M^{me} Lucille Collard: My question is for the Premier. Seeing all the complaints and the distress of so many families, it can't be denied that this government's track record on autism has been abysmal. It has done serious and

permanent damage to the lives of children and families with autism.

In 2019, this government promised to clear the wait-list. Since they made that promise, they destroyed the autism program and claimed that they are making progress in building a new one. Nobody is seeing that progress. Over 53,000 children are not seeing that progress. All they see is just another broken promise. Oh, and the \$5,000 subsidy that they're going to talk about? That's not proper support, especially when most parents don't have access to that subsidy.

The autism program is in shambles because of active choices made by this government. What will the Premier do to fix the autism mess that they have created for themselves?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: Shortly after we formed government in 2018, there were 31,500 people registered for the Ontario Autism Program, of whom only 8,500 were receiving supports. That means that fewer than a third of people enrolled in the program under the previous Liberal government were receiving any support, and that support was limited to behavioural therapy. The other two thirds—that's 23,000 children—had no prospect of ever receiving support from the old program.

Today, roughly 40,000 children and youth with autism are receiving support through multiple streams like existing behavioural plans, childhood budgets and interim one-time funding. That's five times more children receiving supports than at any point before we formed government, and I can list for the member opposite in case they've missed all the facts.

We're making continued progress. We are making good progress in providing children with autism and their families with the supports—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

Miss Monique Taylor: That's a parent.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Hamilton Mountain, come to order.

Restart the clock. The member for Ottawa–Vanier has the floor.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is very unfortunate, and this wouldn't be happening if the government was listening. There wouldn't be parents complaining, being in distress.

I spoke with those families again this morning, and they shared with me that their children are in crisis. They're not getting the help they need. They feel abandoned:

—abandoned by the choices this government made to demolish the Ontario Autism Program;

—abandoned by the broken promise on doubling the autism budget, but not actually spending the money in that budget;

—abandoned by breaking their promise to parents in April 2020 that a needs-based program would be coming in 2021;

—abandoned because it's now 2022, there's no functioning program—despite what the minister has said—the wait-list is growing, and the government is not actually spending the money families need and deserve.

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My question is, again: When will this government stop breaking their promises, prioritize children with autism and finally provide access to meaningful autism therapy in Ontario?

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: I appreciate the opportunity to give the facts. Our government has doubled the funding for the Ontario Autism Program, from \$300 million to \$600 million. We have almost five times as many children receiving supports right now: 40,000 children. That is, as I've said, five times as many children than ever before.

The previous government promised results and only delivered—

Interruption.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I would say to our visitors who are here today in our presence, outbursts are inappropriate and unacceptable. We can't fulfill our responsibility as a Legislature if there are outbursts from the visitors who are here. I think that was explained to everyone on their way in. If it continues, if anybody else participates in the demonstration, they will be asked to leave.

Start the clock. The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton: The previous government promised results and only delivered support to 25% of eligible children, leaving 23,000 children without support and with little prospect of ever getting it.

Almost 34,000 invitations have been sent out to children to come into the program with interim funding; 11,000 invitations have been sent out for childhood benefits. This is a world-leading program that has been developed by the autism community for the autism community. It involves the mental health supports that were never provided before. This is a needs-based program that is making very good progress, and we'll continue that important work.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Vincent Ke: My question is for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. We all know that the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized how vital health care professionals are in this province, and we all know there are many components when it comes to maintaining a strong health care system. Especially, the training, education, support and retainment of health care workers are all crucial elements to ensuring a strong workforce.

Speaker, since day one, this government has put the health care needs of Ontarians first, and that includes supporting health care students in Ontario's post-secondary institutions. That is why I want to ask the minister, on behalf of my constituents of Don Valley North, what is our government doing to continue to support the students looking to soon join a health care-related field?

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Thank you to the hard-working member from Don Valley North for that question. It's a very important one, because our government understands that a high-quality health care system starts with a high-quality post-secondary education system. That is why, last week, I was very excited to announce our new Learn and Stay program.

As a first step, the government is investing \$81 million to support the expansion of the Community Commitment Program for Nurses, targeting newly graduated registered nurses, registered practical nurses and nurse practitioners. Over the next four years, 3,000 nurse graduates can receive financial support to cover the cost of their tuition in exchange for committing to practise for two years in underserved communities.

To further support the next generation of health care workers, we are proud to invest \$41.4 million into the clinical education grant to support the clinical education component of nursing education programs. Together, these initiatives build on the government's commitment to protect Ontario's health care system and ensure patients can continue to have access to care when they need it, no matter where they live.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Vincent Ke: Thank you to the minister for informing us of the Learn and Stay announcement. I know this initiative will help Ontarians get the access to the high-quality health care they need and deserve. The leadership that the minister is taking to increase the number of trained health care professionals will make a tangible difference for the people in my riding of Don Valley North.

Speaker, while this fantastic initiative will support nursing education, I am curious as to what is being done to support medical education in order to support our future doctors. So, through you, Mr. Speaker, what is the minister doing to support the medical students and to ensure a more resilient health care system in Ontario?

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Thank you again to the member for their interest in the prosperity of health care in this province.

These past few weeks have been an exciting time for aspiring doctors and both current and future medical school students. Earlier this month, our government announced that we are expanding medical school education as we continue to build a stronger, more resilient health care system, especially in growing and underserved communities. Our government is proud to be adding 160 undergraduate seats and 295 post-graduate positions to six medical schools over the next five years, the largest expansion of undergraduate and post-graduate education in over 10 years.

As our government continues to make record investments to build up our health infrastructure, we're ensuring that we have the trained professionals needed to care for a growing Ontario and that we're supporting students along the way. Our government is saying yes to students, yes to health care workers and yes to supporting a strong health care system that will support Ontario's health care for decades to come.

RECYCLING

Mr. Chris Glover: My question is for the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. In 2020, Canadians recycled 4.1 million kilograms of batteries. These batteries used to go to Ontario's biggest battery recycling plant, the Raw Materials Co., but CBC Marketplace has discovered that batteries are now being recycled in Michigan. My question to the minister is, what does this government have against Ontario workers and Ontario companies, and why are you allowing recycling jobs to be exported to Michigan?

Hon. David Piccini: Thank you to the member opposite for that question. It's a good one, and we're looking into the contractual issues that have resulted in this.

What I will say the government is committed to doing, and we've backed it up with strong legislation and a critical path forward—we understand that Ontarians want to recycle more. For decades—I would add to the member opposite, respectfully, supported by your party—Ontario was stalled at a 30% waste diversion rate. We've said yes to recycling more. We've said yes to working with industry. We're putting a price on that packaging. We're saying that producers need to be responsible for the end use of the products that they put in landfills, and we've set amongst the highest targets in North America to divert waste from landfills. We'll take no lessons on how to recycle from the party opposite.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Chris Glover: It would be nice if this government would say yes to Ontario workers and Ontario companies, but instead, in the upcoming election, Ontarians are going to remember that your government closed Ontario small businesses while allowing big box stores to remain open. You let 25,000 Ontario small businesses go under in 2020 before you rolled out the first round of relief grants. And now, Ontarians are going to be thinking that that five-cent recycling charge that they pay on every battery is not staying in Ontario.

Jo-Anne St. Godard, the head of the Circular Innovation Council, asks, "Where is the money going and how is it being managed?" I want to echo that question. I want to bring that question to the minister, and I want to ask, why aren't these jobs staying in Ontario?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, we'll take no lessons from the member opposite about jobs. Their green new deal would crush this province, sending workers fleeing from Ontario. We know that was the reality when they propped up the previous Liberal government, with manufacturing jobs fleeing.

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I'll tell that member opposite what we're doing for workers. We're working with the steel sector—a six-megaton reduction in GHGs. Do you know how many jobs have left? None. Do you know how many are staying? We're growing the amount of jobs in this province. We're actually building transit, creating jobs for folks in the skilled trades. We know that member opposite does not care about workers in the skilled trades. They would have

made investments, had they cared, when they propped up the previous government.

We're delivering the lowest-carbon major transit initiative in Ontario's history, and we're not stopping there, Speaker. We're building critical minerals, the batteries of tomorrow, and supporting Indigenous communities in the north, working with them. We're not going to stop, but we're not going to crush workers with a green new deal that would crush this province and bring us to our knees.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Lindsey Park: My question is for the Minister of Education.

Families and providers of child care in Durham are reviewing this \$13.2-billion child care deal, which aims to lower fees for families. One thing stood out to me in the press release, and I'm hoping the minister can expand on it. It says "protection of all for-profit and non-profit child care spaces, helping to support predominantly female entrepreneurs across the province who provide high-quality child care services."

As providers review this, Minister, can you tell them what they can expect down the road?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Thank you to the member from Durham for the question. If I could invoke the position and the statement of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario to answer the member's question: "All licensed centres can apply to participate in the \$10/day program, including those run as small businesses. This is really key.

"Without this provision, a lot of families would have been excluded."

She went on to express gratitude to the Premier and colleagues for "prioritizing flexibility and choice" for Ontario families.

We believe, as Progressive Conservatives, that parents make the best decisions on how to raise their children. We believe that moms and dads will make that decision, and government shouldn't create a barrier or an impediment to the support they deserve. It's precisely why we fought for several months to ensure extension of support for for-profit and non-profit child centres, which is a fundamental contrast, where the members of the Liberal Party would have taken the first deal, excluding roughly 25% of child care operators in the province.

We're proud to stand up for choice, for flexibility, for more investment and for affordable child care for Ontario families.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary.

Ms. Lindsey Park: We know that every family writes their story differently, depending on the needs of their particular children, their work schedules and what family support they may have.

One of the early moves of this government was to bring in a child care tax credit program to start to provide more choice for families. The press release notes: "Maintain Ontario's child care tax credit program that supports 300,000 families with expenses in licensed and unlicensed child care." Can you please explain how the government

will continue to provide support for families who choose unlicensed child care?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I think it's a really important question because while we, in this child care deal with Canada and Ontario, have announced a program that will provide significant savings of upwards of \$12,000 on average as we achieve \$10-a-day by the year 2025—we're talking about a 50% reduction by Christmas of this year for thousands of families in Ontario to finally deliver affordable child care, to finally do what no Liberal Premier could do, which is to create affordable child care for the families we serve.

But to the question, for those not using institutional day care, this government is continuing to provide relief through the Ontario Child Care Tax Credit, providing up to 75% of eligible expenses to 300,000 families. This is a measure that recognizes the inherent costs of child care, regardless of where and how you choose to raise your child: at a YMCA, at a Montessori or at the in-laws. Everyone deserves support. That's why we're continuing to provide relief.

It is regrettable that the Liberals have opposed this tax measure, but we will continue to provide relief directly to families to deliver the financial savings they deserve.

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: My question is for the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Our government knows that reliable Internet is the key to growth in rural Ontario. I know that in Niagara, families, farmers and businesses have lacked access in many areas to reliable broadband connectivity in many areas for far too long.

This government, under the leadership of Premier Ford and the great Minister of Infrastructure, have a plan to achieve nearly 100% connectivity in every corner of Ontario by investing \$4 billion, the largest investment by any province.

Reliable broadband keeps families and businesses in touch. It opens new doors for businesses and gives farmers access to new tools and technologies.

I know that I was proud to announce at the Caistor Community Centre that our government is supporting another Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology project in Niagara, and I'm wondering if the minister could describe to the House the importance of this project for my residents in Niagara West.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: Thank you to the amazing member from Niagara West. His advocacy for the Niagara region is second to none, and because of that, investments are being made, and investments are being made through the support of our Premier, as well as the incredible Minister of Infrastructure, who he referenced.

It's amazing to see how it's our government that is building connectivity. It's our government that is bringing and getting it done, because people deserve opportunity to work from home, to grow their business and to compete at not only a regional and provincial, but national and international basis.

Because of that, we invested a million dollars recently in the member from Niagara West's communities, and that's going to see connectivity in Abingdon, Allens Corner, Caistorville, Caistor Centre, Fulton, Grassie, Grimsby Centre and Kimbo.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It was incredibly important news for the residents in those communities, and I heard many of those residents speak about how pleased they were, but I know that there are also other projects, including \$17.9 million for a project in the Niagara region that's going to connect over 5,500 rural homes, businesses and farms to reliable high-speed Internet.

Now, Niagara West gladly welcomes this investment, and I know that across Niagara, agriculture is responsible for over 20,000 jobs and a billion dollars in GDP to our provincial economy—truly substantial. With expanded access to reliable broadband, these farms and the agricultural community will be able to access new markets, increase their competitiveness and boost their economic output.

Through you, Speaker: Could the minister tell us how expanded broadband will benefit our farmers not only in Niagara, but really across the province?

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd be pleased to, Mr. Speaker, because, as the member alluded to, agriculture is a sector that is driving innovation, and they're early adopters to leading-edge technologies. It's our government that's building this connectivity, with an investment of over \$63 million specifically through SWIFT to connect over 58,000 households and businesses in southwestern Ontario.

Specifically, with farmers, again, we're leading-edge. It's farmers in their fields who are using GPS, which is going to enable them to be precision-targeted, so that we're using the right product at the right time, at the right place, at the right rate. That is going to enable them to produce better yields and more food for Ontarians and around the world.

Furthermore, agriculture is embracing technology in such ways that we can enable better nutrition for our livestock. Premier, the list goes on and on, and this is something we should all be proud of in this House.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. Speaker, Best Care is a chronic disease management program created three years ago to support patients in London and across the southwest who are living with COPD and heart failure. The program has led to a 51% reduction in urgent physician visits, a 60% reduction in hospitalizations and a 63% reduction in emergency department visits. That's not only better for the 10,000 patients enrolled in the program, but it means savings of \$1,000 per patient, or \$10 million, that can be reinvested into health care.

Speaker, despite extensive evidence proving the success of the program, this government has refused to extend Best Care funding beyond March 31, and staff termination

notices must go out in just one week. Will this government commit today to renewing Best Care funding?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. Look, obviously we're looking across multiple sectors to ensure that we have enough funding for programs such as this. It is part of our commitment that we have made, right from day one, to improve health care across the province of Ontario. It is part of a continuing series of investments that really started right from the beginning, not only with long-term care, but the transition to Ontario health teams, which is a groundbreaking way of providing health care to the people of Ontario. It's a blanket of care.

So whether it's the services that the member is talking about, whether it's home care, whether it's access to a doctor, people will have the best quality of care possible to them, and it will be directed. No longer will people have to fight to get within the system; they will have an avenue in. It is also part of that enormous investment that we're making, the highest investment in health care in the history of the province.

1130

More work, obviously, needs to be done, but we will continue on that work, not only for the next couple of months but, I'm sure, well beyond the next election.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Speaker, I want to direct my supplementary to the Minister of Labour because he is well aware of the success of this program in his riding.

Jeannette Mann lives just outside London and is one of the 1.2 million Ontarians living with COPD and heart failure. She has severe asthma and was diagnosed with COPD in 2021. She says, "Being in the [Best Care] program has changed my life." Her message to the government is: "You have the power to change ... patients' lives for the better. Please give them the opportunity I got. It's great to be able to breathe."

The clock is ticking. There is only one week left to save the Best Care program. I ask again: Will this government commit today to improving quality of life and health for Jeannette and thousands of southwestern Ontario patients like her and continue funding the Best Care program?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: There are so many good programs across the province of Ontario, programs that have been supported by this government and additional programs that we have put in place to ensure that Ontarians have access to the best quality health care system not only in Canada but in North America.

It is part of what we started right from the beginning. We knew that when we came to office there were a lot of things that had to be done, whether it was long-term care or whether it was improving health care. That's why we're building more hospitals. That's why Ottawa is getting a brand new hospital, Peel is getting a brand new hospital,

Brampton is getting a brand new hospital, and three new hospitals in Niagara.

That is why we are hiring so many additional health care workers—27,000 in long-term care alone—and new nurses. We've added medical schools in Brampton, in Durham and in Scarborough, because we know that we have to do better. We cannot allow the failures of the past 15 years prior to us coming to government to inform the decisions we make going forward.

Whether it's the services that the member is talking about or other services that are so critical to ensuring that we have the best-quality health care, we will always be there for the people of the province of Ontario.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: My question is for the Premier. When I had the privilege of serving as Premier of Ontario, one of the most important tasks I had was to work with my caucus and my cabinet teams to land on the implementation plan for our platform commitments.

After our re-election in 2014 I determined that in order to give the people of Ontario the opportunity to know exactly what we plan to do, our government became the first in Ontario's history to release our ministers' mandate letters to the public. In 2015, the federal government followed suit and released their mandate letters.

To me, open government included accountability for the work to which we had committed. It's not that mandate letters are exciting reading, but under our government they were available. People could track our progress on commitments, and our successes and challenges were there for all to see.

This government is fighting in the courts to avoid releasing ministers' mandate letters. Why is the government reluctant to let the people of Ontario look at the Premier's expectations of his ministers? Is it because those mandate letters include instructions to break the few platform promises they made in 2018?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: I recall in 2003, when the member joined government, the government of the day made something like 173 promises, and I remember they broke every single one of those promises. Now we have the former Premier getting up and talking about breaking promises.

Here's the promise that we made to the people of the province of Ontario—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, come to order. Member for Ottawa South, come to order.

Restart the clock. Government House leader?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, we touched a nerve with the two members of the Liberal Party who remain.

We made a promise to the people of the province of Ontario to get the province back on track. Why? Because after 15 years of failures by the Liberal Party, jobs fled the province of Ontario. Now they're coming back. That was our mandate. We're getting it done.

We had a mandate to build transit and transportation. They didn't do it. That was our mandate. We're getting it done. We had a mandate to make education better for the students of the province of Ontario, who were failing under that Premier and under that government. We're getting it done. That was our mandate, and we're—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question.

Ms. Kathleen O. Wynne: I ask the Premier again: Is he reluctant to release the mandate letters because in fact while he promised to clear the autism wait-list, his instruction to his minister was to do no such thing and now the situation is much worse than it was in 2018? Was it because while he said he was going to maintain the status quo on rent control, his instruction to his minister was actually to cancel rent control? While he said he was going to continue the basic income pilot, his instruction to his minister was to actually cancel it as soon as possible? While he said he was going to protect the greenbelt and fight against cronyism, he had no intention of doing either?

Speaker, there really can be only one reason this government continues to fight in the courts to avoid releasing their mandate letters. They do not want the people of Ontario to see what their ministers were told to do before the election in a few weeks. They do not want anyone to know that their actual plan was to make unnecessary cuts to the services the people of Ontario rely on. Why else would they stubbornly refuse to shine a light on their work plan?

If that assessment is inaccurate, then I ask the Premier to release his ministers' mandate letters and shine a light on what he did ask them to do.

Hon. Paul Calandra: This coming from a party best known for cash-for-access, a party best known for the Ornge scandal, a party best known for putting windmills in places where—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock.

The member for Don Valley West will come to order.

Once again, the Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries will come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke will come to order.

Start the clock.

Government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, we are three weeks or so away from an election in the province of Ontario. When people go to the polls, they're going to ask themselves if they are better off today than they were under the previous Liberal administration, supported by the NDP,

and they will know that on every single thing that matters to them a Progressive Conservative government has delivered.

We have delivered subways for the people of Scarborough. We've delivered better health care for the people of Ontario. We have opened up the north in a way so that they can participate in the economic growth and development. We have made life better for people in the trades. We have made life better for people who want to get into the trades. We have made more investments in health. We have reduced costs for the people of the province of Ontario. We've made life more affordable. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is doing more to make more homes. The Minister of Agriculture is making our farming sustainable in every measure.

It is a strong, stable Progressive Conservative majority that is—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The next question.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

Mr. Percy Hatfield: My question today is to the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Speaker, Internet gaming launched in Ontario today, causing concern for 260,000 people with a known gambling addiction and their families. The government is implementing the Responsible Gambling Council's RG Check program. However, it's still not specifically clear how this program will help people with an addiction to gambling.

Can the minister tell the House why the RG Check program is the government's only support program being offered?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you for that question.

In fact, from the time that the Roadmap to Wellness was first discussed in March 2020, the work that was done with respect to creating the continuums of care, whether it be for mental health or addictions supports and, in this case, a process addiction or a gaming or gambling addiction—we created the supports and services necessary through an investment each and every year prior to the pandemic. These were problems that existed prior to the pandemic and will continue and actually were exacerbated during the period of time that we've been going through COVID.

We consulted with different organizations and different groups. We looked at the lifespan of individuals to ensure that we're providing services that were appropriate for each age group. We consulted with different addictions organizations and did the same thing with that. We looked at the care that was needed in rural and remote areas. We also looked to ensure that we were delivering services that were culturally appropriate for all the people of the province of Ontario, regardless of where they live.

1140

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): And the supplementary question.

Mr. Percy Hatfield: Speaker, Theo Lagakos has concerns. He's president of the Public Service Alliance of

Canada, representing workers at Woodbine casino. Diana Gabriel is a certified problem gambling counsellor in Windsor. She's convinced online gaming will lead to more gambling addictions. That's because there are no tools built into the system to set limits on the time or money that gamblers invest while gaming from their home computers.

Speaker, can the minister tell us the depth of the conversations the government had with mental health and addictions experts while developing Ontario's iGaming model?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Once again, the consultations that went into the development of the Roadmap to Wellness were extensive. In fact, and perhaps you know this, I was in Windsor–Tecumseh on numerous occasions at Hôtel Dieu to discuss the very needs that we knew were required within the province, even before the online gaming. We talked and discussed different mechanisms that could be put in place, from virtual supports to actual supports, and how to reinforce the different service providers all over the province to ensure that we have the supports necessary to give people the care they need, should they wish to get that.

At the end of the day, we hope that people will be responsible with their gambling. But if they need supports, we've developed those supports, and those supports do exist in various organizations around the province. I have to say, probably the leader in the province of Ontario, perhaps North America, is Hôtel Dieu hospital in Windsor–Tecumseh. They do incredible work. We're continuing to engage with them to ensure that people are looked after in the province.

PROTECTION OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Rick Nicholls: My question is to the Solicitor General. The intent of Bill 100, the Keeping Ontario Open for Business Act, may be narrow and noble—to prevent trucks from impeding critical infrastructure and trade routes—but unfortunately, it goes much further. The powers conferred allow for the seizure of all property, including homes, for far less than another convoy or blockade. Cars and trucks may be seized with no hearing or trial. The same with one's licence and plates: no hearing, no trial, no presumption of innocence. One is guilty until proven innocent, and there is no incentive or practicable way for one to be proven innocent. Summary arrests without a warrant are also contained in section 13. The powers are all non-emergency measures. The act lasts forever. There is no sunset clause. Whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty?

My question to the Solicitor General is: Why is your ministry taking a strong-arm approach with the aim of stopping people from conducting peaceful protests in the name of democracy?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: The member opposite, coming from a community that, frankly, is very directly impacted when our borders are blocked by illegal blockades, I would have thought would have a better appreciation of

what that impact has on our economy. Literally millions of dollars of trade were not able to pass through as a result of the blockade at the Ambassador Bridge. Kudos and credit to OPP, RCMP, the Windsor police and many other police departments that worked together to ensure that that blockade was dealt with as quickly as possible, but Bill 100 will actually give those police officers the ability to act faster. We cannot afford, as a province, to have our economy come to a standstill again. What Bill 100 will do is ensure that that is in place so that we can act quickly and they can remove those illegal blockades as quickly as possible.

It's really important. Frankly, I'm a little disappointed that, as a member who represents a community that is directly impacted with the blockades and the borders through our international partners, he doesn't see the value and the importance of Bill 100.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question.

Mr. Rick Nicholls: No, I do understand that particular aspect, Minister, and I also went on record in saying that I didn't agree with full blockade of the Ambassador Bridge. I was also grateful that they allowed traffic to go back and forth because of international trade.

The amendments to the Civil Remedies Act, legislation that has been used to seize houses, is unconscionable and completely unwarranted. Everyone is shocked at the lightning pace that this bill is being rammed through the Legislature. Bill 100 authorizes the seizure of property, including one's home. All law enforcement is also made immune to civil litigation unless bad faith can be proven. Is any of this right, fair or just? Bill 100 does not affect the virtually permanent state of emergency. It's business as usual. Tyranny will literally become the new norm, with no end in sight.

Minister, those charged with an offence are entitled to make full answer in defence, have the right to cross-examination of their accuser or accusers, and the right to be convicted beyond a reasonable doubt. So my question to the Solicitor General is, is this what anyone voted for or would ever vote for? Is this where you want to take this as an elected representative and a member of the current majority party in power?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I'm going to make it real for the member opposite. The Ontario greenhouse growers grow and use approximately 3,000 acres in his community and around the area, and 70% of that product goes south. When there are blockades—and this was happening—that produce is literally rotting in the tractors. If you do not see the value of what Bill 100 will do to make sure that we can clear these illegal blockades, I can tell you that the Ontario greenhouse growers alliance certainly understands.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes our question period for this morning.

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Kiiwetinoong has a point of order.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. Last week, an Indigenous delegation travelled to the Vatican to have meetings with Pope Francis. The delegation was made up of Indian residential school survivors, leaders, knowledge keepers and youth.

They met with Pope Francis to seek acknowledgement of the claim by the Roman Catholic church related to the right of domination over everyone and all the lands, known as the doctrine of discovery. The removal of the papal bull was not acknowledged.

But they were also seeking an apology for the church's role in the spiritual, cultural, emotional, physical and sexual violence done to Indigenous children in Catholic-run Indian residential schools.

We know, Speaker, that the wound of all wounds is a spiritual wound.

At a public gathering at the Vatican on Friday, Pope Francis offered an apology to the full delegation and committed to visiting Canada later this year. This statement was met with mixed feelings in our nations—rage, sadness, hurt, relief and the beginnings of hope. We are still united in grief.

But an apology is just the first step in the long line of action that must be taken in the path forward. We stand in unity with survivors, their families and all our nations affected by the intergenerational trauma that was done to us by the Catholic church and other churches.

Going forward, we can do better. We must do better. Meegwetch.

Applause.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has a point of order.

Hon. Steve Clark: In response to a question in the House, I referred to the Homelessness Prevention Program and the city of Toronto. I believe I might have used the figure of \$17 million. It's actually \$170 million that the city of Toronto receives under the Homelessness Prevention Program.

DEFERRED VOTES

SENIORS' HEALTH SERVICES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Next, we have a deferred vote on private member's notice of motion number 36.

Call in the members. This is a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1155.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. French has moved private member's notice of motion number 36. All those in favour of the motion will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Rakocevic, Tom
Berns-McGown, Rima	Hatfield, Percy	Sattler, Peggy
Burch, Jeff	Mamakwa, Sol	Shaw, Sandy
Collard, Lucille	Mantha, Michael	Tabuns, Peter
Fraser, John	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Nicholls, Rick	
Glover, Chris	Park, Lindsey	

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise and remain standing until counted by the Clerk.

Nays

Babikian, Aris	Jones, Sylvia	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Kanapathi, Logan	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Ke, Vincent	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bouma, Will	Lecce, Stephen	Romano, Ross
Calandra, Paul	MacLeod, Lisa	Sabawy, Sheref
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Martin, Robin	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	McDonell, Jim	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	McNaughton, Monte	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Miller, Norman	Thompson, Lisa M.
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Mulroney, Caroline	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Pang, Billy	Walker, Bill
Hogarth, Christine	Parsa, Michael	Yakabuski, John

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 19; the nays are 39.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

MORE HOMES
FOR EVERYONE ACT, 2022
LOI DE 2022 POUR PLUS
DE LOGEMENTS POUR TOUS

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 109, An Act to amend the various statutes with respect to housing, development and various other matters / Projet de loi 109, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne le logement, l'aménagement et diverses autres questions.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Call in the members. This will be another five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1157 to 1158.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On Thursday, March 31, 2022, Mr. Clark moved second reading of Bill 109, An Act to amend the various statutes with respect to housing, development and various other matters.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Babikian, Aris	Kanapathi, Logan	Pettapiece, Randy
Bailey, Robert	Ke, Vincent	Piccini, David
Barrett, Toby	Lecce, Stephen	Rasheed, Kaleed
Bouma, Will	MacLeod, Lisa	Romano, Ross
Calandra, Paul	Martin, Robin	Sabawy, Sheref

Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	McDonell, Jim	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	McNaughton, Monte	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Miller, Norman	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Nicholls, Rick	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Ghamari, Goldie	Pang, Billy	Walker, Bill
Hogarth, Christine	Park, Lindsey	Yakabuski, John
Jones, Sylvia	Parsa, Michael	

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Berns-McGown, Rima	Harden, Joel	Sattler, Peggy
Burch, Jeff	Hatfield, Percy	Shaw, Sandy
Collard, Lucille	Mamakwa, Sol	Tabuns, Peter
Fraser, John	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
French, Jennifer K.	Monteith-Farrell, Judith	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 41; the nays are 17.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the bill be ordered for third reading?

Hon. Steve Clark: I'd like to refer the bill to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The bill is thus referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly.

There being no further business at this time, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1201 to 1300.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL POLICY

Mr. Aris Babikian: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

An Act to enact the Digital Platform Workers' Rights Act, 2022 and to amend various Acts / Loi édictant la Loi de 2022 sur les droits des travailleurs de plateformes numériques et modifiant diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

Report adopted.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

TAX RELIEF AT THE PUMPS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR L'ALLÈGEMENT DE LA TAXE À LA POMPE

Mr. Calandra, on behalf of Mr. Bethlenfalvy, moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 111, An Act to amend the Fuel Tax Act and the Gasoline Tax Act with respect to a temporary reduction to the tax payable on certain clear fuel and on gasoline / Projet de loi 111, Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur les carburants et la Loi de la taxe sur l'essence en ce qui concerne la réduction temporaire de la taxe à payer sur certains types de carburant incolore et sur l'essence.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the government House leader like to explain the bill?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's really self-explanatory in the sense that what the government is doing is making life more affordable for the people of the province of Ontario. As we've seen an escalation in the price of gas due to impacts outside of the country, the carbon tax and the war on Ukraine, this bill seeks to provide additional relief to Ontario taxpayers on top of the other reliefs that the government has already been providing taxpayers.

PETITIONS

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: "Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so they can live to their full potential;

"Whereas the Ford government has abandoned children and families, and broken his promise to fix the Ontario Autism Program and denied kids access to vital therapies and services for over three years;

"Whereas the wait-list for the OAP that had grown to 27,000 under 16 years of the Liberal government has almost doubled under the Conservative government;

"Whereas the Conservative government's program" has failed "to be needs-based as it relies on age-based funding caps and non-clinicians to make final funding decisions and is moving kids off the wait-list at a snail's pace;

"Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism service like ABA/IBI, speech pathology, occupational therapy and more that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

"Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to urgently remove age caps, install an appeals process, enrol kids into core services and invest in

equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them."

I fully agree with this petition. I will sign it and give it to page Jackson to deliver to the table.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order? The government House leader.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Pursuant to standing order 70, I wish to inform the House that tonight's evening meeting is cancelled.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I have a petition entitled "Needs-Based Autism Services Now...."

"Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

"Whereas the Ford government has abandoned children and families, and broken his promise to fix the Ontario Autism Program and denied kids access to vital therapies and services for over three years;

"Whereas the wait-list for the OAP that had grown to 27,000 under 16 years of the Liberal government has almost doubled under the Conservative government;

"Whereas the Conservative government's program fails to be needs-based as it relies on age-based funding caps and non-clinicians to make final decisions and is moving kids off the wait-list at a snail's pace;

"Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services like ABA/IBI, speech pathology, occupational therapy and more that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

"Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to urgently remove age caps, install an appeals process, enrol kids into core services and invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them."

I couldn't agree with this petition more. I'm going to add my name to Stacy Kennedy's, the mom who stayed outside the Premier's office to raise attention to her plight, and I'm going to then give it to page Rhythm to take to the table.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: This petition is entitled "Needs-Based Autism Services Now."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

"Whereas the Ford government has abandoned children and families, and broken his promise to fix the Ontario Autism Program and denied kids access to vital therapies and services for over three years;

“Whereas the wait-list for the OAP that had grown to 27,000 under 16 years of the Liberal government has almost doubled under the Conservative government;

“Whereas the Conservative government’s program fails to be needs-based as it relies on age-based funding caps and non-clinicians to make final funding decisions and is moving kids off the wait-list at a snail’s pace;

“Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services like ABA/IBI, speech pathology, occupational therapy and more that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

“Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to urgently remove age caps, install an appeals process, enrol kids into core services and invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them.”

I certainly support and will be signing this petition, and will be giving it to page Stanley.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: I’d like to thank Angela Brandt, who is the president of the Ontario Autism Coalition, for giving me this petition.

“Needs-Based Autism Services Now.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas every child with autism deserves access to sufficient treatment and support so that they can live to their fullest potential;

“Whereas the Ford government has abandoned children and families, and broken his promise to fix the Ontario Autism Program and denied kids access to vital therapies and services for over three years;

“Whereas the wait-list for the OAP that had grown to 27,000 under 16 years of the Liberal government has almost doubled under the Conservative government;

“Whereas the Conservative government’s program fails to be needs-based as it relies on age-based funding caps and non-clinicians to make final funding decisions and is moving kids off the wait-list at a snail’s pace;

“Whereas Ontario needs a true investment in evidence-based autism services like ABA/IBI, speech pathology, occupational therapy and more that meets the needs of autistic children and their families;

“Therefore, we petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services to urgently remove age caps, install an appeals process, enrol kids into core services and invest in equitable, needs-based autism services for all children who need them.”

I fully support this, will affix my name to it and give it to page Emily to bring to the Clerk.

1310

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I have a petition to raise social assistance rates.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s social assistance rates are well below Canada’s official Market Basket Measure poverty line and woefully inadequate to cover the basic costs of food and rent;

“Whereas individuals on the Ontario Works program receive just \$733 per month and individuals on the Ontario Disability Support Program receive just \$1,169 per month, only 41% and 65% of the poverty line;

“Whereas the Ontario government has not increased social assistance rates since 2018, and Canada’s inflation rate in December 2021 was 4.9%, the highest rate in 30 years;

“Whereas the government of Canada recognized through the CERB program that a ‘basic income’ of \$2,000 per month was the standard support required by individuals who lost their employment during the pandemic;

“We, the undersigned citizens of Ontario, petition the Legislative Assembly to increase social assistance rates to a base of \$2,000 per month for those on Ontario Works and to increase other programs accordingly.”

I agree with this petition. I will add my name to it and will send it with Jackson to take down to the table.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Mr. Chris Glover: I got this down at Dr. Ewan’s optometry clinic, just down the street from here.

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; ...

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I fully support this petition. I will affix my signature and pass it to page Mila to take to the table.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Mr. Michael Mantha: I’ve got a petition here on behalf of the great people of Wellington–Halton Hills.

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I wholeheartedly agree with the good people of Wellington–Halton Hills. I affix my signature and present it to page Callum to bring to the Clerks.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition entitled “Support a Just Transition and the Green New Democratic Deal.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Doug Ford is going in the wrong direction on the environment by ignoring our climate emergency and cutting funding to deal with the climate crisis;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to urge the government of Ontario to implement the Green New Democratic Deal to:

“—achieve net zero emissions by 2050, starting by cutting emissions 50% by 2030;

“—create more than a million new jobs;

“—add billions of dollars to Ontario’s economy;

“—embark on the largest building retrofit program in the world by providing homeowners with rebates, interest-free loans and support to retrofit their homes to realize net zero emissions.”

I fully support this petition, I will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Brianna.

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I have hundreds of petitions—probably thousands, actually. I want to thank East London Optometry in my riding for delivering these to me.

“Petition to Save Eye Care in Ontario.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government has underfunded optometric eye care for 30 years; and

“Whereas the government only pays on average \$44.65 for an OHIP-insured visit—the lowest rate in Canada; and

“Whereas optometrists are being forced to pay substantially out of their own pocket to provide over four million services each year to Ontarians under OHIP; and

“Whereas optometrists have never been given a formal negotiation process with the government; and

“Whereas the government’s continued neglect resulted in 96% of Ontario optometrists voting to withdraw OHIP services beginning September 1, 2021;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to immediately commit to legally binding, formal negotiations to ensure any future OHIP-insured optometry services are, at a minimum, funded at the cost of delivery.”

I fully support this petition, sign it, and give it to page Stanley to deliver to the table.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Joel Harden: It is with great pride and great pleasure that I’m presenting this petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Support a Just Transition and the Green New Democratic Deal.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas” Premier “Ford is going in the wrong direction on the environment by ignoring our climate emergency and cutting funding to deal with the climate crisis;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to urge the government of Ontario to implement the Green New Democratic Deal to:

“—achieve net zero emissions by 2050, starting by cutting emissions 50% by 2030;

“—create more than a million new jobs;

“—add billions of dollars to Ontario’s economy;

“—embark on the largest building retrofit program in the world by providing homeowners with rebates, interest-free loans and support to retrofit their homes to realize net zero emissions.”

A fantastic petition, Speaker. I’m happy to sign this and send it to the Clerks’ table with page Ria.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: A very important petition—I want to thank the Family Council Network 4 Advocacy.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas quality care for the 78,000 residents of (LTC) homes is a priority for many Ontario families;

“Whereas the provincial government does not provide adequate funding to ensure care and staffing levels in LTC homes to keep pace with residents’ increasing acuity and the growing number of residents with complex behaviours;

“Whereas several Ontario coroner’s inquests into LTC homes deaths have recommended an increase in direct hands-on care for residents and staffing levels and the most reputable studies on this topic recommend 4.1 hours of direct care” per day;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to amend the LTC Homes Act (2007) for a legislated minimum care standard to provide an average of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix.”

I fully support this petition. I pass it to page Pallas to deliver to the table.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

REPORT ON ONTARIO'S PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I move that this House take note—*Interjections.*

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Don't get ahead of yourself.

I move that this House take note of the report on Ontario's fourth declared provincial emergency from February 11, 2022, to February 23, 2022.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Jones has moved government notice of motion number 12.

I recognize the Solicitor General to lead off the debate.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: On February 11, 2022, Premier Ford declared a province-wide emergency pursuant to section 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. The emergency was declared as a result of interference with transportation routes, including essential trade corridors and border crossings, in locations across Ontario. The disruption along the Ambassador Bridge in Windsor and in downtown Ottawa escalated hourly, with the threat protestors would expand the occupations to the Blue Water Bridge in Sarnia and Peace Bridge in Niagara Falls. As members on both sides of the aisle have acknowledged, the interference prevented the movement of people and delivery of essential goods, such as manufacturing components.

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The Premier's declaration of emergency was confirmed by cabinet on February 12 through an order in council. The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act requires that a report be tabled in the Legislature within 120 days after the termination of a declared emergency. Declaring the emergency was necessary and effective. It was an action necessary to safeguard the people and economy of Ontario, and it did just that.

Looking back to February, groups of individuals shut down one of Canada's most important international border crossings. Speaker, 25% of Canada-US two-way trade crosses over the Ambassador Bridge between Windsor and Detroit each and every year. The six-day blockade of the bridge disrupted billions of dollars of international trade. Manufacturing was slowed because parts weren't arriving on time, causing manufacturing facilities to close, shifts to be cancelled and workers to be sent home. Confidence in Ontario as a reliable place to invest and locate manufacturing was impacted. There were legitimate concerns that the blockade would extend to the Blue Water Bridge in Sarnia and the Peace Bridge in Niagara Falls. The Blue Water Bridge is the second-busiest Ontario-US crossing, which, of course, links Sarnia with Port Huron, Michigan. Together, these bridges are the arteries that keep Ontario's manufacturing working.

As an example of what this means, when the Ambassador Bridge was blocked, Stelco, a major Hamilton-area employer, was unable to ship products by truck to the US. In response to slower customer intake, the company had to slow its steel output. Had the blockade continued, Stelco

indicated it would have had to idle its steel-making facilities.

The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association said that persistent delays at the Ambassador Bridge risked disrupting automotive production that employs tens of thousands of Canadians.

When the Ambassador Bridge was blocked, approximately \$17 million per hour in economic activity between Canada and the US was piling up on both sides of the border. This, of course, had an adverse impact on access to goods and employment. There were also impacts to the quality of life, safety and ease-of-movement disruptions, particularly in Ottawa and Windsor.

Prior to the declaration of a state of emergency, there were limitations on what law enforcement could do to clear those blockades. Fines were issued, as well as a court order to freeze the distribution of donations raised for the blockades. Despite reasonable actions taken, many individuals continued to impede critical transportation infrastructure, prompting the mayor of Windsor to describe the blockade of the Ambassador Bridge as an "international economic crisis." Available tools were not sufficient. An emergency order was the best and most timely legislative tool in the tool box to provide police with the enforcement tools necessary.

The emergency order was made on February 12, 2022, and came into effect immediately upon being made. The order prohibits persons from blocking critical infrastructure defined as 400-series highways; airports; canals; hospitals; infrastructure for the supply of utilities such as water, gas, sanitation and telecommunications; international and interprovincial bridges and crossings; locations where COVID-19 vaccines are administered, such as mass vaccination clinics; ports; power generation and transmission facilities; and railways.

The order prohibits persons from preventing the ordinary use of, and preventing travel to or from highways, walkways and bridges in cases where this would prevent the delivery of goods, severely disrupt economic activities or seriously interfere with the health, safety and well-being of the public. It gives police officers and other provincial offences officers the power to take new enforcement action when they have reasonable grounds to believe an individual is not complying with the requirements of the order.

This government is committed to doing what it takes to safeguard jobs put at risk by disruptive blockades at international borders and keeping the supply chain flowing. To this end, it was necessary to make amendments to O. Reg. 71/22, which came into effect on February 14. These amendments deal with the removal, storage, notification and who's on the hook for the cost of storage of objects such as vehicles. The amendments make clear that provincial offences officers can remove objects, including vehicles, or direct a person such as a tow truck operator to remove them when said object is not removed in accordance with the officers' orders.

The amendment also expressly gives provincial offences officers who remove objects such as vehicles or cause them to be removed the power to detain and store

those objects for as long as the emergency order is in effect. It would require provincial offences officers to make reasonable efforts to notify the owner of where the object is being detained and stored; make the owners, operators and most-recent drivers of the vehicle responsible for the cost and charges of removal, detention and storage; and allow any person, either an individual or a corporation who is reasonably qualified to assist with removal, detention or storage of a vehicle to perform these activities at the request of a provincial offences officer.

The emergency order remains in place until at least April 9 to address the effects of the emergency and, in particular, the real risk that some individuals may attempt to resume disrupting critical infrastructure.

The provincial emergency enabled a safe and peaceful end to the interference with infrastructure and was terminated on February 23, 2022. I am very grateful to the Ontario Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Windsor Police Service and services from Brantford, Chatham-Kent, Hamilton, LaSalle, London and Waterloo, which used the tools the emergency order provided to clear the illegal blockade of the Ambassador Bridge. I am grateful, of course, for the co-operation between Ontario's policing leadership on the ground in the capital to end the occupation safely.

I'll read the conclusion of the report on the provincial emergency covering the period from February 11, 2022, to February 23, 2022: "The order was a reasonable alternative to other measures. Existing regulation-making powers such as ... under the Highway Traffic Act, had not been sufficient to achieve the order's objectives, and statutory amendments would not have been swift enough to result in immediate change."

After two years of COVID-19, Ontarians have had enough: enough of disruptions, enough of threats to their financial security. Their well-being is Premier Ford and our government's top priority and I am pleased that we were successful in restoring freedom of movement to the people of Ontario through this provincial emergency.

In closing, Speaker, I note that on the same day the Premier declared a provincial-wide emergency, he also publicly committed to bringing new legislation forward that would make these measures permanent in law. The proposed Keeping Ontario Open for Business Act, 2022, grew from that commitment and demonstrates the priority we put on public safety and protecting the livelihoods of Ontarians.

If passed, Bill 100 would protect certain transportation infrastructure from future unlawful disruptions. The protected transportation infrastructure will be international borders, airports prescribed in regulation, and other transportation infrastructure that is significant to our international trade. The proposed act would protect jobs and shield the economy from future disturbances like the recent blockade of Windsor's Ambassador Bridge that halted billions of dollars of trade, and it will signal to the world that Ontario is a reliable trading partner and is open for business. The people of Ontario deserve no less.

Open international borders are essential, and, first and foremost, the provincial emergency covering the period from February 11 until February 23 and the Keeping Ontario Open for Business Act are about our ability to act quickly and effectively to protect the freedom of movement, safety and prosperity of the people of Ontario.

1330

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

Mr. Joel Harden: The last time I rose in this place to talk about the Solicitor General's work, thinking about what happened to our city in particular—in Ottawa—for three weeks, I emphasized that it was important for us to be thinking about kindness first. Because what hit our city was something I've never seen before: a mass movement of people whipped up and frustrated and angry after two years of a pandemic that's been difficult for everyone.

But in the middle of that, and why I emphasize the necessity of kindness first, were people who are professional hate organizers, who somehow found themselves in leadership positions and not only utilized the opportunity to spread hate in our city but capitalized on people's frustration and anxiety to purposefully damage infrastructure in our city, shutter small businesses and take paycheques away from workers. That's what happened.

My life has taught me one thing, Speaker: The way you fight hate is with kindness, with hope and with opportunity. I want to begin with that premise again today. However, I've looked at this three-page document that the Solicitor General has just read, and I ask the government sincerely: Do you think this is what accountability looks like around the use of the emergencies act? Do the members of this House in government actually believe that this shows the people of Ottawa that you took our city seriously during three weeks of hell?

Interjection.

Mr. Joel Harden: I'm hearing across the aisle "yes." Well then, let's delve into it. What we know is that on January 28, the Premier of this government said to the media that he supported the convoy movement. He welcomed them. He said he understood them, on January 28, 2022.

What happened subsequent to that, Speaker? After, for some reason, I'm hearing from the federal investigation, the police officials in our city literally gave 500-plus tractor-trailers and vehicles an escort—an escort—into parking positions in our downtown, gridlocking the downtown—including, as I understand from this document, MTO officials helping them understand how to exit provincial roadways onto municipal roadways.

What was the Premier doing? Cottaging, Speaker. He was cottaging, issuing photos from his cottage, snowmobiling with buddies. This is what I had to deal with as an elected representative in Ottawa: people writing me—including Conservative voters, I'll note to the members opposite—saying, "What is the government doing in our time of need, Joel? How could the Premier honestly be thinking that now is the time for a holiday? Our city is under siege."

What was it costing? It was costing, according to officials, \$800,000 a day to maintain a policing infrastructure that was completely ineffective. Let me be clear about that: I have heard privately from disgruntled members of the Ottawa Police Service who are also not happy with the operation.

We chartered 500-plus vehicles into the downtown of Ottawa. We utilized Ministry of Transportation of Ontario officials to literally give people the opportunity to gridlock the downtown. In the days that followed, there were arson attempts on buildings. There was power shut off. People were harassed, sometimes physically, for wearing masks. Our neighbours in particular who come from marginalized communities—I'm talking about our Indigenous neighbours, racialized neighbours, gender-non-conforming neighbours—did not feel safe walking in our streets.

When councillor Catherine McKenney, who represents the downtown, and I did the rounds, trying to figure out what was going on and what people needed in Centretown, one of the organizations we spoke to was Kind Space. When the revelations were apparent that we were spending \$800,000 a day on a security operation that was completely ineffectual, Kind Space told councillor McKenney and me that that is the equivalent of their budget for three consecutive years—three consecutive years.

Kind Space is one of the lead organizations that welcomes people into our city, often youth—gender-non-conforming, queer and trans youth—who have been rejected by their families and who are homeless on the streets of Ottawa. Half of the homeless population of youth in Ottawa are rejected by their families because of their gender identity, and we were spending \$800,000 a day on a security operation that basically gave people licence and impunity to block our city.

I want us to think about that. And to the members who were saying earlier that they were proud of what this note represents and of the province's role, I want you to think about that too.

I also want to ask the question, Speaker, in the time I have—how Ontario dealt with two different convoys. We had this one convoy that hit our city on January 28, but what we also know is that in 2021 there was a convoy of dump truck drivers. Bob Punia, who is the president of the Ontario Dump Truck Association, spoke to the media in a CBC news article that was released on February 11, asking us—it's a good question—why was the full weight of the province of Ontario brought upon his members when they were protesting outside of MTO offices with their trucks, when they were protesting off the 401 with their trucks at the weighing station because the province of Ontario was asking them to retrofit their dump truck vehicles at a cost of—depending on the vehicle, depending upon the modification—\$10,000 to \$25,000 per vehicle? According to Bob, the average income of a dump truck driver in the province of Ontario is between \$40,000 and \$48,000 a year. They were plaintively saying to Ontario that they needed help. Their families could not afford forking out that expense. And what did the province of Ontario do to Bob Punia and dump truck drivers in 2021? Bam, the full hammer of the province was brought down to bear upon

them after six days. When they protested outside the MTO, the Ministry of Transport of Ontario said clearly to them, "We're going to pull your licences. This is criminal activity. You will be charged. Your dump trucks will be towed."

Now, it's interesting, Speaker: If you look at the make-up of folks who drive dump trucks—and we're thankful for their work; it's important work in this province—who, disproportionately, are they? Bob went on to say that they are racialized Ontarians; they are folks who are struggling and trying to feed their family at a time when life is getting more and more expensive. Who are owner-operators of tractor-trailers, the folks who came to our city? I actually—again, with the emphasis of kindness first—went out on the street and I talked to many of them. I didn't see many people of colour, Speaker. I saw people who looked exactly like me, who came from rural parts of the province, just like I do. And I know, from a search, that an average income for an owner-operator of a tractor-trailer is around \$160,000 a year. It's a good income, and they do important work, but those are the folks who could save up the money to come into the downtown, with a police escort, for three weeks to gridlock the city. They could afford to do it. And the province of Ontario did not lift a finger to stop them, not for 14 days.

And then the emergency order gets declared. We have a throwaway sentence in this document that says, "The order was a reasonable alternative to other measures. Existing regulation-making powers, such as those under the Highway Traffic Act, had not been sufficient to achieve the order's objectives, and statutory amendments would not have been swift enough to result in immediate change." Hogwash, Speaker, every single word of that—hogwash. You were quick enough to discipline low-income, middle-income dump truck drivers and their families. You told them you didn't care about them and you wouldn't support the retrofitting of their vehicles. They had to do it all on their own dime, and you sent the full force of the state after them. But when 39 tractor-trailers sat in our streets for three weeks—I'm talking about 39 particular vehicles, Speaker—and you did finally get around to seizing their vehicles, what did you do to them? After one week, you gave them the keys back. You issued them no fines—none whatsoever.

It troubles me, Speaker, because it's a double standard in law that should not be applied in the way in which we do business in this province as legislators. We can't say to the Ontario dump truck drivers and Bob Punia's folks, "Oh, you can't do that. Suck it up. Pay for the retrofits that you have to pay," and then you turn around to these 39 tractor-trailer operators and you tell them implicitly that Ontario is not going to do a whole lot, for 14 days.

And then, finally, the federal government kicks into order and issues a tripartite table for the municipality of Ottawa, the province of Ontario and the federal government to collaborate, and what happens there? The Solicitor General, Speaker, didn't show up to the three initial meetings. She boycotted the three meetings and said it wasn't important enough for the government of Ontario.

For all the members who shouted across the aisle to me that you're proud of this document, the people of Ottawa will not be fooled. That is the legacy of the convoy occupation: angry, whipped-up people coming into our city wanting to make their point, and the people who got hurt in the process were regular folks in downtown Ottawa, and you didn't lift a finger, and you could have lifted a finger. And this? This is window dressing on a legacy of which you should not be proud.

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The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I will remind members to make their comments through the Chair, not directly across the floor.

Further debate.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Today is yet another opportunity for me to speak about the occupation in Ottawa, how it had a profound impact on people and how the government's response has been and remains inadequate.

I am not dismissing the impact from the blockade at the Ambassador Bridge, or the hardship that the city of Windsor had to endure. On the contrary, but we need to also understand that border protests in non-residential areas are considerably different from an occupation of what amassed to approximately 20 square blocks in the centre of a major municipality within this country, in front of a Parliament that had to suspend sittings for a period of time so that the police operations could be undertaken.

We are more specifically talking today about the declared provincial emergency powers that were deployed on February 11, 2022, through the emergency order triggered by the interference at the Ambassador Bridge. I am going to take the few minutes that I have today to tell the story of what's happened in Ottawa from the perspective of the interim chief of police, Steve Bell, who was at the helm of enforcement during the most part of the occupation and until it was resolved.

The following are his comments before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security at the House of Commons on March 24:

"Every year, hundreds of protests occur in our capital. Our officers are trained to maintain the safety of both the demonstrators and the public at large. The vast majority of these protests are peaceful and lawful, and protesters return home when their point has been made.

"This unlawful protest was unprecedented. The protesters brought thousands of vehicles to our city with the full intention of disrupting our capital. After they arrived, many chose to stay and they were clear in their words and actions that they meant to do damage to our community.

"Our police service received regular reports of intimidating and threatening behaviour towards residents on a daily basis. We had reports of hate crimes being committed and of wilful disregard of police and court orders. The protesters used their vehicles as tools to back up their behaviour, honking their horns and racing dangerously around the streets in the downtown core.

"Despite our attempts to negotiate and despite threats of investigation and enforcement, the illegal and disruptive behaviours continued throughout the protest and became elevated on weekends when more protesters arrived.

"Our response as a police service, along with our many partners, was to work to safely manage the disruptions, contain the behaviours and negotiate the protesters out. In the early days, we were able to ensure that no serious injuries, deaths or damage to infrastructure were committed, but that's not the standard of policing any resident of our city or any Canadian would expect.

"As a police service, we understood quickly that we needed assistance from all levels of government in the form of legislative powers and policing resources if we were to safely remove this unlawful protest from our streets.

"It's important that this committee understand and appreciate the negative impacts this behaviour had on our entire community and our businesses, and especially the impacts on our vulnerable, marginalized, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQAA+ and racialized communities.

"Our Centretown is a diverse, proud and vibrant place. During the protest, we saw clear signs of hate, such as swastikas, anti-government sentiment, leaders posting threatening language on social media and other various forms of social disorder. It shook the community's faith and confidence in the ability of police and government to keep them safe. We have seen the same effects in cities such as Calgary, Windsor and in Coutts, Alberta, where similar protests were held.

"Our goal from the outset was always to remove this protest safely. Doing that required careful coordination between all of our policing partners to develop a strategy that would ensure a safe resolution. All three levels of government responded with legislative measures that aided our strategy. I want to thank the city of Ottawa and the Ontario government for the changes brought forward. I also want to thank the federal government for invoking the federal Emergencies Act.

"From a policing perspective, the legislation provided the OPS with the ability to prevent people from participating in this unlawful protest; to restrict people from travelling to any area where the unlawful protest was taking place; to secure protected places and critical infrastructure; to create and maintain the secured area to prevent people from violating the act and safely remove people who were attempting to do so; to go after the money funding the protest; and to require third parties to assist us in removing the heavy vehicles that were clogging streets and creating a safety hazard. It was a critical piece of our efforts, but it was only one piece.

"Another critical piece was the rallying of police resources from the RCMP, the OPP and police services from across Canada. I want to thank them all for their support.

"As you saw, once we had all of those authorities and those resources in place, we were able to implement a methodical police operation between February 17 and February 20 with an integrated command led by the Ottawa Police Service, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Ontario Provincial Police to safely remove the protest."

"In total, there were 230 arrests, and 118 people were criminally charged with more than 400 criminal counts.

Hundreds of provincial offence notices were issued. Cases are still moving through the courts, and multiple investigations are ongoing.

“In a democracy such as Canada, there is no doubt that a discussion and assessment on the appropriateness of the invocation of the Emergencies Act, which provided police broader powers, is important. I am pleased to be here to contribute to that discussion.

“I can tell you that police chiefs across the country are watching this discussion because they know that similar situations could occur or are occurring in their jurisdictions. I have spoken to many of them who have sought out advice.

“Finally, I want to reiterate my pride in all of the police members who worked on this operation, including the members who came from across Canada to assist us. This was truly a Canadian effort and it showed the vital role that police play in maintaining our democracy and keeping our residents safe.”

That’s the end of the testimony of the interim police chief.

I’m sharing that just to show that this is actually a non-partisan summary of what happened in Ottawa, from someone who was on the first row of action. As you can see, I was not exaggerating when I explained the events from my own perspective, as I have done several times in this House.

Some clear conclusions can be drawn from Mr. Bell’s testimony and the answers he provided to the committee members. The first one is that examining how the occupation was allowed to unfold the way it did is an important exercise for all levels of government to ensure this doesn’t happen again. During the committee, Mr. Bell said, “That’s why discussions like these and the internal review that’s going to be done by the city of Ottawa are so important. We need to learn from these circumstances. We need to make sure that something like this never replicates itself again.”

The city of Ottawa is doing an internal review, and the federal government is conducting a study of the occupation of Ottawa and of the federal government’s response to convoy blockades, but this government has voted no on my motion to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy for the committee to study the roles and actions of the provincial government regarding the convoy occupation in Ottawa that was allowed to go on for more than three weeks. Instead, the province is doing a report that provides no scrutiny and no transparency. This is not how government demonstrates accountability and responsibility. This sends the message that the government has something to hide.

Second, the residents of Ottawa felt unsafe in their communities and felt abandoned by the very institutions that are supposed to protect them. That’s a fact.

There is a responsibility for the provincial government to recognize how it failed Ontarians and to provide adequate compensation for lost revenue and make amends for their suffering. To this date, Ontarians are still waiting for transparency and accountability, and the people of Ottawa are still waiting for adequate support.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonnell: Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of the great Solicitor General, Minister Sylvia Jones.

Safe and open international border crossings tie Ontario to the world. Hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of goods for people and businesses pass across our international borders every day. They are loaded onto planes at our international airports or cross bridges into the United States, where truck drivers take them to the next destination. This freedom of movement is why Ontario is poised for massive economic growth. It is the foundation on which countless hard-working moms and dads make their living.

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In my riding and in the riding of my friend and neighbour Minister Clark, we alone have three international bridges to serve our constituents, local businesses and access to family and friends. These links are vital in keeping the supply chains working, supply the local businesses that employ local people. That is why our great Solicitor General introduced Bill 100, the Keeping Ontario Open for Business Act, 2022. This, of course, was in response to actions we saw taking place in Ottawa and Windsor earlier this year.

Speaker, Anderson Economic Group estimates that the freedom convoy prompted by Canada’s vaccine border mandates resulted in \$144.9 million in lost wages, predominantly from plants in Michigan and Ontario. They estimate that the auto industry lost a whopping US\$299 million between the dates of February 7 and February 15 thanks to the anti-mandate protesters who halted all movement along the border.

And here is the real whopper: The Ambassador Bridge accounted for US\$137 billion in trade in 2021 according to WorldCity, a trade data consultancy. This is just one bridge, Speaker. And we know for a fact that in my very own riding this kind of financial impact hits home. BASF has factories in Mississauga, Toronto, Windsor and in my riding, in the city of Cornwall. They are integrated into 16 different industry classifications, from agriculture to automotive to pharmaceuticals and more. It is a very long list within the supply chain, which each and every one of us relies on. I was informed that shipments that were travelling by truck could not get to key customers because of the border being blocked, and those customers were just days away from having to stop their own manufacturing operations if they could not receive the appropriate inputs from BASF.

Border disruptions like we experienced in February are not how we can assure the Fortune 500, investors and economic commentators that Ontario is the place to do business, to grow or to expand. That’s why our government introduced a suite of new measures today to protect the international borders from unlawful disruptions that hurt people and businesses. During the recent blockades, the government took immediate action and decisive work to stop the unacceptable and illegal disruption to trade and

traffic at the border. The legislation introduced by our Solicitor General Sylvia Jones is one way the Ontario government is taking action to defend the provincial economy from future disruptions and strengthen policing capacity to protect our border. This will reinforce Ontario's position as a reliable trade partner and ensure that we continue to be open for business. We will do everything in our power to protect our workers, job creators and the international trade relationships from any future attempts to block our borders.

When the Ambassador Bridge was blocked illegally, an emergency order was necessary to provide police with the tools they needed to clear it: tools such as the ability to remove objects that are being used to form blockades or the power to suspend a driver's licence where a vehicle is used in a blockade.

We have heard the people of Windsor, Hamilton, Oshawa and all those hurt by the shutdown of Canada's most important borders that the province needs the tools to be able to act quickly and effectively where the openness of the borders is threatened. Bill 100, if passed, is very narrowly scoped to provide provincial offences officers with the tools they need to clear illegal blockages of border infrastructure, such as international bridge crossings and international airports, that disrupt the ordinary economic activity or international trade.

Speaker, we are here today to debate the report on Ontario's fourth declared provincial emergency. On February 11, 2022, Premier Ford declared a province-wide emergency pursuant to section 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. The emergency was declared as a result of interference with transportation routes, including essential trade corridors and border crossings, in locations across the province. The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act requires that a report be tabled in the Legislature within 120 days after the termination of the declared emergency.

The emergency order prohibits persons from blocking critical infrastructure, defined as 400-series highways, airports, international and interprovincial bridges and crossings, and many other facilities and supply chain structures critical to the provisioning of goods and services that keep all Ontarians free and safe from disruption. It prohibits persons from preventing the ordinary use of, and preventing travel to or from, highways, walkways and bridges where this would prevent the delivery of goods and services, severely disrupt economic activities or seriously interfere with the health, safety and well-being of the public.

In the report, it was determined that:

"Ontario had previously worked to manage the impacts of the protests by using other measures such as a court order to freeze the distribution of donations raised for the 'freedom convoy.' Despite actions taken, many individuals continued to impede access to or egress from the use of critical transportation infrastructure, including essential trade corridors and other infrastructure. These prolonged blockades had an adverse impact on access to goods and

services as well as employment, resulting in manufacturers cancelling shifts and businesses closing, as well as being detrimental to the quality of life and ease of movement, particularly in Ottawa and Windsor.

"It was reasonable to believe the harm or damage caused by the emergency would be alleviated by the order as it provided additional tools for law enforcement to address obstructions."

This report goes on to conclude, "The order was a reasonable alternative to other measures. Existing regulation-making powers such as those under the Highway Traffic Act, had not been sufficient to achieve the order's objectives, and statutory amendments would not have been swift enough to result in immediate change."

I'd like to reiterate the Solicitor General's reference that the report tabled today outlines: The provincial emergency enabled a safe and peaceful end to the interference with infrastructure and was terminated on February 23, 2022. This report outlines the success of our government's decisive actions to enable law enforcement to clear blockades and keep trade flowing.

I applaud the Premier's leadership and swift action in response to the events in February. Ontarians' well-being is Premier Ford's and our government's top priority. For myself and my constituents along the border, we are truly grateful that we were successful in restoring freedom of movement to the people and businesses of Ontario through this provincial emergency.

If passed, Bill 100, the Keeping Ontario Open for Business Act, 2022, will be yet another promise we've kept to the people of Ontario: that Ontario is a great place to invest and to grow, and that we are indeed open for business. So, in closing, as the Premier might say, let's get 'er done.

I just want to have a minute here to speak about some of the people in my own riding. Not necessarily in this blockade, but in previous cases we've seen rail or highways closed down and our farmers unable to get propane, so they were unable to dry their grains, and because they couldn't dry them, they were unable to harvest them. When that happens in the fall time, you have a short window where you can get in there and harvest your crops, and if you miss that window, you likely miss it for the year. A lot of them were forced to go back in the spring to finish off the combining, and of course, the loss of material can be up to well over 50%, so those really hurt people in my riding, and of course there are many other people in similar businesses that are impacted by these types of blockades.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Percy Hatfield: I believe I speak for most people in Ontario when I say our hearts go out to the people in Ottawa, especially those in the downtown core, and the hell they went through during the protest and the blockade in our nation's capital.

1400

In Windsor, our situation was entirely different. I'd first like to read into the record a letter I was copied on. It was sent by the mayor of Windsor to the Solicitor General. The

letter is dated March 17. It was also sent to the federal Minister of Public Safety and the federal Minister of Emergency Preparedness. The letter outlines what transpired during the illegal blockade of the Ambassador Bridge:

“On the 7th of February, the city of Windsor was the site of an illegal occupation at and around the access routes for the Ambassador Bridge.

“This protracted activity disrupted the vital trade and commerce route between the United States and Canada.

“Subsequent to a successful injunction order granted by the Ontario Superior Court Chief Justice Morawetz on February 11, 2022, the Windsor Police Service, with the tactical and logistical assistance of the OPP, RCMP and other police agencies, were able to clear the roadways for traffic on February 14....

“Local police did their best to clear access to impacted businesses along Huron Church Road (the main access highway to the Ambassador Bridge) as quickly as possible; however, for most businesses along this roadway access to their locations remained significantly limited.

“Moreover, commercial vehicle traffic was adversely impacted to varied degrees until March 13 ... more than a month after the initial occupation began.

“Through the quick local response, supported by the OPP, RCMP and other agencies, the Windsor Police Service guided a safe conclusion to the illegal Ambassador Bridge blockade and restored access to this vital international trade corridor.

“To be clear, the safe and peaceful conclusion to this blockade incident required a more massive supplementation of resources and logistics that could not have been sourced locally.

“Overtime and logistically supports required to bring about a peaceful resolution of the recent illegal occupation at the Ambassador Bridge has resulted in a separate reimbursement request from the city of Windsor to provincial and federal department officials.

“At this time, all levels of government are engaged in various reviews associated with the steps each of our administrations undertook in response to the protest activity earlier this year.

“I understand the federal government’s invocation of the Emergencies Act results in a mandatory review of the situation and response to the provoking crisis.

“Similarly, the provincial declaration of emergency, which was specifically tied to the protest activity in Ottawa and Windsor, requires a due diligence review of actions and next steps.”

Speaker, the mayor of Windsor, Drew Dilkens, goes on to say, “At the city of Windsor, our team is focused on the immediate impacts and strategies as well as longer-term solutions necessary to prevent such protest activity from once again crippling the national economy.

“Windsor’s critically important international trade routes connect directly into the local municipal roads in the city of Windsor. It is worth noting that, save for the presence of federal border security officials on site at the customs/border plazas who are responsible for processing

international travel, there is no security of these international trade routes.

“For clarification, traffic from both the Windsor Detroit Tunnel and the Ambassador Bridge exit immediately onto municipal roads and are several kilometres from the province’s 401 highway network.

“The recent blockade incident at the Ambassador Bridge highlighted a vulnerability in our governance model.

“The city of Windsor is certainly responsible for local infrastructure and the Windsor Police Service is capable of providing adequate and effective law enforcement for our community.

“That said, the need for broader collaboration and support from provincial and federal governments to bolster the safety and security of our borders appears obvious.

“To that end and with an aim of mitigating similar risk in the future, we would be pleased to participate and contribute in a meaningful way to a collaborative debriefing of the recent Ambassador Bridge blockade regarding emergency regulatory obligations.

“We look forward to working together to protect our important international border crossings through human and capital resource planning and asset deployment.”

Speaker, as I say, that letter is signed by Drew Dilkens, the mayor of the city of Windsor. This letter is in addition to another, earlier one asking the senior levels of government for financial assistance in paying the bills associated with the blockade. It’s estimated that Windsor taxpayers are on the hook for more than \$5.5 million. For example, some of the bills are for legal fees of a quarter of a million; \$2.5 million for overtime; \$1.3 million for the concrete Jersey barriers that the police deemed essential for traffic control during and immediately after the blockade. They spent more than half a million dollars to house the hundreds of out-of-town police officers who came to help out. They had to eat, which cost another half a million. Officers who came from the city of London are owed \$130,000. There’s another \$100,000 for miscellaneous costs. The city’s public works department is owed more than \$100,000. Our Transit Windsor drivers had to work overtime to shuttle the out-of-town workers around: There’s another \$40,000 in extra costs to our taxpayers. EMS crews had to be there on standby; that cost us nearly \$40,000. Our fire department stayed close by, again on overtime, to the tune of \$25,000.

That’s a sample of some of the extra costs that were racked up during the blockade. Surely, the senior levels of government can see their responsibility in this extreme case. After all, the cost to Canada’s economy when that bridge was shut down between Windsor and Detroit—between Canada and the United States—the busiest border crossing in Canada, was \$400 million a day. Speaker, \$400 million a day: the cost to Canada’s economy.

The protest, if one is to believe the organizers, was started because they were opposed to mandatory vaccines. Our automobile plants were shut down, our parts plants were shuttered, cross-border trade came to a halt along that corridor at a loss of \$400 million a day. Ninety charges

were laid, 46 people arrested, 37 vehicles were towed. We reached a peaceful resolution, but the direct cost to local taxpayers was more than \$5 million and the total cost nearly \$300 million, over an illegal blockade supposedly against mandated vaccines for truck drivers.

On 9/11 in 2001, there was a deadly terrorist attack in the United States—several of them—that led to Canadians looking at their international trading infrastructure. In Windsor, we saw the vulnerability of the Ambassador Bridge. After all, it was built in 1929. We launched a study to see where we could build an alternative crossing so our international trade could never be held hostage in case of a terrorist attack. We're building the Gordie Howe bridge now, but it's years away from being finished.

Speaker, I know I had so much more I wanted to get on the record here, but let me say, we just announced a big \$5-billion project in our community, building batteries for electric vehicles. You're from Oshawa; you can appreciate this. We have a long history of automotive success. We call Windsor Canada's automotive capital. At the news conference for that plant, our mayor, Drew Dilkens, was quoted as saying, "Our ... roots are in manufacturing and automotive, and we're darn good at it." You can take that to the bank.

Speaking of money, that investment would not have happened without financial assistance from the senior levels of government. I thank the federal ministers who were there. I want to especially compliment Doug Ford and the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Mr. Fedeli, for seeing the need for government incentives. When I was first elected to this House, the leader of the Conservative Party at that time, Mr. Hudak, would never consider working with the auto sector to secure jobs in Ontario. In fact, he called those incentives corporate welfare. That new plant will be just two kilometres from my home.

I also want to say that the federal government made an announcement last Friday giving more than \$2 million to help support the more than 240 local businesses that lost their income during that blockade. They can apply for grants of up to \$10,000, the same as in Ottawa, for their impacted business. But we're still waiting to hear from the provincial government. We need some help from the provincial government to help offset those business losses, just as we need help from the provincial government to help us pay the \$5 million that our taxpayers are now on the hook for, for the extra overtime and the other expenses during this blockade.

In closing, I want to thank all the police officers and the first responders who came from all over who helped us restore order, secured our international border crossing again, and found a peaceful resolution. Let's just hope that we put into place some new mechanism, some new system, some new sense of security so that something like this never happens again in Ottawa or in the great city of Windsor.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French):
Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's truly a pleasure to participate in this take-note debate report on Ontario's fourth declared

provincial emergency, from February 11, 2022, to February 23, 2022.

1410

Madam Speaker, just before I make comments on the report, I want to actually commend the Solicitor General, otherwise known outside of this chamber as Sylvia Jones, the member for Dufferin—Caledon. I want to commend her for absolutely every single action she has taken to protect the people of Ontario. I had the privilege of sitting at the cabinet table and I know that she has done everything in her ability to protect the people of Ontario. For those who are quick to condemn, not one of those people who have condemned have sat at her table, have had the burden to bear, have had the scrutiny or the accountability that she has had. With this bill and any emergency order that she, the Premier and cabinet have put in place, it has been done to ensure the protection and safety of the people of Ontario.

I want to remind the House that every single decision that has been made through this pandemic has been done in consultation with the health and science table and under the direction of Dr. Williams, and now Dr. Moore. Again, for those who are very quick to condemn how our government has handled a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, I want to give accolades to the Solicitor General. I also want to extend that to the Attorney General—again, outside of this chamber known as Doug Downey, the MPP for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte.

Each of these bills, each of these pieces of legislation has been done with the exact same thought process in mind: protecting the well-being, health and safety of the great people of Ontario. Madam Speaker, in this case I think members on all sides of this Legislature can agree and have acknowledged that the interference that prevented the movement of people and the delivery of essential goods, such as manufacturing components, is absolutely something that should be non-partisan, that we have to address by bringing in Bill 100 to allow this to be done in a timely manner—without actually having to stop and bring back the Legislature, in the case of a winter recess or the summer recess, or if we were even on a constit week, to debate it. Time is people's lives at stake, Madam Speaker, so I want to just make sure that we all know that is the case of why these things were done.

No one can predict, members of the opposition included, when an emergency is going to strike, when a pandemic is going to hit, so why would we not want legislation that gives those people positions of authority to make decisive decisions? Why would we not want our police and our front-line responders to be able to do that absolutely immediately, so that we have the limited amount of impact that we have?

When the bridge was blocked—an illegal blockade, Madam Speaker—I want to just remind people of some points. Approximately \$17 million of trade crosses over the Ambassador Bridge hourly, making up 25% of all Canada-US trade. Supply chains were seriously disrupted, manufacturing facilities closed and employees sent home because parts were not arriving on time. Our auto sector took huge losses, as did our agriculture and many other

industries. When I think of agriculture—livestock sitting in trailers that could not move anywhere to be able to get to their place of destination, the feed for that livestock, the medicine for those livestock and the people who purport to protect them—where is all of that thought process to say, “You did a good job by getting in there as quickly as you possibly could to remedy the situation”?

Just before I continue, Madam Speaker, I want to also make sure that it’s absolutely crystal clear that with that piece of legislation, it was scoped narrowly, so that we could meet the goal effectively, and no more. Our party will always support freedom of speech and the right to protest. That should not, however, come at the expense of the people of this province, as it did in the Ambassador Bridge blockade or the blockades that were done in Ottawa. To take away the ability—for other people’s health and safety to be impacted negatively is illegal, and we all have the responsibility to uphold the laws and to ensure that. That’s why the bills that we brought in were brought in: to ensure that the police officers in uniform could do their job; that the first responders could do their job and ensure that people’s health and safety were of paramount concern.

Madam Speaker, I’m going to put on the record here a couple of other things. About 10,000 commercial vehicles hauling an estimated \$325 million use the Ambassador Bridge daily, according to the Michigan Department of Treasury. About \$50 million is from auto parts. Particularly members of the NDP, the official opposition, stand often to say they protect the automotive sector and the trades and the workers in those industries. I want to suggest to them that we can do that collectively and collaboratively, and we did take action to ensure that those people’s livelihoods and those jobs weren’t impacted. That’s why we’ve brought this bill in: so that we don’t have to stop and start and wait and challenge and be challenged. It is there to give those officials the authority they need. The moment an illegal blockade were to be set up, they have the ability to go in and take it down.

Madam Speaker, 220 Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers members farm over 3,000 acres, with 70% of their produce destined for the United States. That is a ton of produce going to the States to help them, their economy, their people eat healthily, and also our own people here to be able to do that.

Stelco: A key concern was a loss of customer confidence and long-term retention as multiple US customers had threatened to withdraw their business. Stelco was unable to ship products by truck to the US during the blockade. In response to slower customer uptake, the company was slowing its steel output and indicated it would have to idle its steelmaking facilities had the blockade continued. That has a direct impact on the jobs of people who work at Stelco and a ripple effect on the industries that support Stelco.

BASF has factories in Cornwall, Mississauga, Toronto and Windsor. Shipments that were travelling by truck could not get to key customers because of the crossing being blocked, and those customers were just days away

from having to stop their own manufacturing operations if they could not receive the appropriate inputs.

Again, we took action to be able to say to them, “This is important to people’s livelihoods, to their children’s livelihoods,” and to ensure that we could support them in their hour of need.

What the report showed and what the legislation was intended to do was to allow for the tool to allow our law enforcement officers to direct owners and operators of vehicles to remove their vehicles from illegal blockades, to remove and store objects making up an illegal blockade, and temporarily suspend the drivers’ licences and vehicle permits of those taking part in an illegal blockade.

The people of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound spoke very unequivocally to me that people breaking the law have to be held accountable, especially when it’s impacting the lives, the livelihoods and the health and safety of their fellow Ontarians. Our Premier, Premier Ford, was very clear that we will do everything in our power to protect our workers, job creators and international trade relationships from any future attempts to block our borders. It’s our talented workforce and job creators who participate in this economy that make our province a strong, reliable trading partner, and we are signalling to the world that we will continue to be open for business.

We want to be clear that the legislation that was proposed and is being implemented is specific to the illegal blockades of border crossings that impact economic activity or international trade. It was scoped very narrowly and will have no impact on the right to peaceful, lawful and temporary protests or on protests that happen elsewhere in the province.

We want to ensure by doing this that we can protect the ability of essential goods and services, such as manufacturing components, to be moved. As my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh said, \$400 million per day, according to him, is impacted when that border shuts down, so we want to ensure that we safeguard the people and the economy of Ontario, and we’re doing just that.

That six-day blockade of the bridge, as the report shows us, disrupted billions of dollars in international trade, with a ripple effect on jobs and families right here in your community and in my community. Regardless of where we live in this province, it had an impact. Manufacturing was slowed because parts weren’t arriving on time, causing those manufacturing facilities to close, shifts to be cancelled and workers to be sent home. That has a ripple effect on the critical supply chain, regardless of industry, that provides all those good-paying jobs, making sure that we are an affordable economy.

Investor confidence in Ontario as a reliable place to invest was also impacted. We want to make sure that that blockade never happens again. We also had a very big concern—and why we moved so quickly—about the Blue Water Bridge, the home of our friend from Sarnia–Lambton, Bob Bailey, the PMB guy. That is the second-busiest Ontario-US crossing, which links Sarnia with Port Huron, Michigan.

Our airports: to ensure that goods and services and, most importantly, people can move freely and uninhibited.

Many of our organizations are just-in-time delivery. This showed us that blocking something as critical as our railroads, our airports and our bridges has a huge, huge impact. We wanted to, and we did, take decisive action. We took the decision to make sure that we put actions in place so that people will have the very quick ability to respond to an emergency, to an illegal blockade—as we said, “illegal” being the key. Madam Speaker, we’ll continue to be proud that we took action to safeguard the lives and livelihoods of the people of Ontario.

1420

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Michael Mantha: It’s always an honour to rise on behalf of the good people of Algoma–Manitoulin and to share a few words here on the floor of the Legislature.

Today’s take-note debate on the blockade in Ottawa and Windsor is not an easy topic for any of us. What took place in these cities affected everyone in this province in one way or another. Of course, it affected people in Windsor and Ottawa the most. It was in those cities that workers had their shifts cut, either for their safety or because blockades stopped goods from getting to market. It was in Ottawa that residents of the downtown could not find peace because horns were blaring from dawn to dusk.

These were the most apparent consequences of the blockade, and rightly so. No one in Ontario should be subjected to that kind of lawlessness, even in the course of a protest.

However, I am sure that members here would agree with me that we all felt the far-reaching consequences of what took place during the convoy’s occupation of Ottawa and the Ambassador Bridge. The biggest change I noticed was the rising level of anger and frustration that constituents were expressing to my staff and to me. During difficult times, this is to be expected, and it’s kind of a normal process. When you don’t know what’s going on, you question it. People are hearing and seeing events unfold on the news and they want to know what actions we, as elected officials, are taking. Sometimes what we are calling for or doing is not going to please everyone; in fact, it almost never does.

During the course of the blockade, I noticed that it became less and less possible for people to accept that disagreement was an option. You know that old saying, “Let’s agree to disagree”? We’ve drawn lines in the sand and we have less of those conversations. You’re either on my side or not at all, and communication breaks down. That’s if we were not in complete agreement on this issue.

That was the most worrying thing for me because that has long-term implications for the course of our province and our country. Our roles as members of this Legislature require regular communication with people. That means listening first and talking later. Before being elected, most of my job required the same skills. Effective communication requires both parties to listen and achieve an understanding of different perspectives. In fact, there are multiple perspectives in some situations that need to be considered and understood. However, understanding a person’s perspective does not necessarily mean that you

have to agree with them. We all know that there are different paths to follow to get to the same desired destination. Even though all parties may understand each other in the end, they still might not agree on what was right and what was best.

That happens in this place every day. We stand up on opposite sides of this chamber and disagree with each other on the best way to deliver prosperity for the people of Ontario. Despite this, we continue to have working relationships with one another. We can come together to find the areas that we can agree on and act to deliver on those key issues. This is a vital aspect of how this place functions, but it is also something that I worry is being put at risk by the growing climate of division we’re seeing in the province.

The frustration expressed by many is understandable. People are tired of dealing with the many relentless stresses that directly result from this pandemic. We’ve endured lockdowns, restrictions, economic hardship, loneliness, loss of education, employment opportunities, sick loved ones and thousands of deaths across the country and in our own communities. Understandably, Ontarians are tired, they’re frustrated and they’re scared.

Of course, understanding and communicating is a two-way street. What we can and must do as elected officials is to make our offices and ourselves available to the public we serve, to take the time to hear the concerns that are brought to us. Again, that does not mean that we will agree with every person who comes our way, but hearing is always the first step to being heard.

I cannot pretend that I have all the answers to what is clearly a growing issue in our society. I’m offering my comments today as words of advice.

We spend a lot of time in this place talking about raising the level and tone of dialogue, and I think we saw a taste of what failing to do so will result in. If we want to return to some semblance of the calm, respectful and tolerant society that most of us grew up in, we need to turn down the volume of our reactions and exchange ideas and just learn to listen better and understand each other.

The fact of the matter is, we are heading into an election in about 60 days. That means that the level of partisanship is going to heat up in the final weeks of this session and will continue to rise over May. That is the nature of our democracy. We have to highlight where our parties differ so that voters can choose someone to govern. However, I would put this to the members present that this election comes with an extra burden on all of us. Given everything that the world has been through in the last four years, and given the events that have taken place in this province in the last few months, including the topic of today’s debate, it’s our job to not let the partisanship get away from us. Whatever the government looks like after June 2, a number of us will come back to this place and we will need to be able to work together once again.

Travelling in my riding, I often speak to people about what happened in Ottawa and what happened in Windsor, and a lot of the discussions always lead to, “Why did that happen? Why did people across this country feel the urge to gather together and raise their concerns in unison?” A

lot of it always comes back to certain decisions that were made—and some of those decisions that were made at the beginning were perceived to be made by the health care professionals who were making those decisions, and there was less resistance from the public to absorbing that information.

What really triggered a lot of anger, and what I consistently hear from businesses, mom-and-pops, and people I sit down with at the coffee shop, is that somewhere along the way those decisions stopped being made for the public on the basis and needs of health care—and the perception and how these decisions were being made were being made politically. That's what really frustrated people. They were asking, "Why are they making this decision now?" It just seemed that how decisions were being made was reacting to a certain period of time as far as some information that was coming from the health care team, where the numbers were dropping—"Oh, we're going to open up again." Then, "Oops, we're going to slow down again." "But wait a second"—the health team who were at the table, advising the government, telling them not to take those steps, because if they were to, then we would end up back in this position.

Ultimately, yes, the government made a political decision. They claim that they used the best advice that was given to them, which, now we know, that wasn't—and then we took a step forward, but then we took three steps back. That's what led to a lot of frustration with people. Why are we doing this? Why are we going around on a roller coaster ride? We're having fun on that merry-go-round, and then, all of a sudden, oh, man, we're back to where we started from. We've done that six times now. We're into a sixth time.

There are businesses that are out there that are, first, not getting the response that they're expecting from this government. They're still waiting for a response on the small business grants—or the tourism sector: "Am I going to be eligible?"

There are a lot of people who are asking, "Why did they remove the masking? It was too early to remove it. Why couldn't they wait?" The evidence is pretty clear, as far as what we're seeing right now—and I'll only speak for northern Ontario, where we're seeing a climb in COVID-positive tests that are coming back.

What's gone on in Ottawa and Windsor is very difficult, but let's not ignore why people were frustrated and ended up in those communities as well.

1430

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I've been listening to a lot of great comments through the whole debate from both sides of the House, and I want to bring it back to my riding and maybe something a little bit more personal as to why I think we need to do what we are doing.

I have two sons in the trades, and my other son is a police officer. His wife is also a police officer. The two boys in the trades get equipment from the States in order to work, so that's how the blockades at Windsor, especially, affected them.

The police officer was not involved in any work at Windsor or Ottawa, although some of the officers in his police service were. I think any police officer who is involved in this type of thing—in fact, involved in many things—just wants the tools to be able to do their work. That's what they're after, and they need our support to do that.

When something like this comes along—and all of us can remember back a few years. There's something in our lifetime that you're going to remember the rest of your life. Something happens where you know where you were and maybe even the time of day it happened. I think we're going to look back on these two years—more than two years now—with COVID, certainly look back on the blockades at the bridge in Windsor and what happened in Ottawa and think, "I remember being there." We're in the House and are maybe more involved with it than some people are, but I think people around this province are going to remember, "I remember what happened in the winter of 2022, when things went south at these two locations."

There are going to be lots of questions asked, I'm sure. "Why did it happen?" And there's all kinds of reasons. We've heard a lot of them today: the frustration in the minds of a lot of people in Ontario and across this country with what happened and what was going on with COVID. There are all kinds of reasons why these things happen, and I think that's all going to come out in the wash with the inquiries that are being proposed, both federally and, I believe, with the city of Ottawa doing an investigation. But whatever happens there, I'll leave that up to the people who are going to be doing those inquiries.

What any law enforcement officer asks of us is to give them the tools that they can use in their trade, as long as they are fair and equitable to everybody. They shouldn't favour one side versus another. But people should know that if they do things, if they break the law, they can be held accountable, and there are repercussions. Also, the law enforcement officials know, "I can do this in a certain situation."

I also want to say that there was some discussion as to why the police didn't show up, bang, just as soon as things started to happen. There are different reasons, I'm sure, that are going to come out after these inquiries are done. But in my riding, after midnight, there are very few police officers on the road. I know the county of Wellington has got two OPP officers on the road; that's it. Do you take one away for a few days and leave that other officer by themselves after midnight to deal with, maybe, some serious calls, such as domestic calls, which can be one of the most serious calls they go to?

It took a while for the coordination of the police officers involved to happen. I would be worried if, all of a sudden, the authorities took a whole bunch of law enforcement officers at once out of an area and left it unprotected. They didn't want to do that. This coordination took quite an effort, and I think we all know that—when they got it all together. But there are some tools here, I think, that are going to be of benefit to our police officers, and I'm going to read part of it here that I think is quite important.

“A police officer would be able to arrest an individual without a warrant when the officer believes on reasonable grounds that the individual:

“—failed to follow a police officer’s direction to stop impeding critical border infrastructure;

“—failed to follow a police officer’s direction to stop assisting others with such an impediment;

“—failed to follow a police officer’s direction to disperse;

“—interfered with or obstructed any person exercising a power or performing a duty or function under the act, such as a police officer; or

“—failed to identify themselves when a police officer required them to for the purpose of laying a charge.”

Those are five pretty simple points right there, which I think any police officer confronted with this type of thing could go to the person who he believes, on reasonable grounds, is causing a problem at these border places, and say, “Look, here’s what I can do. I don’t have to do it, but here’s what I can do if you don’t make an effort to move out of the way and stop your blockades.”

It’s very simple, which I think is another great thing that our law enforcement people will applaud. It’s not difficult to understand this, because I think I can understand it and I’m not probably the brightest bulb in the tree at times. Anyway, I think that’s what we have to do for our police officers. Certainly, they ask for it and they want that.

So the other interesting thing is in Essex county—I’m going to go back to my riding again. There was a feed company. We all think of food as an issue with border crossings and car parts and everything like that. I had a feed mill call me up that was going to run out of feed to make feed for the animals that they supply, the farmers they supply. He called me up—and they come across Windsor most of the time. He said, “We’re desperate.”

There are certain ingredients they use to make animal feed. They feed chickens. They feed hogs. They feed cattle. They feed all kinds of animals. You just can’t go change the feed on an animal. It upsets them. Because you run out of something, you just can’t substitute it right away. You have to sort of blend these things in because it can upset that animal, and that’s what they were afraid of. This is the biggest feed mill in Canada; it’s in my riding. It’s huge. I couldn’t even think of the numbers of chickens and hogs and cattle they feed, but this is a huge, huge mill.

So you can understand their concern when things weren’t coming across in Windsor. They tried to go to Port Huron after that, but then, of course, we know that Port Huron got blocked off—or not blocked off so much, but all the trucks were going to Port Huron and causing a big backlog there. So they were very concerned that they were going to have to make some pretty hard decisions on their feed formulas, and they didn’t want to upset the digestive systems, which is what it does to animals, and because their production for the farmers would go down, other than being hard on the animals. So he called me up and said, “We can’t get some of our supplies from across the border. We’ve got to get this thing stopped.” So there was a lot of frustration with companies that maybe we aren’t even thinking of.

And 70% of our produce grown in the Leamington area—huge greenhouse industry down there; a lot of us have seen that greenhouse industry—goes across the border. I think someone here said that they just couldn’t stop producing. Once you plant the seed, it’s growing. The produce is there. You’ve got to do something with it or it’s going to spoil on you. Those are huge, huge economic issues that we would have with these illegal blockades.

I’m very thrilled that the Solicitor General has worked on this as much as she has, that she’s brought out these new things, so that police officers have the tools that they need to go to a situation such as this and act quickly. Like I say, these five points that I just read through that the police officers have—these tools are certainly going to help that situation.

Thank you, Speaker, for the time.

1440

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate?

Mr. Norman Miller: I’m pleased to have the opportunity to debate on the report on Ontario’s fourth declared provincial emergency, from February 11, 2022, to February 23, 2022. On February 11, the Premier declared a province-wide state of emergency as a result of the ongoing blockades on transportation routes and critical infrastructure at various locations across the province.

On February 12, through an order in council, cabinet confirmed this order. This allowed the government to pass emergency regulation O. Reg. 71/22, critical infrastructure and highways. Prior to this, law enforcement did not have all the tools it needed to end the blockades. Fines were not sufficient to break up the illegal blockades, and police were piecing together provisions from multiple statutes.

O. Reg. 71/22 gave our law enforcement professionals the tools they needed to deal with this unprecedented situation. This regulation prohibited the blockage of critical infrastructure: for example, 400-series highways, utilities infrastructure, hospitals, COVID-19 vaccine clinics, and international and interprovincial bridges and crossings. It also prohibited individuals from preventing travel when this would threaten the delivery of goods and services and the health, safety and well-being of the public. It gave law enforcement the ability to remove objects being used to blockade infrastructure in contravention of this order, and set out powers to suspend and cancel drivers’ licences and commercial vehicle permits.

On February 14, the regulation was amended to confirm that law enforcement could remove and store objects such as vehicles when they were being used in contravention to the regulation, and make the owners and operators of these vehicles responsible for the costs of removal and storage. As the report states, these measures were necessary and essential to ending the blockades.

Members from both sides of this House have recognized the impact that the blockades were having on regular working people across the province. On a normal day, hundreds of millions of dollars in goods go over our borders. Booming trade at our borders means more jobs at

home, which means more families able to make and maintain a decent standard of living. But the Anderson Economic Group estimates that the so-called “freedom convoy” blockades cost an estimated \$144.9 million in lost wages on both sides of the border. That is \$144.9 million directly out of the pockets of hard-working people in communities like Ingersoll, Brampton, Windsor, Oakville, Cambridge and Woodstock.

The auto sector supports nearly 100,000 jobs in Ontario, and hundreds of thousands more jobs spin off from this sector. Our border with the US is vital to the success of this industry. Between February 7 and February 15 of this year, when there were blockades at vital border crossings, Anderson Economic Group estimates that the auto industry lost US\$299.9 million. In addition to the impact on industry from the disruption of trade at our borders, businesses in downtown Ottawa had to close for weeks on end, and the lives of residents of Ottawa were severely disrupted.

I quote the 120-day report, as it concisely says:

“These prolonged blockades had an adverse impact on access to goods and services as well as employment, resulting in manufacturers cancelling shifts and businesses closing, as well as being detrimental to the quality of life and ease of movement, particularly in Ottawa and Windsor.”

If the blockades had continued, the impacts would have escalated. We’ve heard from several companies and industry associations that were just days away from further damage to livelihoods and business. Stelco was unable to ship products by truck to the United States during the blockade. As a result, the company was slowing down its steel output and said that it would have had to idle its steel-making facilities had the blockade continued.

The Aerospace Industries Association of Canada, AIAC, said that while the blockade was ongoing, aerospace companies were expecting delays of one to three days on cross-border shipments, and some outright cancelled shipments of goods and manufactured inputs. They also say that goods crossing the Canada-US border will likely come with a cost premium in the future. Companies may be forced to seek alternative transportation modes or processes; for example, air transportation.

BASF, which has factories in Cornwall, Mississauga, Toronto and Windsor, had shipments that could not get across the border, and some customers were just days away from having to stop their own manufacturing operations if they could not receive the appropriate inputs from BASF.

The agricultural industry was also threatened, with goods such as livestock, feed and perishable goods stuck at the border. This not only hurt farmers and small businesses, but also would have raised animal welfare concerns and threatened the food supply chain, representing a major risk to public safety.

The 120-day report confirms that these outcomes were avoided because of the emergency order, saying, “It was reasonable to believe the harm or damage caused by the emergency would be alleviated by the order as it provided

additional tools for law enforcement to address obstructions.”

I want to finish by thanking our police services for their professionalism in ending the illegal blockades at our border peacefully and safely. This includes police services of the Ontario Provincial Police, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Windsor Police Service and officers from Brantford, Chatham-Kent, LaSalle, London, Hamilton and Waterloo, as well as the more than 120 police services that worked together to end the blockade in downtown Ottawa.

I also want to thank the Solicitor General of Ontario for her work on this issue and express my complete confidence in her ability to continue to protect the province of Ontario from illegal blockades.

Additionally, I ask all members of this House to support Bill 100, currently before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. This bill would ensure that law enforcement has the tools to take the necessary action to protect public safety and economic activity without an emergency order in a blockade situation.

Ontario has long had the reputation of being a reliable trading partner and a good place to invest, start a business and grow a family. This report shows that this government did what was necessary to protect this reputation from individuals who sought to disrupt the economic activity and the safety, health and well-being of the public.

Madam Speaker, with the little time I have left, I would just like to reinforce this. If we look at some of the recent announcements in the Windsor area, where the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade and the Premier—I believe it was on March 23 they were there, and they did a huge announcement: a \$4.9-billion Stellantis battery plant, with some 2,500 jobs. You have to be able to cross the border for an investment like this to make sense, because most of those batteries are going to be heading to where the market is, which is in the United States. And of course, this is also critical for northern Ontario and for the Ring of Fire, for all the critical minerals that are being mined—chromite, cobalt, nickel, copper, platinum—that are so critical to the transition to a sustainable, global economy and so important for the economy of Ontario and of northern Ontario. I think that illustrates why Bill 100 and why the measures that we’re taking are so important: to keep our border open and to keep our relations with our partner to the south the way they’ve been for many, many years.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

There being no further debate, I declare the debate concluded.

Orders of the day?

Mr. Michael Parsa: No further business.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Jennifer K. French): There being no further business, this House stands adjourned until Tuesday, April 5, at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1451.

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Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
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Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	

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

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Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (OP)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Park, Lindsey (IND)	Durham	
Parsa, Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Associate Minister of Digital Government / Ministre associé délégué de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre du Développement du Nord, des Mines, des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Roberts, Jeremy (PC)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Romano, Hon. / L'hon. Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Simard, Amanda (LIB)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Singh, Gurratan (NDP)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Singh, Sara (NDP)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises et à la Réduction des formalités administratives
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
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Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
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Wilson, Jim (IND)	Simcoe—Grey	
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Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
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Vacant	Elgin—Middlesex—London	

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