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Mardi
22 novembre 2022

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Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 22 November 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 22 novembre 2022

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BETTER MUNICIPAL
GOVERNANCE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 VISANT À AMÉLIORER
LA GOUVERNANCE MUNICIPALE

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 17, 2022, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 39, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 and to enact the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Repeal Act, 2022 / Projet de loi 39, Loi visant à modifier la Loi de 2006 sur la cité de Toronto et la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités et à édicter la Loi de 2022 abrogeant la Loi sur la Réserve agricole de Duffins-Rouge.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When we last debated Bill 39, the member for Barrie–Innisfil had the floor. I believe she still has some time on the clock—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Oh, questions and responses; I apologize. There are questions to the member from Barrie–Innisfil.

Mr. Ross Romano: I'm happy to be able to rise this morning and speak to the importance of building housing across the good province of Ontario. We know that we have such a challenge. We've heard time and time again the concerns that we have across this province, this country, in seeking out and finding attainable housing. It is something that is so important, very near and dear, and something that I trust that the members opposite recognize the importance of—attainable housing—but, more importantly than anything, it's about actually doing something to accomplish that goal.

We're moving forward in that fashion, and I'm wondering, to the member opposite, if they could please help us understand what they have against us working towards building more attainable housing in the province of Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The question is addressed to the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you to the member for that question. I also don't understand why the opposition is opposed to building more houses, to get more attainable

housing online. There's not an event or a time that goes by in the riding that I humbly represent where housing as an issue doesn't come up, whether it's someone who says, "I'm worried about my kids not being able to find a home," or someone in their family who has been saving up.

This government, from day one, has become innovative in terms of how we build housing. Just recently I had Minister Clark in the riding of Barrie–Innisfil, where we announced a modular build, which is a really exciting way to get some affordable houses built and get online quite quickly. But we learned these models from other jurisdictions, so if other jurisdictions are doing things well, why not use evidence-based policy in order to improve the way we build here in Ontario and how we, of course, support the governance of the municipalities?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The next question.

Ms. Jessica Bell: My question is to the member for Barrie–Innisfil. The province's own Housing Affordability Task Force, since we're talking about evidence-based decision-making, said that access to land is not an issue. It's not the reason why we have a housing supply shortage.

Why is this government choosing to open up the greenbelt when, before the election, you made a commitment to not open up the greenbelt, given that land is not an issue when it comes to dealing with the housing supply crisis?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: It's always a pleasure to hear the member from University–Rosedale. I know she agrees with many of our policies: for example, fast-tracking the missing middle. In fact, she's been on record saying that "fast-tracking missing-middle development so we can build two- and three-bedroom townhouses and laneway housing"—and that's exactly what we're moving towards, so I'm glad to hear her support for that particular policy.

We're using every tool we possibly can in order to, again, bring about attainable housing, including things like garden suites and secondary units. We need to continue to build on that progress, and that's exactly what we're doing in this bill.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. Will Bouma: Speaker, through you to the member: I know that our government has committed to putting out one piece of housing legislation per year. Here we've seen a major policy change and two pieces of housing legislation coming forward. I was wondering if the member could expand further—and even just last year we had a record number of housing starts, I think, in almost 40 years, with 100,000 homes built—on how important it is to be able to get to our target of getting a million and a half

homes. What does that mean with the immigration targets that have been set with the federal government, meaning that the population of Ontario is going to be growing by at least 350,000 people per year for the foreseeable future? How important is it that we just get those housing starts going, and how adaptable do we have to be in order to make that happen?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you for that question. This bill did not come lightly. Our entire housing strategy has been something we've been working on from 2018. When we talked to AMO, we talked to different municipalities, we talked to rural Ontario, we talked to the affordable housing task force, they laid out clear recommendations of how to move the pendulum. We've seen, from report after report, whether it's Scotiabank or many others, or the Smart Prosperity Institute, where they talked about how 1.5 million homes is what we need to cool things down. But, even then, some of these reports were saying that we need to build even more than that.

Speaker, what we're doing today is taking that fine-balance approach, allowing for more attainable housing to be built, but also doing it in a very wise way to still enjoy the amenities that we do and, of course, all of the lovely parks that we enjoy every day.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the member from Barrie–Innisfil about housing in a way that—I experienced this in my riding from constituents. I have a couple who are 90 years old and 80 years old, and they have a daughter who is 50 years old with developmental disabilities. And now the parents are in long-term-care homes. So their daughter, who is 50 years old and has developmental disabilities needs housing, and she needs supportive housing.

Where do the bills for stronger mayors, building homes faster, increasing municipal powers—where is that housing for people, for adult children who need those supports when their parents can't look after them anymore?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: The member knows that every day we delay housing adds to the cost of that house. We know that on an average house, over six months, we're adding \$17,520 to the cost of that home. When we talk about apartments and condos, there's \$11,640 added to the cost of that particular home with delays.

Since 2018, every housing bill we've introduced has been very fine-tuned on the issue of what do we do to ensure that people have attainable housing. I talked to a lady—her name is Cindy—in Innisfil, and she's very excited about our transit-oriented community development in Innisfil because she knows that that has the potential to create all kinds of attainable housing.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): That's all the time we have for questions and answers.

We're going to move to further debate.

0910

Ms. Jessica Bell: I'm proud to stand today to speak on Bill 39, because the bill is so important. What I'm not proud about is seeing this government introduce a bill that

is a real threat to democratic norms and a bill that will double down on suburban sprawl in areas that we should protect.

I want to explain the bill to you. Bill 39 consolidates power in the hands of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, at the expense of everybody else. The bill consolidates the democratic power in the hands of the mayor of the city of Toronto, at the expense of the 2.9 million citizens in Toronto and the city councillors that were elected to represent them. The bill has very little to do with solving the housing affordability crisis and helping people get a home that is affordable. There is no evidence that I have seen from this government that Bill 39—or its twin bill, Bill 23—is going to lower housing prices to make homes affordable again or lower rent prices to make homes affordable for lower-income, moderate-income and middle-income people. What this bill is about is bulldozing the province to help the Premier's wealthy developer friends. That's what this bill is about. It is an affront to democracy.

I want to go through the three schedules in the bill. It's a small bill, unlike Bill 23, which was a very big bill. I wonder if you're going to take this bill to committee, I really do, so that city councillors, citizens, can speak about the consequences of this bill in this region. I wonder if you're going to take it to committee. I hope you do.

This bill has three schedules. Schedule one, the City of Toronto Act: What this bill does is, it says that the mayor of the city of Toronto can get a bylaw passed with just a third of the members of city council. That is a slap in the face of representative democracy and majority rule—50 plus 1. Now the mayor can get a bylaw passed with just eight councillors. That's really astonishing. It is truly astonishing.

I am also really disappointed, and that's a polite word, to hear that Mayor Tory asked for these powers. That is a real shame. Because he didn't say anything about asking for those powers when he was running for office, nor did this government say that they were once again going to meddle in municipal elections and local democratic decision-making when this government was running for government in June 2022. So it is, quite frankly, shocking to see this.

The second schedule that is in this bill is the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Repeal Act. What this schedule does is, it eliminates more of the protections that exist in this area, the Duffins-Rouge area, in order to make it much easier for some of this government's wealthiest donors, developers, to build on this land, even though, for the last 50 years, governments of all political stripes, from Bill Davis to Mike Harris to Dalton McGuinty, understood the value of protecting the greenbelt and protecting our farmland.

This land on the greenbelt is cheaper than land that can be used for development, because it has easements on it to ensure that it is protected as farmland. These developers, including some of the Ontario provincial government's—the PC Party's—wealthy developer friends, bought this land cheap over the years, and now they've finally got their own way and they get to develop it and make a huge

amount of money. That's what the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Repeal Act is really all about.

Then, schedule 3, and this is also very concerning, allows the Premier to hand-pick regional council chairs. That is very concerning because the regional council chairs are democratically elected by city councillors within that region. So we've just gone through an election. These city councillors—some of them are new to office. Some are just getting inaugurated, they're getting a tour of offices, they're learning the ropes, they're finding out the rules, they're hiring their staff, and then all of a sudden this provincial government bill comes through and says, "Actually, there's one thing you aren't going to be able to do anymore: You're not going to be able to elect your regional council chair, because we have decided that the Premier gets to hand-pick the regional council chair," and that's exactly what you're going to do. I really hope you take this to committee so that we can hear from regional municipal councillors and get their perspective on the drastic change you have done.

I heard the member for Barrie–Innisfil mention that there has been some consultation with AMO. When I communicate with AMO, I'm not hearing that there has been a ton of consultation on this; they were very surprised about Bill 23. My guess is that they're very surprised about Bill 39. The letter that they wrote to us about Bill 23 used language that I have never seen a very moderate institution like AMO—I've never seen them use this language before. They use the word "radical" because they're so concerned about what this government is doing with land use planning in southern Ontario, in rapid-fire succession, without consultation, without considering the consequences on municipal budgets, without considering the consequences on democracy, without considering the consequences on meeting our climate change goals.

Interjection: It's messed up.

Ms. Jessica Bell: It's messed up. Thank you very much. It is messed up. You certainly didn't run on that in the last election.

What I find so frustrating—I want to go back to the City of Toronto Act and the decision to pass what I would call an undemocratic strong-mayors bill on steroids—is that this government, to the best of my knowledge, hasn't even outlined the provincial priorities that will allow the mayor to pass a bylaw through on eight city council votes. The mayor has this power to use minority rule to get a bylaw passed, and they can only do it on provincial priorities that are identified by this provincial government. But this government, to the best of my knowledge, hasn't yet identified what those provincial priorities are. I guess it will be in regulation. You will sit down; you will decide what they are. But we don't even know what those provincial priorities are. We can guess. I'm sure it will be broad-sweeping to give the mayor a huge amount of latitude on housing, transit, development, development charges. I'm sure it will be sweeping. But I believe those kinds of decisions should be made also by the people of Toronto and the city councillors we elected to represent us.

I was in committee—Bill 23—last night, and then immediately after I went to a residents' association AGM

with my colleague MPP Wong-Tam. What struck us is how all these decisions that city councillors make on behalf of the residents of the city of Toronto are now going to be made by MPPs elsewhere—MPPs who represent other regions of the province: rural regions, Ottawa, Barrie. Now the provincial government gets to decide how much parkland we have in downtown Toronto, where 80% of people live in an apartment in my riding. Now this government gets to decide development fee charges, gets to drastically cut them, which determines the quality of the transit service that a Torontonian has when they get up in the morning and go to work. Honestly, it is disturbing.

What I also find very difficult to fathom with Bill 39 and Bill 23 is this idea that we're doing this in order to solve our housing affordability crisis and our housing supply crisis. They are two different things. This government loves to talk about the housing supply shortage that we have. It is very real. It was real even before the federal government upped our immigration targets, which is absolutely necessary. But there's also a housing affordability crisis, which this government—I can't even hear—sometimes you say the word "attainable." But the idea of talking about affordability—this government has a real difficulty in actually saying the word. That's what I find so hard to fathom.

0920

And what I see Bill 39—and Bill 23—do is that I see it doubling down on suburban sprawl, which is incredibly unsustainable. It will build the kinds of homes that are, on average, about 3,000 square-foot, cost easily over \$1 million—which makes them unaffordable for the vast majority of people—and they lock us into unsustainable, soul-destroying commutes and unsustainable transportation patterns.

They also cost municipalities an obscene amount of money to service. When you compare it to increasing the amount of housing that we need in existing neighbourhoods, in the neighbourhoods people want to live in, it's much cheaper for municipalities to service those areas. It also builds the kind of sustainable, greener, more livable regions and cities that we need in order to move through this climate crisis and adapt to it and respond to it. But instead, this government is doubling down on suburban sprawl. Schedule 2, in particular—and also schedule 3—makes it easier for them to do it. I have so many concerns about that.

I recall Peggy Brekveld from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. She came into committee to express her concern about the consequences of suburban sprawl and the consequences that this government is moving forward on to take land away from farmland and pave over it. She mentioned that there are 320 acres a day of farmland that's currently lost in Ontario each day.

We are very lucky. We have some of the best growing area, some of the best growing land in the world. We are one of those unique areas that can produce enough food to sustain Ontario, and then we can export it. But instead, we're looking at paving over this, and that's exactly what Bill 39 and Bill 23 are looking at doing, and I think that's a shame.

If this government was truly interested in tackling the housing affordability crisis, I would recommend that this government actually look at the Housing Affordability Task Force recommendations that you asked a task force to develop. One of the key recommendations they made is that land is not the reason why we have a housing supply shortage. They were very clear about it. They were also very clear—they never mentioned the idea of getting rid of conservation authorities, which is a huge problem, because you are. And they never talked about paving over the greenbelt, which is exactly what, in schedule 2 in Bill 39, they're going to do.

I find that deeply concerning, especially when I read reports like what's here—this is a report from the CBC, which did a deep dive into who actually owns the land in the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve area, the DeGasperis family: how many acres they own, what they bought it for; very concerning. And then I hear reports that the nine top developers who stand to benefit the most from opening up the greenbelt gave over \$500,000 to the PC Party. That really smells very fishy. It smells very dodgy. I commend the reporters that are looking into this, and I hope the Auditor General looks into this, because it just doesn't add up. It really doesn't add up.

I hope some of your own members are looking into this too, because I'm sure you're hearing about it. I read the news; I see the protests. Hundreds of people are going to your offices. That's very surprising; I don't often see that. They're concerned about the greenbelt. They want to protect it too. They thought this government was going to protect it, because you said you were going to do it during the last election. And now, all of a sudden, you're introducing bills like Bill 39 and you're doing the exact opposite thing. That's very concerning.

I'm going to conclude by talking a little bit about what I want this government to do to address the housing affordability crisis that they talk so much about. If this government was truly interested in helping people find a home that was affordable—that they could afford to buy, that they could afford to rent—then they would have a comprehensive housing program. They would develop a comprehensive housing program that dealt with numerous things. Yes, we need to build more homes, but we shouldn't be building homes on farmland and greenbelt. These should be homes that the member for Barrie–Innisfil mentioned: those missing-middle homes, those townhomes, those duplexes, those triplexes in existing neighbourhoods. Bill 23 goes some way in that direction, and there could be more that could be done. We should be increasing density near transit stations. There are measures in Bill 23 that do that; I support them. But that's the kind of sustainable housing and sustainable planning patterns that we should be moving forward on.

It is also absolutely critical that this government acknowledge that we are not going to be able to build the homes that meet the needs of Ontarians if we don't acknowledge that it will require government investment as well. There are low-income, moderate-income, middle-income people who are not going to be served by the private housing market. Many of them are not, because

they just don't earn enough money, which means that we need government investment in programs to ensure we build the housing that is actually for Ontarians; not just for investors, but for Ontarians, so they're paying off their own mortgage and not someone else's. That's what we need.

I see models that we can replicate here. I see what BC is doing, where they're moving forward with much greater government investment in public housing. I look at what the city of Toronto is doing with their Housing Now program: They have a plan to build 10,000 homes. They broke ground this week. They're building that on public land near transit stations—a third private market rentals, a third condos and a third affordable—to tackle the housing crisis. It's so sensible.

What's amazing is that the Ontario government could do this, too. We have over 6,000 properties that have been identified as being suitable for land—public land. Why don't we use that land? We could double down on that and build the kind of housing that we need. But I don't see this government doing that, and they should. They're selling off public land. They're giving it to developers. There's no affordable housing requirements in any of the developments that you're approving. The Mimico station: no affordable housing requirements. The foundry: no affordable housing requirements. That's a shame, because that land should be used for affordable housing as well.

What we are also calling for is an acknowledgement that renters need protection too. What this government is choosing to do is eliminate rent controls and renter protections so that renters have to work even harder just to keep a roof over their head and have to make tough choices around whether they can pay for food, whether they can pay for transit in order to cover rent—the escalating rent. This government is reducing the controls that they have, the renter protections that they have, which I really do find a shame, because we should be going in the other direction and strengthening renter protections so people who rent can pay affordable rent, so they have money left over at the end of the month that they can save up for a down payment and buy their own home. That's what many people want to do. But if they're paying \$3,000 a month for rent, they're never going to do that. This government—I hope you acknowledge that, because you talk a lot about attainability. Nothing is attainable if you're spending \$3,000 a month on rent—nothing. You're just running to stand still. That's it.

Then what I find so concerning about Bill 39 and Bill 23 is that there is just nothing to deal with people and help people who are just struggling to get by: people who are sleeping on couches, people who are living in encampments. Encampments are once again returning to my riding, to Toronto Centre, to Spadina–Fort York, to many urban centres. They've got nowhere to go. The housing market is—there's just no place for them. They're sleeping on the streets. There's nothing in here to address that. Instead, what I see in the fall economic statement is cuts—cuts to supportive housing programs that municipalities use. And then I see, in Bill 23, cuts to the amount of development fees that go to supportive housing programs. There's nothing.

I really urge you to rethink this. We can have homes that meet the needs of Ontarians and respect democracy at the same time. We can have homes that meet the needs of Ontarians and protect the greenbelt, protect the environment and have a healthy, thriving farming sector. You're heading in the opposite direction. I urge you to rethink it. There are better ways to go.

0930

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll move to questions and answers.

Mr. Vincent Ke: I'm happy to say that, across our province, our communities are growing. Ontario's population surpassed 15 million for the first time ever this year and is projected to grow by another two million in the next decade. We have heard that one third of Ontario's growth over the next decade is expected to happen in Toronto and Ottawa. We know that we need to plan for this growth.

Speaker, my question is, does the member opposite not agree that we need to provide the municipalities with the tools they need to plan for growth?

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member opposite. The Ontario NDP understands that we have a housing supply shortage. We made a commitment in the last election, like all parties, that we need to build 1.5 million homes to meet the need. We get it. But what we also understand is that we don't need to sacrifice democracy, the environment, municipal budgets and farmland in order to achieve the housing supply targets that we have.

What I find concerning when we're talking about municipalities and growth is that this government, with Bill 23, has made a decision to slash the amount of funding municipalities have to provide the infrastructure that is necessary for current Ontarians and future Ontarians who are coming here.

In the case of the city of Toronto, we're looking at losing \$230 million in funding that is meant to go to capital expenses to pay for the Yonge line subway expansion so that we can deal with the increase of people coming down on the Yonge North line, for the Ontario Line, for more daycares, for more schools. There are schools in my riding that are full, where there are signs in nearby condo developments saying, "Look, if you move into this apartment, we can't guarantee that you're going to have a school nearby because it's full."

So when we're talking about growth, we need to talk about the infrastructure that's needed for that growth as well and municipalities—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. Further questions?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I just want to ask the member: Right now, our new city council in London is going to be meeting at noon today to add to the growing list of names of the critics of this government's Bill 23, building homes faster. The new mayor has called a meeting today, of course, because he says he's worried about the proposed reduction in development charges which are applied to new builds for paying for the city's infrastructure. The member alluded to that a minute ago. Can she expand on how other municipalities are coming out as critics against

this bill because of the lack of planning and foresight when it comes to what cities face today?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Barrie-Innisfil has a point of order.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Pursuant to standing order 7(e), I wish to inform the House that tonight's evening sitting is cancelled.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you.

Back to the member to respond to the question.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member from London–Fanshawe. During the Bill 23 committee hearings, we received many written submissions, as well as people who came in to speak to committee about the concerns they have with municipal budgets. What the government is choosing to do is reduce development fees for certain units that they claim are affordable, but they're not. They're not affordable. We had many experts come in and say that this is not a definition of affordable that any government uses in Canada, and the consequences of that are that municipalities across Ontario, especially the ones that are growing very quickly, are going to see a drastic cut in the amount of development fees they have.

Development fees are used to partially subsidize—just partially—the costs of providing infrastructure to new and current Ontarians who are coming in. We're talking schools, sewerage, transit. So when municipalities don't have that money to provide those services, then they're either going to bring in service cuts or they're going to bring in big tax hikes. That's a solution, and neither—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you for the answer. We're going to move to the next question.

Mr. Will Bouma: I always enjoy engaging with the member from University–Rosedale. Her comments are always thoughtful, and I know that we have the same goals at heart. I appreciate hearing from her today that the opposition also wants to build 1.5 million homes; I think that's an excellent point that we can work off of together.

I'm just curious: A question that I've had when I have conversations with farming advocates is that number of the 300 acres that is going into development every day. When I ask those people—and I haven't been able to find that statistic yet. I'm hoping you may have it. You may not, which is fair. But I'm just curious: How many of the 300 acres that are being converted to development every day in the province of Ontario are not already in a locally approved official plan for development?

For example, in my community, we have large settlement areas that have been designated for 20 years. As that land is converted, I don't know if that's exactly a tragedy that that's going from farmland when it's already been decided and in official plans and everything else for that long.

I'm just wondering, because I haven't been able to find that statistic, if you might have that statistic about how much of that 300 acres is just raw farmland? Because my feeling is, based on the planning principles that we have in

place in the province of Ontario, that number is probably zero, but I'm wondering if you have any insight on that.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you for asking that question. What I do know is, the statistic of 320 acres a day came from Statistics Canada data, and the OFA broke that down to get that figure. I don't believe Statistics Canada has drilled into the details of whether that's within an area that's already zoned for development or if it's an area that is zoned for farmland. So I can't answer that question for you.

But what I also know is that the Housing Affordability Task Force has been very clear that access to land is not a reason why we have a housing supply shortage. I also know that there are many municipalities that are making the decision to keep growth within their existing boundary, which is kind of what you're getting at, instead of being forced—in the case of some municipalities—to expand their boundary and be required to have development in areas that are currently farmland or green space.

I'm very much in support of keeping the boundaries where they are and using examples of Halton and Hamilton, where they've decided to meet their job growth and population goals by increasing density within their boundaries. Thanks for allowing me to raise that.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: It's apparent that this government has a deep fear of democracy because, with every bill that has come before this House, the government has attempted to undermine core democratic processes, shifting power and resources away from ordinary working people and their elected representatives to those with deep connections to the Conservative Party.

I have a question though, because in Thunder Bay we have two shovel-ready not-for-profit projects. My question is: Is there anything in either of these bills that would provide the necessary financial support so that these projects could go ahead? Because they could be building in April, and the province is missing in action.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you to the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North. That's an excellent question.

There is nothing in Bill 23 or Bill 39 that allocates funding to go for supportive housing and affordable housing projects, which are critical in all of our ridings; they're absolutely necessary.

In fact, Bill 23 has cut the amount that development fees can be used for all buildings, for all units, not just affordable ones. They have cut the fee that should go to supportive housing programs, just like the one that you're talking about.

When we look at the investigation that the Financial Accountability Officer does into the government's books each year, we also see that over time there has been a cut in the amount of funding this government has allocated to affordable housing and supportive housing overall. And that's a shame, because it means people in your riding and my riding suffer.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I don't think we have time for another question and answer, so we're just going to move to further debate.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I rise today to speak to the second reading of Bill 39. Speaker, I just don't even know where to begin with this bill, other than to state the obvious: This is an outrageous attack on democratic principles, the principle of majority rule. Where is it in any democracy, anywhere in the world, that we say a minority of elected officials get to make the decision?

0940

You think about this: Imagine if Prime Minister Trudeau got up today and said in Parliament, "Moving forward, from now on, one third plus one of parliamentarians get to decide yea for legislation." People would be outraged, and rightfully so. As a matter of fact, it would be unconstitutional for the Prime Minister to do that. But here we are in the Ontario Legislature today, debating a bill that brings in minority rule in the nation's and the provincial capital. As one journalist, who is an expert on housing, has said, "It's nuts." Yes, it is. Literally democracy—we are literally debating the centuries-old democratic principle of majority rule within an elected body today. Think about that.

And you know what, Speaker? It's not even needed. The government's own hand-picked housing task force never once—never once—said we need strong mayors, let alone minority rule to address the housing crisis. As a matter of fact, not once—actually, explicitly, the task force said, "We don't need to open the greenbelt for development." But here we are, in schedule 2 of this bill, opening the Duffins—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Stop the clock.

I apologize for interrupting, but pursuant to standing order 50(c), I am now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader directs the debate to continue.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Speaker. Please continue. The member is very passionate.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We will continue the debate.

The member for Guelph will continue. Start the clock.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate the opportunity to finish this. I'm hoping to answer some members' questions.

In committee, when we were talking about estimates for the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, government members questioned whether the greenbelt land that's being opened for development was actually prime farmland. Well, we actually learn in this bill that the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve is one of the areas that's being opened for development, especially cropland—some of the best cropland in North America. As a matter of fact, the government sold it to farmers at well below market prices because it would be saved forever for farming. And then some land speculators bought it up cheap and now they're going to turn millions into billions with the stroke of a pen, and the rest of us are going to foot the bill for this. This is raising questions among the farm

community: Is anything sacred when it comes to protecting farmland in this province?

Speaker, this bill should just be pulled. Not even go to committee; let's just pull it.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll now turn to the questions and answers for the member for Guelph.

Mr. Will Bouma: I always enjoy engaging with my friend from Guelph. I saw him at an event just a couple of Saturdays ago and it was very good to see him.

I would like to pose to him—I know it's a little off topic from where he was going, but he did bring in farmland, and so I would like to pose to him the same question that I asked the member from University–Rosedale just a few minutes ago. We are told, and I believe the statistics, that there's 320 acres of farmland that's going into development on a daily basis in the province of Ontario. I believe that statistic is accurate. I was wondering if the member knows—because I have not been able to find the answer to that question yet, and that might be a little bit of a dig at the parliamentary assistants to agriculture, to see if they can find me that number. But how many of those acres are not already in established settlement boundaries that have been well-established, and approved official plans that have been approved at municipal council and at the provincial level, of that acreage that's not yet in the settlement boundary? I was wondering if he had any insights on what that actual number might be.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate my colleague's question. He asked me this question in the hallway a couple of weeks ago, so I asked the Ontario Farmland Trust. They're the people who came up with the statistic. It is derived directly from Statistics Canada data and I'm happy to provide that to government members: 320 acres a day.

Unfortunately, to get into the level of detail that the member is asking for is very difficult through StatsCan data, so it would have to be something that the Ministry of Agriculture, or maybe the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, should know. But it seems to me the government would want to know this information before they actually expand and develop on even more farmland. And as a matter of fact, experts have shown there are 88,000 acres of land already approved for development in Ontario within existing urban boundaries that we can use to address the housing crisis.

The question I would ask is: Why are we opening the greenbelt for development? Why are we expanding urban boundaries when we have enough land already within existing urban boundaries to build the housing we need?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for London–Fanshawe for the next question.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm getting emails daily on this issue. Last week, the theme was about the democracy attack on education workers. Now it's on Bill 39. This is what he writes:

“Bill 39 will repeal the bill that protects the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve and give ultimate power to mayors. This is a direct threat to our democracy! This is going to allow land developers and mayors to pave over massive expanses of valuable ecosystems and farmland

that is irreplaceable! This is going to mean my city councillor that I voted for may not have a voice at the table if the mayor chooses to strong-arm their way to enacting policies as they see fit.

“Please do what is right. Stop these bills. Stop this government from completely ruining this province. This is nothing more than greed and bullying” tactics.

Is the member getting emails like this as well in his office?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Yes, I'm getting a number of emails like this. First of all, we're literally bringing in minority rule. We're talking centuries of democratic principles are under threat in Bill 39.

When it comes to the greenbelt, I don't know if I have ever heard a Premier be so explicit so many times, promising not to do something when it comes to the greenbelt. I can tell you, we looked it up in the Hansard, and there are multiple occasions, just in this House alone, that the Premier said that we will not open the greenbelt for development, and that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing said that we would not open the greenbelt for development. Of course, we know the infamous campaign video where the Premier explicitly said, “I will not open the greenbelt for development.”

So what so many people are asking me is: Why doesn't the Premier keep his promise to protect the greenbelt? Because we don't need that land to build the housing we need. We already have it approved for development.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We have time for another quick question.

Mr. Will Bouma: I would never waste an opportunity to interact with my friend from Guelph, Madam Speaker. I'm just trying to think of where I was going now, because I had a good question stuck in my head somewhere. It's rattling around.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: We're in trouble.

Mr. Will Bouma: Exactly. I can see the smoke coming out of my ears. Thank you to my friend from Kiiwetinoong.

But I was wondering—again, a little bit off topic—but if we are able to decrease development charges to get more purpose-built rental housing online—I know it's not in this bill, but I was wondering if I could pick the member's brain on that.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: Yes, I think if the province replaces that lost revenue to municipalities, then it's something we can consider if it is truly affordable, and in perpetuity being affordable. But the bottom line is, we can't ask existing property taxpayers to foot the bill for that.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to further debate. I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to Bill 39, the Better Municipal Governance Act.

I would think everybody in this Legislature would very quickly agree that Ontario is the best place in the world to call home. I know that everybody in my community—that, I think, we can all agree on. Unfortunately, there are a couple of issues. Fast-pacing demand and a lack of supply: Those are the two things I'm going to talk about today.

That is what has driven house prices out of reach for many families in Ontario. Again, it's fast-increasing demand, which I want to talk about for a moment, and then lack of supply, which I'll also address.

Think about the fast-increasing demand. What has happened in Ontario in the last five years? What has changed in Ontario that has caused this demand? We need to go back a few years ago to 2017, 2018, when the previous Liberal government gave up on manufacturing in Ontario. They just gave up.

0950

I'm going to read you two sentences from their long-term report on the economy. It told you what the Liberal government saw coming up. It said, "The structure of the Ontario economy will continue to shift from goods-producing to service-producing sectors," and, they went on, "shifting employment from goods-producing industries, in particular manufacturing, to service-sector industries."

The previous government gave up on manufacturing. They hiked hydro rates, they hiked taxes and they added red tape, and as a result we saw a loss of 300,000 jobs in the province of Ontario. That's in the past. That's what happened. That's how we started.

I'll give you one more reference, because I think it's important that we hear. Unfortunately, Sergio Marchionne has since passed. He was the chair of then-called Fiat Chrysler, in Windsor. The headline in the Toronto Star was, "Fiat Chrysler Chief Worries about Ontario's Competitiveness."

Sergio was sitting on a stage in Windsor with former Premier Wynne. They were talking auto because auto was declining in Ontario. Every single auto company was reducing, closing, stopping certain vehicles in their production line. Sergio Marchionne was sitting with the Premier and she mused about Chrysler expanding. He delivered a very blunt message directly to Premier Wynne, who was sitting beside him. He said, "This is not what I would call the cheapest jurisdiction." He was referring to hydro rates, red tape and higher taxes. He said to her, "I think you need to create the conditions to be competitive."

So exit Premier Kathleen Wynne, enter Premier Doug Ford and our party. This is fundamentally why there is fast-increasing demand in housing today. We looked at the situation that the previous Liberal government left, of high taxes, high hydro rates, 300,000 jobs that had left, Sergio Marchionne saying that you've got to create the conditions to be competitive, and Premier Ford said, "All right, this is what we are going to do. We are going to lower the cost of doing business."

We visited Ford and GM and Stellantis. We visited Toyota. We visited Honda. We visited all of the auto companies, the engine manufacturers and the parts makers. There are 700 parts makers in Ontario and 450 tool and die makers. We visited as many as we could. There are 300 companies that are in connected and autonomous vehicles: GM up in Markham, Ford in Ottawa and BlackBerry QNX in Ottawa. They each employ hundreds and hundreds of people designing the cars of the future, these connected and autonomous vehicles. We visited them all and they all gave us the same message: You've got to lower the cost of doing business.

And we did, Speaker. We began by reducing WSIB premiums—workplace safety costs—by 50%. That is a \$2.5-billion annual savings to business. We put in an accelerated capital cost, which means they can write off the cost of their new equipment in a year. That's a \$1-billion savings. We reduced commercial and industrial hydro rates by 16%; that's \$1.3 billion. We lowered the provincial share of local property taxes by \$450 million. We reduced the burden of red tape on business—at that time it was \$400 million and it's now over \$550 million. All in, we reduced the cost of doing business by \$7 billion annually.

So when I say to you that yes, Ontario is the best place to call home, but fast-increasing demand and lack of supply is what the problem is, the fast-increasing demand comes from the fact that we reduced the cost of doing business by \$7 billion, and because of that, companies have flocked back into Ontario.

I'll start just with the automotive because that was the immediate response. Premier Ford and myself, we went to Washington; we met with Ford. We went to Plano, Texas; we met with Toyota. We went to all of the companies and we said, "We did what you asked. We lowered the cost of doing business in Ontario. We are now competitive. What are you going to do for us?"

Ford, in Oakville—\$1.8-billion investment; Honda, in Alliston—\$1.4-billion investment; LG-Stellantis, in Windsor—\$5.2-billion investment, their first investment in North America; GM, in Oshawa and Ingersoll—\$2.3-billion investment; Stellantis, in Windsor and Brampton—\$3.6-billion investment; Umicore, out of Brussels and now in Loyalist township—\$1.5 billion. There's \$16 billion in new investment, just in auto—in EV—that has created tens of thousands of new jobs.

To build LG's plant in Windsor—just to build that plant—are thousands upon thousands of employees. It's a 4.5-million-square-foot building. To put it in our terms, in Canadian terms, it's the size of 112 hockey arenas. That's what's being built down there. It needs thousands of people to build that facility down there, and once it's built it will employ 2,500. Look at GM in Oshawa: 2,700 men and women—in fact, 50% women, 50-50—showed up at work today, in Oshawa, in a plant that was closed. All these people need a place to live, so when we say "fast-increasing demand," you can see that just the auto sector alone has created tens upon tens of thousands of jobs. That's why there's demand.

Since we were first elected, pre-COVID, there were 300,000 new jobs created in Ontario. Those people need a place to live. Since the pandemic—yes, of course, like everybody else, we lost 1.1 million jobs, but we gained 1.3 million back. We added 200,000 jobs, just since the pandemic, throughout the pandemic and now. That's 500,000 new men and women who went to work in a job this morning—more than when we were first elected, only four and a half years ago.

So when we say that fast-increasing demand is causing a problem—why we need Bill 39, the Better Municipal Governance Act—it's because we have so many people here who are working, who need a place to live. So it's not just automotive.

I made a couple of notes while I was sitting here, listening, earlier. I'll just rhyme off a few to show that this is so diversified around the province and around the sectors:

—XYZ Automation, a company in Waterdown: \$25-million investment, hired 50 people. I think they mentioned the member from Flamborough–Glanbrook in their news release;

—Barry Callebaut, a chocolate manufacturer in Brantford: \$104-million investment; they hired 200 people;

—Laurysen Kitchens, in Stittsville: \$26-million investment, hired 20 people;

—Dot Foods, in Ingersoll: \$39-million investment, 200 people;

—Justworks, in Toronto, an HR management platform in Toronto: \$20-million investment, 75 new people;

—Lastman's Bad Boy built a new facility in Pickering: \$70 million, 200 new employees;

—Trusscore, in Palmerston—they make plastics and paint—\$10-million investment, 68 people. They all need a place to live.

On some bigger numbers:

—Telus, \$23-billion investment; they're hiring 9,500 people over the next five years;

—Tata Consultancy Services, from India, is here today on University Avenue; 5,000 new employees they're hiring over the next four years;

—Nokia—we did the announcement in Ottawa—hundreds of millions of dollars, 340 new employees and 100 interns that they're hiring. All of these people need a place to live.

So when we talk about what's happened—“Why all of this now? Why, all of a sudden, are you doing this?” Well, good heavens, there are 500,000 people working today who weren't working just a few years ago, and I've just rhymed off a list here of about 20,000 more people who—these announcements are only made in the last couple of months, from Telus' \$23 billion and 9,500 employees all the way through to the Nokia one. All of these; that's 20,000 employees I've listed.

1000

Every single morning of every single day, I send Premier Ford what he calls and what I call his “one-a-day vitamin.” It's the name of a company, where they're locating, how many millions they're investing, how many people they're hiring and whether the province has any skin in the game or not. Every single day of every single week, that's what's happening in the province of Ontario. Every single day there are millions of dollars of investment coming into the province of Ontario. That hasn't stopped.

Speaker, I'm going to take a moment and I am going to read yesterday's—this is fun. Oh, that hasn't been announced yet. But there's good news coming in Niagara. MPP Sam Oosterhoff is going to make a \$6-million announcement and 30 new jobs.

That hasn't been announced yet either. Well, I'll have to go back. Cambridge is getting some very good news about 40 jobs coming.

Every single day we're reading—Unbun in London, \$4 million. They are creating to provide gluten-free products to Mr. Sub and Pizza Pizza and Burger's Priest. They're

going to sell all of these products—23 new jobs. Very nice.

Every single day of every single week, Speaker, there are great announcements coming, millions coming. So when you ask why there's fast-increasing demand—what I've said—that's why, because we've created the climate in Ontario for job seekers and job creators to build these jobs. They all need a place to live.

When you now look at the other side of the coin, the lack of supply—Minister Clark, my great friend Steve, has said the word “NIMBY.” He has talked about NIMBY.

Hon. Steve Clark: I'm right here, buddy.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I didn't even know you were here. Not in my backyard—NIMBY. He's got a new one now. He's got a new one, and I've got to tell you, I've been sharing it every day. BANANA: build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone. That is exactly what is happening.

So when you want to know why there's a lack of supply, there's a lack of supply because we've got all of this NIMBYism that is happening, all of that activity. I look in my hometown of North Bay, and there's one project—we had the civic hospital and St. Joseph's General Hospital. They were both demolished and we built a brand new, billion-dollar hospital in North Bay. On the civic hospital site—now, I was mayor at the time these buildings were demolished. I was mayor from 2003 to 2010. So these buildings were demolished. Since then, there's nothing built on the civic site. At least on the St. Joseph's site, there's a new long-term-care facility that's under way, but on the civic site it's just been blocked and blocked. It's an entire city block. The hospital is gone, but there's not one thing built on that because it continues to be blocked. For a decade, it has continued to be blocked.

That is exactly the issue. We've got that “build absolutely nothing anywhere near anyone.” That is exactly what's happening. As a result of it, I can drive to the Commanda, which is in the southwest end of my riding, I can drive to Powassan—the little town of Powassan, 3,200 people; their first house to hit \$500,000 in Powassan. That's what's happening when you can't build anything, anywhere, near anyone. That's what's happening. In Port Loring, they're having bidding wars for houses. That's absolutely unheard of north of the French River. That is just absolutely unheard of, and that's what's been happening, Speaker. Because there is a lack of supply, it's driving the prices out of reach of families, and so we, through Bill 39, intend to resolve that.

We look at last year's 100,000 housing starts. I think that was the highest since 1987, far greater than the 30-year annual average of 67,500. But that was just the start. We need to have this bill in place so that we continue to work hard so that all Ontarians, both newcomers and long-time residents, can actually, for the first time, have the dream of home ownership become a reality.

So we're taking steps to fix the problem. It's bureaucracy. It's the red tape. All of that stands in the way of the much-needed housing.

Speaker, I've talked about the fast-increasing demand. I've told this Legislature all about the \$16-billion investment in the auto sector that's created tens upon tens of thousands of new jobs. The 2,700 people that went to work

in Oshawa this morning for the first time in a long time since that plant was reopened, the 2,500 people who are coming to Windsor after the thousands—it'll likely be 10,000 people that work in that building there. All of these people need a place to live.

We will continue to make sure that we expand the strong-mayors powers to the municipalities that are shovel-ready, municipalities that are committed to growth and municipalities that are committed to cutting red tape. We want them to look at what we've done as a province.

We listened to Sergio Marchionne tell Premier Wynne that you've got to become competitive, you've got to cut costs, you've got to cut red tape, and that's what will help us. Because I can tell you, Speaker, by the emails and texts that I send the Premier every night, that fast-increasing demand? That's not going to slow down. That is not slowing down in the province of Ontario.

They look at us. I was in Germany and Austria and Japan and Korea earlier this year; every one of those countries, every business that we visited, said to us, "In this turmoil, in this tumultuous world that we're facing right now, we look at Ontario as a sea of calm." They can't wait to get here, not only to work here but to open companies here.

I'm going to India on Friday, and I will meet with about a dozen companies, and they have all told us the same thing: "We just need to hear from you the facts. We believe Ontario is safe for our workers, safe for our families, safe for our executives. We believe that about Ontario. We want to hear that from you. And we believe that our investments will be secure. Ontario is stable. They promised low costs; they promised low energy rates; they promised to reduce the red tape"—all promises that we've kept. They need to hear that from us, every single company in every single country; they're ready to invest here.

We think there will be great news out of the trip to Germany. We think there will be spectacular news out of the trip to Korea and Japan. We're looking for really solid results coming out of India as well. We're there to thank Tata for the 5,000 employees that they're hiring here. We're there to thank HCL and Infosys for the 500 employees each of them hired in Mississauga.

These are thousands of people, Speaker. It's not slowing down. The demand will not slow down in Ontario. Now we need to work on the supply.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We will move to questions for the minister.

Ms. Doly Begum: Good morning, Minister. Thank you very much for your presentation.

I have a very simple question. You mentioned a lot of investments. I wanted to ask—and I know we talked about numbers and statistics today—how much of those investments were in affordable housing?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: I would continue to say—we've got the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing right here—

Hon. Steve Clark: They voted against all of these.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: You've taken the words right out of my mouth. All of the things that we've done, all of that list that I've read—every single piece of it needed to go through a budget item that you voted against every time.

The 2,700 new jobs in Oshawa? Sadly, you voted against it. I think of Redpath in North Bay, an \$8-million investment in their workers.

All of these investments, by the way, created jobs and have new workers in them. I think of you voting against the expansion of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. dollars—a portion of that \$8 million went to J.S. Redpath in North Bay, one of the mining companies that we expect to help us dig the lithium out of the ground in northern Ontario. All of these provided 500,000 workers in the province of Ontario.

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The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question.

Ms. Laura Smith: I want to thank the minister for his statement bringing to light this important issue.

Three weeks ago, I had the pleasure of touring Macrodyne Technologies. This company creates very specialized hydraulic presses in the riding of Thornhill. I was absolutely amazed to see what they do and what they create for the international market. When I sat down at the table with them and we talked about their biggest issues, employment and a place for their people to live was their biggest issue. This is such an important issue, because if we're creating an environment for our economy, we also have to create an environment for our employees. Could the minister talk about this balance?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Young families, newcomers, anyone who has come to Ontario with the dream of having their own home, hopefully near where they work—that dream is falling out of reach. We delivered an historic 100,000 new housing starts last year—that's the single greatest increase in housing starts since 1987—but there is much, much more work to be done if we want to reach our goals and have these families have a place to call home.

This bill will increase the pace of construction and make housing attainable for all. That's what this bill will do, by providing efficient local decision-making that will speed up the approvals. A sped-up approval makes a lower-cost house.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I might be an idealist, but changing the municipal legislation should have happened before the residents of this province just voted for their city councils, like we did right in St. Catharines.

Why does this government think it's okay to introduce bully-through legislation that changes how municipalities are run after a municipal election? It flies in the face of democracy and voter empowerment.

Ontario just had a historically low turnout at municipal polls; just over 36% of all Ontario residents cast ballots. Instead of instilling a sense of empowerment about their vote, this government is taking it away.

My question is, why not make changes over the summer instead of this Ford-style bait and switch on municipal democracy?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Ontario is expected to grow by two million more people by 2031, and one and a half million of those residents will end up in the greater Golden

Horseshoe region. The federal government's recent immigration target of a half a million new residents per year will put even more pressure on the housing market.

Our government has been very clear that we will expand the strong-mayor powers to municipalities that are shovel-ready and committed to growth and cutting red tape.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): There's no more time for questions. We need to move to members' statements. It is 10:15.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FOOD BANKS

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I've said it before and I'll say it again: The cost of living in Ontario is unbearable for most individuals and families. The basic necessities of life in Ontario have become out of reach for so many. Energy bills, rent, gas, car insurance and food prices have all skyrocketed and this government hasn't reined it in. Families on fixed incomes suffer the most when their bottom-line expenses go up. They're forced to make impossible choices between which bills to pay or to go without any money whatsoever when ends just don't meet.

Life is getting so hard that families, now more than ever, are relying on food banks to feed themselves. The figure will shock you: One in seven employed Canadians are currently accessing food banks. I'll say it again: These are employed individuals working hard to try and make ends meet in Ontario, but just can't do it. One in seven—imagine. And, of that, over a third of all food bank users are children. Speaker, this is unacceptable.

But what are Ontarians to do when even the food banks in their communities are being pushed out by the rising cost of rent and can no longer afford to operate in the neighbourhoods they serve? This is the case in my own community. A long-serving food bank, Society for the Living, has found itself priced out of their home where they have operated for 24 years. Imagine that: an important source of relief for many families, priced out and looking for a new home. If local food banks are closing, what does this mean for those that need them the most? This government needs to act now, because talk is cheap, but living in Ontario is not.

FERN TAILLEFER

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'd like to commemorate Fern Taillefer in this Legislature today. He is an outstanding constituent who is always out and about, who just celebrated Remembrance Day, where he is often parade marshal, wearing his red sash. I know I can always go to you, Fern, and can count on you to tell me where I need to be and what I need to do.

But so does our entire community. We're so lucky to have you at Barrie Legion 147 and everything that you do with the poppy campaign. You help so many families and

touch the lives of so many people through the poppy campaign, and you go above and beyond. Because of you, and, of course, your friend Bob, we have now the Peacekeepers Park, which you were fundamental and instrumental to. That was turned from a grassy park that not many people visited to now the annual Peacekeepers Day parade on August 9 of every year because this park came to fruition.

Most recently, I wanted to ask the Legislature to give a round of applause for Fern, because he is going to be receiving the Veterans Ombudsman Commendation award. So, congratulations, Fern. This will add to so many of your achievements, in addition to your being the recipient of the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers and the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation.

Congratulations, Fern. Thank you for everything you're doing in your community, and I look forward to seeing you around the Legion.

REBECCA MORRIS-MILLER

Miss Monique Taylor: I rise to pay tribute today to the loss of a difference-maker in Hamilton, Rebecca Morris-Miller. Less than four years ago, Becky, as we know her best, took her vision and her lived experiences and began a journey to bring light to the desperate need for programming. As the founder and operations director of Grenfell Ministries, Becky brought together her team to provide wraparound services for so many who have been pushed to the margins of our society. She devoted all she had to every project she touched, including the National Overdose Response Service and Connections in Corrections, just to name a few.

Becky never stopped searching for ways to “love people where they were at.” Every time I saw her, she reminded me of those words. She was always talking down the road farther than any others could see. Becky could make you visualize the light before the path. If Becky could see it, you would too, largely in part to her charisma and activism.

In speaking with Becky's fellow colleagues, they share such fond memories of her. She was their light, their spark, their flame of hope. She was one of their dearest friends and confidantes. You see, Becky was always doing what she herself called “revolutionary work.” It really did change the lives of those living with addictions, mental health issues and homelessness. She once told the media, “We are all one decision away from a new life.” Rebecca Morris-Miller had faith in people when they didn't have faith in themselves.

Becky, even though the world got a little darker when you left us in late October, I promise you: We will leave the light on through your work, your legacy, your children, your family, your friends and your community. We will carry on in your grace and continue to advocate for all who continue to benefit from the work and your giving soul. May you rest knowing we will carry on your passion and love for all.

Rest in peace, my friend.

1020

ORLÉANS FOOTBALL CLUBS

Mr. Stephen Blais: As we come to the end of the Canadian football season, I want to congratulate and recognize the dominance of Orléans football clubs at all ages and levels this year.

First, I'd like to congratulate the Tigers from St. Matthew Catholic High School. From what looked like would be a missed season due to a lack of equipment, the Tigers rallied and won the tier 1 Ottawa varsity football championship. Ranked inside the top 20 in the province, the Tigers are looking to roar their way into an OFSAA title next Wednesday in Guelph.

In community football, I'd like to recognize the utter dominance of the Cumberland Panthers Football Club. The Panthers led the way in creating a vibrant division for U18 women and girls to experience tackle football this year, and they won the inaugural provincial title, defeating York.

On the boys' side, the Panthers took home city titles in three of four age groups. The U12 Mosquitos went undefeated, also winning the fall provincial title, defeating the Vaughan Rebels. And to top it all off, Mr. Speaker, former Cumberland Panther Kurleigh Gittens Jr. put the cherry on top of a breakout season in the CFL, winning the Grey Cup last weekend with the Toronto Argonauts.

I'd like to thank all of the coaches, trainers, team managers, photographers, referees, moms and dads and everyone else who volunteers to make Orléans football the hotbed that it has become. Congratulations to all the boys and girls on their hard work and success. I look forward to seeing you on the gridiron again next spring.

EVENTS IN MARKHAM-UNIONVILLE

Mr. Billy Pang: I am excited to share some of the many wonderful events in Markham-Unionville. In October, I was delighted to celebrate CEFS Centre's Harvest Festival and Victoria Square United Church's 190th anniversary. I also celebrated the grand openings of Agora Prep Learning Centre and Brown Academy. Thank you for investing in our students in Markham-Unionville.

On behalf of the Premier and MTCS, I attended and was proud to announce our government's \$74,000 support towards the DanceSport Grand Prix competition that took place in Markham-Unionville.

In November, I joined with my Hindu community and friends to celebrate Hindu Heritage Month. I was happy to share friendship and memories with the Toronto True Light Alumni Association as they celebrated their school's 150th anniversary in Hong Kong.

Organized by the Markham District Veterans Association, I joined their Remembrance Day service and paid tribute to our veterans. I also laid a wreath at the Crosby cenotaph. Thank you to the many residents who came together to honour our heroes for their bravery and sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, safety has always been one of our government's top priorities. That's why I hosted a crime prevention round table for our Markham-Unionville residents. Thanks to our law enforcement partners at YRP, we have learned so much about crime prevention and will continue to watch out for our neighbours.

Last Friday, about 40 residents from Markham-Unionville took a Queen's Park tour. They admired the unique architecture and experienced and explored Ontario's Parliament. I thank our government for this beautiful structure and the hard-working officials who ensure that Ontario is operating efficiently.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms. Marit Stiles: Good morning. I've been out on the road these past weeks, meeting face to face with Ontarians and hearing what matters to them. Last week brought me to Kingston and Sudbury, and just this past Sunday, I spent the day in Brampton, meeting with many, many community leaders.

Brampton has been promised a lot by the Conservatives. But what are Bramptonians actually getting from this government? Take health care, for example. Brampton has seen promise after promise, but the fall economic statement included no mention of the expansion of Peel Memorial, not to mention the construction of a new hospital. In fact, the statement included no new money for health care, despite the staffing crisis and surge in respiratory illnesses.

People in Brampton raised concerns with me about housing and growth, and they're wondering how replacing their elected regional chair with someone appointed by this government will make sure that growth is managed successfully or how overriding official plans to the benefit of developers will make sure new developments are actually serviced by water and sewer or not built on flood plains.

Brampton needs a strong voice in this place to push this government to do more for people. New Democrats will continue standing up for the people of Brampton. You can count on us.

SENIORS' HOUSING

Mr. Ric Bresee: In 2018, when I was a new mayor in Loyalist township, I had the opportunity to work with a gentleman by the name of John, who's been a local developer in that area for more than 40 years. In my community, there's a large number of seniors, many of whom have been living in the same bungalows since the 1960s or 1970s and are reaching an age when they're looking to move to something less labour-intensive. Unfortunately, there are very few spaces for seniors to move into and still stay in their own communities. In fact, there have been no small format and purpose-built units developed in more than 40 years. I'm told that this is a fairly common situation across the small towns in rural Ontario.

At the time, the average price of one of these bungalows was selling for about \$300,000 in early 2019. So, with that information, the developer designed a community of 56 units, or, more precisely, 14 fourplexes, with each unit over 1,000 square feet, single-storey, modern HVAC, ensuite laundry and modern appliances. The complex would be condominium and so the external structures of those homes, the yard and snow maintenance, would be taken care of, and they were selling for less than the average price of the homes they were moving out of. This has been a great success.

The private developer continues to build a range of housing, including purpose-built rental and middle income, and he tells me that his greatest challenge with these projects has to do with the red tape, the bureaucratic delays and the administrative uncertainty in both the cost and duration of these permitting processes.

I can tell you that with the new initiatives proposed by this government, this will get better and the people who build the homes, the people who actually make our homes, will be further motivated to build more homes that we need in our community.

VARATHALEDCHUMY
SHANMUGANATHAN

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: It is my honour to welcome Ms. Varathaledchumy Shanmuganathan amma to the Ontario Legislature today. At the age of 87, Varatha amma has earned the distinction of being the oldest person to graduate with a master's degree from York University and is one of the oldest women to earn a graduate degree in all of Canada. To add, Mr. Speaker, this is her second master's degree.

She began her academic journey at the University of Madras in India, where she completed her undergraduate degree. She later also earned a diploma in education from the University of Ceylon. She earned her first master's from the University of London when she was in her fifties. She immigrated to Canada in 2004 and decided to make her dream come true when she learned that York University offers Canadian seniors over the age of 60 with waived tuition fees.

Despite the pandemic and the challenges it posed to learning, she persevered, put the difficulties aside and powered through it all.

Mr. Speaker, this woman who is sitting in front of us today in the Legislature is an inspiration to us all. To all the young people who are just beginning their academic careers, she reminds us that learning is a lifelong journey. I want to congratulate Varatha amma for her lifelong commitment to education.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE
AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Ms. Laurie Scott: I would like to acknowledge and thank the local chambers of commerce in my riding of

Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. Chambers of commerce staff provide various methods of assistance, guidance and support to our local businesses and not-for-profit organizations. They help with things like networking, assistance in advertising and promotion, and community support.

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I have had the distinct pleasure of attending in-person award ceremonies recently for two of my local chambers, the Lindsay and District Chamber of Commerce, which represents approximately 330 businesses, and the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, which represents approximately 270 businesses. On November 10, the Lindsay and District Chamber of Commerce held their awards of excellence event. This event celebrated many individuals and businesses from the area, recognizing, for example, the Employer of the Year award, the Tourism Excellence award and the New Business of the Year award. The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce held its business and community achievement award ceremony this past Saturday, November 19. This event recognized community leaders, with the Highlander of the Year, the Young Professional award and the Innovation and Creativity award, just to name a few.

I would like to congratulate the nominees and winners and, in particular, the many young, innovative and creative entrepreneurs I met. Truly, thank you to the chamber staff for their continued contribution to help businesses be successful and continue to thrive during these uncertain times. Everyone in the community benefits from their support. Keep up the great work.

WEARING OF PINS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to recognize the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility, who, I understand, has a point of order.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: If you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to wear forget-me-not pins in support of Alzheimer's awareness.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Cho is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear forget-me-not pins in support of Alzheimer's awareness. Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm very pleased to inform the House that we have with us in the Speaker's gallery today Mr. Panayotis Antonatos, consul general of Greece in Toronto. Please join me in welcoming our guest to the Ontario Legislature.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's my pleasure to welcome Michelle Martin from the Alzheimer Society. She's a leader in Waterloo. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: From the beautiful riding of Essex, a pillar of the community: She just received the Order of Ontario last night. Please welcome to the Legislature Ms. Elise Harding-Davis.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome my good friend Larry Gibson, who's a business owner of the Fort Erie golf course, and it's his first time to question period. Welcome to Queen's Park, my friend.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I would like to welcome the honorary consul general of the Republic of Lebanon, Mr. Greg Bostajian; the head of executives of the consular team, Manal Saidoun; and one of the consular team, Roy Yehia. I would like to take the opportunity to congratulate them for the independence day of Lebanon. Today there will be a flag-raising and there will be a reception after that. You are all welcome to join, please.

Ms. Marit Stiles: I would like to welcome my long-suffering partner of 30 years, Jordan Berger. He's joining us today in the members' gallery.

Mr. Rob Flack: I'd like to recognize my friends from the London St. Thomas Association of Realtors, Bill Madder, Jack Lane and Adam Miller, and a special shout-out to Adam's mother, Cheryl Miller, a long-time friend and municipal politician in London.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My colleague from Niagara Centre and myself would like to welcome Teena Kindt and her special team of colleagues from the Alzheimer Society of Niagara. Welcome to Queen's Park. We're looking forward to a meeting with you after question period.

Hon. David Piccini: I'd like to welcome, no stranger to this place, a good friend of mine from the Durham Region Association of Realtors, Travis Hoover, also a big fan of Premier Ford's. Welcome to Queen's Park, Travis.

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, it is an absolute pleasure of mine to welcome WoodGreen community services, who serve close to 40,000 people each year across 40 different locations, with over 75 programs and services that tackle the social determinants of health. We have here with us today Ansley Dawson, Qazi Hasan, Sarah Ibrahim, Eric Mariglia, Alexandra Goth, Sonya Goldman, Naureen Choudhry, Talia Fine, Amenah Abusara, Amanda Hadida and Danielle Maillet. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'd like to welcome Roger Bouma and Travis Hoover from the real estate association to Queen's Park.

M^{me} France Gélinas: We have three guests from the Sudbury real estate association: Tanya Vandenberg, Tyler Peroni and Ashley Sauvé. Welcome to Queen's Park.

We also have a member of the Sudbury Alzheimer Society, Stephanie Leclair, who is here with us, and Dr. Sharon Cohen from the Toronto Memory Program. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I don't know if they've actually arrived yet. I'd like to warmly welcome the dedicated members of the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. There was a good breakfast meeting this morning. I'm sure they are coming.

Mr. Joel Harden: I also want to welcome our Lebanese friends who are here today. Ottawa Centre is home to a proud Lebanese community. It's great to see you here today. I'll see you at the flag-raising.

I want to recognize Jordan Berger, a good friend of mine, who is here today.

I also want to say thank you to the people from the Good Roads group who will be meeting with many of us today and have a reception later tonight. I look forward to seeing colleagues there.

SHOOTING IN COLORADO SPRINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I understand the member for Toronto—St. Paul's has a point of order that she would wish to raise.

MPP Jill Andrew: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for a moment of silence so we may recognize the five members of the Colorado 2SLGBTQIA+ community and allies who were killed last Saturday night, hours before the Transgender Day of Remembrance on Sunday, by a hate-filled shooter inside a nightclub described as a safe haven for LGTBQ community members in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Their names are Daniel Aston, Raymond Green Vance, Kelly Loving, Ashley Paugh and Derrick Rump.

Seventeen others were also wounded in this attack against queer, trans and non-binary communities and their families.

We must all remember that violence against any 2SLGBTQIA+ community member is felt across borders. May we stand today in a moment of silence for all victims of transphobia, homophobia and biphobia everywhere, always.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Toronto—St. Paul's is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to have a moment's silence now for all victims of transphobia, homophobia and biphobia everywhere. Agreed? Agreed.

Members will please rise.

The House observed a moment's silence.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Members may take their seats.

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QUESTION PERIOD

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier. This week, elderly and frail patients in alternate-level-of-care beds will start being charged \$400 per day to remain in hospital. Advocates told this government yesterday that the \$400 fee is a "bludgeon" and used "to coerce [seniors'] consent."

To make matters even worse, this government is willing to move frail, elderly patients into homes that could actively be in COVID-19 outbreak or that had a large number of deaths during the pandemic.

Speaker, does the Premier think it's acceptable to move elderly patients into homes with poor pandemic track records or homes with active COVID-19 outbreaks?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply for the government, the Minister of Long-Term Care.

Hon. Paul Calandra: In fact, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing is helping seniors who are on the long-term-care waiting list, who are in hospitals and want to be in long-term care, move into that long-term-care home.

I was just in a long-term-care home on Friday. The daughter and a resident came up to me and said that, after four months of being in a hospital, moving into the long-term-care home was a game-changer for them. It has meant the world. The mother and daughter are now able to visit easier. They're able to get more social activities. They are making friends. She said that it has been a game-changer and she wished that she had done it sooner.

This is a testament not to the bill that we brought in that allows this to happen, this is a testament to the hard work of the people who are working in long-term care across the province of Ontario. It is made possible because of the investments that we have made in long-term care, over \$13 billion worth of investments, to improve long-term care, to turn a patient into a resident of a home.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: It's interesting that the minister is willing to move patients into a home with an active COVID-19 outbreak—extraordinary; very interesting.

Again, to the Minister of Long-Term Care: This government should have the health and safety of every Ontarian on their mind each time they put forward new policies. But with Bill 7, the government is asking frail, elderly Ontarians to shoulder the burden of an underfunded and understaffed health care system. That's simply not fair.

The government should be investing in the health care system, in our nurses, and in our health care workers. That's where they should be putting dollars. Ontario seniors and their families deserve to know that when they choose to go to a home, their needs will be met.

To the minister: What criteria are hospitals directed to follow to determine if a long-term-care home has suitable staffing levels, equipment and care protocols for a patient to be moved there without compromising the quality of their care?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's interesting that the NDP now somehow care about long-term care. They didn't care about long-term care when they held the balance of power. Of course, it was of no interest to them. They didn't care about long-term care when we were bringing North American-leading investments into long-term care. They voted against those investments.

We're building 60,000 new and upgraded beds in every part of the province. We're bringing long-term care into small communities across the province because our seniors—you know what they have said to us? They have said that they want to be in communities that they have helped build, closer to their family and friends. That's what they said, and that's exactly what we're doing. We are investing in long-term care—four hours of care per day for residents, a North-American-leading standard, Mr. Speaker. Those are the investments we're making, and we're doing it with our residents in long-term care, with

the professionals who are working in our long-term-care homes, and we will get the job done because—

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

The final supplementary. The member for Niagara Falls.

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Premier. I want to say it again: 5,000 seniors have died under this government's watch in long-term-care facilities. Bill 7 was rammed through the House with no public comment period and no consultation. There was no opportunity for workers, family members or stakeholders to raise their concerns with this government effectively forcing elderly patients into long-term-care homes they didn't choose.

We know that care varies across the sector, and we know that workers are burned out and leaving the sector. Families should never have to worry that their family member will be moved to a home where they don't have enough staff—big issue. Will the minister guarantee that patients will not be forced into homes whose staffing levels are lower than their own provincial standards?

Hon. Paul Calandra: It's unsurprising to me, colleagues, that the member actually asked that question, because had he read the Fixing Long-Term Care Act that he voted against, he would know that that can actually happen. It is right in the bill. A patient who's wanting to become a resident of a home cannot be discharged into a home that doesn't have the resources needed to care for that person. It is a hallmark of the Fixing Long-Term Care Act.

Another hallmark of the Fixing Long-Term Care Act is four hours of care—27,000 additional health care workers. We increased the food allocation. We're building 60,000 new and upgraded beds. In his own riding—in his own riding—he voted against \$50 million of additional support for health care workers in homes with over 450 new and upgraded beds in his own riding—voted against it, voted against the staffing.

We'll get the job done, because they have never, ever cared about the sector. We care about the people who are in those—

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

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question is to the Premier. Five former mayors of Toronto have joined the chorus of people speaking out against Bill 39 and this government's latest attack on a fundamental democratic principle: majority rule. Majority rule is a core value in council chambers and legislative assemblies, not just across this country but around the world. But instead of respecting the voice of voters in Ontario, this government is doing an end run around democracy, shifting power away from people and into the hands of wealthy developers.

Speaker, why does the Premier think our democratic institutions can be swept aside whenever they're just inconvenient for him?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): And to reply, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Today, November 22, is National Housing Day. It's a day to reflect on our government's action to get shovels in the ground faster, and one of those commitments that we made to Ontarians during the election—we also made it to big city mayors and regional chairs in January when the Premier and I hosted a summit—was that we were going to give those mayors the tools to be able to get shovels in the ground faster, and we did it. Immediately after our election, we tabled the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, which was passed by the Legislature, again without the support of the party of no, the New Democratic Party. Then Premier made it crystal clear that we were going to continue to extend those strong-mayor powers to other communities because we need mayors in those six regions, along with the mayors of Toronto and Ottawa, to be able to have the tools to get shovels in the ground faster. That's why we tabled Bill 39, and that's why we'll continue to table a housing supply action plan every year in our mandate.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, back to the Premier: This government was just forced to repeal a bill in Olympic record time when they tried to take away the charter rights of workers in this province.

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But I'll tell you, if Ontarians thought that we were dealing with a changed Premier, they were mistaken. This government was willing to use the "notwithstanding" clause to suppress the wages of the very lowest-paid workers in our province. They're willing to change the law to carve up the greenbelt for sprawling development. And now, they're willing to undermine democracy again, letting just eight people of 26 pass laws that affect over three million people in Toronto.

Does the Premier recognize how dangerous and how reckless this government's actions are to our democracy?

Hon. Steve Clark: Well, Speaker, I'm not going to take any lessons from the New Democrats in terms of housing policy. Nobody is interested in their leadership race. Nobody is interested in their policies. Again, they presented these same policies during the election; they were rejected.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order. Opposition, come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: We're going to continue to build upon the success of our housing supply action plan. We're going to continue to work with mayors, to listen to Mayor Tory, to deliver on changes that Mayor Tory has asked for to be able to get shovels in the ground. We're not going to take any lessons from this acclaimed leader and this failed New Democratic Party.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members of the opposition, I'm having a bit of difficulty hearing the minister answer the question.

Member for Davenport, supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's like a bunch of little kids realizing that they're losing a game,

and in the middle of it, they try to change the rules. You know, it's really embarrassing.

Interjections.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, we don't agree on everything in this House, that's for sure. But I would have thought we would all agree on the basic tenets of our democratic system. The government is also giving themselves the power to appoint regional chairs in Niagara, in Peel, in York—a move that is completely undercutting local decision-making.

People, whether they live in Toronto or Peel or Niagara or York, deserve to have their voices heard and their concerns represented by their locally elected representatives. Will the Premier do the right thing and just withdraw Bill 39 today?

Hon. Steve Clark: Do you know who's losing, Speaker, because of the NDP's style in Ontario? Young families who don't have a path to home ownership right now; new Canadians who will choose Ontario as the best place to come in our country to raise a family—

Interjection.

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

Hon. Steve Clark: —and create opportunity; for that senior who wants to live in the community that they grew up and raised their family in, but don't have a path to downsize. That's who is losing because of New Democrats voting against every single, solitary policy that this government is putting in to deal with housing supply. We're in a housing crisis. We need to build housing supply. Why do you keep opposing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Davenport, come to order. Member for Niagara Falls, come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: —all of the measures that we're putting forward? Again, we're going to stand at all times for that young family who wants to have a home that meets their needs and their budget. We'll always stand for that senior who wants to have a housing opportunity where they live, and we'll always stand up for that new Canadian—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. We're all pleased that there's a great deal of enthusiasm in the House today, I think. If you repeatedly ignore my requests to call you to order, I will warn you, and then we'll progress from there. We have to be able to have our discussion, and the Speaker has to hear what is being said by the member who has the floor.

Start the clock. Next question.

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Last week, the outgoing Waterloo council asked the province to defer Bill 23 until

the incoming council has had a chance to review it. Councillors have expressed legitimate concerns that the bill was introduced the day after municipal elections and “seems aimed at limiting comment from incoming duly elected officials.” Councillor Bodaly also called the legislation environmentally problematic, citing flooding concerns and protections for wetlands.

Waterloo is not alone in their request to defer Bill 23. Councillors in York, Niagara, St. Catharines, Collingwood and Burlington have all passed motions requesting deferment of Bill 23 and more fulsome municipal consultations. This is a reasonable request. Understanding the full impact of this legislation is important.

Will the minister respect the request of municipalities and defer Bill 23 until newly elected municipal councils have a chance to review the legislation?

Hon. Steve Clark: I've stood in this House and talked about what defer and delay does to the high price of a home. You look at the fees that add over \$116,900 to the cost of a home in the greater Golden Horseshoe, you look at the amount of time—the studies that have been tabled show that the time it takes to get shovels in the ground has increased some 30% or 40%. It takes way too long to get housing built in the province.

We are a prosperous, growing province. It's the best place to live in Canada, and we want to make sure that our municipal partners do their part. We've given them a housing pledge. We want them to buy into our 1.5 million homes plan over the next 10 years, and each and every one of them ran on a platform of building housing.

Now is not the time to defer; now is the time to get shovels in the ground faster and create opportunity across Ontario.

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: This government has made so many mistakes. They've gone to court over a dozen times, and you lost every single time because you rushed through legislation. New councils are just getting sworn in and won't be able to review the legislation until their first meeting in December. AMO, representing 444 municipalities, has told this government that preliminary analysis of the bill indicates a transfer of over \$1 billion a year in costs from private sector developers to property tax payers, without any likelihood of improving housing affordability. It's not going to work. We're actually trying to help you by getting it right.

Will the minister respect the voices of the citizens of Waterloo and across this province and provide these democratically elected councils time to review the legislation that impacts their environment, their communities and budgets? It is a reasonable request on behalf of municipalities, and this minister, who has that responsibility, should at very least listen to them.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, come to order. The Minister of Labour, come to order. The Minister of Energy, come to order.

Start the clock. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to reply.

Hon. Steve Clark: More homes built faster is part of our strong foundation for transformative change in Ontario. We know that last year was the best year in over 30 years in the province—we had over 100,000 housing starts—but we know, given the economy and factors that are outside of our control, that we're not going to get there this year. So we need to put a strong foundational plan in place. More homes built faster is that foundational plan.

We need to get to our goal. Especially now that there are so many new Canadians coming because of the federal government's decision, we need to make sure that transformation happens at the municipal level. Transformation isn't easy. We need all of our municipal partners to do their part. They need to work with us and they need to work with the federal government on ensuring that we get shovels in the ground faster.

We're in a housing crisis and we need everyone to be working collaboratively moving forward. Now is not the time to delay.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Nolan Quinn: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. In my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, the city of Cornwall continues to be a hub for economic investment opportunities. Today, Cornwall is proudly home to one of our country's largest and most advanced logistics and manufacturing operations. Many of our companies have succeeded in Canada and worldwide, but in order to remain competitive, our manufacturers and businesses need a government that works with them.

Will the minister please explain how our government supports manufacturers and businesses who are creating jobs in Cornwall and across our province?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Cornwall isn't just a great place to live and work and raise a family, it's one of the most competitive places to invest as well. In the last two years, \$100 million has been invested there with help from our regional development programs. Biscuits Leclerc has an \$80-million project creating 76 jobs with \$1.5 million of our support. This is a sweet deal for Cornwall, for Hawkesbury and for Brockville. They'll all see upgrades to their plants as they enter new markets.

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We also supported Cornwall's auto sector through an O-AMP investment for Morbern's \$429,000 project to implement Industry 4.0 technologies.

Speaker, this is how we're supporting businesses in Cornwall.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Nolan Quinn: Thank you to the minister for his answer. Initiatives like the Regional Development Program and the Ontario Automotive Modernization Program are significant for businesses across Ontario as they contribute to our province's economic prosperity.

It is long overdue that businesses in southwestern and eastern Ontario receive their fair share of support, and our government is stepping up and showing leadership.

I am proud of the entrepreneurial drive evident from the business community in my riding. Many individuals are ready and willing to work hard to create successful businesses.

Speaker, will the minister explain how our government is helping entrepreneurs in my riding start and grow their businesses?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: When our government got elected, we vowed to provide entrepreneurs with all they need to succeed. This meant eliminating mountains of the Liberals' red tape. It meant fixing the Liberals' unaffordable hydro and lowering taxes. Now, Speaker, entrepreneurship in Ontario is alive and well.

We support a network of Regional Innovation Centres, small business centres and Futurpreneur Canada.

In Cornwall, we fund the small business centre with almost \$500,000 annually. We provide \$85,000 for their Summer Company and their Starter Company Plus programs, and that helps students and young entrepreneurs turn ideas into businesses. And we provide almost \$33,000 in Digital Transformation Grants; it went to local businesses to help them get their businesses online.

Speaker, this is just the start that entrepreneurs in Cornwall need to succeed.

MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, the government's own Housing Affordability Task Force outlined that "a shortage of land isn't the cause of the" housing crisis. "Land is available, both inside the existing built-up areas and on undeveloped land outside greenbelts."

At our emergency town hall on Bill 23 last week, we heard from community members and experts—including a member of the original task force that drew up the greenbelt plan—who shared how dismayed they are by the government's undermining of the purpose of the greenbelt and its permanence. In fact, there is a designated whitebelt specifically for development and growth, Speaker, but this government still continues to target the greenbelt.

Despite all the evidence, and the fact that the Premier actually promised this province in 2018 that he wouldn't do that, and the vehement opposition from experts, from housing advocates, from community leaders and much more, why is this government opening up the greenbelt for development?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Thanks for the question. I'm going to start with the first part of her question, which was her meeting regarding the More Homes Built Faster Act.

That bill, which is making its way through the Legislature, if it passed, contains about 50 actions that the government has put forward to tackle our housing supply crisis, right from requiring an opportunity for gentle densification within urban and rural communities moving on to something that I think is very exciting, and that's our

attainable housing program that I'm working with the Minister of Infrastructure on.

The modifications are part of our commitment to Ontarians. We looked Ontarians in the face in the June election and said, "If you re-elect us, under the leadership of Premier Ford, we are going to move the Housing Supply Action Plan—in terms of policies, procedures, legislation—every year of a four-year term." We're acting on that.

As well, the member opposite knows that that Housing Affordability Task Force is our long-term road map that will help guide us with the other changes we're going to make. It's a very simple yet very transformative exercise—

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

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, destroying the greenbelt is not the answer. We know what happened after the Hurricane Hazel devastation and how it devastated our province. In fact, it was the provincial government that amended the act to enable conservation authorities to retain and regulate lands for the conservation and safety of our communities. It is not the answer.

But this minister wants to talk about housing? Let's talk about housing. Popi, a young woman in my riding who escaped unimaginable domestic violence—almost died—has been waiting, has been struggling, actually, to breathe because she lives in a basement apartment where it's hard for her to breathe. The doctors have said that she might actually need another surgery—she's had multiple surgeries—because she lives in a basement apartment. She has been waiting for years for affordable housing. This is just one of the many stories of those who are waiting for affordable housing.

If this bill is actually about affordability, why isn't there anything in this bill that specifically calls for building affordable housing for people like Popi and those who are waiting for affordable housing?

Hon. Steve Clark: Well, Popi should know that the billions of dollars we spent over the last four years on affordable housing—that that member and her party voted against it every single, solitary time.

I want to correct her record, Speaker. She talked about the greenbelt—and the proposal that we're consulting with Ontarians right now would, in effect, add 2,000 acres to the greenbelt and would provide an opportunity to build a minimum of 50,000 homes. Why is that number appropriate? Well, it goes back to an answer that I gave earlier in question period. The best year in this province's history—in over 30—was last year, when we had 100,000 starts; that is even higher than the 69,000 homes that were built, on average, per year for the last 30 years. So 50,000, at a minimum, is very important. The proposal that we're consulting on provides that opportunity but also an opportunity to grow the greenbelt by over 2,000 acres. It's good public policy.

SKILLED TRADES

Mr. Trevor Jones: Speaker, a recent 3M Canada survey shows that although 96% of Canadians believe that the

country's workforce needs more skilled trades workers, 76% also said they would never pursue a career in the skilled trades. This is worrisome news for Ontario. Skilled trades are vital for our economy.

Current projections show that by 2025 one in five new jobs in Ontario will be in the skilled trades. Our government must continue to act by addressing the ongoing labour shortage in the skilled trades.

Can the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development tell the House what our government is doing to get more people working in the trades?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I want to thank the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington for his leadership in southwestern Ontario promoting the skilled trades.

Speaker, our government has an ambitious plan to build, working together with Ontario's leading construction unions and builders.

Last week, I joined leaders representing 14 private sector unions from across our province, including Marc Arsenaault, business manager for the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, who represents over 150,000 hard-working tradespeople who are building our future. Alongside our Minister of Finance and the Solicitor General, we announced an additional \$40 million for our Skills Development Fund. We're expanding the fund to include training for high school students for the first time in Ontario history. We're on a mission to get more young people into our skilled trades.

I'll have more to share in our supplementary.

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

Mr. Trevor Jones: Thank you, Minister, for that response.

I am pleased that our government is making the necessary investments in our skilled trades system. That said, we must make sure that these good, meaningful jobs are within reach of everyone. Unfortunately, the apprenticeship process has lacked diversity, as demonstrated by the low percentage of apprentices from under-represented groups. A diverse workforce is an important asset for Ontario's economy. Ensuring diversity is essential for many reasons, including promoting individuals' different strengths and skills, which leads to better outcomes and problem-solving on the job site.

Can the minister please explain how the Skills Development Fund will provide opportunities for those wishing to pursue a career in the trades?

Hon. Monte McNaughton: I want to thank the member again for this very important question.

Our Skills Development Fund is investing \$3.5 million to support four building trades province-wide training initiatives. These programs will help nearly 2,000 young people launch rewarding careers in the skilled trades and put them on a path to union-sponsored apprenticeships. Training like this is how we're preparing the next generation for six-figure salaries, delivering our ambitious infrastructure plans, including building 1.5 million homes by 2031. Within two years, we funded 388 training projects and trained nearly 400,000 workers for in-demand jobs across every sector.

Mr. Speaker, to build an Ontario that leaves no one behind, labour, government and business must work together. We need all hands on deck, and we're not slowing down.

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LAND USE PLANNING

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My office has been overwhelmed with phone calls and emails from organizations and residents of Thunder Bay-Superior North expressing their deep concern at the environmental damage that Bill 23 will bring. I will read an excerpt from one of those constituents:

"By far the greatest and most significant threat facing Ontario today is the threat of climate change and loss of biodiversity. Sacrificing wetlands to provide more housing start locations is a very short-sighted solution to an immediate housing issue but will result in much more significant long-term impacts on the future of the Earth for us and for my children and my grandchildren."

Will the Premier remove the parts of Bill 23 that undermine regional conservation authorities' ability to protect wetlands needed for everyone's survival in the face of climate change?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Bill 23 contains, as I said earlier in question period, about 50 initiatives that the government has put forward to really supplement our housing supply action plan. We went to Ontarians with a clear plan, that they accepted, to build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years. We're implementing that plan with bills that we've already passed in this session, bills that are before the House, bills that will be debated today in the House and have been debated today in the House. All of those measures, put together, will help get shovels in the ground faster.

In terms of some of the issues that the member talked about, we believe we need to work collaboratively with conservation authorities. We believe that their work is of value and they should concentrate on those measures like flood mitigation, which really was part of the foundation of their creation originally. We think we can work collaboratively, ensure that those checks and balances are in place, but at the end of the day we're in the middle of a crisis and we need to get shovels in the ground and build more housing.

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

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Premier, recreating wetlands, which is one of the things you've offered with this additional 2,000 acres in a different area or watershed, is a little bit like cutting off an arm and saying, "Oh, don't worry about it. I've got a spare arm over here. We'll just use that one." It doesn't work. There's no logic to it; there's no science to it. At the same time, as you are removing the ability of conservation authorities and municipalities to manage the lands in their regions, you are downloading millions of dollars in costs to them and leaving them with

legal liabilities should there be future problems with flooding or drinking water.

Bill 23 is a direct attack on the well-being of all communities for the short-term benefit of those who will profit from building where they should not build. I can tell you, the builders will be long gone when the consequences of these bad decisions come knocking.

Again, I ask: Will the Premier restore the ability of conservation authorities to fulfill their mandate to protect the integrity of local watersheds?

Hon. Steve Clark: I've already answered about the mandate, but I want to emphasize to this member and her party of no that we're in the middle of a housing crisis. Too many Ontarians have lost hope in the dream of home ownership, and our government is going to restore that. We're going to restore the hope that that young family—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Steve Clark: They can do their NIMBY chants all they want on that side of the House. They'll continue to stand up and be the party of NIMBYism and BANANA-ism in the province. That's what New Democrats are—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The official opposition, come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: We're going to continue, Speaker—regardless of their howls and their yells in the chamber—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Brampton North, come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: —we're going continue to stand up for seniors, for new Canadians and for young families that don't have that—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Windsor West, come to order.

Hon. Steve Clark: We're going to restore their hope. We're going to get shovels in the ground faster, and we're going to be successful in getting 1.5 million homes built over the next decade.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Stephen Blais: My question is for the Premier. The government has chosen and the Premier has chosen to flip-flop on their promise to allow over 7,000 hectares of the greenbelt to be developed, much of it high-quality farmland.

Now, Ontario is blessed with some of the best and most productive farmland in the world. In 2018, when this government was elected, the average weighted price of corn in Ontario was just about \$197. This year, Mr. Speaker, it's over \$331; it's a 67% increase. Soy has gone from \$472 to \$745—57%; barley from \$244 to \$390, a 63% increase. When you pave under farms, crop prices go up. That means higher prices at the grocery store—

Interjections.

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

Mr. Stephen Blais: It means higher bread prices, higher vegetable prices, higher prices for chicken and beef and milk.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Fordflation—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. Just a second: I'm having difficulty, for some reason, hearing the member for Orléans's question. It could be the physical distance; it could be some other factor. I need to be able to hear the member who has the floor.

Start the clock. The government House leader to reply.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Mr. Speaker, what an odd question for the member opposite [*inaudible*] party to pave over and to evict farmers from the greenbelt was the Liberal Party of Ontario. And they did it in my riding, Mr. Speaker. A family that had been farming for over 200 years was evicted so that they could create a park—a park that never opened. That is the legacy of the Liberal Party.

Now, he gets up in this House and talks about increasing costs of food. Well, how about those farmers who have a carbon tax that you support each and every day in this place? That is what is causing the price of food to go up. That is what is costing our farmers. We said it the day we got elected, didn't we, colleagues? We said, "A carbon tax would cost the people of Ontario in everything they did." We took the federal government to court. We asked them, "Join us to stop a carbon tax that will hurt our farmers, that will hurt people of the province of Ontario." They laughed at it and instead supported their federal—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I remind the members to make their comments through the Chair.

The supplementary question.

Mr. Stephen Blais: Thanks, Mr. Speaker, and, of course, they didn't stop at the greenbelt. The city of Ottawa recently added about 1,200 hectares to their urban boundary with a clear intent to provide lands for housing growth, while ensuring sensitive ag lands and those that were difficult to develop were not included.

The minister, after delaying for more than a year, has decided to add 50% more land to the boundary. He's adding—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Mr. Stephen Blais: —207 hectares in Findlay Creek in the Carleton riding that were not recommended because of the lack of city infrastructure, and 65 hectares in Fernbank that were not recommended due to servicing problems, including the absence of road connections.

After delaying for a year, after driving up housing prices in Ottawa for a year, why does this minister feel that the residents of Findlay Creek and Greely and Stittsville should have to endure higher property taxes while sitting in gridlock because of the lack of infrastructure?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. I'm sure most members appreciate applause in the House when they say something, but not when it's intended to deliberately interrupt or embarrass another member. Let's stop doing that.

Start the clock. Minister of Municipal Affairs to reply.

Hon. Steve Clark: A lot to unpack, Speaker, on that, but I'll try my best. First of all, on the greenbelt comment: Don't take my word for it. I'll just quote Charles Sousa, the former Liberal MPP for Mississauga South and finance minister under Kathleen Wynne, who's a member of our greenbelt council: "I recognize the importance of the greenbelt," Sousa said, 'but growth will be happening north and south of the greenbelt and we have to make sure it's done right.'"

On his second comment regarding the city of Ottawa's official plan, just like all official plans, we're in the middle of a housing crisis. We have to ensure that those residents of Ottawa, including the ones that are represented by our exemplary member for Carleton, need to have that opportunity to realize the dream of home ownership. Official plans are the most important tool that municipalities have to make sure that we put shovels in the ground and create that opportunity for people in Ottawa so that they can realize the dream of home ownership. You can't have a council that ignores planning advice on putting land within the urban boundary. That just doesn't—

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

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HYDRO RATES

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Ontario has one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with over 90% of our power generation creating zero emissions. Nuclear power and hydroelectricity are the foundation of our energy system strength, as they provide low-cost, reliable and emissions-free electricity. We know that Ontario's energy advantage is good for our environment and is the envy of jurisdictions in Canada and around the world. That said, Ontarians want to know how our clean energy production can benefit our economy.

Can the Minister of Energy please tell the people of my riding how Ontario's clean electric grid system benefits our economy?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks very much to the member opposite from Brampton for the great question this morning.

Our government knows that a reliable and affordable electricity grid isn't just good for the economy; it's also great for the environment.

We've stabilized electricity prices since the harmful days of the previous Liberal government, through programs like the comprehensive electricity plan, which has stabilized rates. It has allowed manufacturing jobs and new investment to come back to our province, like the \$3.6-billion investment at Stellantis in the member opposite's riding and down in the Windsor region as well—but it's more than just that. Stabilizing our electricity rates also means that companies can now invest in electrifying their industrial businesses, like we're seeing with the green steelmaking processes coming soon to Hamilton and Sault Ste. Marie.

It's because of a stable, reliable, affordable electricity grid that we will see reduced emissions in other parts of

our economy, while at the same time watching our economy in this province grow.

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

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: Thank you, Minister, for that answer. It's good to know that procuring new natural gas generation will help reduce emissions and ensure that our grid remains affordable and reliable.

Widespread electrification of our transportation network and industries is undeniably a good thing. In his response, the minister mentioned the comprehensive electricity plan, which has assisted in returning manufacturing jobs back to our province. Ontarians are, however, concerned about the cost of this program. Can the minister please elaborate on this plan and why it's necessary?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member from Brampton.

The comprehensive electricity plan is reducing electricity costs for more than 50,000 industrial and commercial customers by 15% to 17%. To the member's question: Why is that program necessary? Well, I can tell you, it's necessary because of a decade of Liberals mucking up the energy policy in our province. They signed contracts under the Green Energy Act, locked in for 20 years, many at 80 cents a kilowatt hour, when our clean, reliable, affordable nuclear power was available for eight cents a kilowatt hour and our hydroelectric was available for four cents a kilowatt hour. The Liberals kept signing these contracts that were driving up the price of electricity and were going to continue to drive up the price of electricity by 6%, 7%, 8% year over year, through the end of the decade. The comprehensive energy plan is meant to fix the problems that were created by the Liberal government.

We are bringing back a stable electricity system to our province so that our economy can thrive.

EDUCATION FUNDING

MPP Jill Andrew: My question is to the Premier. A parent in my riding got in touch with our office after an email circulated asking parents for donations to pay for paper towels and soap for the classroom. This is while the recent FAO report forecasts a historic \$6-billion spending shortfall within the public education sector alone over the next six years. That's money that could be used today by this government to fix and save our schools during today's crisis.

How is it acceptable that families, many of whom are already facing the worst affordability crisis in this province's history over the last 40 years, are being asked to pick up the bill for public education because this government refuses to?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Minister of Education.

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Mr. Speaker, let me just start off with the recognition that students are in class this morning, which is exactly where they belong. I want to express gratitude to all the parties for working together to ensure stability for children. I want to thank our workers, who

provide critical support for the children of this province. I want to thank parents for their incredible patience.

I will note that what guided the government in our negotiation was keeping kids in the classroom. That is what matters most to our Premier and our government, and we've delivered that in partnership with both the union and the trustees of the province. We did so by presenting a fair deal for all parties, and the greatest beneficiary of this outcome is our kids, who have stability, finally, for the coming school year.

With respect to investment, I will note to the member that the funding has been increased this school year to the highest levels ever recorded. This September, there's a \$650-million increase for children in the province. We've increased staffing by 7,000, and we're going to continue to do more to ensure that children have a quality education and that they learn, right to June.

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

MPP Jill Andrew: Back to the Premier: The government's 2022 budget stated, "Education sector expense is projected to be lower primarily because school boards experienced a decline in non-government revenue, from sources such as fundraising."

The fact that our education sector is reliant on bake sales, philanthropy and volunteerism is a system failure, not a solution. What about schools and parents who cannot afford to raise hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars? This is inequity in action. This is, frankly, stacking the deck against our students.

The question is back to the Premier: Will this government commit to increasing education spending to ensure students have everything they need, including hygiene—health and safety basics during a pandemic—to thrive in the classroom, without turning to struggling families to cover the government's shortcomings?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: If the members opposite are concerned about the costs on parents, then they will vote for the catch-up payments we brought forward to help those very parents get through this economic difficulty. It is ironic to hear the members, on the one hand, suggest that parents have costs that are unaffordable, and yet oppose measures to put money directly into their pockets to help them with their kids and catch up. It is an unacceptable choice. We want to do both. We want to increase investments for publicly funded schools. When it comes to school supplies, there's over \$11 billion, this school year alone, in the Pupil Foundation Grant to provide schools with those resources.

In addition to increasing funding in publicly funded schools, we are also providing direct support to parents because we know they are best positioned to invest, support and care for their kids.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier. People love the greenbelt. They want the Premier to keep his many promises, not to pave over the places they love, the farmland that feeds us, the nature that protects us, especially when we already have enough land slated for

development to address the housing crisis—land in places where people want to live, close to where they work, their family and transit; not in unaffordable places with long, expensive commutes.

We know that developing the greenbelt will help a few land speculators turn millions into billions.

Why is the Premier breaking his many promises not to pave over the greenbelt when his own housing task force clearly stated that we do not need to open the greenbelt for development to address the housing crisis?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I'm always disappointed in him for not supporting our government's community housing renewal, social services relief fund and all of our housing supply action plans. Pretty well every one, universally, he's either voted against or spoken against. He has never supported our call to ask the federal government for the \$480 million that we're owed, even though some federal Greens have indicated support for that.

At the end of the day, our consultation with Ontarians is going to do two things: It's going to grow the greenbelt by over 2,000 acres, which I think is a very positive opportunity—including the Paris-Galt moraine that this member had a private member's bill in respect to—but at the same time, it will provide an opportunity with 50,000 homes at a minimum on land that's existing, that's serviced, that's adjacent to an urban area. These locations were selected for a purpose, and the purpose is to get shovels in the ground faster.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I voted against the government's housing bills because they won't solve the housing crisis. I want to vote for bills that actually solve the crisis. Let's be clear: Dismantling environmental protections, attacking local democracy, paving over farmland, wetlands and nature, downloading costs onto property taxpayers, and forcing people into long, expensive commutes will not solve the housing crisis.

I've put forward plans that show how good planning with zoning changes that allow four-plexes and walk-up four-storey apartments, mid-rise apartments along transit corridors and arterial roads, clamping down on housing speculation, investing in deeply affordable co-op and non-profit housing—those are the solutions that will solve the housing crisis.

Will the minister say no to what the land speculators want and yes to the solutions that will actually deliver housing that's affordable in the communities people want to live in?

Hon. Steve Clark: Here's what this guy has voted against when it comes to the housing file: He voted against our housing renewal strategy, which has provided over \$4 billion to our community housing advocates to deal with rent supplements, bolstering homeless shelters and supportive housing—something that he has talked about but always seemed to vote against. What else has he voted

against? The social services relief fund, which provided our municipal partners \$1.2 billion to improve homeless shelters, to protect staff, and to support vulnerable people. He also voted—and I can't believe that he actually did this—against our creation of the Homelessness Prevention Program, where we added \$25 million, where we consolidated a number of supportive housing programs to try to make it streamlined and to be able to have a coordinated municipal response.

It doesn't matter whether it was \$4 billion for community housing, \$1.2 billion for the social services relief fund or \$25 million for homelessness—each and every time, the Green Party and this leader voted against that measure.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. David Smith: With winter impacting our cities, more people depend on our already busy public transit system. We know the GTA will become home to another million people over the next 10 years. Our transit system is strained, and people are feeling the impact of the neglect by the previous Liberal government. Quite simply, transit expansion needs to occur right now.

I understand that the government's investment in the Ontario Line will deliver transit relief to the city core and connect my constituents in Scarborough Centre to downtown from the TTC's Line 2.

Can the Associate Minister of Transportation please provide an update to everyone in Ontario?

Interruption.

Hon. Stan Cho: Thank you very much for the question—and those are the great people of Scarborough calling the member. He's doing great work. He's answering that call.

Speaker, we recently marked a crucial milestone in the building of the Ontario Line, the crown jewel in our multi-billion-dollar GTA transit expansion plan. I'm glad to inform the member that on November 9 our government awarded the Ontario Transit Group the contract to design, build and finance the south portion of the Ontario Line, from Exhibition and Ontario Place to the Don Yard portal. We also recently issued two qualification requests for the Ontario Line's northern segment to support underground station and tunnel building between the Gerrard portal and the Don Valley bridge, as well as the construction of three kilometres of elevated tracks in Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park.

Speaker, for 15 years, Torontonians were stuck with zero transit growth from the NDP-backed Liberals. Well, with this milestone, our government is filling the transit gap that we inherited from the Liberals by building a world-class relief line that will connect riders to the grid and get them from point A to point B.

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

Mr. David Smith: Thank you to the associate minister for the update.

After 15 years of the Liberals and NDP failing to get shovels in the ground, the Ontario Line presents a tremendous opportunity to expand transit. At the same time, building the Ontario Line and other major transit projects will benefit not only riders but all of Ontario.

Can the associate minister explain what our government is doing to ensure that this critical transit project is delivered for the people of my riding of Scarborough Centre?

Hon. Stan Cho: I'm glad to inform the member that the transit expansion, in fact, does benefit everyone in this province, including those in Scarborough and in every corner. For riders, the Ontario Line will cut crowding by 15% on Line 1, which is the busiest stretch of our subway.

What's more, Speaker, riders from Thorncliffe Park, who have needed transit for way too long, will be finally able to commute to the downtown core in speedy time: 26 minutes, from 42.

To the member's point, it's called the Ontario Line, and it benefits all Ontarians by supporting 4,700 jobs a year during construction, cutting overall fuel consumption by more than seven million litres a year and generating up to \$11 billion in economic activity for our province. In fact, every \$1 billion invested in transit helps support 10,000 jobs and boosts Ontario's real GDP by another \$1 billion.

Unlike the Liberals and NDP, we're saying yes to building transit, yes to connecting the grid, yes to the people of Ontario and to the great people of Scarborough.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. Ryan and his family live in a two-bedroom apartment in London West that was built in 2021. He pays \$2,015 a month and just received notice of a \$350 rent increase, which is more than 17% and seven times the provincial rent increase guideline. That's an additional \$4,200 a year that Ryan will somehow have to find, at a time when groceries, utilities, insurance and other bills just keep rising. If he can't make it work, Ryan will have no choice but to move out, and this could keep happening year after year.

Speaker, will the Premier act now to prohibit the exorbitant rent increases that tenants like Ryan face annually in buildings that were constructed since 2018?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Steve Clark: Well, Speaker, we'll have to go back to 2018, when the government made the decision, in the fall economic statement, to lift rent controls. We did it for one purpose: We did it to incentivize the construction of purpose-built rental building in Ontario. So what did that accomplish? Well, last year, in 2021, we had the highest level of purpose-built rental construction since the early 1990s, and that was successful. Despite the fact that New Democrats didn't support that initiative, it showed its success.

Part of what we're doing in Bill 23 is we're again incentivizing the construction of rental accommodation by

eliminating the development charges so we can get shovels in the ground faster. So the tenants in London, the tenants across Ontario will have affordable rental opportunities. That's exactly why the government put this policy in place.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Another London West constituent is a private sponsor for a refugee family from Syria. He had less than two months' notice to find rental accommodation for the sponsored family. With very few options, he signed a lease on a post-2018 apartment and later learned that the landlord is not bound by the provincial rent increase guideline, which was nowhere mentioned in the lease agreement. He is concerned that unethical landlords could use rent increases to force out tenants they may not want, like a refugee family, an action that would clearly be prohibited by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Can the Premier explain why he is allowing landlords to use unaffordable rent increases as a way to effectively evict tenants from their housing?

Hon. Steve Clark: Again, Speaker, I don't know the details of the case that the member opposite is outlining. But what I do know is that we provide strong tenant protections at the Landlord and Tenant Board and also through the Rental Housing Enforcement Unit that's part of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. So what I would say to that family is to contact those two organizations.

But again, Speaker, I want to highlight that this government has made some significant tenant protections as part of our strengthening community housing and protecting tenants in Ontario.

And I want to again let those tenants know what New Democrats did when they had an opportunity to stand up for increased fines against unethical landlords: They voted against it.

GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Speaker. To you and through you to the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery: People with disabilities face many challenges and obstacles in their daily lives. Ontarians with accessibility needs should not have to worry about spending endless hours filling out repetitive paperwork to obtain accessible parking permits. For far too long, complicated bureaucratic processes have created confusion and unnecessary hardship for those who already face many difficulties.

Can the minister please explain how our government is providing relief and making life easier for Ontarians with disabilities?

Hon. Kaleed Rasheed: I thank the great member for Sarnia-Lambton for his question. We are improving our services to make life easier for all Ontarians, especially those with accessibility needs. I'm happy to say that Ontarians are able to apply for, renew and replace lost or

stolen accessible parking permits online from the comfort of their home.

I had the opportunity to visit ErinoakKids, a leader in medical and support services for youth with physical and developmental disabilities in Mississauga, and witness first-hand how bringing more accessible parking permit services online will help families, caregivers and organizations supporting those with disability needs.

Under Premier Ford's leadership, our government is working with individual organizations and communities to identify, prevent and remove barriers for all persons with disabilities.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: Thank you, Minister, for that response. Modernizing government services and ensuring accessibility for all Ontarians should be a major priority of any government, but especially this government. The addition of online services for accessible parking permits is a significant step in that direction. It is disappointing that for many years individuals with disabilities had to apply either in person or by mail, using a process that could take up to seven weeks to finish.

Could the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery please elaborate on what other measures we are implementing to make services more accessible for everyone?

Hon. Kaleed Rasheed: I again thank the member for this question. This improvement builds on our government's work to make it faster, easier and more convenient for Ontarians to renew their important IDs and documents. Ontarians can now access over 40 critical services online, any time and anywhere. That makes renewing their driver's licence, licence plate or health card a breeze, taking only a few minutes. And Ontarians can sign up for convenient digital reminders so they never forget to renew on time.

These online options are saving people precious time and letting them focus on what matters most in their lives. I encourage everyone to take advantage of these services at ontario.ca/renew.

MEMBER'S GRANDCHILD'S BIRTHDAY

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for letting me rise on this special day to wish my grandson Greyson James Walter Uhryn a very happy fourth birthday.

Happy birthday, Greyson. I hope you have a wonderful day. Grammie and G, Mini and Rodger love you to the moon and back.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1144 to 1500.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HERITAGE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CULTURAL POLICY

Ms. Laurie Scott: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Meghan Stenson): Your committee begs to report the following bill, as amended:

Bill 23, An Act to amend various statutes, to revoke various regulations and to enact the Supporting Growth and Housing in York and Durham Regions Act, 2022 / Projet de loi 23, Loi modifiant diverses lois, abrogeant divers règlements et édictant la Loi de 2022 visant à soutenir la croissance et la construction de logements dans les régions de York et de Durham.

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 BILLS

MAKING NORTHERN ONTARIO HIGHWAYS SAFER ACT, 2022 LOI DE 2022 VISANT À ACCROÎTRE LA SÉCURITÉ DES VOIES PUBLIQUES DANS LE NORD DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Bourgouin moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 43, An Act to amend the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act to make northern Ontario highways safer / Projet de loi 43, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement des voies publiques et des transports en commun pour accroître la sécurité des voies publiques dans le nord de l'Ontario.

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): I'd like to invite the member to briefly explain his bill, if he wishes to do so.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I'm pleased to be here to reintroduce my private member's bill, which is intended to make it safer for northern Ontarians to travel our highways during the winter months.

The bill seeks to reduce the number of winter closures on Highways 11 and 17 that are oftentimes caused by poor road conditions and maintenance standards that are not on par with those on southern Ontario highways.

The bill amends the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act in relation to standards for road

maintenance in winter. New section 100 sets out a classification system for Ontario highways consisting of five classes of highways. The section classifies all 400-series highways, the QEW highway and Highways 11 and 17 as class 1 highways. The section also sets out the time within which snow must be removed from each class of highway after each snowfall. Class 1 highways have the strictest requirements for snow removal, requiring that the pavement be bare of snow within eight hours of the end of a snowfall.

BUILDING MORE HOMES BY ENDING EXCLUSIONARY ZONING ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 VISANT LA CONSTRUCTION DE PLUS DE LOGEMENTS EN METTANT FIN AU ZONAGE D'EXCLUSION

Mr. Schreiner moved first reading of the following bill: Bill 44, An Act to amend the Planning Act with respect to residential unit policies in official plans / Projet de loi 44, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire en ce qui concerne les politiques relatives aux unités d'habitation contenues dans les plans officiels.

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 member for Guelph care to briefly explain his bill?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: This bill provides solutions to the housing crisis by building more homes while protecting farmland in the greenbelt by amending the Planning Act to require official plans to contain policies authorizing, in areas of settlement, the use of up to four residential units in a detached house, semi-detached house or row house as well as multi-unit residential buildings of up to four storeys, as of right.

BUILDING MORE HOMES ON MAJOR STREETS AND TRANSIT CORRIDORS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 POUR LA CONSTRUCTION DE PLUS DE LOGEMENTS SUR LES RUES PRINCIPALES ET LE LONG DES COULOIRS DE TRANSPORT

Mr. Schreiner moved first reading of the following bill: Bill 45, An Act to amend the Planning Act to require official plans to authorize midrise housing developments in specific circumstances and to make related amendments / Projet de loi 45, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aménagement du territoire pour exiger que les plans officiels autorisent l'aménagement d'immeubles d'habitation de moyenne hauteur dans des circonstances particulières et apporter des modifications connexes.

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): I'll invite the member from Guelph to briefly explain this bill as well.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: This bill provides solutions to the housing crisis by building more homes while protecting farmland and the greenbelt by amending the Planning Act to require official plans to contain policies that authorize, in areas of settlement, mid-rise housing developments ranging from six to 11 storeys on major streets, including along transit corridors, as of right.

PETITIONS

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I have a petition in support of the Stay Home If You Are Sick Act, and it reads as follows:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there is overwhelming evidence to show that paid sick days significantly reduce the spread of infectious disease, promote preventive health care and reduce health care system costs; and

"Whereas 60% of Ontario workers do not have access to paid sick days, and cannot afford to lose their pay if they are sick; and

"Whereas low-wage and precarious workers are the most likely to be denied paid sick days; and

"Whereas enabling workers to stay home when they are sick without losing pay helps limit the spread of illness in the workplace and allows workers to recover faster; and

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"Whereas during an infectious disease emergency, it is unreasonable and dangerous to public health to make workers choose between protecting their communities and providing for their families; and

"Whereas legislating paid sick days through the Employment Standards Act, with transitional financial support for struggling small businesses, will ensure that workers have seamless, uninterrupted access to their pay;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately pass Bill 4, the Stay Home If You Are Sick Act, to provide Ontario workers with 10 annual employer-paid days of personal emergency leave and 14 days of paid leave in the case of an infectious disease emergency."

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

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Mr. Joel Harden: I have a petition that reads:

"Support Gender-Affirming Health Care."

To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas two-spirit, transgender, non-binary, gender-diverse, and intersex communities face significant challenges to accessing health care services that are friendly, competent, and affirming in Ontario;

"Whereas everyone deserves access to health care, and they shouldn't have to fight for it, shouldn't have to wait

for it, and should never receive less care or support because of who they are;

"Whereas gender-affirming care is life-saving care;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support the reintroduction of a private member's bill to create an inclusive and representative committee to advise the Ministry of Health on how to realize accessible and equitable access to and coverage for gender-affirming health care in Ontario."

Speaker, I'm happy to sign this. I will be sending it with page Aiden to the Clerks' table.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to end sprawl and build climate-friendly cities.

"Whereas the government's plan to address the housing crisis is one that favours sprawl development; and

"Whereas paving over the wetlands that protect us and the farmland that feeds us is fiscally and environmentally irresponsible; and

"Whereas we already have more than enough land within current urban boundaries available to build the housing we need, including 88,000 acres of land in the greater Golden Horseshoe alone; and

"Whereas we can address both the housing and climate crises by building infill missing middle and mid-rise housing in existing neighbourhoods;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly to amend the Planning Act to allow for fourplexes and four-storey walk-up apartment buildings in neighbourhoods and mid-rise on main streets and transit corridors as of right."

I fully support this petition, will sign it and ask page Camilla to bring it to the table.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I have a petition here entitled "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 January 2022 was 5.1%, 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 support the petition. I will be affixing my signature and giving it to page Scarlett.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I had about 700 or 800 education workers show up at my office a little while ago. They signed these petitions and asked that I read them and submit them, which I'm happy to do.

A petition “to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: Negotiate in Good Faith with Education Workers.

“Whereas the government has launched an unprecedented attack against democratic rights of workers to collectively bargain and to strike; and

“Whereas the government’s refusal to adequately fund our public education system at the appropriate levels to provide a high-quality service has resulted in staffing shortages and a lack of supports available for students who need them when they need them; and

“Whereas the government has the power to invest in public education so that our kids can get the education they deserve, and the workers who make schools run can have a decent standard of living and safe working conditions;

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

“Immediately repeal Bill 28 and Bill 124; and

“Negotiate in good faith with education workers through their union;

“Invest the funds necessary in public education to address the staffing crisis and support children’s learning.”

Speaker, I wholeheartedly support this. I will affix my signature and send it to the table with Mabel.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I'd like to present the following petition:

“Whereas we know that building critical infrastructure is crucial to delivering better services, moving people faster and generating long-term sustainable economic growth; and

“Whereas under the leadership of Premier Ford our government is making historic investments to build and repair infrastructure in every region of Ontario; and

“Whereas at the heart of the plan is a capital investment of \$158.8 billion over the next 10 years, with \$20 billion in 2022 and 2023 alone, and includes plans to invest in trains, roads and subways; and

“Whereas our plan includes \$25.1 billion in capital over 10 years to support planning, building and improving highways, including Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass, the 401 and Highway 7; and

“Whereas part of this capital investment includes \$61.6 billion in capital over 10 years for public transit, including expanding GO rail services to London and Bowmanville; and

“Whereas our government plans to invest in hospital infrastructure with a \$40-billion, 10-year program; and

“Whereas these investments will increase the capacity in our hospitals, build new health care facilities and renew existing hospitals and community health centres; and

“Whereas in education, our government is investing \$21 billion, including about \$14 billion in capital grants over the next 10 years to support the renewal and the expansion of school infrastructure and child care projects;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows”—and I will affix my signature and give it to page Nicholas.

HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Rhéo and Michelle Courchesne from Blezard Valley in my riding for these petitions.

“Health Care Not For Sale.

“Whereas Ontarians get health care based on their needs, not their ability to pay;

“Whereas the Ford government wants to privatize our health care system;

“Whereas privatization will bleed nurses, doctors and PSWs out of our public hospitals and will download costs to patients;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows: “to immediately stop all plans to privatize Ontario’s health care system, and fix the crisis in health care by:

“—repealing Bill 124 to help recruit, retain, return and respect health care workers with better pay and better working conditions;

“—licensing tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and other health care professionals already in Ontario;

“—incentivizing health care professionals to choose to live and work in northern Ontario.”

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and give it to Oriana to bring to the Clerk.

NORTHERN HEALTH TRAVEL GRANT

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Steve Guinard from Dowling in my riding for these petitions.

“Let’s Fix the Northern Health Travel Grant.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas people in the north are not getting the same access to health care because of the high cost of travel and accommodations;

“Whereas by refusing to raise the Northern Health Travel Grant (NHTG) rates, the Ford government is putting a massive burden on northern Ontarians who are sick;

“Whereas gas prices cost” way “more in northern Ontario;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows: “to establish a committee with a mandate to fix and improve the NHTG;

“This NHTG advisory committee would bring together health care providers in the north, as well as recipients of the NHTG to make recommendations to the Minister of Health that would improve access to health care in

northern Ontario through adequate reimbursement of travel costs.”

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerk with the page.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Peggy Sattler: “Stop Ford’s Health Care Privatization Plan.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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“Whereas Ontarians should get health care based on need—not the size of your wallet;

“Whereas Premier Doug Ford and Health Minister Sylvia Jones say they’re planning to privatize parts of health care;

“Whereas privatization will bleed nurses, doctors and PSWs out of our public hospitals, making the health care crisis worse;

“Whereas privatization always ends with patients getting a bill;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately stop all plans to further privatize Ontario’s health care system, and fix the crisis in health care by:

“—repealing Bill 124 and recruiting, retaining and respecting doctors, nurses and PSWs with better pay and better working conditions;

“—licensing tens of thousands of internationally educated nurses and other health care professionals already in Ontario, who wait years and pay thousands to have their credentials certified;

“—making education and training free or low-cost for nurses, doctors and other health care professionals;

“—incentivizing doctors and nurses to choose to live and work in northern Ontario;

“—funding hospitals to have enough nurses on every shift, on every ward.”

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

GASOLINE PRICES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Colin and Helene Pick from Capreol in my riding for these petitions.

“Gas Prices....

“Whereas northern Ontario motorists continue to be subject to wild fluctuations in the price of gasoline; and

“Whereas the province could eliminate opportunistic price gouging and deliver fair, stable and predictable fuel prices; and

“Whereas five provinces and many US states already have some sort of gas price regulation; and

“Whereas jurisdictions with gas price regulation have seen an end to wild price fluctuations, a shrinking of price discrepancies between urban and rural communities and lower annualized gas prices;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Mandate the Ontario Energy Board to monitor the price of gasoline across Ontario in order to reduce price

volatility and unfair regional price differences while encouraging competition.”

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask page Kennedy to bring it to the Clerk.

PUBLIC SECTOR COMPENSATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Kelly Ouellet, also from Capreol in my riding, for these petitions.

“Repeal Bill 124....

“Whereas Bill 124 removes the right of public employees to negotiate fair contracts;

“Whereas Bill 124 limits the wage increase in the broader public sector to a maximum of 1% per year at a time of unprecedented inflation;

“Whereas Ontario’s public servants have dealt with two years of unheralded difficulties in performing their duties to our province;

“Whereas those affected by Bill 124 are the people who teach us, care for us, make our hospitals and health care system work and protect the most vulnerable among us;

“Whereas the current provincial government is showing disrespect to public servants to keep taxes low for some of our country’s most profitable corporations;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“Immediately repeal Bill 124 and show respect for the public sector workers.”

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Kennedy.

LONG-TERM CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Sue Leblanc from Hanmer in my riding for these petitions.

“Time to Care....

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

“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; and

“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;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

“To amend the LTC Homes Act ... for a legislated minimum care standard of four hours per resident per day, adjusted for acuity level and case mix” right now.

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask my great page Kennedy to bring it to the Clerk.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ED THOMAS PHILIP

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the member for Barrie–Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Speaker. If you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to make statements in remembrance of the late Mr. Edward Thomas Philip, with five minutes allotted to the independent members as a group, five minutes allotted to His Majesty's government, and five minutes allotted to His Majesty's loyal opposition.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Ms. Khanjin is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to make statements in remembrance of the late Mr. Edward Thomas Philip, with five minutes allotted to the independent members as a group, five minutes allotted to His Majesty's government, and five minutes allotted to His Majesty's loyal opposition. Agreed? Agreed.

Today we are honoured to remember and pay tribute to a former member of our provincial Legislature, the late Mr. Ed Thomas Philip, who was the MPP for Etobicoke during the 30th, 31st, 32nd and 33rd Parliaments and the MPP for Etobicoke–Rexdale during the 34th and 35th Parliaments.

Joining us today in the Speaker's gallery is Mr. Philip's son, Andrew Philip. His daughter, Sarah Philip, and his former wife, Audrey Philip, are watching from home.

Also in the Speaker's gallery is Mr. David Warner, who was Speaker of the Legislature during the 35th Parliament.

I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It is truly a privilege to stand here and speak a few words of tribute to Mr. Edward Thomas Philip's remarkable life and contributions. Edward passed away peacefully at Mackenzie Health hospital in Richmond Hill on January 31, 2022, at the age of 81.

I would like to extend my welcome to his family members, who were just introduced—Mr. Andrew Philip, who is here today, and another member of his family who couldn't be here today, Ms. Audrey Philip—as we honour Edward and his years of service to Ontario.

Born in Montreal, Edward moved to Ontario and received his bachelor of arts and master of education degrees from the University of Ottawa, and a PhD from the University of Toronto.

He was a dedicated leader. Even before his time in politics, Edward led leadership training at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

Edward Thomas Philip's political career was very successful as he first entered politics in 1975, representing the riding of Etobicoke–Rexdale. Edward was the chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and he played a role in monitoring the Office of the Provincial Auditor, Management Board of Cabinet, the Ministry of Government Services, and the Ombudsman. Edward held important roles as the NDP critic for housing, rent review,

government services, transportation and communications. He also held the position of deputy whip.

The public and Edward's peers saw his passion translate into his work. As a condominium owner, he made condominium issues one of the strongest platforms for his political career. He would often have 10- to 15-hour days, with his Queen's Park office flooded with phone messages from hundreds of people regarding housing-related concerns. He saw this as his responsibility and the responsibility of the office he held. Edward looked after all these people and desperately tried to ensure condominium owners were treated fairly.

Edward was a very hard-working and committed man to his province and saw the value of provincial politics. These were the issues that affected families directly, the things people spoke about around the dinner table, and the ones they thought about before they went to bed. He would say he wouldn't enter other levels of politics because there are too many things to do provincially. Don't we all know that?

Aside from his political career, Edward did not shy away from opportunities to make a difference. He was a freelance writer, broadcaster, former director of Mental Health Canada, and a member of the Ontario Association for Continuing Education and the Creative Education Foundations.

A creative man, Edward's hobbies consisted of theatre and music.

Without a doubt, Edward lived a life full of extraordinary achievements. He was a very caring man whose legacy will continue to live on. I thank him for his service, and I extend my condolences to his family and loved ones.

May he rest in peace.

1530

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I recognize the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: As the member for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, it is an honour to pay tribute to a former member of provincial Parliament for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, Mr. Edward Thomas Philip.

I also want to mention that Ed's son is here. Andrew, welcome to Queen's Park today.

Ed Thomas Philip was a dedicated servant of Etobicoke and of this great province. His constituents clearly recognized and appreciated this, given he was elected for five consecutive terms. On election night in 1990, just having won his fifth term, he spoke plainly about his electoral success, saying, "I've been out there and accessible for 12 years."

Ed was born in Montreal in 1940. He received his BA and master of education degrees from the University of Ottawa and completed his postgraduate work at the University of Toronto.

In reading about his life, it's clear that Ed excelled at and was very well versed in a broad range of disciplines and vocations.

Prior to his election, Ed oversaw leadership training at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. He was a freelance

writer, broadcaster and member of the Ontario Association for Continuing Education and the Creative Education Foundations. He was also bilingual.

Ed was a five-term member of provincial Parliament with the New Democratic Party, from 1975 to 1995, and was an active member of the New Democratic Party since its founding convention. He was Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Office for the Greater Toronto Area, Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, and Minister of Transportation in the Rae government.

Prior to the NDP's electoral victory in 1990, Ed served as opposition critic on a range of portfolios, including housing, rent review, government services, transportation and communications.

He was the government's financial watchdog, overseeing the Provincial Auditor, Management Board of Cabinet and the Ministry of Government Services, as well as the Ombudsman, and he held the post of deputy whip.

Ed was obviously an exceptionally hard worker. In his long tenure at Queen's Park, he had the distinction of chairing the Standing Committee on the Administration of Justice and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. He also served as a member on the following standing committees: procedural affairs, the Ombudsman, the administration of estimates, as well as the Select Committee on the Highway Transportation of Goods and the Select Committee on Retail Store Hours.

Committee work is not usually a widely known function of our Parliament, but it is where the granular detail of legislation and policy is parsed and deliberated on. Good committee work requires a knowledgeable and seasoned parliamentarian, and the good people of Etobicoke–Rexdale certainly had that in Ed Philip.

Politics is, at its core, about people. Ed clearly cared about his constituents, and he cared about the portfolios that he held in government and in opposition.

In a 1983 condominium industry publication, Ed was featured in an article hailing his work ethic and dedication, particularly as it related to issues in the industry. The article highlighted his 10- to 15-hour workdays here at Queen's Park and at his constituency office in Etobicoke. I would like to quote briefly from it:

"Philip has been a member of the Etobicoke Condominium Association since 1973, and has been involved in rent review and tenant issues, as well as about 2,000 cases for constituents in his riding each year. Philip is a politician who honestly enjoys canvassing, and spends most of his life working, but, 'it's not like work,' he says. His Rexdale riding is one of the largest in the province, and last election, 'the national press said I had the safest seat in the province,' a point he is proud to make."

Before closing, I would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to Ed's position as a former director of Mental Health Canada. The ongoing work of destigmatizing matters of mental health in this country owes a great deal to the dedication and work of trailblazers like Ed.

On behalf of the Ontario Progressive Conservative caucus, let me again say that it is an honour to pay tribute to this former Etobicoke–Rexdale MPP, Ed Philip. We

thank his family for giving so much of Ed Thomas Philip to the people of Ontario, and we give thanks for his life.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I will next recognize the member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: Ed Philip passed away peacefully on Monday, January 31, 2022, at the age of 81.

He was a five-term MPP with the NDP, from 1975 to 1995, for the riding of Etobicoke and later Etobicoke–Rexdale. He was a senior cabinet minister from 1990 to 1995 with the Rae government. Ed served as the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister of Transportation, and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. He was also the opposition critic for transportation, communications, housing, rent review, and government services. He held the position of deputy whip and chaired the Standing Committee on Administration of Justice.

He studied at the University of Ottawa, where he received a BA and a master's of education and completed postgraduate work at the University of Toronto, at OISE.

He was an active New Democrat since the founding convention, which took place on October 7 to 9, 1961, and his father was an active member of the CCF.

Prior to becoming an MPP, Ed was responsible for leadership training at the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

When I found out that I had the honour of reading a eulogy for Ed, I reached out to people who knew him.

His former wife, Audrey, talked about their twins, Andrew and Sarah. Sarah, she said, is now in Ottawa and will be a social worker by the summer. Andrew is looking into a career in Web development. He is with us in the House today. Welcome, Andrew.

Ed is also fondly remembered by his brother and sister-in-law, Fred and Barbara.

Ed loved his children very much and was extremely proud of them.

Audrey said that being an MPP was very important for Ed, not for the value of being a politician, but for introducing legislation that could benefit constituents.

He worked seven days a week, woke up early, went to the gym. His days were a whirlwind of activity completely dedicated to serving his community.

Former MPP Gilles Bisson served with Ed in this Legislature from 1990 to 1995. He said that Ed was respected by everyone in the House and was a very positive and kind person.

Former MPP Rosario Marchese also served with Ed from 1990 to 1995. He said that Ed was extremely committed to his constituency and that he worked non-stop.

And the current Speaker of the House, who I believe is the only serving MPP who served with Ed, from 1990 to 1995, said that when he was first elected—and the Speaker was 27 at the time—he was Ed's critic and that Ed was very courteous and polite to him, and he really appreciated that very much as a new MPP.

Mr. Philip, as housing critic during the 1990s, brought in legislation to protect condo owners. A condominium magazine wrote that he was a condo owner since 1973,

introduced 12 private members' bills dealing with condominium issues, and he was a member of the Etobicoke Condominium Association. He wanted to see property managers licensed and bonded, and he insisted that condominium homes were overtaxed. He tabled authoritative research that showed that residential condominiums within the residential property class were over-assessed, and the Liberal government of the day therefore reduced property taxes for residential condominium owners Ontario-wide and enhanced fairness for condo owners. This was the first private member's bill passed in this House by a member of the NDP. Rosario Marchese took on this work, bringing forward condo legislation four years in a row. And I'm hoping that I can build on this legacy, as last year I brought forward a condo bill to provide greater protection to condo owners and renters. In reading Ed's story, I do see a number of parallels. I am hoping that I can build on the legacy that Ed had here. As well as the condo issue, I've also done graduate work at OISE.

I reached out to Stephen Lewis, who was the leader of the NDP when Ed was first elected—and I'll say that Stephen Lewis was one of the greatest orators in this House, and his words are just so magical here. He said:

"Ed ... was one of the most conscientious members imaginable. He never set any responsibility aside. He hunkered down in every circumstance and met every expectation.

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"And that was the point. No expectation was too demanding or too minor. Whether a serious debate was looming in the House, or careful preparation for question period was required, or he was faced with a tangled constituency problem, Ed would disappear into his office and emerge hours later with an answer or solution intact. He did it every time. Over and over again. Ad infinitum.

"His devotion to duty was unflinching.

"What's more, self-promotion was never part of Ed's character. He was earnest, self-effacing, kind, and forever decent. He was one of those rare people for whom the word 'malice' had no meaning.

"He brought a quiet dignity to the practice of politics."

I'll leave the last word to Ed. He said that working as an MPP was "not like work."

I want to thank Ed's family for being here and for all the sacrifices you've made over the years. We all know—everyone in this House knows—that our families have to make sacrifices so that we can serve our constituents, so thank you for those sacrifices, and thank you for doing me the honour of reading you this eulogy for Ed.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you, and on behalf of the assembly, I thank the members who have joined us today for those tributes. I hope that you enjoy the rest of your day here at Queen's Park.

ALAN WILLIAM POPE

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Barrie—Innisfil on a point of order.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to make statements in remembrance of the late Mr. Alan William Pope, with five minutes allotted to His Majesty's loyal opposition, five minutes allotted to the independent members as a group, and five minutes allotted to His Majesty's government.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Agreed? Agreed. Thank you.

Today we are honoured to remember and pay tribute to a former member of our provincial Legislature, the late Mr. Alan William Pope, who was the MPP for Cochrane South during the 31st, 32nd, 33rd and 34th Parliaments.

Mr. Pope's family and friends are watching the tributes from home this afternoon, including his wife, Linda Fillion-Pope; his son, David Pope; and his daughter-in-law, Kirstin Danielson.

Joining us in the Speaker's gallery is Mr. David Warner, Speaker during the 35th Parliament.

I'll recognize the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's an honour, on behalf of the official opposition, to pay tribute to Mr. Alan William Pope, who was born on August 2, 1945, in Ayr, Scotland. He passed away unexpectedly on July 8, 2022, from complications of open-heart surgery, with his wife, Linda, and son, David, by his side. He also leaves behind his daughter-in-law, Kirstin, and his beloved grandchildren, Beatrice and Theodore.

He graduated from Waterloo Lutheran—now Wilfrid Laurier—and then Osgoode Hall to start his legal career.

He was elected as an alderman for the city of Timmins, and he was subsequently elected in the Ontario Legislature in 1977, then again in 1981, again in 1985 and again in 1987.

But his first taste of the political arena was when he was elected as the president of the Young Progressive Conservatives. He was a partisan to the core. He also ran for the leadership of the Progressive Conservatives, and he exhibited some typical northern Ontario tendencies. He rallied against the machine, against the establishment, which at that time was the Big Blue Machine. The Big Blue Machine, if you'll recall, in those years was sputtering a bit; it wasn't quite the machine it used to be.

I didn't have the opportunity to meet Mr. Pope, so I called someone who did know him—and some of you know him as well—another former member from that area. Mr. Pope represented Cochrane South—which, at the time, represented Timmins as well. Mr. Gilles Bisson succeeded Alan Pope. He never ran against him, but he succeeded him. I called Gilles and asked what Mr. Pope was like. Despite all his ministerial positions, Alan was known as a constituency guy. He was a great constituency guy. Gilles was once at an event where Alan was working the room, and Gilles thought to himself, "If he doesn't come to my table and shake my hand, I'm not going to vote for him." And then he thought, "Wait a second. I'm not going to vote for him anyway." But he was so good at treating everyone with respect, and it was a testament to his character.

Something else in the discussion with Gilles and Mr. Pope—he told Gilles that he knew he was going to win his first election when the previous member no longer was willing to sometimes look people in the eye on the street. That’s a valuable lesson to all of us and something that Gilles learned and something that Gilles taught me. Always look people in the eye, even if they don’t agree with you, because you represent them. That was very good advice.

During his tenure as MPP, he spearheaded the building of the Timmins and District Hospital and the Gillies Lake Conservation Area and many other projects in his area—as we all do.

He decided not to run in the 1990 election. As we did the research—when the Bob Rae government was elected, the Bob Rae government appointed Alan Pope to negotiate on a First Nations issue with First Nations and the federal government, on behalf of the NDP government and on behalf of the people of Ontario. I stated at the start that Alan Pope was a partisan. He was an example of an open partisan who was also a statesman, because his first love was the province of Ontario. That was identified, and that is a goal I hope we can all live up to. That is the testament of a statesman—when you are trusted by all sides, and you are asked to do the negotiations on behalf of a government that does not hold your political views and knows it very well. That is a testament to the quality of a statesman, and that was Alan Pope.

It’s an incredible honour to be able to say thank you to his family, in his memory. May we all live up to the bar that Mr. Pope set.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I’ll next recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

Mr. Ted Hsu: I’m pleased to stand here today to pay tribute to Mr. Alan William Pope, member of provincial Parliament for Cochrane South from 1977 to 1990.

Born in Ayr, Scotland, Alan Pope attended Timmins High School and Waterloo Lutheran University, and he graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School.

During his time in government, he held many prominent cabinet positions, including Minister of Natural Resources, Minister of Health, Attorney General, minister for French language services, and Justice secretary.

By the public and his peers, he was seen as a man with a strong presence, a formidable work ethic and dedicated mindset. These are the characteristics that drove Alan’s perseverance and led him to success.

1550

From his early days as president of the national Young Progressive Conservatives in 1969, to getting his feet wet in municipal politics in Timmins in 1973, he took the daring leap into politics sooner than many of us here did. That could be why one of the first things people noticed about Mr. Pope’s political career is the youthful energy he had during his time in office—an energy that never seemed to go away. One local paper described Alan as the “disarmingly youthful chap” who became Minister of Natural Resources. He put this energy into everything he did, but that youthful spirit didn’t stop him from having to

make the hard decisions or standing up for what he believed in. As he became a veteran member in government and his party, he developed a reputation by his peers as someone who would always speak his mind and stand up for what he thought was right. If you wanted something sugar-coated, Alan wasn’t the guy to ask. He was the real deal.

After leaving politics, he continued to serve his community. He spearheaded the funding and building of the Timmins and District Hospital, and he pushed forward the development of the Gillies Lake Conservation Area and many other projects. He cared deeply about his community and the people he served.

He was a man who had a passion for the outdoors and his family. He loved dearly his wife, Linda; his son, David; and his beloved grandchildren, Beatrice and Theodore.

Thank you, Alan, for your service.

And thank you to everyone here and his family for allowing me to do this tribute to him today.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I’ll next recognize the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Mr. Ross Romano: Today I rise to recognize and honour the passing of our former legislator and colleague of this House, Alan William Pope, who left us this past summer at the age of 75. Alan served as the provincial member for Cochrane South from 1977 to 1990, for the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario.

While I did have the pleasure to meet Alan a few years ago at a caucus retreat in Timmins, I spent some time trying to learn a bit more about his life. In doing so, I noted the recurring themes of determination, grit and vocation—determination on behalf of his principles, a vocation to his constituents and the people of the north.

It would be fair to refer to Alan as a king of the north. He always brought a northern Ontario lens to the issues being debated at Queen’s Park.

Speaker, as a fellow northerner proudly representing the people of Sault Ste. Marie, I am particularly humbled to deliver this tribute on behalf of Alan.

Northerners can sometimes be referred to as stubborn. We can sometimes be referred to as having a bit of a chip on our shoulders. It is incumbent upon us to fiercely fight for our constituents, because in ages past we’ve not always felt that Queen’s Park represented us to the same extent as those living in the south. Alan William Pope exemplified this. He fought like a lion for his constituents, as a member of provincial Parliament, as a parliamentary assistant, and as a member of the executive council. To quote him in short, “I hope that people will look on me as someone who is going to fight...”

Perhaps it was his heritage that bred the fight in him. Alan was born in Ayr, Scotland in 1945 and was raised in Timmins. Following his education at Timmins High School, he went on to complete post-secondary studies at Waterloo Lutheran University, now Wilfrid Laurier University, and then Osgoode Hall Law School. He was a barrister and a solicitor and president of the National Young Progressive Conservatives from 1969 to 1971.

Like a number of members of this Parliament, his elected life began in municipal politics, being elected as an alderman in the city of Timmins in 1973.

He was first elected as the member of provincial Parliament for Cochrane South in 1977, and he served at Queen's Park until 1990. He rose quickly through the ranks under Premier Davis and Premier Miller. His journey in government began as a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Culture and Recreation. The following year, he was appointed parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. In 1979, he was appointed to cabinet first as a Minister without Portfolio and then as the Minister of Natural Resources.

To provide this House with a glimpse of the character of Alan Pope, I would like to share a brief quote from a 1981 article in the *Globe and Mail*:

"The Waterloo-Lutheran and Osgoode Hall graduate is tall, but not imposingly so.

"He has a presence at the podium.

"Part of that presence is a smile that hesitates, then devastates his audience....

"Some of his effect is generated by a strong voice.

"But the eyes have it.

"They gleam dark, yet are as arrestingly bright as the sun on a frozen, northern" Ontario "lake."

I could continue, Speaker, but I hope this quote speaks to the effect that his personage had on those whom he met.

Rick Morgan, the then executive vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, said this: "He's the kind of person prepared to make things happen."

A reading of his elected life speaks to his expertise and knowledge of the files he was elected and appointed to execute. After four years as Minister of Natural Resources, he was appointed to various cabinet positions, including Minister of Health, Attorney General, minister for French language services, and Justice secretary.

As Minister of Natural Resources, Alan thrived on fighting steadfastly for northern and rural issues and showed his deep commitment to the land and to the people of the province, all while honing his fishing skills.

As Minister of Health, he architected the building of a new hospital for northeastern Ontario, leading to the now standing Timmins and District Hospital.

In 1985, Alan took the plunge into leading politics at the top and ran for leader to replace Frank Miller. He's known for his now-famous keynote speech, where he abandoned traditional podium form and stood and spoke from the convention floor, where he was most comfortable, being a man of the people.

Alan was spirited, with a keen mind and a dry sense of humour. He held to his unwavering dedication and commitment to the people of the north. He never compromised on his principles and convictions on the issues and policies that mattered most.

In choosing not to seek re-election in 1990, he noted, "When you add it all up, it's time to take a break from politics, reassess my future, refine my personal philosophy, perhaps write a book and certainly pursue a law career," which he ultimately did do in Timmins.

While they could not be here today, I understand that Mr. Pope's family, including his wife, Linda, and his son David, are watching from home in Calgary right now. To Linda, David and his family and friends, I say thank you.

Thank you for sharing with this provincial Parliament and this great province the life and dedication of Alan.

In closing, Speaker, those who knew Alan personally are saddened to know he's gone and are proud to have known him and to have had the pleasure of his company. He will be missed.

May he rest in peace.

Applause.

Mr. Ross Romano: If I may say, Madam Speaker, Steve Gilchrist, former MPP of Scarborough East, who served with Alan for a period, is in the gallery as well right now.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): This concludes the tributes. I want to thank those who have joined us in person here in the gallery and also those who have been watching from home. I hope you enjoy the rest of your day.

BETTER MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 VISANT À AMÉLIORER LA GOUVERNANCE MUNICIPALE

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 22, 2022, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 39, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 and to enact the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Repeal Act, 2022 / Projet de loi 39, Loi visant à modifier la Loi de 2006 sur la cité de Toronto et la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités et à édicter la Loi de 2022 abrogeant la Loi sur la Réserve agricole de Duffins-Rouge.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): When we left off debate this morning, the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade had completed his remarks and we were on questions. I believe the turn for questions is on the government's side, so I'll recognize the member for Barrie-Innisfil.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: I want to thank the Minister of Economic Development. He often comes to Barrie and meets with our local manufacturers.

When speaking to this bill, I talked about Linamar transportation, and the minister is very familiar with Linamar transportation and has done a lot of work with them. Something I mentioned in this Legislature that they have trouble with is, when they're trying to recruit workers, oftentimes the impediment is trying to find attainable housing in the community that they're trying to bring the workers into. So I want to ask the minister how this bill and all of what we're doing to build more housing is going to help the manufacturing sectors and employers like Linamar transportation with attracting more of those workers.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: About five hours ago, when I spoke to this bill, we talked about the fact that Ontario is without question the best place in the world to call home. But there are two things that are in the way: fast, increasing demand and a lack of supply of homes.

This bill, if passed, will help our government with local decision-making powers. That's what this really is all about. It's to get these homes built faster so that in areas like Barrie–Innisfil, where there is such a huge demand for employees—there is an equal demand for housing, and there are so many impediments in the way of building those houses today. This bill, the Better Municipal Governance Act, is intended to speed up the process of building the hundreds of thousands of homes we need each and every year.

1600

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. John Vanthof: I listened intently this morning to the minister's speech. He mentioned that he was a former mayor of North Bay—a very popular mayor, I would say.

As a former mayor, does he agree that we should abandon the basic democratic principle of 50% plus one? Under this new act, with the strong mayors, there are occasions when a mayor only needs 30% of council. I was once a municipal councillor as well, and I'm very firm on making representative government 50% plus one. If a mayor can't get half his council to agree, perhaps the mayor isn't on the right track. What are the former mayor of North Bay's views on the abandonment of the 50%-plus-one principle for municipal government?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you for the compliment of my two terms as mayor of the city of North Bay. One of the real joys of my life was being mayor of our hometown.

I congratulate Mayor Peter Chirico and the 10 new councillors in the city of North Bay and all of the new mayors and councillors—the entire 11 mayors in my riding.

I can say that we really look forward to this Better Municipal Governance Act. The whole purpose of it is to address the housing supply crisis by working specifically with our municipal partners on our shared provincial-municipal priorities. I think that the whole goal is to build a million and a half new homes over 10 years, and this will be a critical piece in that puzzle of getting these million and a half homes built.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Unfortunately, we don't have time to go for another round of questions and answers.

Further debate?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am very pleased to be able to stand and put some thoughts on the record here about Bill 39. I wish I had more time, so I'm going to cut right to the chase. This particular bill is a lot for just three schedules—and I'm going to focus mostly on one of the schedules we haven't heard a lot about, because being from Durham region, I think it's very important that somebody out of the seven Durham MPPs gets up and tells this story, so I will be the one.

Interjection.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Speaker, I love being heckled, but the particular member—if he could just stay tuned and heckle maybe where more appropriate.

Schedules 1 and 2 of this bill are about democracy.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Order.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Thank you, Speaker. Let me just figure out who the member is—oh, the member from Brampton North; of course it is. Anyway, I'm going to focus on my comments here. I hope the member from Brampton North jumps up and asks some questions when it's his turn.

Speaker, this is fundamentally about democracy, but I'm going to break it down for you in terms of the schoolyard, because that's what I come from and I think that breaking it down for folks makes it a bit clearer. If you have six kids in the yard and they're deciding whether to play freeze tag or hide and seek—normally, if you have a group of three and three, one of them is going to be the deciding factor. Whether you play freeze tag or hide and seek, you need four to decide—but not anymore, not in the province of Ontario, not with this. Now you just need two—because a third is all that's required now for councils. One of these provisions in this schedule is that a mayor, for certain motions, only needs a third of council to support them.

Here is a letter that I got from someone: “Bill 39 needs to be stopped! I did not just vote in a municipal election to now have the person that I elected not necessarily have a voice at the table. The strong-mayor powers directly threaten our democracy. Nobody should be granted the power of pushing through bylaws or other legislation with only one third of the vote. What are you doing in this province? How are we sitting back and allowing this government to enact these laws which give ultimate power to the few

“Do the right thing! Stand up to Ford and put an end to all this nonsense. Bill 39, Bill 28 and stopping public comments on his greenbelt plan are all direct attacks on democracy and our ability to use our voices as a collective. That's how dictators lead. This is not the future I want for my children.

“Do the right thing! Stop this bill!!!!

“Christina Coghlan.”

That's a real person. Folks are having real opinions. I would have said that the government is hearing these, that they're getting the same emails and phone calls, but some of their offices—I don't know if you knew this—aren't even staffed up yet. I'm happy to share those emails with them, but this is part of why Ontarians aren't getting answers.

Here is another one, a letter from James: “I am writing to ask you to vote against Bill 39, Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022. I believe this bill conflicts with our Canadian democratic principles. Schedule 1 allows bylaws to be passed with the support of fewer than half of city councillors in Toronto and Ottawa. I believe that if the majority of a city opposes a bylaw, then that bylaw should not pass....

“Normally I would only write to my own MPP, but this law only affects the cities of Toronto and Ottawa, so I believe that MPPs from other regions should consider the opinions of people who would be affected by this bill.”

Also, it begs the question, who's next?

The member from Brampton North was hooting and hollering about Oshawa, so I'll tell him about Oshawa. This is an article from *insauga*:

“Oshawa Council Tells Queen’s Park Hands Off the Greenbelt.

“Oshawa council has given clear direction to the Province on their recent ‘swap’ of environmentally sensitive lands for lands in the Paris-Galt moraine—keep your hands off the greenbelt.

“Oshawa councillor Rosemary McConkey brought the motion before council on day one of the new term....” She basically said, “When you make a promise you should keep it”—and pointed out that even though Oshawa wasn’t directly involved in the deal ‘will definitely affect our headwaters’ and could lead to a further loss of pristine lands in the future.

“This will be hard to undo once it has started’....

“Councillor Bob Chapman agreed, saying the province ‘shouldn’t be encroaching on the greenbelt. It’s sacrosanct.’”

We’re in this House talking about Bill 39 today—but Bills 23 and 39 are all attacks on our future.

I want to take us back, though, into our history, in the limited time that I’ve got.

I got a letter from Bonnie Littley, who is the co-founder of the Rouge Duffins Greenspace Coalition. She campaigned in the early 2000s to protect the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act—schedule 2 in this bill. She said:

“The Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve was public land sold back to farmers at \$4,000 an acre on the condition it remained agricultural by the way of easement on title in 1999. To protect this prime (class 1 and 2) farmland for future generations in perpetuity! This speculation will be a huge rip-off of the public purse! It is the most protected land in all of Ontario! Easements on title. In the greenbelt. An MZO to protect the area from Pickering doing the planning. The former provincial government took their planning rights away when they kept trying to pave the preserve and created the Central Pickering Development Plan, where the preserve is enshrined as agricultural. Plus its own legislation Bill 16, the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act.

“The minister spoke of lands that are appropriate for development because they are beside an urban area. That logic is 1980s sprawl logic since a ton of ag lands are beside urban areas. The Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve is also nestled beside the Rouge Park, which also has a lot of agricultural activity and the other side protects one side of Duffins Creek. Then it can be argued it’s appropriate to have an ag preserve where it is.

“Also, why is there no mention of the homes being built right now in Seaton? Pickering is also identified as an urban growth centre in the provincial growth plan and is required to hit certain densities in the urban core before moving into new greenfield sites. They are approving condo towers as we speak. In short. They don’t need any new lands for development. Period. This is not passing the smell test.”

I had a chance to meet Bonnie, and we had a good chat at the rally—there were 200 people, give or take—in Pickering. I was glad to spend a freezing cold Saturday with them. A lot of those folks have been fighting this fight for a long time.

1610

A bit of history, Speaker: In 1993, the NDP government established the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve. In 1998, the city of Pickering endorsed the conclusion of a rural study which called for that land to remain rural.

Just for folks at home who are thinking, “What is she talking about?”, schedule 2 of this bill says that the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act should be repealed—and that’s like this government has to peel off that safety, that protection, in order to take that chunk of land out of the greenbelt. When everyone is talking about Bill 23 and pulling stuff out of the greenbelt for development, in our neck of the woods, this has to happen first, before they can get at it, because this is super-duper-protected land.

In 1999, the Ontario government, Durham and Pickering signed an agreement to protect these lands as farmland in perpetuity, which means forever and ever and ever. After this agreement was signed, the Ontario government began selling that land to farmers for cheap, but as a condition of the sale, the purchaser had to agree to easements or limitations protecting the land forever as farmland.

In 2005, a *Globe and Mail* article said that the sale of those lands was overseen by Tony—Miele? Is that how you say it? I’d have to ask the PCs; I think you guys all know him. He was the then president of the Ontario Realty Corp. He has been in a couple of different articles lately, like the *Toronto Star* “Friends with Benefits?” investigation on the PC-connected beneficiaries of the Highway 416 proposal. Even more amazingly, that guy who was involved in selling off the land is the chair of the PC Ontario fund, the PC Party’s campaign donation war chest. It’s just so interconnected.

Back in the day, in 2003, shortly after Miele sold the protected farmland to various farmers for next to nothing, companies owned or controlled by Silvio De Gasperis snapped up these properties from the farmers, buying all but three lots of its current land holdings, totalling more than 1,300 acres. He paid a total of \$8.6 million at the time, which is next to nothing. He bought up a lot of land that was supposed to be protected forever and ever and ever.

There was a developer-funded growth-management study that contradicted that earlier recommendation. Then the Liberals came and put it into the greenbelt, thwarting De Gasperis and his plans for vast riches.

Fast-forward, and here we are. A land dispute is being resurrected nearly two decades later by this PC government, whose political donations are collected and managed by that same Tony Miele, and De Gasperis stands to make bajillions of dollars—somebody could correct me on the exact figure.

I’m out of time.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We’ll go to questions.

Mr. Vincent Ke: Thank you to the member from Oshawa for her presentation.

Speaker, young families, newcomers and those all over the province dream of having their own home near where they work and play—a dream which continues to be out of reach for too many as demand outpaces supply and places more and more pressures on our housing market. Industry experts have said that bold, decisive action is needed now to address our current supply crisis.

According to a Scotiabank report, we need 1.2 million new homes now to meet the G7 per capita rate for the 10-year target that the task force and our government have set.

The need for action is clear.

So my question to the member is, why does she not agree that urgent action is needed to address Ontario's housing crisis?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: It's interesting that nothing in this bill has anything to do with housing—but I'll answer his question using the TRCA response to the planned repeal of the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act. This is from November 16. It was posted online by the conservation authority and was then mysteriously taken down; I don't know why. Anyway, it was archived online—because nothing ever really goes away. I'm quoting from that. They said, "It is well established that earlier this year the province's own housing experts implored them to protect the greenbelt, noting that there is sufficient developable land available to address the housing supply crisis without greenbelt lands."

They also said in this scathing letter that disappeared, "Unlike the typical process followed for other urbanization proposals there has been no watershed plan or sub-watershed plan and supporting environmental studies completed for this area involving Toronto and Region Conservation Authority ... to inform this decision."

This is where we find ourselves today.

I'm more than happy to answer any more of their awesome questions.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The next question.

Mr. Joel Harden: I want to thank the member for Oshawa for that presentation.

To the member, through you, Speaker: I've been grappling with this notion of minoritarian rule, as the member said. I'm grappling with the notion that a 30% vote is now a majority in the mentality of this legislation and, I'm going to presume, with the government.

I just want to reflect on the fact that in the last election, 10% of the electorate voted for this caucus; 10% of the electorate voted for your caucus, Speaker, the Liberal caucus; in addition, a part voted for the Green member and the Green member elected; and 20% voted for this government. If this Legislature is actually reflective of what the people of Ontario voted for, we would be a majority. It would seem that if Bill 39 is to be believed, the NDP currently could be in government with the Liberals. How does the member feel being in government—if the government applies this principle?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: There was a lot of math there, and I think it can be boiled down to the basics of: Fair is fair and unfair is not fair. And if you were to put this, as I used a—not to make light of it, but I used a schoolyard example. If, suddenly, a third was all that was required for decisions to be made, we would find ourselves in a very unusual province, which I think is what this government is trying to do—to create all sorts of chaos so that we don't know where to look, and to put through their own initiatives without the majority either being convinced or being involved.

You asked me how I'd feel about being in government. I would love to be in government, and I would be so excited to get rid of a lot of those folks over there.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll go to the next question, please.

Ms. Laura Smith: Earlier today, I talked about visiting an enterprise located in Thornhill by the name of Macrodyne. Macrodyne Technologies is a thriving, state-of-the-art facility that creates hydraulic presses, and they serve international markets. They are very, very good at what they do, and they showed me exactly what they do. I was incredibly impressed. When I sat down with them in the boardroom, I asked them, "What is your biggest issue? What can Ontario do to help you?" And they said this, very succinctly: "Please build more homes." Their biggest problem was keeping employment. Nobody would stay there. There aren't enough homes. There is simply nowhere for them to live.

On this side of the House, we understand the need for working diligently with our large municipal partners to build more homes.

Do the opposition not recognize that the province has a role to play in ensuring that we plan for growth?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: The members on this side of the House have a concept of "affordable"—and a lot of the employers realize that their employees don't have places to live in their home communities where they work because they can't afford it. These McMansions that may or may not happen—I don't know that that's going to address that.

Let's talk about what the member had asked about actually building homes. You are putting a lot of faith in people who are really excited about massive profit margins to build homes—they don't have to, by the way. By reclassifying watersheds—now that's Bill 23, but it's all the same here, the greenbelt and just opening it up. These developers are under no obligation to build anything. The minute that you reclassify a watershed and it's now, what, "the land formerly known as wet," or whatever you're going to call that wetland—it's now moist meadow or something—they've already made bajillions of dollars on paper. They don't have to build anything. At what point do we see in this legislation or Bill 23 that they will, indeed, actually build homes? Show me.

Interjection.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Oh, I'm so glad the member from Brampton North is back—whoo.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll go to the next question.

1620

Ms. Jessica Bell: I was wanting to ask you about the greenbelt. This bill does make it much easier for PC donors who happen to own land in a section of the greenbelt that's being opened up by this act. Why do you think the government is choosing to open up sections of the greenbelt in areas near you?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I'm going to go to an article from the CBC—I don't know if it was yesterday or today; it's hard to keep up: "Wealthy Ontario Developer Close to Winning Long Battle to Build Homes on Protected Greenbelt." In my area, Silvio De Gasperis started buying up parcels of land back in 2003. Back in 2005, he told the National Post that the province's move to include the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve in the greenbelt would cost his company an estimated \$240 million in lost revenue. He said, "McGuinty has already hurt me. I'm going to hurt him." He "then launched a campaign to stymie plans for the greenbelt, working with Pickering to develop the preserve land anyway...."

"Victor Doyle, a former senior provincial planner who helped design the greenbelt"—in his words, to answer your question—"said he felt 'deceived as a planner and as a citizen...."

"It's all about, in my view, rewarding the land development interests who own this land and are clearly of primary interest to the government," Doyle said."

These are folks who stand to make a boatload of money. They have been investing in this Conservative government since 2014—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. Other questions?

Mr. Billy Pang: For the past few weeks, we have had a lot of hearings to listen to stakeholders, and one of the stakeholders told me—he was answering my question. I asked him, "How many years does it take for you when you have submitted all your documents and then you can deliver a house?" He said it was 10 to 11 years.

I want to ask the member from the opposite side: Under their proposal, how fast can they deliver 1.5 million houses in 10 years?

Interjection: A bajillion years.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: Speaker, I appreciate that the members of the government caucus like my word choice in using "bajillion." The point is—

Interjections.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I use it, and it seems a bit flip, but the point is, I don't have any faith in this government that they are indeed going to deliver on their promise, because that isn't their MO. Their MO is to make the promise and not deliver on the promise.

Mr. Will Bouma: How long?

Ms. Jennifer K. French: How long? Great question—how long you're going to take, but also will you even deliver on those homes, because we don't have assurance? We do have a lot of profit margins in this legislation, in Bill 23.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to go to further debate.

Mr. Graham McGregor: I am honoured to stand here to speak on Bill 39, the Better Municipal Governance Act.

Ontario is growing rapidly. Each year, Ontario welcomes new Canadians, eager to start a life, start a family in their new home, and it's a beautiful thing to see. It's a beautiful thing to see that with hard work someone in Ontario can have a life that previously they could only dream about—or so that is what we might have once thought. There's one thing that many dream about that they aren't always able to make a reality, and that is a home that meets their needs.

Unfortunately, with the state of Ontario's housing crisis, we're seeing more and more Ontarians unsatisfied with their living situation. Sometimes that may be due to location—and there are many, many reasons for that. One of the reasons is, they can't find a place close to work so they have to commute long hours daily for their paycheque, or the area they need to live in does not have the homes to accommodate the size of their family or the size of the family they hope to have someday.

We see seniors who want to downsize to a community that better meets their needs, but that's not an option.

We have millennials who want out of their parents' home—actually, their parents want them out as well—but that's not an option.

New Canadians who drop everything they have back in their home countries find themselves living in cramped apartments. I see this in my riding of Brampton North, and it is not right.

It all boils down to one thing: There are simply not enough homes.

Speaker, there's no doubt in my mind that Ontario is the greatest place in the world. As I've said before in this House, Ontario thrives off its diversity. I think we have unanimous agreement on that. It's no secret that people want to live here; quite frankly, we need them to. We need more people to move to Ontario. We need more diversity, not less diversity.

That's why it breaks my heart to hear stories of dissatisfaction from newcomers when they come to Canada, saying, "I miss my home" and "Canada is not exactly what I thought it was." I see it in my riding—in particular, the neighbourhood of Springdale, home to some of the hardest-working people you'll find anywhere in this country, many new Canadians who are eager to build that foundation in their new home. They're eager to build that foundation in Canada for future generations of their family to benefit, but this sacrifice they make is made significantly more difficult when they're living in outrageous living conditions.

We see, particularly, international students in Brampton, who are sometimes crammed into basement apartments, sharing a washroom with up to seven other people.

Ontario is a place where it doesn't matter where you come from, who you love or how you choose to worship God; everybody deserves the same opportunity to succeed. We've attracted the world's most amazing people, who

have helped to build this identity in this province. However, we need to continue to work to maintain the dignity of our system.

I'll speak about another neighbourhood in my riding, M section. M section is a neighbourhood which the former member for Brampton North loved very much, actually, and which has a significant population of seniors. These seniors are hard-working Ontarians who paid their dues to the province. Now they hope to downsize, and they can't find an affordable home to meet their needs in a livable community. These are Ontarians, these are neighbours who worked incredibly hard for what they have. However, as Ontario's population continued to grow through the years, our housing supply simply did not keep up, leaving these seniors with incredibly limited options. Funnily enough, if there were enough options for the seniors in M section to downsize their homes, maybe that would have allowed some of the millennials living in their parents' basements in another neighbourhood called Snelgrove, in my riding, to find a home that they might prefer.

As I heard from Ontario's realtor association this week, we need to help young people find a home because it will make them happy and it will also make their parents really happy.

Speaker, as we all saw with the Minister of Education's fantastic work in negotiating a deal with CUPE that keeps kids in class, we on this side like to make parents happy. We know that's important to them, and it seems like our government is the only one that truly wants to give the people of this province what they want. We serve the people of Ontario, while the NIMBY members opposite would much rather appease their downtown Toronto environmentalist buddies, slowing down projects across the province, hurting families. We talk about an acronym—we hear the opposite side wants to talk about their amendments to the bill, and I guess you could phrase their feedback in an acronym. I'd say "NDP—Needlessly Delay Projects" that would benefit Ontarians. They used to just be NIMBYs, "not in my backyard"—but now it seems like the members opposite not only don't want new development in their backyard; they don't want new development in anybody's backyard.

Some of the members of my generation want backyards. Some new Canadians who come to our country deserve backyards. Some seniors who have backyards deserve livable, downsized homes, where they can stay in their community and continue to thrive and live.

Unfortunately—this should be straightforward; this should be unanimously agreed on by every member of this House. We all went out to the people of Ontario, we looked Ontarians in the eyes, and we all said that we're going to build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years. The members on the other side, Ctrl-C, Ctrl-V—that's a generational reference that a lot of the New Democrats may not understand—popped in the same target in their platform. But now, when we're taking actions to build 1.5 million homes over the next 10 years say, they're saying that they disagree with it; they want to needlessly delay. We hear them, colleagues. What do we hear? "We need

more consultation. Wait. Slow down. We need you to consult with this, to consult with that. Have you considered this amendment? Have you considered that amendment?"

1630

Frankly, Ontarians don't need more committees or working groups. They need action. They need a government that's going to get things done. That's exactly what our PC government is here to do for the people of Ontario.

I'll speak about Halloween. We saw Halloween in my community—I believe in all communities in Ontario. I'll talk about some of the neighbourhoods in my riding—neighbourhoods like Heart Lake and Snelgrove, where there used to be a hundred kids who would knock on the door; now there are only three, four, five, maybe a dozen. Part of the reason is, Heart Lake is a community that was built decades ago by young families who wanted to build a better life for their children; unfortunately, a lot of those same children are priced out of the neighbourhood and are forced to live elsewhere. Many of those children, if they still live in the neighbourhood, are living in the basement. They're not living with a backyard. They're not living in a house that meets their needs, a house where would be satisfied to raise their family. What I would say to families there, what I told them at the door, is that this is a government that has your back. Our Premier, our Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, our entire PC caucus is laser-focused on delivering the housing supply you need to have a better life for you and your family.

Housing affordability is not something that respects municipal borders. If you can't afford a house in Brampton, shifting your life and your family over to Brantford or to Brant county will not solve the issues in affordability. Ontario is in a housing supply crisis—it's not Toronto, not Peel; it's the province of Ontario.

Another scary statistic, a shocking statistic, that was shared with me was that 53% of Ontarians under the age of 40 are considering moving to another province. We have a labour shortage in this province. We have almost 400,000 jobs that are being unfilled at this point. We need an economy that grows. We need people here to help our economy succeed.

We have Alberta aggressively targeting Ontario drivers and Ontario families, saying, "Move to Alberta. We want you here." What we need in Ontario is to say, "No, we want you to stay here. We want you to work here, get a great job, have a great family, and build a better life for you and for future generations." That's not what I hear from the members opposite.

We're going to hear a lot about "this statute" and "this amendment" and "this schedule" and all the issues that they like to talk about.

The people of Ontario know—they said it in the last election—that one party has their backs for housing affordability. That's the PC Party of Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We will go to questions and answers for the member of Brampton North.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I thank the member for his speech. He has obviously done a lot of research.

I know this member is a very proud and active member of the Conservative Party, so what I will say now is something that I'm sure he well knows, and that is that the establishment of conservation authorities here in Ontario came from his forebears, from his party. They had the vision to protect our water supply, to protect farmland, to protect environmentally significant land, to protect endangered species. They had the vision to establish this, and now, years later, this current Conservative government is doing everything it can to undo the important work that was done by their forebears.

So my question is, do you believe that past Conservative government was misguided in protecting these lands?

Mr. Graham McGregor: I thank my colleague for his question. I would invite him to read the bill, where we're very clear that we're protecting the core mandate of conservation authorities, which is to stop flooding. What I would also say about—

Interjection.

Mr. Graham McGregor: Sorry, that is Bill 23; that's a fair point. It's not Bill 39. But this is part of the package that our government is putting together.

Imagine if we were to put our heads in the sand, the way the members of the opposition would want us to. "We won't build anything. We'll find an excuse to never build any new homes for people. We'll never build any roads for them to drive on. We'll never build any long-term-care homes for aging Ontarians to go to as they grow older. We'll never build any new hospitals for Ontarians to go to when they get sick." Imagine if we were in that scenario.

Thank God, Ontarians chose this party and this government to lead our province. We're going to build Ontario to make it better for every Ontarian.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The next question.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Speaker, through you to the member for Brampton North: I thank him for his excellent presentation.

I know that from his background he has a very strong understanding of the effects Bill 39 would have in upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities, particularly as it relates to planning and development, and the efficiencies it's going to bring to build badly needed affordable housing in Brampton, but also across the region of Peel. Could he elaborate further on that?

Mr. Graham McGregor: I thank the member across for his question.

I would also kind of lament a little bit—I wish the members on the other side of the House would trust the people of Brampton a little bit more. Brampton is the fourth-biggest city in Ontario. We're the ninth-biggest city in Canada. The idea that a city of 700,000 people could take a little bit more ownership on some of the decisions that are impacting Bramptonians every single day should not be something ridiculed by members of this House. We've seen it before.

I invite members who were here in the previous government—we see the opposition fearmongering. What

did they say? They said that the Premier and the PC government were going to fire all these government employees. Did we see that happen? No, actually, the only government employees who lost their jobs were the NDP caucus members, when Ontarians kicked them out in 2022, especially across Brampton.

I think it would behoove all members of this House to trust the people of Brampton a little bit more; our party certainly does. I think it's good advice.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll go to the next question.

MPP Jill Andrew: I'm glad to be able to share some points on Bill 39 and Bill 23, government bills. They're pretty much "waste" bills, frankly, to use millennial language.

I'm wondering why the government is using immigrants as scapegoats—because no immigrant comes to Ontario asking to live on the greenbelt, asking to live on wetlands.

This government doesn't understand that their notion of affordability is driving Ontarians into poverty. The average Ontarian does not make \$130,000 a year.

So can the Brampton North member tell me which house anyone making \$39,000 or \$35,000—or ODSP recipients. Which house can they afford to build on Bill 39, Bill 23, or any of the other crap they've brought in the Legislature this year?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you—language.

To reply, the member for Brampton North.

Mr. Graham McGregor: That's okay. It's a contact sport.

I think the member has a lot of educational certifications. She's a very well-educated member for Toronto—St. Paul's, and I respect that. But I'm not sure if the member ever took an economics course.

There are factors here at play of supply and demand. Here in Ontario and Canada, we have the lowest supply per capita of houses of any country in the G7. In Ontario, we have the lowest amount of houses per capita of any province across the country. We know and experts know that when you make supply to meet demand, that creates a more fair market for everybody.

I would say that when we speak about new Canadians, many of whom live in my riding and many of whom live in Toronto—St. Paul's, I'm not sure how the member could go to them credibly and suggest that the NDP plan to never build anything—to never build homes, to never build hospitals, to never build long-term care, to never build any transit; to continually vote against good investments that will help newcomers come to our country—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We'll move on to the next question.

1640

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: I'm happy to say that, across our province, there are many vibrant communities growing. Ontario's population has surpassed 15 million for the first time ever this year, and it will continue to grow for another two million in the next few years. Madam

Speaker, many of the members know that the federal government also recently announced that their target of new immigrants by 2025 is 500,000, and many of those new Canadians are going to choose our province to settle down and start families here.

Can the member from Brampton North explain how this legislation, if passed, will help us to continue to prepare for the future growth and welcome new Canadians looking to start their families in Brampton and Scarborough?

Mr. Graham McGregor: I would say, you know, Canada is a country that's really been built by immigrants, by newcomers. I'm a first-generation Canadian. My parents came from Scotland and Northern Ireland. We have the Associate Minister of Transportation; his parents came here from Korea to build a better life. We have the member that asked the question, that came here from Sri Lanka to live in a prosperous and free country and build a better future for himself and for future generations.

I think that is a trend that we need to continue as legislators, as lawmakers in this country. We need to continue to welcome people. But who would we be if we're going to have half a million new Canadians coming in 2025—we know the lion's share of them will come to Ontario. Who would we be if we didn't build homes for them to live in, we didn't build hospitals for them to go to when they got sick, we voted for disastrous regulations that would stop them from getting a job, we would tax them to death, we would build no opportunity for any of them in the name of needlessly delaying projects—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you for the response.

Le député pour Algoma–Manitoulin.

Mr. Michael Mantha: I'm going to try to bring it down a bit. I will ask the member a very straightforward question. We've heard a lot of debate in regard to how we feel that transparency and democracy are being ripped out with the introduction of Bill 39. There's another word that I want to mention to the member, and I'm curious about his thoughts on responsibility. We are partners in this province. We are all treaty members. I'm wondering if the member can provide me his insights as to what Indigenous communities, what First Nations communities, what leadership was consulted prior to the introduction of Bill 39.

Mr. Graham McGregor: I appreciate the member's attempt to kind of cool it down. I think that's right. We all have a responsibility as lawmakers to use our voice on behalf of our constituents to make our province better. I know, if the member will see, there was Indigenous consultation, certainly, on this bill, on the housing supply action plan.

I would say, as our government is building opportunity, we're not just building opportunity in the GTA; we're building opportunity in the north, as well. I was happy to see medical school expansions, for instance, in my riding in Brampton. But we also know that we're expanding access to doctors in northern Ontario, as well. I think we need to be inclusive with all of our partners as we move forward. We need to build a better province for everybody in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to further debate.

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to start by telling you about an experiment. It's called the Milgram experiment. Some of you may be familiar with it. It was 1962 and Stanley Milgram was a social scientist. In the experiment—he was the experimenter, so he was wearing a lab coat and he had one volunteer and one person, and the other person thought—a teacher and a learner; I'll describe it that way. The idea was to study—what he told the two study participants was that he was going to be studying the impact of punishment on memory and on learning. And so what he did is he took these two people, and he designated one as the teacher and the other one as the learner.

Now, the learner was actually in on the experiment. So the teacher and learner go in and they look at the equipment. There's a dial in the one room, and it's a voltage dial, and in the other room there's something that looks like an electric chair. They strap the learner into the electric chair, and then the experimenter and the teacher go back in the other room with the dial. They say that the way the experiment is going to go is that the experimenter is going to read out pairs of words and then the learner is supposed to recite them back. If he gets them right, that's fine. But if he makes a mistake, they're going to give him a shock with the voltage meter. The shocks go from 15 volts to 450 volts, and if you know anything about electricity, 450 volts is a lot; it's deadly.

So he does this experiment, and at first the teacher gives a shock and the learner goes, "Uh!" And then eventually the learner is complaining more and more about the shocks that they're getting. They're in the other room. If the teacher was saying, "You know what? I don't think we should continue. We might be hurting him." The experimenter would say, "Please continue," and then he would give another prod; he'd say, "The experiment requires that you continue. It is absolutely essential that you continue. You have no choice. You must go on," is what the experimenter would say. And the shocking part was that 65% of the people who were the teachers, who didn't know what this experiment was really about and didn't realize they weren't actually giving a shock, went all the way to 450 volts, even after the learner had gone silent in the other room. And 450 volts is a deadly voltage. So these people actually believed that they were torturing this person, and yet they continued. It's an experiment about obedience to authority.

One of the other things that came out of this experiment was that people who were polite and nice tended to go all the way to the 450 volts. People who were cantankerous tended not to go. They'd say, "I'm not doing this." I always think about this, and I think of myself as a polite person, and it's a warning to me. It's a warning to me that you can't always be polite. There are times when somebody is going to ask you to do something that is wrong, and you've got to stand up and you've just got to push back.

The reason I'm telling this story about the Milgram experiment is that I'm asking the Conservative members of the House: What bill would your government bring forward that you would not vote for? What is your line in the

sand? Where would you say, “This is beyond what I voted to be in here for?” I’m looking at Bill 39. We’re talking about Bill 39 today, and this bill, I will say, is an egregious attack on our democracy. It was introduced six days ago and it gives the mayor of Toronto the power to make bylaws with only one third of the councillors. We just had, just three weeks ago, our municipal elections and we elected—the people of Toronto voted for our city councillors. We voted for 25 city councillors, and we assumed that the election that we took part in would be respected. But instead, immediately after the election, two weeks after the election, this government introduces legislation that says, “Well, yes, you may have elected 25 city councillors, but only eight of them and the mayor are going to be able to make decisions.” So 17 of those councillors that we elected are going to be taken out of the decision-making process, even though we elected them. This is a violation of the fundamental principle of democracy. Democracy: Webster’s dictionary defines it as “government by the people especially: rule of the majority.”

The other thing that came out—and I’m really shocked—is that Mayor Tory asked for these powers to govern the council with only one third of council votes. Mayor Tory is a person who—we may not always politically agree on issues, but I’ve always respected him. I’ve been at a few events with him over the last few weeks, and he’s been talking about coming out of the pandemic how we need to work together, how we need to heal the divisions that came up in our society through the pandemic. And then, for him to have asked the government, during the election in which he was running, to override, to give him the power to override the results of the election, to override the results of the votes of the people of this city, is absolutely shocking. I’m so deeply disappointed.

1650

The government always has a rationale. Every time they bring in a bill that attacks our democratic rights, they always have a rationale. This is housing, and the government refuses to talk about democracy. In this debate this afternoon, I haven’t heard the word “democracy” once from any of the government members, but what we have heard about is housing.

The new city councillor in my riding, Ausma Malik, wrote, “Bill 39 isn’t about housing. It’s a clear attack on our local democracy.

“I am disheartened by Mayor Tory’s overreaching request for this power.”

And it’s not just Toronto that Bill 39 affects. It’s also the regions of York, Peel and Niagara. The voters in those municipalities just voted for their councillors, and some of those councillors sit on regional governments, and those councillors on the regional governments were to elect the head of the council. Instead, what’s happening with Bill 39 is, the Premier is going to be appointing the head of council and that head of council that he appoints will be able to make decisions for the regional council with only one third of the councillors. It’s a complete violation of the democratic expectations and principles of the people who voted in those municipalities of Niagara, York and Peel.

To the people, if you’re listening to this and you don’t live in Toronto, you don’t live in York, Peel or Niagara, pay attention to this because when this government attacks the democratic rights of the people in the GTA area, they’re attacking the democratic rights of everyone, because any of us could be next.

I started out by asking the government members, “What’s your line in the sand? What bill would you not vote for?” The other bill that just came up is Bill 28 that this government introduced two weeks ago, and it used the “notwithstanding” clause to strip education workers of their fundamental freedoms and their legal rights under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and it also stripped education workers of their protection under the Human Rights Code. The Human Rights Code makes it illegal to discriminate against people based on their gender, their race, their religion, their disability—there’s 15 categories there. What that bill did was, it made it legal for the government to discriminate against those education workers, who are predominantly women and people of colour, and that’s a piece of legislation that the Conservative members in this House voted for. I am really shocked that anybody would stand up for that. This is why I started talking about the Milgram experiment: What is your line in the sand? When will you say, “I don’t care what’s coming from the leadership in the Conservative Party, I cannot vote for that because it violates the fundamental principles and rights of the people of this province”?

I will say, just to conclude about Bill 28, there was an incredible mobilization of workers and unions across this province that forced this government to withdraw it. So I’m really, really hoping that there will be a mobilization of citizens across this province that will force you to repeal Bill 39.

I’ve just got a few seconds left. The Conservative members, when you walk out of your caucus room in this Legislature, there’s a large portrait of William Lyon Mackenzie. He was the leader of the Rebellions of 1837. He was fighting for what they called responsible government, democratic government, and that rebellion actually got it for us. In 1848, the residents of Upper Canada got the first elected government in this area, after the First Nations people—so in the colony. This government, your government, is actually taking us back to that pre-democratic history. I ask you, please, do not support Bill 39.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Time for questions.

Mr. Will Bouma: It’s always a pleasure to engage with the member from Spadina–Fort York—always measured, always calm, always kind.

I will be pleased to support this piece of legislation, because I recognize the importance of building housing, not just for my children but for the approximately 350,000 new Canadians who will be coming into the province of Ontario every year with the new federal government immigration quotas, and I welcome them and I look forward to that.

What I would ask the member is, what Conservative bill would you vote for? You were bouncing around a little bit.

Just recently, we were debating the fall economic statement, on which I couldn't get a single negative comment out of the NDP other than it went not far enough. Yet you all voted against it.

What Conservative bill would you vote for, if not something that is an absolute benefit to the most vulnerable Ontarians?

Mr. Chris Glover: First of all, I want to comment on your housing comments, because you always talk about, "That's the rationale," and the government always talks about, "The rationale for Bill 39 is we need to build housing." We've been building housing in the province of Ontario since 1867 in a democracy. Nowhere the government said, "Hey you have to overturn or override democratic principles in order to build housing." Yours is the first government to do that.

What bill would I support from this government? I would support a bill that actually built not-for-profit supportive housing to bring an end to homelessness. We've got 16,000 people on the streets of this province who do not have a home. I would support a bill—I see I'm out of time. I will go on about what other bills I would support in the next answer.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Windsor West.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: I have a question for my colleague from Spadina–Fort York. We've heard the government members talk at length about having to create housing for newcomers to Canada, for immigrants. I want to share some information with you about my riding specifically, but also all of Windsor and Essex: 27% of Windsor's population are newcomers. I can tell you, my riding, not just the city as a whole but my riding specifically, is one of the most diverse in the entire country. When I'm knocking on doors and talking to those folks—whether they can vote for me or not, they are still my constituents, and I make sure I tell them that. They want to be able to afford a place to live when they come to Canada. Many of them come from countries where democracy is not a thing. It's not a thing. The people do not have a say. The governments dictate what will happen.

I'm wondering if the member for Spadina–Fort York can tell me how this government rectifies—how they balance this conversation about newcomers when the reality is, through legislation like this, these newcomers will never have a voice here.

Mr. Chris Glover: I look at the makeup of the new council, and the new councillor in my riding is Ausma Malik. She's the first hijab-wearing woman ever elected to city council. Amber Morley, Jamaal and Alejandra Bravo—there's a number of people from equity-seeking groups who have been elected to this council. The first thing that this government has done is strip them of their power. It's an absolute affront to their democratic rights and an absolute affront to the struggle that they had to get to the positions that they have.

I'm really hoping the government will reconsider Bill 39.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Question?

Ms. Laura Smith: The core of this legislation is very simple. It will help us support efficient local decision-making and give elected officials the tools they need to remove barriers stalling development on the housing, transit and infrastructure Ontarians critically need. The proposed legislation, if passed, will give local legislators elected by Ontarians the extra tools they need to get shovels in the ground and help us prepare for Ontario's future growth, like the individuals that I was talking to in my riding. They desperately need housing.

Why doesn't the opposition trust Ontarians to choose efficient local leaders?

Mr. Chris Glover: We absolutely do trust Ontarians. We trust Ontarians to go to the ballot box and vote in an election. Then we trust the government, the provincial government, to leave that alone, to respect the votes of the people of the province, the people in their municipal elections.

When you said that you're supporting local decision-making, the exact opposite is true. You're overriding local decision-making. We just had an election in Ontario. We elected 25 city councillors. They are supposed to govern this city by majority vote. You're saying, "No, that's not necessary. It's only going to be one third." So eight of those city councillors are going to be able to make decisions, and it's the same process, the same principle that you're applying and you're disenfranchising the voters in Niagara, in Peel and York. It's an absolute assault on the democratic rights of the people of this province.

1700

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Joel Harden: I want to congratulate the member from Spadina–Fort York for, as I think the member for Brantford–Brant said very well, his calm compassionate remarks. But I want to make an attempt to answer the question you posed and hopefully get some debate in this House, because it was a great question you posed about what's the line. What's the line for any one of us that, in our own caucus, we may stand up and say, "No, I can't consent"?

I want to point out, Speaker, through you, the legacy of Peter Kormos, who was expelled to that chair right over there when then-Premier Rae imposed the social contract. It became very, very controversial, and Peter decided to filibuster for 17 hours because his constituents were telling him, "Peter, we don't agree with this."

And that's democracy. Democracy in this place is that when someone proposes something you disagree with, you should stand in your place and speak against it. I would hope that there are members over on that side, Speaker, through you, that, when faced with the idea of minoritarian rule—there's got to be debate in that caucus. So that's the legacy of our party. That's what I would say: Peter Kormos is the legacy of our party.

What do you think about that, my friend? What's the advice you'd give the government?

Mr. Chris Glover: We all were elected here. There are 124 member in this House who were elected by our

constituents to represent our constituents. And there are going to be things that you like that your government is doing; there are going to be things that you don't like that your government is doing. Then there's got to be some that you say, "This is absolutely reprehensible. I cannot stand with this. The people of my riding will not allow me to vote for this."

The egregious attacks on our democratic rights in this province by this government—not just Bill 39 and Bill 28, but also in the previous session, when they changed the rules of the municipal elections in the middle of the election campaign period in 2018, when they decided that they could rule by emergency power without having to come back to the Legislature to grant them that power for up to a year. There have been a number of attacks on our democratic rights, and I'm really, really hoping that the Conservative members of this House will stand up and vote against Bill 39.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll go to the next question.

Mr. Will Bouma: A couple of statistics here I just looked up: In 2011, the number of new housing starts in Ontario, 67,000; in 2012, 76,000; in 2013, 61,000; in 2014, 59,000. The record shows that when the opposition held the balance of power with the former government, there weren't nearly enough houses built in the province of Ontario. The opposition has cut and pasted a million and a half homes into their housing plans, but their record definitely demonstrates an inability to actually deliver on those things.

I'm wondering if the member from Spadina–Fort York is comfortable saying here in this House that he would look his constituents in the eye and say to them, point blank, "If we were in government, there is no way that your children or new Canadians would ever be able to enjoy the dream of home ownership."

Mr. Chris Glover: The government keeps harping on this. We can build housing in a democracy. You don't need Bill 39 to build housing. The government of Ontario gives a line—they give an amount, a number of houses, a quota that the city of Toronto has to build. And every year, the city of Toronto has met that quota. It's part of the places to grow program.

Anyways, we can do it. We can build the million and a half houses that we're going to need, but we also need to build some affordable housing and that's nowhere in any bill that this government has brought forward. In fact, the last time that affordable housing, that not-for-profit social housing and supportive housing was built in this province was under the last NDP government. We were building 15,000 not-for-profit housing units per year in this province. That's the last time it was built. So if people want to—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you.

Just before we pursue for further debate, I understand that the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock has a point of order.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, for the time.

I want to introduce, in the gallery, Chris Rol, who is with the insurance bureau association of Ontario, but was one of the first people who came to work with me in the Legislature in 2003, and I want you all to welcome Chris.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We can continue with further debate.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I am very proud to stand today to speak on Bill 39, Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022. I would like to thank and recognize the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for bringing this bill to the floor, and for his hard work on behalf of all Ontarians.

I was watching the debate before I started, and to my surprise, one of the colleagues opposite was talking about how we can build 1.5 million houses with whatever we have today. Then the question would be why we didn't do it, why the government before us didn't do it, if it's available and can be done. Another colleague was saying there is no guarantee if we go with those bills that we can actually build 1.5 million. I don't know why there is the uncertainty about building or not building, or meeting or not meeting the numbers. There are no guarantees.

We were in the committee hearings the other day, and one of the colleagues was saying, "What is the guarantee that if we did this and that, we'll be able to meet the 1.5 million?" The guarantee is just the planning. We don't know the plans. When a country or a company starts a project of 20 years or 15 years, there is no guarantee that after 15 years they will actually be where they are planning to be. But all the odds and the plans and the timelines and the charts and all the kinds of analysis they do are to make sure that hopefully we will be in that.

What we know now is that as we stand today, we have a crisis. We have a housing crisis. There is enough explanation about the status we are in today, because Canada is scheduled to add 500,000 immigrants every year. If the situation is as such today, what is going to happen in two years when we have a million people added to that equation?

Some 55% of my riding wasn't born in Canada, so the majority of my riding are new immigrants. I can agree to some extent with the colleague who said that the new immigrants would look for rental units, because they want to look for some affordable units to live in. I can agree with that, but again, where are those rental units today? In Mississauga, I don't think you can get even one rental apartment available as of today. There are none. Why? Because people who have actually been in their rentals for five or six or 10 years can't even afford a house, so that they can move on and leave that rental apartment for a newcomer to come in.

So the cycle is stalled. Why? Because the cycle to build a new development takes 10 to 11 years before any house can see the light. So even if we start today with the existing cycle, we are not going to see the results of that change until 2033, according to the cycle. The only way we can get out of that is to break that cycle, to change the cycle, to accelerate the cycle.

During one of the discussions here in committee last week, there was one appeal window of two years. There was a two-year appeal window. How come a developer can put a price or develop something, to get something going, with just one window of appeal that's two years? This can't happen.

With accountability comes authority. When we tried to push for the mayors to play their role in promoting and getting the units built—if they don't have the right authorities, it's not going to happen. It's just like math, one plus one; it's not really a magic thing.

1710

This bill didn't come out of nowhere. This bill is part of a series of bills. This government did the two recommendations based on the housing supply action plan: More Homes, More Choice; then More Homes for Everyone in 2022; then Strong Mayors, Building Homes; and quickly followed by More Homes Built Faster, which we introduced. So it's building blocks. Each block of those will help us to change something, to pave the way for more housing to get built.

And when we say more housing, I don't know why the opposition will always refer to housing like the developers and the big houses and the expensive solutions. Again, it's a connected cycle. As soon as somebody can buy a house, he will leave his apartment, rental apartment, and this rental apartment becomes available for somebody else who is ready to get in there.

With all those changes we are proposing here, if passed, it will allow a better, efficient and more synchronized process for municipalities, to allow a faster response to our shared priority of building 1.5 million new homes over the next 10 years. So there is a decisive action plan made by our government that can get the job done for Ontarians.

Madam Speaker, it's not news that we are in this crisis because of many years of neglect. Building houses wouldn't take six months. The current cycle is eleven years, so if we want to address the root cause of that, we need to go back 10 years to see what was the status 10 years ago that caused us to be here today. This is what our government is doing. Our government is looking into what impedes the process, how we ended up here today. It didn't happen day and night. We didn't wake up in the morning and find, "Oh, my God, we have 400,000 units missing." No, it happened across a number of years. And as I mentioned, even in the last mandate, we did two bills to accelerate housing, to try to change the narrative a little bit, to change the cycle, to break the cycle and give the mayors and the municipalities the responsibilities to be able to push that.

Today, I was meeting with some of the co-op associations outside, and they keep saying, "Whenever we talk to the city about a project, they say that this is a provincial issue." Well, we are pushing this provincial issue now, saying "Okay, municipalities, you have the right, you have the power, go and do your job. Get the job done." I don't see why the opposition would be against something like that, when I'm talking about—when I talked about the two-year appeal process, a period of time or a grace period

for two years for appeal, the master plan or whatever, some of the opposition were saying, "Yes, we have to give them the chance to study." So if the chance to study is two years for the appeal process and then they change something and they come back and say, "Another two years for appealing the new ones," how can a developer plan a road map for a project like that? They have to put some margins, like safety margins, in costs, and being in the process for 10 years would cost them money. This money, at the end of the day, will add to the cost of the unit that gets sold. He would do a project every 10 years. You have to get some money to live, right?

So I think that the speed of the solution, the speed of the process is very important to the whole process. It's not only that we get things done. We get things done and we need to get things done fast. We get things done now—not in two years, not in the future, today. We need that to get done today.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll go to questions and answers.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you to the member for his work on this file and his speech. It's always a pleasure to speak with him.

I have a question for him, but it's really a question for all of the Conservative government members. I want you to imagine a scenario whereby Justin Trudeau introduced a law in Parliament that said that if any province could muster one third of their MLAs or MPPs to put forth a bill that supported the priorities of Justin Trudeau, it should pass in any province. Would you support such an initiative by the Prime Minister to allow any province with one third of their MPPs or MLAs to get a bill to pass so long as Justin Trudeau agreed with it?

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: There is a difference in here. There is an action plan versus voting on changing legislation. This is totally different. We're talking about people's lives and housing and education and health, and you're talking about a policy change or a constitutional change. Nevertheless, I think what's going on now at the federal level is not very far from what we are here now anyway.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Hon. Kaleed Rasheed: Thank you to my wonderful colleague from my neighbour riding for his remarks. Actually, being a professor at a college, I know we always talked about demand and supply, and I know this afternoon we heard from the member from Brampton North about the education that he was trying to give to the opposition members about economics 101, that it's all about demand and supply.

There is a huge demand for homes. We have residents in our riding who want to actually own a home. We have immigrants who are coming—I, myself, belong to an immigrant family who came with a dream of owning a house in this wonderful country, in this great province. So when we talk about demand and supply, maybe my friend and my colleague can educate some of the members here about economics 101 and how demand and supply actually works. Thank you.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Thank you very much to the minister from Mississauga East–Cooksville. It's not really difficult math. If I have five units and there are 100 people who want to buy, they will bid on each other so they can win one of the five. It's not difficult, complex math. So the price will go up. If I have 200 units and only five buyers, then basically the developer will continue bringing the price down so that he can sell them. So the competition will be averted, and instead of competing to add pricing, it's going to be competing to lower pricing.

We know that the only way to bring pricing down is competition. We have to have more units, we have to have developers who are developing, giving options, giving a price range, giving a better price, better cuts to get their units sold. It's very simple. I don't understand; how difficult is that?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Next question?

Mr. Joel Harden: Let's talk about competition and let's talk about math. Since the Conservative government was elected in this province in 2018, the cost of a house has doubled in the province of Ontario—doubled. Since

the member is very interested in economics, I would like to think that the scaffolding of the dismal science of economics is math, and I'm wondering if it's comfortable for the member—whose company I enjoy, for the record—that we have minoritarian rule in this bill, that a third of an elected body can make a decision. I'm wondering if the member is actually comfortable with that. It would be like handing over the levers to the opposition parties. Are you prepared to have a motion, with unanimous consent, to allow us to run the province of Ontario if you very much believe in this bill?

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: Again, I will go back to what I said earlier. We are in a crisis. When we are in a crisis, we have to think out of the box. When we were talking to some of the mayors, they were saying, "We are doing our best, but we are not having co-operative councillors." Now we can get things done because those councillors will know for sure that they—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We're out of time.

Report continues in volume B.

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Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
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	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Tangri, Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Vacant	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	