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ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 1 December 2022

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 1^{er} décembre 2022

The House met at 0900.

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

Prières / Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STRENGTHENING POST-SECONDARY
INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENTS
ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT
DES ÉTABLISSEMENTS
POSTSECONDAIRES ET LES ÉTUDIANTS

Ms. Dunlop moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 26, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of post-secondary education / *Projet de loi 26, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation postsecondaire.*

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Would the minister care to lead off the debate?

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Good morning, Mr. Speaker, and thank you. Before I begin, I would like to say that I'll be sharing my time this morning with my parliamentary assistant and the member for Burlington.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to give a couple of special thank yous this morning and talk about my experience early this morning. My daughter and I arrived at Sick-Kids at 6 a.m. She's actually in surgery right now. I left her in the hands of some amazing doctors at 8 a.m., for the next four hours. So I want to give a shout-out to all the amazing doctors, nurses and health care providers across the province—especially the ones who are taking care of our wee people. Even though my daughter is 22 and six feet tall, she's still a patient at SickKids, until after this operation. So I want to thank everyone out there for all their love.

I'm pleased to have this opportunity, once again, to discuss our proposed legislative changes that will help set students up for success throughout their post-secondary education journey and as they transition into rewarding careers.

Over the last few months, I've had the pleasure of visiting several of Ontario's world-class post-secondary institutions, where I've had the opportunity to speak directly with students about their post-secondary education journey and their aspirations for the future. I have also had the privilege of speaking with so many high school students, parents and mature learners at different events—whether

it be at the Ontario Universities' Fair or the Jill of All Trades event—where I was able to hear first-hand about their aspirations when it comes to their post-secondary options. And I can tell you, the enthusiasm from both our current and prospective post-secondary students was palpable—because embarking on a post-secondary education, for many, is one of the moments in life when our next chapter begins.

Our government recognizes that Ontario's colleges, universities, Indigenous institutes and private career colleges are hotbeds of innovation and entrepreneurship. Campuses across the province, from the GTA to rural and northern Ontario, are not only places of learning, but centres of employment and economic growth for their communities, cities and regions that they call home. They offer high-quality education that will help students and graduates develop the knowledge and skills they need to get good-paying jobs and support the growth of our economy. And it is those students and graduates of these high-calibre institutions who give this province its competitive edge. I have said this many times: The people of this province are our greatest assets.

But in order for students to flourish in post-secondary education and beyond, we first need to provide them with a solid foundation that fosters success. By creating the right conditions for them to succeed, Ontario will have everything we need to safeguard our competitiveness and build Ontario's economy.

That's why today I am proud to stand before you to once again speak about Bill 26, which contains historic changes that will position Ontario's post-secondary education system and students for success.

Before providing an update, I'd like to remind the members what the legislation is about. To recap: At its core, the legislation seeks to protect students and make sure our post-secondary education communities are safe, healthy and respectful environments for learning and growth—environments where they don't have to worry about discrimination or harassment while accessing an education.

Bill 26 would give publicly assisted colleges and universities and private career colleges the ability to better address faculty and staff sexual misconduct against students. First, it would equip institutions with stronger tools to address instances of faculty or staff sexual misconduct against students. This means, for example, that sexual misconduct toward a student by faculty or staff would be deemed just cause for dismissal.

Second, it would prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements, which can be used to hide the prior wrongdoing of an employee when they leave one institution for

another. For example, in a case covered in the media a few years ago, a faculty member dismissed for just cause following an investigation into allegations of sexual violence was hired by another institution while the investigation was under way. Preventing the use of non-disclosure agreements will help limit instances where an employee leaves an institution to be employed at another institution with their prior wrongdoing remaining a secret, unknown to fellow faculty, staff and students. This will help provide greater transparency with respect to faculty and staff who are found to have committed sexual misconduct toward a student.

And third, the legislation would require institutions to have employee sexual misconduct policies that outline rules of behaviour between employees and students and contain examples of disciplinary measures for employees who break these rules. This will help address instances where faculty overstep a teacher-student relationship with inappropriate behaviour, such as an instance a few years ago when an independent review found that a professor gave alcohol to and made sexual advances towards a student.

Together, these changes would help to better protect students in instances of faculty and staff sexual misconduct and would help institutions to address complaints when they arise.

By working together with colleges, universities, private career colleges and all of our partners, we will build a better and safer learning environment for students that is free from sexual misconduct, harassment and violence. This is a priority for our government, which is why we've already taken concrete steps to address the issue, and the measures included in Bill 26 further build on these actions, which put student safety first.

Speaker, as proud as I am of Bill 26 and all of the hard work that has gone into developing it, it is truly unfortunate that this sort of legislation is necessary to keep students safe.

Earlier this week, we saw reports in the media of an ongoing case against a U of T professor who was investigated for violations of the sexual violence policy on campus. Even after the university accepted the results of the 72-page report, the professor not only remains employed by the institution, but will be directly overseeing two students and teaching classes next semester. During the committee process, we heard conflicting reports about whether current college and university processes did enough to keep students safe after proven instances of faculty sexual misconduct took place. From what we read here, it is clear that more can and needs to be done to empower schools to remove offenders from their school and keep students safe.

0910

Speaker, our government also supports a post-secondary education system that is accessible, respectful and inclusive for all learners, including Indigenous learners, which leads me to another important part of Bill 26: the proposed name change for Toronto Metropolitan University.

We work with colleges, universities, Indigenous institutes and Indigenous partners to create the conditions that make it easier for everyone to access a high-quality education. We do this because we want to build and encourage a post-secondary system that embraces inclusivity and promotes success for all learners so they can find rewarding careers.

The institution took it upon itself to create a task force to engage with community members on reconciling Eger-ton Ryerson's legacy. And after extensive consultations with the university and the broader community, including an online survey with over 30,000 respondents, the university determined that a new name would better reflect its current values, aspirations and directions. The school's renaming was one of 22 recommendations in the final report of the task force.

In April 2022, the university's board of governors approved "Toronto Metropolitan University" as the proposed new name to replace "Ryerson University." A few months later, the university formally requested that our ministry bring forward amendments to the Ryerson University Act, 1977, to make "Toronto Metropolitan University" the official legal name of the institution. We are pleased to support the university's name change to "Toronto Metropolitan University" by proposing the amendments to the Ryerson University Act, 1977, and other affected statutes to reflect this change.

The university's renaming is one of many steps the university is taking to move beyond the legacy of its namesake and his role in the design of Canada's residential school system. As the task force report notes, "A name change alone will not erase the systemic barriers and inequities that Indigenous and Black community members face within the institution." However, it is an important signal that the university is listening and responding to the historical issues of colonialism and how its influence can affect current students when considering how it could better align the university's name with its values. As the university states, "Names matter. They tell the world who we are and what we stand for. They communicate ideas, values and aspirations. They speak to the future even as they acknowledge the past."

I would like to congratulate the university on their decision to move in a new direction; in particular, on the extensive work and community consultations they have completed in order to arrive at this decision, and on the resulting report of its task force.

As a place of higher learning, Toronto Metropolitan University and the self-reflection it has pursued over the last few years can serve as a lesson that a deeper collective understanding of the Indian residential school system is an important step on the path towards reconciliation.

Both initiatives in Bill 26 are about creating the right conditions for student success. They're about creating inclusive, respectful and safe environments for learning. That is something that is incredibly important to this government, to me, and to the Premier. And he asked me to continue the work that we are doing to strengthen the response of colleges, universities and private career

colleges to sexual violence on campus, particularly cases of faculty and staff misconduct towards students.

The first part of this bill underlines our government's zero tolerance position on sexual harassment, assault and misconduct in post-secondary communities. This is a matter that is particularly close to me, given my prior role as the Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues, and now as Minister of Colleges and Universities, but more importantly, as a mother to three young women, two of whom are in post-secondary education.

After introducing these proposed amendments a few weeks ago, I was pleased to see so much immediate support from the post-secondary education sector, as well as coverage in the media.

The Toronto Star penned an article with the headline "Ontario to End Secrecy Behind Campus Sexual Misconduct Cases and Let Universities Fire Faculty Who Abuse Students."

Additionally, it was excellent to see campus media's interest in Bill 26. The Varsity, U of T's long-standing campus newspaper, published a piece on the proposed legislative amendments earlier this month. The Varsity spoke with executives from the Prevention, Empowerment, Advocacy, Response, for Survivors Project, otherwise known as PEARS. This is a grassroots, trauma-informed group providing support for survivors of sexual violence across U of T's three campuses. The founder and director of the organization was quoted as saying, "I was very pleased to see that further attention is being paid to the issue of sexualized/gender-based violence in post-secondary, as it is so often disregarded."

Ultimately, the measures in Bill 26 are focused on improving student safety and ensuring the best environment for students to excel in the high-quality education our post-secondary institutions provide.

Speaker, I want to pause for a moment and give a special mention to someone important. Micah Kalisch, the founder and director of PEARS, or the Prevention, Empowerment, Advocacy, Response, for Survivors Project, provided one of the bravest and most moving submissions at committee last week. I know committee members who are here in the Legislature this morning were part of that committee and heard her talk. Her words moved the committee and emphasized why legislation like Bill 26 and consultations with students on this issue are so important.

Micah, I want to thank you for your bravery, your passion and your work in addressing sexual and gender-based violence.

It's individuals like Micah who are truly making a difference.

It has been very encouraging to see how much support we've already garnered for these proposed changes.

In their official statement, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, or OUSA, said, "We are pleased with" these "legislative changes that support survivors and protect students from harm in potential incidents of faculty-perpetrated sexual violence. Students across Ontario need continued governmental and institutional

support to create a safer learning environment free of sexual harassment."

OUSA participated in the ministry's consultations last year and shared student concerns in cases of faculty and staff sexual violence against students. A number of these proposed amendments align with OUSA and the expert recommendations in Courage to Act's white paper *What Is the Role of Post-Secondary Institutions in Addressing Student-Instructor Relationships?*

Other partners responded to the news, too. Steve Orsini, president and CEO of the Council of Ontario Universities, said, "Ontario's universities are committed to ensuring student, faculty and staff safety and condemn all forms of sexual violence or harassment. Building on today's announcement, all of our universities have developed and continue to regularly review their institutional sexual violence policies to ensure that they maintain a survivor-centric approach."

To quote Linda Franklin, president and CEO of Colleges Ontario: "Ensuring every student has a safe and positive learning environment is a top priority. The comprehensive policies and protocols in place at every college are enhanced on an ongoing basis, and we're committed to working with the government and students on the further measures announced today."

Finally, a quote from Ari Laskin, CEO of Career Colleges Ontario: "Career Colleges Ontario is pleased to see the government is taking action on sexual assault and sexual violence in the post-secondary educational sector. Our members have had in place policies that address student safety on our campuses and we are encouraged to see the government formalizing this across its entire post-secondary sector. Ontario's career colleges will continue to put student safety and well-being at the forefront of all of our operations."

Speaker, as you can see, while we remain open to constructive feedback, some of which we've heard from key stakeholders since the introduction of Bill 26, reaction has been widely positive and shows us that this form of action was much needed.

I want to be clear: We have, as we all know, remarkable faculty at colleges, universities and private career colleges across the province, and the vast majority of faculty and staff conduct themselves with complete professionalism and strive to foster a safe environment for all our students. However, concerns have been raised on whether existing measures go far enough to address faculty/staff-to-student sexual misconduct in the post-secondary education sector.

That is why these measures are being put in place—to protect our students from those who don't live up to the standards of conduct with respect to student safety and well-being.

0920

As part of the committee process, several witnesses raised questions and probed nuances to help us better align the language of the bill with its intent. This direct feedback is critical to addressing sexual violence, and we're committed to maintaining an open dialogue with our partners to continuously improve our work in this area. I

will now briefly touch on the changes that have been introduced through this process, which I believe improve the bill further.

During the committee process, we heard some concerns around the use of the term “sexual abuse.” It was shared by some that “sexual abuse” may be too narrow of a term, often colloquially used to describe physical acts, when the intent of our legislation was to include both physical and non-physical acts, such as remarks of a sexual nature. The term “sexual abuse” was used in the bill to capture a broad range of potential acts or conduct. To make the definition clearer, we have amended the bill to use the term “sexual misconduct” rather than “sexual abuse.” This is welcome feedback, and I want to thank those who raised it with us.

The term “sexual misconduct” is defined in the proposed amendment to include:

- acts or conduct that contravene the sexual solicitation provisions under the Human Rights Code; and
- acts or communication that contravene the sexual solicitation provisions under the Human Rights Code; and
- any other conduct or behaviours as defined by institutions in their employee sexual misconduct policies.

On this, I want to take a moment to address any potential concerns about the use of the term “misconduct,” rather than a more common term like “violence” or “harassment.” It should go without saying that careful consideration went into the drafting and amending of Bill 26. I understand the power of words and the importance of choosing words carefully. The choice to use “misconduct” as the defined term in the legislation was twofold. The first was to further define an umbrella term that can be used to apply to a wide variety of phrases and terminology, used in this nature, that are already defined within the referenced acts, codes and policies in Bill 26. For example, “sexual harassment” is contained and defined in the Criminal Code, the Human Rights Code and in school campus policies—all of which are equally applicable should a student need to file a formal complaint. The second was because we want to ensure the language around this issue has an opportunity to evolve. Just as “sexual and gender-based violence” has not always been the terminology used, we want to ensure that, should the language continue to evolve, the legislation encapsulates a term that new phraseology can fall under.

The second set of changes address the need to strengthen language related to non-disclosure agreements, or NDAs. Legal professionals reviewed Bill 26 and flagged a concern that, when it came to NDAs, the legislation would have prohibited the use of a non-disclosure agreement to prevent an institution from disclosing the fact that a court or arbitrator had determined that an employee of the institution committed an act of sexual misconduct toward a student. That would leave a student who alleges misconduct vulnerable to pressure to sign an NDA at the beginning of the process before moving forward with a meaningful investigation. To address this concern, we have amended this bill so that no agreement between an institution and any person can prohibit the institution, or any person related to it, from disclosing the fact of an

allegation or complaint being made that an employee committed an act of sexual misconduct toward a student. However, a non-disclosure term of this nature could be included at the student’s request.

Together, the proposed amendments in Bill 26 would require publicly assisted colleges and universities as well as private career colleges to have specific processes in place that address faculty and staff sexual misconduct on campus and to make these processes transparent. These measures are focused on improving student safety and creating an environment for students to do their best and excel in the high-quality education our post-secondary institutions offer.

We know that a healthy campus environment is crucial to student success. At a fundamental level, no student in Ontario can reach their full potential unless they are safe on campus and in the broader post-secondary community.

Our government believes that everyone should be able to pursue their studies, on- or off-campus, without having to worry about sexual violence, harassment or misconduct. The measures included in Bill 26 further build on our government’s actions to support our students and keep them safe.

It is clear that across our institutions, these changes have been welcomed and appreciated for going further than ever before to combat sexual misconduct on campus.

And I’m proud to say that’s not all we have done since forming government.

Last fall, we made policy changes to strengthen supports for post-secondary students reporting sexual violence or harassment. We introduced regulatory amendments that required institutions to update their sexual violence policies in order to shield students from irrelevant questions during sexual violence investigations at institutions. These amendments ensured that students could safely bring complaints forward without fear of disciplinary action. This includes instances where perhaps a student was drinking under age when the sexual violence took place. Thanks to these amendments, students will not be penalized for violating the institution’s policies related to drug and alcohol use at the time the sexual violence took place. It also barred irrelevant questions that had a potential revictimizing or shaming effect, including questions about past sexual history, attire and so on. Our government took action to put an end to these issues, and these changes came into effect this spring. My number one priority is our students’ safety. That is why our government implemented these changes to better support students who have already gone through difficult experiences and may have felt scared and vulnerable.

In 2018, the government conducted the Student Voices on Sexual Violence survey to gather information about how respondents perceive, understand and respond to incidents of sexual violence, as well as their level of satisfaction with their institution’s sexual violence supports and services. More than 160,000 students across Ontario participated in this voluntary survey, which has helped inform our government’s work in the area.

Over the years, we have listened to students and partners and have addressed sexual violence matters in

various ways. For example, as of July 2019, colleges and universities are required to report annually to their board of governors on the number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students, as well as the supports, programs and initiatives that are available to their students.

Colleges and universities must now have and publicly post a stand-alone sexual violence policy, which must be reviewed at least every three years and amended as appropriate. Student input must also be taken into consideration during the development of the policy, and every time the policy is reviewed or amended.

Additionally, our government required every publicly assisted college and university in Ontario to have a task force that is devoted to addressing sexual violence on campus.

And since 2019, the government invests \$6 million annually in the campus safety grant. These funds assist and support publicly assisted colleges and universities with campus safety programs, including campus sexual violence prevention programs and supports. The grant can be used to support a variety of student-focused programs and services, including safe walk programs, awareness programs, safety training and much more.

0930

I'd like to address the consultations that we held to better understand and address faculty/staff-to-student sexual misconduct at our post-secondary institutions.

We pride ourselves on being a government that is responsive to the evolving needs of its people. We know that issues as pervasive as sexual violence and harassment aren't addressed by quick fixes.

It's worth noting that a 2019 Statistics Canada survey found that harassment is more common in academia than in any other field. Specific instances of sexual violence and misconduct committed by post-secondary faculty and staff against students has been exposed in recent years due in part to investigative reporting in the media. In many cases, survivors have come forward to report instances years after the sexual misconduct took place. While allegation details vary from case to case, a picture has emerged of general frustration about the disciplinary measures taken by, and the lack of transparency taking place at institutions following reports of sexual misconduct against students by a faculty or staff member.

Cases of sexual misconduct by faculty or staff against students undermine the essential conditions for learning, and as evidence of these cases emerge, the public's trust in the ability and commitment of post-secondary institutions to keep students safe is also affected.

In August 2021, following some media attention regarding sexual misconduct cases in post-secondary institutions and the calls to strengthen existing measures, our government engaged with colleges, universities, private career colleges and student groups to develop a plan of action that could build on and expand existing measures. Our consultations helped us determine the extent of the issue of faculty and staff sexual misconduct towards students, and what we could do to further ensure student

safety. These consultations provided a clear signal that there was more work to be done to grant students a safe learning environment, especially as they return to campuses full-time.

We are working to do everything possible to combat issues of sexual violence or misconduct on our campuses. The steps we've taken since 2018 have strengthened supports for post-secondary students reporting sexual violence or harassment in campus communities. And the measures introduced in Bill 26 will give post-secondary institutions greater powers to address acts committed by faculty and staff towards students. That is why these measures are being put in place—to protect our students and support their well-being.

I would be remiss not to mention that universities and colleges are also taking important steps to address student safety and respond to these concerns. Many post-secondary institutions are proactive and doing exceptional work to address sexual misconduct. One example that I was very pleased to learn about is at Queen's University, where they recently launched an online tool and mobile app to allow victims of sexual violence to anonymously record incidents, access resources and connect with on- and off-campus supports. This online support hub allows students to record their experience through a trauma-informed, question-and-answer format. Many institutions have also introduced awareness-raising and educational tools around consent.

Speaker, today's legislation is about more than post-secondary education. Beyond the lecture halls and classrooms, over the last five years, there has been a great reckoning when it comes to inappropriate behaviour and unhealthy relationships. More than ever, survivors and allies are coming forward to challenge sexual harassment and misconduct in workplaces, social environments and intimate settings. In Hollywood, media and beyond, public consciousness has shifted, with more widespread recognition of the urgent need to call out unhealthy relationships that aren't rooted in consent or that involve problematic power structures.

That's what makes this legislation so critical. As a government, we are formalizing our recognition, to show Ontarians that we will not stand by when power is abused. We want to create consistency across the sector in the way institutions address staff who commit acts of sexual misconduct. These changes would provide publicly assisted colleges, universities and private career colleges tools and resources to address instances of sexual misconduct by faculty and/or staff and greater transparency with respect to faculty and/or staff who are found to have committed an act of sexual misconduct towards a student. The proposed changes would make Ontario one of a few Canadian jurisdictions that require institutions to have policies setting out rules for behaviour between faculty and staff and students, and setting out disciplinary measures for faculty and staff who break these rules.

From the first day students set foot in the classroom, to the day they graduate and start their careers, our government's plan to support learners will support everyone in

Ontario to have the tools and the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Our government is taking bold, decisive action in order to do what is best for Ontarians, and we need to remind ourselves that at the heart of this action is the post-secondary education sector and the students. That is why the measures we are proposing are, first and foremost, student-focused. If students don't feel safe or have a sense of belonging, this will impact their success. It will impact their performance, not just in school, but long before and long after graduation.

Post-secondary institutions have a responsibility to provide a safe and supportive learning environment and are expected to do everything possible to address issues on campuses, be they sexual misconduct or righting historical wrongs.

This is a complex issue, and we are committed to working with our partners—including students—to continuously adapt and enhance the supports available to survivors of sexual violence and fight sexual misconduct on- or off-campus.

Bill 26, if passed, would benefit students by helping to create a safer, more respectful environment and campus community. Bill 26 provides measures to help position our post-secondary education sector for continued success for present and future generations. The sexual misconduct measures will provide students with more protection, empowering them to achieve their full potential during some of the most formative years of their lives.

Once again, we are building on past successes to help students feel safe and to support our institutions to continue to uphold high standards. We will continue to work with our colleges and universities, student groups and other partners to make sure our world-class post-secondary institutions support a bright future for the people in this province.

I am proud of these historic legislative changes, and I appreciate your support as we move forward.

I'm now going to pass it on to my parliamentary assistant—and I'm sure you can all imagine that I'm going back over to SickKids to wait for my daughter to come out of surgery.

Thank you all for your time. I'd like to thank all the committee members. Everyone who spoke on this bill has been so supportive.

I know that we are all here for the right reasons—to ensure that students are protected on campuses in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: I am pleased to build on Minister Dunlop's remarks about the proposed legislative changes. These changes will help set students up for success throughout their post-secondary education and as they transition into rewarding careers.

As a government, our priority is to support Ontario students and help them access high-quality education—education that will help them develop the knowledge and skills they need to get good-paying jobs and support the growth of our economy.

In order for students to flourish in post-secondary education and beyond, we first need to provide them with a solid foundation that fosters success. All students in Ontario deserve to learn in a healthy, safe and respectful environment—an environment where they don't have to worry about discrimination or harassment while accessing an education.

The safety and well-being of students on campuses across Ontario is a critical responsibility of our colleges, universities and private career colleges—and on our part, our government will continue to take action to support institutions in their efforts.

That's why today I'm proud to show my support for the two initiatives outlined in Bill 26, the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022.

As Minister Dunlop explained, the first set of proposed amendments in the bill introduce changes that demonstrate our zero tolerance stance for sexual assault, harassment and any other form of sexual misconduct in our post-secondary communities. This legislation seeks to help publicly assisted colleges and universities and private career colleges to better address faculty and staff sexual misconduct against students. This includes equipping institutions with stronger tools to address these instances should they occur, unfortunately. Institutions would also be required to have employee sexual misconduct policies that set out rules for behaviour between employees and students and set out examples of disciplinary measures for employees who break these rules.

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Finally, the proposed changes would prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements, which can sometimes be used to hide the prior wrongdoing of an employee when they leave one institution for another.

As Minister Dunlop mentioned, after considering the bill in more detail and listening to feedback we received, we are strengthening the language in the bill to protect students even more by using the term “sexual misconduct” instead of “sexual abuse” to refer to both physical and non-physical acts, and making it clear that the use of NDAs, or non-disclosure agreements, is unacceptable unless the student requests it.

As someone who led hiring and recruitment at Sheridan College for the past 13 years, I can tell you first-hand about the level of responsibility institutions feel to get it right. No one should have to worry about sexual misconduct on- or off-campus, especially not students. Our post-secondary institutions go to extensive lengths to attract and retain the best talent for our students. Candidates are led through a rigorous recruitment process and vetted extensively.

Non-disclosure agreements put staff, students and visitors in harm's way when prior wrongdoing remains a secret.

We need to ensure a safe environment for post-secondary learners, fostering feelings of safety and personal comfort in which to learn, live, work and grow. Not only do we want to surround our students with educators who are inspiring and engaging; we also want to ensure these educators are unfailingly professional.

I'd like to reiterate Minister Dunlop's statement that in most instances, the faculty and staff at our post-secondary institutions are doing an exceptional job and are demonstrating incomparable behaviour. Unfortunately, there are a few cases where this cannot be said, and so our government will not hesitate to step in.

The second set of amendments in the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022, would change the name of Ryerson University to Toronto Metropolitan University. As Minister Dunlop mentioned, the university took steps towards making this name change because of concerns with the legacy of Egerton Ryerson and his role in the creation of Canada's residential school system. The university came forward earlier this year to request that the government make Toronto Metropolitan University the official legal name of the institution. We are pleased to support this step in the university's continued journey—a journey that better aligns the university's name with its current values. The university's renaming is one of many steps the university is taking to move beyond the legacy of Egerton Ryerson and his role in the design of Canada's residential school system. I would like to congratulate the university on their decision to rename, on the extensive community consultation they have completed in order to arrive at this decision, and on the resulting report of its task force. I look forward to seeing how the university further acts on the recommendations of its task force to move towards greater inclusion and equity for Indigenous learners.

For many years, I've been a committed mentor and coach for students, working with high school, college and university learners to help them overcome the challenges they face when entering the workforce. As someone who is passionate about post-secondary education and supporting students on their career journeys, I can so clearly see how these proposed legislative amendments would be critical to bolstering student success. Ultimately, it all comes down to supporting student access to post-secondary education and ensuring a safe, inclusive learning environment once they get there. I'm proud to say that our government has taken extensive action over the past few years to make this happen.

But while a relatively high number of Ontarians participate in post-secondary education overall, there are still groups that, for various reasons, are under-represented at colleges, universities and Indigenous institutes. That's truly a shame, because this province needs representation from all individuals who call Ontario home. Their varying perspectives and ideas make us undoubtedly stronger.

For example, low-income students have a high school dropout rate of 30% to 50%, and are less likely to enter a post-secondary education and to succeed once they arrive. As you can imagine, family income is an especially strong predictor for attending university. As such, young people from high-income families are two to three times more likely to go to university than students from low-income families.

Youth in extended care, often referred to as crown wards, face similar challenges in accessing post-secondary

education, with a 56% chance of dropping out of high school. It goes without saying that this can often lead to unemployment and underemployment.

And there are students whose parents did not attend post-secondary education. It can be a great honour and also a lot of pressure to be the first in your family to pursue higher education. Unfortunately, only 56% of first-generation individuals—that's the term we use to describe individuals who are the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education—have a post-secondary credential. That number jumps to 89% for those whose parents both have a degree, a diploma or some other credential. Speaker, 56% compared to 89%—that's a significant gap.

Students with disabilities face their own unique set of challenges accessing and succeeding in post-secondary education. In 2021-22, over 96,000 post-secondary students were registered with offices for students with disabilities at publicly assisted colleges and universities, and that number has been on the rise for years.

Finally, I'll note that in 2019, 37% of Ontarians reported having a university degree, but only 16% of off-reserve Indigenous individuals did.

I realize these stats can paint a stark picture of inequity in our province and in Ontario's post-secondary sector, but it's important we acknowledge the many factors at play in the context of the important legislation being discussed today.

I'm proud to say that our government has taken definitive action to better support the inclusion, access and success of more students at post-secondary institutions across Ontario. For example, in March of last year, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities engaged with the Premier's Council on Equality of Opportunity. The council is an advisory group that champions community voices and provides advice to the government on how to help young people succeed in Ontario's changing economy. The goal of engaging the council was to help seek feedback from stakeholders, advocates and students themselves on how the government can better respond to accessibility challenges faced by minority groups at colleges and universities. We coordinated consultations with different under-represented groups in the post-secondary sector, including those I mentioned earlier. We wanted to hear directly from individuals regarding the barriers they experienced accessing higher education and any challenges they had once they got there. That insight is helping our government shape a better, more inclusive post-secondary system.

I'm proud to say that we have many programs in place that are making a very tangible difference in this area. For example, we provide nearly \$10 million annually to Pathways to Education, a not-for-profit organization that provides academic, financial, social and one-on-one supports to Ontarians in certain low-income communities in the province. Pathways to Education helps these youth graduate from high school and successfully transition to post-secondary education. This program supported more than 3,000 students in Ontario last year. That's 3,000 students who suddenly had the door of higher education

opened to them; 3,000 more students who will gain the skills they need to graduate, get a meaningful, well-paying job and help drive Ontario's economy forward. I know Minister Dunlop had the pleasure of attending the Pathways to Education grad ball a few weeks ago. The event is always a wonderful opportunity to see the very real difference this program can make to so many young people.

Our government also provides more than \$11 million annually to support Ontario Postsecondary Access and Inclusion Programs at colleges and universities. This funding helps institutions to provide outreach, transition and retention programs to students who, without supports and interventions, would not otherwise access post-secondary education. It is designed to help students see the value of higher education, see themselves in post-secondary, and help them make the transition and succeed once there. This program had about 273,000 interactions with students in the 2020-21 academic year. That's more than a quarter of a million touchpoints with students to help them in their post-secondary journey.

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We also support something called Ontario Education Championship Teams. As I mentioned earlier, it can be challenging and overwhelming for a first-generation post-secondary student to pursue higher education. This is also true for youth in extended care. Ontario Education Championship Teams help remove informational and administrative barriers for those students so they can transition to post-secondary education and access training and employment. The 21 teams are made up of children's aid societies, school boards, post-secondary education institutions and employment services. They are doing truly great work. Each year, this important program supports an average of 6,000 students. Again, that's 6,000 students who may not have thought a post-secondary education was even a possibility for them.

Finally, in the context of today's proposed amendments to help Toronto Metropolitan University move beyond the legacy of the Indian residential school system, I would like to highlight the work we are doing to support more Indigenous learners with their post-secondary goals. As a government, we are supporting both changes at the local level, such as Toronto Metropolitan University's name change, and taking concrete steps towards building a post-secondary system that embraces accessibility and equality and promotes success for Indigenous learners and all students.

We know there is an attainment gap in post-secondary education between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners. Approximately 53% of Indigenous people aged 25 to 64 hold a post-secondary credential, compared to 65% of the non-Indigenous population. There is widespread agreement by Indigenous leaders, communities and education professionals that investing in culturally responsive post-secondary education opportunities for Indigenous learners will have tremendous benefits and reduce this gap.

To this end, colleges and universities across Ontario are committed to improving Indigenous learners' access, inclusion and participation in post-secondary education.

They have prioritized many activities, some in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, including hiring and retaining more Indigenous faculty and staff; increasing recruitment, bursaries and scholarships for Indigenous learners; including more Indigenous content in courses; offering new courses, programs and degrees specializing in Indigenous subject matter; and increasing partnerships with local Indigenous communities.

Our government supports colleges and universities in providing culturally appropriate services and student supports to Indigenous learners through the Indigenous student success fund. Through this fund, our government invests \$18.2 million annually to fund programs and services such as Indigenous counsellors; post-secondary education experience camps; elders-in-residence; academic supports; access to Indigenous-focused mentoring, counselling and advising services; partnership development; and student and community outreach activities. To further ensure that universities and colleges include culturally appropriate services, institutions that receive the grant are required to maintain an Indigenous education council comprised of Indigenous community members. The council provides advice and input on programs and services. To respond to community needs, colleges and universities also offer Indigenous study programs such as social work, teaching, early childhood education, and language programs.

In addition to promoting inclusion for Indigenous learners at colleges and universities, Ontario supports Indigenous institutes in providing post-secondary education and training for nearly 1,500 Indigenous learners. Indigenous institutes are an important pillar of our post-secondary education sector. That's why, five years ago, Ontario took a historic step to formally recognize their important role in delivering post-secondary education in the province. That is when the Indigenous Institutes Act, 2017, came into force. The act allows Indigenous institutes in Ontario that have been independently quality-assured through the Indigenous Advanced Education and Skills Council to offer independently delivered post-secondary education credentials.

Nine Indigenous institutes in the province are currently part of the publicly assisted post-secondary education system. Not only do they provide education and training for thousands of Indigenous learners; they offer programming in a culturally holistic and safe learning environment—an environment where Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing are woven into all aspects of the learner experience. Several institutes serve communities in northern, rural and very remote parts of the province. They provide critical access to learners who might not otherwise participate in post-secondary education and training.

Our government is committed to supporting Indigenous institutes in providing learners in all parts of the province with access to high-quality education and training, so that Indigenous institutes continue to flourish and respond to community demands and the needs of the local labour market. That's why our government continues to invest in

Indigenous institutes across Ontario. In 2021-22, Ontario invested \$24.8 million in the Indigenous Institutes Operating Grant, and, in budget 2022, committed an additional \$4.5 million over the next three years, for a total of \$26.3 million in 2022-23.

There is no greater investment than in the talent and skills of the next generation.

There has never been a more rewarding time to contribute to Ontario's health care workforce. To help meet the unprecedented health care challenges brought into sharp focus throughout the pandemic, our government is investing \$34 million over four years to increase enrolment in nursing and in personal support worker programs at six Indigenous institutes. This funding will help participating Indigenous institutes expand existing programs or create new ones to support the training of approximately 340 practical nurses, 60 registered nurses and 400 personal support workers over four years. To assist these students with completing their studies, Ontario is providing subsidies for tuition, textbooks, child care and costs related to clinical education. Ultimately, we want to make it easier for learners to pursue training as a nurse or a PSW. Overall, this increase in skilled nurses and PSWs will make a significant difference in supporting our health care system and will help Indigenous learners pursue rewarding careers.

In addition to funding for personal support worker and nursing programs, Ontario promotes a diversity of programs that meet the economic, health and social needs of Indigenous communities. Our government is dedicated to creating the conditions that make it easier for Indigenous learners to access a high-quality education. This includes all aspects of a student's experience, from the learning environment to mental health supports to financial assistance.

To provide Indigenous students, faculty and staff with access to modern and safe learning environments, through budget 2022, our government is investing \$4.5 million over three years to support the maintenance of Indigenous institute facilities.

We have also taken decisive action to provide flexible and increased access to mental health supports for Indigenous students. In 2022-23, Ontario is investing \$950,000 in the Indigenous Institutes Mental Health Grant. This funding will continue to support Indigenous institutes in offering new or increased access to mental health, wellness, and trauma-related programs, services and supports, primarily for learners at Indigenous institutes. Funding may also be used to provide mental health, wellness, and trauma training for their staff and faculty.

To make it easier for Indigenous people to access a culturally supportive and high-quality post-secondary education, we are also removing financial barriers for Indigenous learners. Our government opened the door to OSAP eligibility for Indigenous institutes as of the 2020-21 academic year. In addition, Ontario offers a range of grants and loans through OSAP to support the unique needs and economic circumstances of Indigenous learners. There

were over 5,700 Indigenous learners who received OSAP for the 2021-22 academic year, totalling approximately \$78 million in federal and provincial grants and loans across all post-secondary institutions. These supports include the Ontario Indigenous Travel Grant, which addresses the high cost of travelling to a post-secondary school for Indigenous students living in remote First Nations communities.

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The real winners are Ontario's students and communities, who benefit from the incredible work being done at our institutions across the province.

As I mentioned earlier, most faculty on campus are doing a remarkable job of supporting student success. We see this in some of the examples that I've shared today. But we need to do more to set students up for success so that they can achieve such milestones. We need to remove barriers to education and provide students with the kind of safe, encouraging, respectful environment where they can focus on what is most important.

Our government is ready to take bold, decisive action in order to do what's best for Ontarians.

As someone who has worked in the sector for many years, I know that if students don't feel safe or have a sense of belonging, this will impact their success. That's why I'm so pleased to see that the measures we are proposing today are truly focused on what matters: the students.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It's now time for questions and answers.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I thank both the minister and the parliamentary assistant to the minister for their comments this morning. This is a bill that I think we can all support. The end goal is really good.

There is one part of the bill that we have tried to amend, and that has to do with education. Does the parliamentary assistant believe that if we were to make education on sexual harassment for everybody attending college and university mandatory, that, over the years, as more and more students become educated on this topic, it would have a long-term effect on decreasing the amount of sexual harassment we see not only in colleges and universities but throughout our society?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member across for your question.

Our government is committed to ensuring students have access to a secure and safe learning environment. That's why we have taken these steps to strengthen supports for students reporting sexual violence or harassment. Colleges and universities are each autonomous organizations and have their own policies and processes in place regarding sexual violence codes of conduct on campus. This legislation specifically addresses sexual misconduct of staff and faculty towards students.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Lorne Coe: I want to congratulate the parliamentary assistant not only on her presentation but on her long-standing stewardship on what we're debating today.

I'd like her to expand on her presentation and speak about how the regulations that we introduced a year ago and this particular piece of legislation will help, together, to better support students in post-secondary education.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to my colleague for the question.

Last March, our government imposed regulations designed around empowering students who are survivors or have knowledge of an instance of sexual violence. One of the most important changes we put in place was that if someone comes forward with information about an act of sexual violence, they are granted certain exceptions from campus policies; the biggest of these is the school's drug and alcohol policies. While we don't want to encourage any illegal or excessive use of drugs or alcohol, students should not be reluctant to come forward with information because they're concerned for their academic success or standing out of fear of being punished for doing so. Another addition that we're building on is the removal of unnecessary questions regarding themes such as the sexual history of the student. When it comes to matters of consent, all that matters is whether or not someone has provided it in the moment. But most importantly, these regulations require all schools to have a sexual violence policy.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I would like to say that I think this is a positive step forward.

The member spoke about quite a few other things during her talk, and I'd like to address one of them. Students, during COVID, received increased grants from the federal government through OSAP; however, if they were on ODSP—in other words, they were struggling to have enough money to go to university, and they had a disability—their money was clawed back. So students who didn't have a disability were able to keep the entire amount of the grant, but students with a disability actually had to give some of that money back. I'm wondering if the member is able to speak to that at all, because it did put students with a disability at a further disadvantage.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

The bill in front of us today talks about non-disclosure agreements, sexual misconduct, and the renaming of Toronto Metropolitan University.

With respect to your question around OSAP, I'll share that supporting post-secondary education is one of the best investments this government has made for students in the future. That's why we're getting it done for students in their greatest time of need. We've expanded OSAP to be eligible for students enrolled in Indigenous institutes. We've expanded OSAP to cover microcredentials, so that learners have more options on how to expand their education. And in 2020-21, we invested \$4.7 billion in direct student aid to 400,000 students.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston.

Mr. John Jordan: Bill 26 proposes changes that, quite frankly, are long overdue. Protecting students at colleges and universities is so important, and I'm so glad to see this government making these changes. I thank the minister and the PA for the work they've done on this. Can the member please outline how these measures will specifically support students and survivors of sexual misconduct?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member next to me for the question.

Put simply, Bill 26, if passed, will put an end to the secrecy around faculty-student sexual violence on campus and off-campus. As we have seen in reports in recent years, use of non-disclosure agreements to prevent students from seeking legal recourse against the offender and the ability for faculty and staff to move from one school to another without facing any punishment or outright dismissal is far too common in post-secondary education. If passed, Bill 26 would give institutions greater power to discipline and dismiss offenders and empower students to come forward with evidence of sexual violence.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for London–Fanshawe.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I thank the government for bringing the bill forward. As we know, this week we talked about gender-based violence. We had presentations on how it impacts our society, how it impacts all families—every member of the family. So I'm glad to see that this initiative has been taken, especially for young people going to university and college, and that these measures are happening. But I need to talk about prevention. The member from Nickel Belt alluded to education. I think that's such an important piece in order to make sure that we can look to the future for eliminating or mitigating it not happening.

How are universities and colleges getting the best practices and standardized policies universally throughout the system so that there's not a patchwork being done and everybody's on board with the same topic and can proceed with the good work that this bill has started?

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Ms. Natalie Pierre: Once again, Bill 26 speaks to sexual misconduct of staff and faculty toward students.

In terms of prevention, colleges and universities are autonomous institutions and have their own policies and procedures in place around codes of conduct for students and codes of conduct for employees. It may be something that the government considers, moving forward, in the form of a directive. We do meet with our stakeholders in colleges and universities regularly to talk about best practices in this and other areas, and we are looking to share those practices with all other post-secondary institutions.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): We have time for one further question.

Mr. Rick Byers: Ontario has some of the best faculty and staff in the world working at college and university campuses across the province.

Interjections.

Mr. Rick Byers: Hear, hear.

In fact, in many cases, these institutions are not just home to some of the best and brightest, but they're also some of the largest employers in our communities.

We know Bill 26 has a strong focus on faculty-on-student sexual violence, but we have heard from the minister and others that this legislation is a welcome addition to the sector.

Can the member elaborate on how Bill 26 is not just good for students, but also for members of the faculty and staff as well?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you for the question.

Madam Speaker, we have some of the best faculty and staff at our colleges and universities, and in no way is Bill 26 an attack on our faculty and staff or a way to limit their rights. In fact, many of the faculty and staff see this as keeping them safe as employees, as well as keeping students safe.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Unfortunately, we have run out of time for debate and questions.

Third reading debate deemed adjourned.

system in Canada, better known as the Krever inquiry, which concluded that blood is a public resource, that donors should not be paid, that Canada must increase self-sufficiency in all blood and blood products, and that no part of the national blood operator's duty should be contracted out.

In 2014, a private company was prepared to open paid plasma collection centres in Toronto and Hamilton. Recognizing the threat, the government passed the Voluntary Blood Donations Act. I was proud to vote in favour of that bill, along with the current Minister of Health, Minister Jones, and eight members of the current government, to shut these clinics down.

Now, eight years later, Canadian Blood Services has signed a deal with Grifols pharmaceuticals in order to contract out plasma collection to a for-profit collector.

We must remember the Canadians, the Ontarians who became sick, who died. We must remember the lessons of the past and respect the Krever inquiry.

The Ontario Minister of Health is the lead supervisor of Canadian Blood Services. She has a duty to act right now to protect Ontarians and Canadians by shutting down this deal.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

FIRE SAFETY

Mr. Rob Flack: On Friday, October 2, 2020, Cindy Devine was killed at the young age of 35 in a two-vehicle accident. She was a wife to Richard and a mother of four. Richard is here today.

Cindy was alive shortly after the crash, but she was completely entrapped in the car and could not escape. Unfortunately, Cindy died after her vehicle caught on fire.

This tragic incident resulted in a campaign now called Extinguishers for Cindy, and they are calling for Cindy's Law to be established in this province. The Extinguishers for Cindy campaign has now raised over \$45,000 in the past three years. This campaign has a lot of well-deserved support and momentum in my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London. In addition to the money that the campaign has raised, Extinguishers for Cindy has also handed out approximately 1,000 fire extinguishers to local residents.

Speaker, this is a friendly and impassioned reminder to all members of this House and those watching from home: Fire extinguishers are not only important to keep in our homes, but they should also be kept in our vehicles. Fire extinguishers save lives.

Keep up the good work, Richard and team.

WORLD AIDS DAY

M^{me} France Gélinas: Today, December 1, is AIDS day. One of the most important messages that AIDS taught us is the importance of protecting our blood supply. In the 1980s, AIDS in our blood supply unknowingly infected hundreds of Canadians who needed blood transfusions, leading to the royal commission of inquiry on the blood

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

Mr. John Jordan: Today I want to talk about the launch of an exciting idea and acknowledge the good work of our Minister of Colleges and Universities and our Minister of Education to support our young people to explore and find a rewarding career. This is a good-news story. From the recognition of missed career opportunities for a new generation, to the rollout of the dual credits secondary school program, supporting the needs of a dynamic and changing workforce—this is an idea with wings.

When news of an additional \$4.8 million in program funding reached the secondary schools of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston, the reaction was overwhelmingly positive.

Smith Falls District Collegiate Institute principal Terry Gardiner said, “The Dual Credit Program represents an outstanding opportunity for students entering trades, or trying a course in their area of interest. It allows them the opportunity to ‘try on’ college and many students see that they can be successful.”

Janet Sanderson, principal of Granite Ridge Education Centre in Sharbot Lake, said, “It gives our students a chance to ... get a taste of the college life ... explore post-secondary options and test the waters. One student remarked, the Dual Credit Program gives him a reason to like school again.”

With one in three tradespeople over the age of 55, the infrastructure of our future will be built by the next generation. Experiential learning is an invitation to explore pathways to robotics, electronics, carpentry, health care, mechanics and more, all under the guidance and mentorship of skilled trades teachers, college partners and industry professionals.

Ontario's Dual Credit Program has created a buzz in Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston, and it's powered by the purest form of clean energy: the curiosity and inventiveness of our youth.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Joel Harden: A loud thud was heard yesterday across Ontario at 11 a.m. It was the dropping and the introduction of the Ottawa Light Rail Transit Commission report. It was a 650-plus-page document detailing the problems we've had with our LRT system. It's something I have fought for in this place—thanks to residents and community members back home, who I want to thank for their work.

Sometimes, the truth hurts, and it certainly hurts this morning for advocates of public-private partnerships in infrastructure, because Justice William Hourigan, who led this report, said the following: “The P3 model caused or contributed to several of the ongoing difficulties on the project ... the city traditionally had a hands-on leading role in projects, given the lesser role it played under this mode, the city was left in a position where it had limited insight or control over the project.”

P3s are an accident waiting to happen. They will not offer the transparency the public deserves. That is the lesson, I believe, from Ottawa's LRT failure.

But right now, as I speak, the same P3 consultants and contractors who made a mess out of Ottawa's LRT are building the Eglinton Crosstown.

I call on this government to read Justice Hourigan's report, to learn the lessons, to not waste the public money, and to make sure the mess that happened in Ottawa never happens again.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. Nolan Quinn: For 10 years the United Way/Centraide of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry has been kicking off the festive season with their annual holiday gala. This past weekend at the gala, Karen and Ray Brunet were recognized with the André Mailhot Award, which is the United Way's highest volunteer honour. Although this award was announced at their AGM in early June, United Way Canada representatives attended the annual gala to present the award to Karen and Ray in person. With this being the 10th year of them being chairs of the gala, the timing couldn't be any better. The award honours a volunteer who has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to community, philanthropy and the United Way movement. The individual is recognized by his or her peers as exemplifying the United Way values of leadership, volunteerism, inclusivity, community engagement, commitment and respect. Karen and Ray were selected from among nominations that came from many of the 69 United Ways across Canada. Karen and Ray have put in over 5,000 hours of volunteering at my local United Way and can be linked to the majority of sponsors and donations that this event receives. They therefore ensure the event's success year after year. It is not an

exaggeration to say that it is truly thanks to their selfless dedication and community connections that this event has raised over half a million dollars in the 10 years it has existed.

1020

DE SARIO FAMILY FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: The holiday season is upon us, a time of kindness and goodwill towards all. During this time, many groups, associations, places of worship and more organize important acts of charity, but sometimes a single person or family steps up to do something remarkable. These acts of joy and kindness and charity come in many different forms, each with their own story of inspiration.

The De Sario family was inspired by the care their daughter received at SickKids hospital for juvenile diabetes, so in 1999 they began a yearly tradition of decorating their home with Christmas lights to raise money for SickKids—and when I say decorate, I mean over-the-top beautiful, with tens of thousands of lights, probably visible from space, and every other decoration you can imagine. It's a wonderful sight that captures the hearts of all ages. And this year, they're hoping to raise \$20,000.

Speaker, as you know, SickKids hospital is known as a place of legends, where every one of their patients has a legendary story that inspires us all. It is also home to the largest hospital-based child health care research institute in Canada, and we're so proud and fortunate that it is located here in Ontario.

The De Sario Family Festival of Lights begins this Saturday, December 3, at 5 p.m., at their home at 165 Benjamin Boake Trail in the Keele and Sheppard area, in Toronto's northwest end, and it runs until the end of this year. I thank them for their hard work to spread joy and help children in need.

Whether you happen to be in the area or not, I encourage you to come by and view the sight for yourself, and perhaps that visit may become a family tradition for you as well.

Happy holidays.

GREAT UNION DAY

Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: It is an honour to stand in the House today to mark an important anniversary that Romanians all around the world celebrate. Every year, on December 1, Romanians come together to celebrate Great Union Day, also known as Romania's National Day—the unification of the Romanian provinces into one country, which took place at the end of the First World War, in 1918.

Romanian Canadians make up an essential part of our national character. In fact, Canada is home to over 250,000 Romanian Canadians.

Mississauga is home to close to 4,500 Romanian Canadians, who continue to contribute to the cultural, social and economic fabric of Mississauga and of Ontario.

Canada would not be the same without athletes like Bianca Andreescu or politicians like Andrew Scheer.

Mississauga's own Bianca Andreescu, who is a proud Romanian Canadian, is the highest-ranked Canadian in the history of the Women's Tennis Association.

Speaker, Romania today is a historically mature country whose binder has passed the test of time.

Canada has excellent relations with Romania, as evidenced by the strong political ties highlighted by shared memberships in NATO and la Francophonie.

Today, I am very happy to welcome Ms. Oana-Raluca Gherge, the consul general of Romania; Mr. Florentin Titov Gherghe, consul; and my dear friend Raul Dudnic from OMNI TV to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I would like to take a moment to wish them and all of our Romanian Canadian friends a happy Romania National Day here in Ontario as well as worldwide. Merci.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I'm honoured to rise today to highlight the amazing people-powered organizing that is taking place all across this province right now.

Last weekend, I participated in a day of action with hundreds of people—knocking on doors from Thunder Bay to Windsor to Ottawa and cities in between; speaking with neighbours to talk about how vital it is to protect the farmland that feeds us, the nature that protects us; and calling on the Premier to keep his promise not to open the greenbelt for development. In a few hours, people collected nearly 4,000 petition signatures and identified hundreds of sign locations, calling on the Premier to keep his greenbelt promise.

This weekend, there will be rallies again all over the province.

Organizers like Environmental Defence, GASP, Water Watchers and Stop the Sprawl are mobilizing to defend the greenbelt, calling on the Premier to “keep your hands off our greenbelt” and to keep his greenbelt promise, because we know people power works.

Speaker, a healthy democracy requires citizen engagement and mobilization.

I'm inspired by the people taking the time out of their busy lives to demand that the government maintain the integrity of the greenbelt.

I will be there this weekend with the people, defending the greenbelt and calling on the Premier to keep his promise.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENTS

Mr. Billy Pang: As 2022 is coming to an end, I would like to revisit our recent Markham–Unionville funding announcements to wrap up the year on a generous and bestowing pitch.

Foremost, I would like to recap that November 17 marked the 40th anniversary of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Partnering with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport—I thank OTF for awarding funds to

those in need and facilitating culture and sport events in Ontario. I look forward to engaging more in-person recognition in the future.

The Ontario Arts Council's OAC operating grant continues to help enrich our cultural lives by supporting the display of some wonderful collections by Canadian artists at our gallery in Markham–Unionville.

The Seniors Community Grant Program from the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility is another great program. This year, Markham–Unionville has four recipients. It's great to see senior clubs reconnect and keep their members active again in Markham–Unionville.

Ontarians' health and safety is at the top of our government's agenda.

Earlier in November, through the Health Infrastructure Renewal Fund and the Community Infrastructure Renewal Fund, Markham Stouffville Hospital and Hong Fook mental health Markham branch have received respective funding that allows them to provide quality care to their patients.

Funding is an important tool for us to work well with our community members.

My congratulations here to all successful applicants.

AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY

Mr. Will Bouma: Our government is building a strong, secure food supply chain and securing Ontario's position as a food leader in Canada by releasing our Grow Ontario Strategy. The strategy outlines the province's plan to strengthen the agri-food sector, to ensure an efficient, reliable and responsive food supply, and to address ongoing vulnerabilities through new innovations by focusing on three priorities: strengthening agri-food supply chain stability; increasing agri-food technology and adoption; and attracting and growing Ontario's agri-food talent. This is particularly important in my home riding of Brantford–Brant, as agriculture is our single largest economic sector. This plan is a bold vision of pride and trust in the quality and quantity of food produced in Ontario, grown on the foundation of a competitive agri-food industry that serves the needs of Ontarians, Canadians and the world.

That being said, today I would like to welcome, in the gallery, the Paris fair ambassador, Bronwyn Monkhouse, and the Burford fair ambassador, Doug Archer, and his parents, Scott and Elizabeth. They supported and advocated with distinction the Brantford–Brant agricultural sector, farmers and food processors that feed us all. Many of us remember the gaps in grocery store shelves, on and off, during the pandemic. These young people who act as ambassadors for the agricultural sector remind us that food does not magically appear on grocery store shelves, but rather that our food is planted, cultivated, raised and processed by some of the best farmers in the world right here in Ontario.

1030

And remember this: Farmers make up less than 1% of the population, but 100% of us eat.

HOUSE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Before I invite members to introduce their guests, I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 9(h), the Clerk has received written notice from the government House leader indicating that a temporary change in the weekly meeting schedule of the House is required, and therefore the House shall commence at 9 a.m. on Monday, December 5, 2022, for the proceeding of orders of the day.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Chris Glover: On behalf of the MPP for St. Catharines, I want to welcome to the House Anna Levin and Peter Runcan. I also want to welcome to the House Amir Farsoud. Amir is an Ontarian with a disability. He was afraid of losing his housing and applied for medical assistance in dying.

I'm wondering if the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services would be willing to meet with Amir and I after question period.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock for a minute, please. Thank you.

We're doing introduction of visitors. We can't have political statements made during the introduction of visitors.

Start the clock.

Mr. Rob Flack: I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome a great resident from Elgin–Middlesex–London and the grandmother of page Scarlett: the wonderful Doreen Wilson, a friend of mine, originally from Stroud. Her brother Craig Hunter is a wonderful man from a wonderful family. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Doly Begum: I am very delighted to introduce Paul Persaud and Samuel Allicock, two wonderful grade 10 students from Woburn Collegiate Institute who are visiting Queen's Park to discuss student safety at schools. We've had some really tragic incidents of violence at Scarborough schools.

I'm also delighted to introduce the parents and family of our page captain from University–Rosedale, Joel Bozikovic. We have Liv Mendelsohn, Susan Cohen and Alex Bozikovic in the House today. Please welcome them.

WEARING OF JERSEY

Mr. Mike Harris: Point of order.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): On a point of order: the member for Kitchener–Conestoga.

Mr. Mike Harris: I know that we're all very excited to see question period wrap up a little early today so we can catch the end of the Canada game.

With that said, my Germans are looking for an opportunity to qualify to make it to the second round, so I do seek unanimous consent from everyone if I would be allowed to wear my jersey in the House for the rest of the day.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): This is going to be controversial, I know.

Mr. John Yakabuski: We don't want him to take it off; that's for sure.

Laughter.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Kitchener–Conestoga is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to wear that shirt in the House for the remainder of the day. Agreed? Agreed.

QUESTION PERIOD

COURT DECISION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier.

On Tuesday, the courts recognized that Bill 124 was unconstitutional. The decision reads that the government has not “explained why it was necessary to infringe on constitutional rights to impose wage constraint at the same time as it was providing tax cuts or licence plate sticker refunds that were more than 10 times larger than the savings obtained from wage restraint measures.”

If the economic conditions didn't justify infringing on constitutionally protected rights, why did the Premier introduce Bill 124 in the first place?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The President of the Treasury Board to respond on behalf of the government.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: As the member opposite knows, we are reviewing the decision, and our intention is to appeal.

But let's speak to the historic investments this government has made across this province—over \$170 billion invested.

Let's look at health care investments. We've got a \$40-billion hospital infrastructure plan that we're going to put forward. That's going to build new hospitals all across the province—new hospitals in a city like Brampton, which was neglected and ignored by the previous Liberal government; a new hospital in the city of Windsor; a new hospital in Uxbridge; a new hospital in Mississauga.

Mr. Speaker, we are making the critical investments needed to support this province—throughout the last four years, and we'll continue to deliver on that over the next four.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I think it has been reinforced that there isn't a critical lack of money and that, in fact, the funds were there to pay people decently.

Bill 124 has driven nurses out of our hospitals and has created a staffing crisis in our health care system.

The government can start undoing the mess that they made. So will the Premier drop his intention to appeal the court's ruling on Bill 124 and finally work on a plan to recruit, train, retain and return nurses to our health care system?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I'm happy to speak to the investments that we have made in health human resources across this province, especially in the last four years.

The largest health care investment increase year over year was recorded last year, when this government put an additional \$5.2 billion into the health care system. What does that mean? Since March 2020, we have added over 12,000 health care professionals into the system. Just this year, the Ontario college of nurses has registered 12,800 nurses—and we still have a month to go.

We will continue to make these historic and unprecedented investments that we have been making to ensure we have the health human resources across this province.

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

Mr. Peter Tabuns: This question is to the Minister of Labour.

Yesterday, the Minister of Labour stood in this House, and instead of addressing the substance of the opposition's legitimate questions about Bill 124, he opted for talking points about private sector unions, even though he knows full well that there isn't a union—public or private—in this province that supported Bill 124.

So, with the benefit of hindsight, will the minister tell the hundreds of thousands of broader public sector workers in this province why he backed a bill that suspended their rights to collectively bargain in the first place?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I'll repeat for the member opposite: As we review the decision, our intention is to appeal.

We are incredibly grateful to our public service across this province that serves Ontario and Ontarians.

We're also incredibly proud of the investments that we are making in this province.

Just three months ago, the Minister of Finance tabled our budget, which, in fact, the members opposite voted against. They voted against increasing health care funding to this province. They voted against building infrastructure—a \$160-billion infrastructure plan across this province, which would see hospitals in cities like Windsor, in cities like Brampton, in Scarborough, all across this province.

We will continue to make these historic and unprecedented investments across this province.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: My question is for the Premier.

Speaker, the Auditor General tabled a report yesterday and painted a very clear picture of the state of auto insurance here in Ontario.

My question is very simple: Does the Premier agree that Ontario drivers are being gouged on their auto insurance? Yes or no?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member opposite for that important question.

Mr. Speaker, we could have saved the Auditor General some time and money. Maybe we should have done a value-for-money on this finding—because, of course, as the member opposite knows, we take the cost of auto

insurance very seriously. As the member opposite knows, through the pandemic, we saw rate relief of \$1.3 billion for drivers in this province.

1040

The member opposite—because I know he's a very learned fellow—has read page 102 of the budget that was tabled in April, which, as the member for Brampton South just highlighted, his party didn't vote for.

Mr. Speaker, I'll highlight what's on page 102 in the supplemental question.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Speaker, it's only 10:30 a.m., and it seems the minister is already out to lunch on this issue, so I'm going to help him.

The answer is, yes, Ontario drivers are being gouged on their auto insurance. We pay the highest auto insurance rates in Canada despite having some of the lowest per capita accidents. In fact, accidents have been down since the start of the pandemic, and yet insurance rates are climbing at double the rate of inflation. While Ontarians are struggling, insurer profits hit 27%, and drivers are overpaying in the hundreds of millions.

Will this government do the right thing and bring auto insurance premiums down to the level they should be? Yes or no?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, maybe I'll take the member opposite out for lunch.

I do appreciate the question. It's a very serious question.

Let me read from page 103—sorry—from the budget, which I'm sure the learned member read: "The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario is implementing a new strategy for reforming the regulation of automobile insurance rates and underwriting. As part of the new strategy, FSRA will be developing a new framework for ensuring fairness in rates that would replace outdated guidance, including existing guidance on territorial rating"—also known as postal codes.

So I'd ask the member opposite: Do you support that in the budget, and why did you vote no?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Members should make their comments through the Chair—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Please start the clock.

Final supplementary?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I thought the minister was supposed to give answers, not ask questions. This is exactly why this minister is one of my top 10 favourite fantasy authors of all time.

Speaker, the proof is in the premiums; I've said it before. The Auditor General has confirmed what New Democrats have been saying here for years: Auto insurance postal code discrimination is real, and it has to stop. Drivers with clean driving records in Brampton, Scarborough, northwest Toronto and many other GTA neighbourhoods are paying double the rates of others.

Two months ago, I tabled a bill to end auto insurance postal code discrimination in the GTA. The government supported this very same bill before the election; the Premier said it was a priority. So will they pass this bill into law immediately? Yes or no?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Well, I know the member opposite would love to be on this side of the House so that he could help us reduce insurance rates.

I come back to the pandemic—\$1.3 billion of relief; zero increases for two years, because we've been focused on keeping costs down for the people of Ontario.

But it just doesn't end with territorial ratings—that we're looking to provide value for auto insurance premiums and the people of Ontario. We're also looking at choice. That's also on page 103. We're looking at more choice for auto drivers who want more choice in the industry. We're also looking at fraud and abuse. We've directed FSRA to collect the data so that we can tackle fraud and abuse in the system.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows well that this government's priority is to provide relief to the hard-working people of Ontario. That's what we ran on, and that's what we'll—

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

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Yesterday's Ottawa LRT inquiry report revealed a cascade of problems due to the decision to build the LRT as a public-private partnership. The report said, "In many ways, the P3 model caused or contributed to several of the ongoing difficulties on the project." These difficulties included a lack of transparency, misleading information from the P3 contractor, and the city's inability to hold the P3 partner accountable for deficiencies.

Will the government learn the lessons of the Ottawa LRT fiasco and stop signing risky P3 contracts?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you very much to the member for the question.

Certainly, we're grateful to the commission, but it's because of the P3 projects we have that we are able to build subways in the city of Toronto and in York region. It's the reason we're building highways—like Highway 3, the Highway 427 extension, the Highway 401 widening, and the Garden City Skyway. It's the reason why we've made such great progress on building hospitals in the province of Ontario—like Niagara, Cortellucci Vaughan, West Lincoln Memorial Hospital, Niagara south, Trillium, Ottawa.

I've always said—I've been very transparent—we will use the right model for the right project and we will proceed in that way.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The supplementary question. The member for Parkdale–High Park.

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: The same P3 contractors and private consultants responsible for the Ottawa LRT are also responsible for the Eglinton Crosstown P3. The Auditor General warned of deficient designs and missed deadlines. There are already signs that the problems experienced with the Ottawa LRT could happen with the Eglinton Crosstown P3. Metrolinx keeps announcing more delays and keeps paying more money to the P3 contractor. They recently announced yet another one-year delay, which both the minister and Metrolinx have refused to explain.

Clearly, something has once again gone wrong with the Eglinton Crosstown P3.

What is the ministry and Metrolinx hiding?

Hon. Kinga Surma: The Minister of Transportation has been very clear that she is doing everything she absolutely can to make sure that we can get the Eglinton Crosstown running as quickly as possible.

Our P3 history in the province of Ontario is a wonderful one. We have brought to life 74 projects since the inception of Infrastructure Ontario. Since our government was elected, we've brought 24 projects to market, 15 of which are currently in construction.

We were elected on a strong mandate to build this province, and that's what we will do.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

Mr. Lorne Coe: My question is to the Minister of Infrastructure.

In the coming decades, Ontario's population is expected to grow by more than six million people. As our population grows, investing in infrastructure is now more important than ever. Clogged roads and gridlocked highways hurt our hard-working families, as they're stuck in traffic longer than needed. Outdated and antiquated infrastructure drags down our economy and makes us less competitive as a province. Ontario cannot afford to hold this economy back. Now is the time to build.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure please share with the House what our government is doing to build effective and resilient infrastructure for all Ontarians?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Thank you very much to the member.

Again, we were elected on a very strong mandate to invest in infrastructure, which is why we are investing \$159 billion over the next 10 years. Last week, we announced our updated P3 project pipeline, which included 39 projects.

During COVID-19, under Premier Ford's leadership, we developed the rapid build program to build long-term-care homes as quickly as possible, which resulted in 320 additional beds at Lakeridge in a construction period of 13 months. We are taking those learnings through the rapid delivery program, and we've announced our first rapid delivery program to build schools in the province of Ontario. This includes five new schools, creating 15,700 student spaces and 1,500 child care spaces.

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

Mr. Lorne Coe: Back to the minister: Addressing our infrastructure needs today is an investment in the future of our province.

Together, let's build health care networks that better serve our patients and keep our province moving ahead.

Infrastructure investments ensure a stronger economy, better jobs and bigger paycheques for all Ontarians.

1050

Communities like Brampton, Windsor and my region of Durham are all places that have long advocated for infrastructure investments, but, sadly, the previous Liberal government ignored our needs.

Now is the time for our government to act. Now is the time to get shovels in the ground.

Can the Minister of Infrastructure tell the House what critical projects our government is undertaking as we, together, rebuild Ontario?

Hon. Kinga Surma: I certainly can. The people elected us, and they brought us back here because they want more hospitals, they want more highways, they want more schools and more public transit.

In our most recent P3 pipeline update, we are advancing on procurement and construction of our hospitals and children's treatment centres—ones like Niagara Health, Trillium Queensway and Mississauga, WAHA, CAMH, CHEO, and Quinte Health.

With regard to transportation, we continue to advance Highway 3; the Scarborough subway; the Eglinton Cross-town West extension; the Ontario Line north, which we've broken up into two separate contracts; and the Garden City Skyway.

We're also bringing Ontario Place back to life so that families have a wonderful place on the waterfront to enjoy.

ONTARIO LOTTERY AND GAMING CORP.

Ms. Catherine Fife: My question is to the Premier.

Yesterday's Auditor General report showed that Ontario Lottery and Gaming signed private casino contracts based on unrealistic bids, but instead of holding those contractors to their contracts, they agreed to let them pay \$3.3 billion less to the government. These are billions of dollars that should have gone to supporting our schools, our hospitals.

Why is this government letting the OLG undermine its own credibility by signing and renegotiating bad contracts?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Finance.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Thank you to the member opposite for that question.

Mr. Speaker, those contracts, which were signed about a decade ago, in 2012—between 2011 and 2014, I think there was a minority government. And who supported the minority Liberals?

Interjection: Catherine Fife.

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Oh. The member opposite's party.

Over the last decade, the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. has been good for taxpayers—in fact, the most recent year returned \$1.5 billion to the taxpayers of this great province. Not only that—provided significant growth to the economy through good jobs, good-paying jobs, bigger paycheques.

Finally, the citizens of this province have a great entertainment industry, through the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., that provides entertainment value to the citizens at all the casinos and all the great—

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

Ms. Catherine Fife: Mr. Speaker, if I could enforce those contracts, I would—but do you know who could? This Minister of Finance could do it.

The auditor also showed that the OLG and its private casino operators do not have adequate processes to prevent money laundering: “At two casinos, mystery shoppers were able to obtain four casino cheques for between \$4,900 and \$10,750 with limited play and no casino winnings,” despite OLG's money-laundering policy that play must be verified before issuing any cheques above \$3,000.

Money laundering is happening in Ontario's casinos. British Columbia has stronger money laundering provisions in place today, which the government should bring in. So my question is really simple: Will the Minister of Finance commit to making those changes today so that money laundering does not happen in Ontario casinos?

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy: Mr. Speaker, there is no room for bad actors in this province.

The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp. has a very rigorous process, has policies and procedures in place—and they've increased their enforcement over the years and are doing a terrific job.

We will always go after bad actors.

But let me tell you this: I have to question the scope and the mission creep of the Auditor General using taxpayer dollars to do a sting operation in an area where we have plenty of enforcement in this province.

We are going to go after the bad actors. We are going to make sure that we have the high standards in this province. We take it seriously, the OLG takes it seriously, and this government takes it seriously.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Mr. Dave Smith: My question is to the Minister of Energy.

Speaker, concerns about the issues of access to electricity in our province exist. Communities in rural, remote and northern Ontario deserve access to a reliable source of electricity. Sadly, for many, that's just not the case.

In many Indigenous and northern communities, the continued reliance on diesel generators is an ongoing challenge that needs to be addressed. Diesel-generated electricity is expensive, it's polluting, and it doesn't meet the needs of growing communities.

Indigenous communities across Ontario serve as important partners in our energy sector.

Can the Minister of Energy please elaborate on what our government is doing to ensure northern, remote and Indigenous communities have access to the electricity they need?

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member opposite for the question.

As Minister of Energy, my top priority is to ensure that we have a reliable and clean electricity grid that meets the needs of everyone across Ontario, especially in remote communities.

The member is right that there are still some remote fly-in communities that are operating on diesel generators. That's expensive, it's not good for the environment, and it doesn't allow for growth in new homes and an expansion to be built in these communities.

That's why it was really important last week that I joined my friend and colleague the MPP from Kiiwetinoong in Kingfisher Lake, his home community, with many of his family members. It was a tremendous day, as we lit up that community to the provincial grid, thanks to the Wataynikaneyap power project, which is a tremendous project—it's known as the line that brings light. I would add that it's the line that brings hope as well.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you to the minister for that response.

It's encouraging to see our government's leadership, working alongside First Nation communities, to partner on connecting to our electricity grids to northern Ontario. Being connected to our electricity grid unlocks future economic and social development in northern communities, including new schools, housing, and economic opportunity.

Can the Minister of Energy elaborate on the Watay Power project and tell this House how this First Nation-led project will bring energy certainty and new opportunities to northwestern Ontario?

Hon. Todd Smith: The Wataynikaneyap power project is a very important project—1,800 kilometres of transmission line; an Indigenous-led project; and 24 First Nations teaming with Fortis power to connect communities like Kingfisher Lake and 16 others to the provincial grid. Our government is proud to support this project with \$1.34 billion, which will help the construction during this time. Three of the 17 fly-in communities have already been connected to the provincial grid. Chief Eddie Mamakwa in Kingfisher Lake said last week—and the member opposite said this to me as well—he recalls when the first diesel generators were brought in in 1982; the runway was built in 1987; the running water came in in 1993. And they'll always remember, in 2022, when they hooked up to the provincial grid. It allows for growth. It allows for housing to be built in the community. It allows for the new school that's being built in Kingfisher Lake to be powered. This is what can happen when we work together with First Nations partners to ensure that we're

seeing economic prosperity in their communities. It's a tremendous partnership and should be congratulated.

ENERGY CONTRACTS

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question is to the Premier.

Yesterday's Auditor General report revealed that the government is failing to make adequate use of its renewable energy resources.

Another report yesterday showed that this government is about to waste the money of Ontario ratepayers by procuring more gas plants. The report by Power Advisory said it would be cheaper to invest in efficiency, conservation, renewable energy and storage, instead of spending billions on new gas plants.

Hydro bills are already too high. Why is the Premier wasting money on new gas plants when there are cheaper options that don't use fossil fuels?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Energy.

Hon. Todd Smith: Thanks to the member opposite.

It's pretty rich coming from the member opposite—to talk about affordability in the energy sector, when his own party believes that we should get rid of natural gas, a base-load power supply. And that member, in particular, is not supportive of nuclear, which provides 60% of our base load power in the province every day. Each and every day, my job as the Minister of Energy is to ensure that we have an affordable and reliable supply of electricity in the province. The Independent Electricity System Operator has advised us that if we were to remove natural gas from the system, we would have blackouts and brownouts. Is that what this member wants? It's certainly not what this government wants or what the people of Ontario need.

1100

We're seeing record investments in our province because we now have a reliable and affordable electricity grid in Ontario—one that is competitive with other jurisdictions—and we're seeing the results with multi-billion dollar investments here in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Well, that was an interesting dodge.

Let's try it again. The Premier has promised private gas plant companies that Ontario ratepayers will keep paying for the new gas plants even after they are shut down. The gas plant contracts will run to 2040, but those plants will be shut down long before then under federal law.

We already had one gas plant scandal under the Liberals. And it looks like the PC government is determined to do exactly the same thing.

How much will Ontario ratepayers be forced to pay for new gas plant contracts after these plants have been shut down?

Hon. Todd Smith: The member opposite wants to shut down gas plants now. That would result in brownouts in our province—completely unacceptable. The Independent Electricity System Operator has also told us that it would increase electricity bills by \$100 a month. That is

unacceptable to our government, and it's unacceptable to the people of the province of Ontario.

We saw a glimpse of their energy policy a couple of weeks ago, when the member from Ottawa Centre ran extension cords across the bridge from Ottawa to Gatineau. That's a look at what we could expect—God forbid—if an NDP government was ever in charge of our energy supply. We simply can't have that unpredictability. We have to have a reliable and affordable system.

Every single day, I'm working to ensure that our system is clean and safe, that it offers choice, and that it is reliable and affordable, so we can see the growth we need in our province.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier.

In 2018, the Premier was caught on video telling a room full of developers, "We will open up the greenbelt, a big chunk of it." Then in May of that year, he swore to all Ontarians that he unequivocally wouldn't touch the greenbelt. And in April 2021, he said, "We're not going to touch the greenbelt."

So here we are, December 2022. It's Christmas, and the Premier is proud to say "promise made, promise kept" to his rich developer friends. The problem is, he broke his promise to the people of Ontario. He is giving away the people's greenbelt—huge chunks of it; it's not his to give.

Speaker, through you to the Premier: Can the Premier stand here today and tell us why anyone would believe anything that he says?

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

Hon. Steve Clark: I could say the same thing about the honourable member. He stood here in this House and, as a member of the governing Liberal Party, carved up the greenbelt 17 times—no apology, no answers for the people of Ontario.

We were open. We were clear. We were transparent. We're in the middle of a housing crisis, and we posted on the environmental registry a plan that would provide a minimum of 50,000 homes.

Many of these sites have received municipal support. The one in Pickering, Mayor Ashe—I have a letter that I'll read in the supplemental, clearly indicating that they wanted this property in the DRAP to be available for home construction.

All of these sites are adjacent to existing urban areas. They're all able to be serviced.

At the end of the day, our plan, unlike the Liberals', will add over 2,000 acres to the greenbelt.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, it's evident that the Premier thinks part of his job description is to make his very rich friends even richer. It's clear that there's a pattern of people gaining inside knowledge and advance notice of this government's decisions—

Interjections.

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

I heard what the member for Ottawa South said. I will remind all members that you can't impute motive in the House. I'm going to ask the member to withdraw and then conclude his question.

Mr. John Fraser: Why would someone take out \$100 million—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. John Fraser: I withdraw. Sorry; I didn't hear you, Speaker.

There is a clear pattern of people gaining inside knowledge. Why would someone take out a \$100-million loan at 21% interest to buy land that you could literally do nothing on—and weeks later, magically, you could.

It took more than a day for this government to say "no" when they were asked whether developers got a heads-up—a whole day.

It's not the developers' greenbelt. It's not the government's greenbelt. It's not the Premier's greenbelt to give away. It's the people's greenbelt.

Speaker, through you: Will the Premier stand in this House and tell the people of Ontario that his rich developer friends did not get a heads-up?

Hon. Steve Clark: It's pretty rich, coming from a gentleman who worked for Premier McGuinty, who sat in this chamber on this side of the House and carved up the greenbelt 17 times. It's pretty rich that this guy is bringing this question forward.

I'm going to read a letter from the mayor of Pickering, His Worship Mayor Kevin Ashe. The first paragraph says it all: "You recently received a letter from Mayor Ryan requesting the repeal of the Duffins Rouge Agricultural Preserve Act, 2005, in the city of Pickering. As the newly elected mayor of the city, I would like to support this request. As noted by Mayor Ryan, these lands were part of the regional and municipal growth plans for settlement area expansion prior to the greenbelt—20 years ago."

We're moving forward on this request from municipalities, other requests from municipalities.

At the end of the day, the plan proposed will have a minimum of 50,000 homes provided for us and over—

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Ottawa South will come to order. The Minister of Northern Development will come to order.

The next question.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Speaker, studies reveal that approximately one in five children in Ontario are encountering mental health challenges. The past few years have been especially difficult for our youth as they face unique challenges augmented by the isolation brought on by the pandemic. It is therefore crucial for our government to expand access to innovative solutions in order to support the mental health and well-being of Ontario's children and youth.

Can the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions please share with this House how our government is ensuring high-quality care for children and young people through integrated services such as the youth wellness hubs?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to the member for Mississauga Centre for her question.

Since 2019, we've invested \$570 million into child and youth mental health supports across the province of Ontario.

In June 2021, we dedicated another \$31 million to reducing wait times and improving access to mental health services.

Expanded alongside these services are our youth wellness hubs. These are one-stop shops for mental health and addictions treatment, primary care services and early intervention programming for youth aged 12 to 25. Available on a walk-in basis, they offer a safe space for youth and a warm hand-off to other community-based care providers, assuring children who are in need of help that there is no wrong door. We now have 22 of them in the province of Ontario, and we've green-lit another eight.

I'm looking forward, in my supplemental, to talking a little bit about the work of Joanna Henderson at CAMH and the great work, when we collaborate, that we can do as a province and—

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

Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: I thank the minister for his response and for his tireless work on mental health and addictions for our province.

I am proud that one of the 22 youth wellness hubs that the minister spoke of is actually located in Malton, in my city of Mississauga. The Malton Youth Wellness Hub provides vital services to youth in my riding, such as mental health counselling; substance use support; employment, housing and education support; as well as recreation.

These services are being delivered through partnerships with organizations like Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin, CMHA Peel Dufferin, Our Place Peel, and many, many others.

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In 2010, the previous Liberal government was provided a report prepared by an all-party committee, which included 23 recommendations to improve mental health services. Not a single one of those recommendations was implemented.

Unlike the Liberals, our government is committed to working with our mental health partners to support and address our children and youth's mental health and well-being needs.

Can the associate minister please elaborate on how our government is building a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions system?

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

This Monday, Dr. Henderson and I got together to announce an exciting pan-Canadian initiative called the

Integrated Youth Services Net, the IYS-Net. As many of you here today have heard me say over and over again, if we can't measure it, we can't manage it. The IYS-Net will connect every youth hub across Canada through a shared data infrastructure, easing collaboration between researchers and policy-makers. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker: mental health practice informed by real-time data exchanges that optimize service delivery and treatment outcomes, learning from youth and proactively adapting to their needs. This is an unprecedented opportunity for us to be creative and collaborative and to make catalytic change.

Together with our provincial and territorial allies, we're building a system centred around the values of justice, diversity, inclusion, and the lived experience of young people all across Ontario. This is what we're focused on, and we will build that system in collaboration with all our partners.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Jeff Burch: Speaker, through you to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing: I've asked the minister numerous times whether the government tipped off developers about plans to open the greenbelt for development. The minister has had multiple different answers to our questions. First, the answer was that the government talks to anyone who builds homes. Yesterday, the minister said "no," without any further elaboration. Every day, it seems we get a new answer from the minister.

So, today, I'll ask again: Did the minister or any other government or PC Party official share with any landowner, developer or lobbyist information about the government's plan for developing the greenbelt before it became public on November 4?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, I answered yesterday that no, I did not, and that I will assist the Integrity Commissioner in the investigation.

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

Mr. Jeff Burch: Up until April, the chief of staff to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing was Luca Bucci. In June, Mr. Bucci was hired as the CEO of the Ontario Home Builders' Association.

Despite a one-year cooling-off period required of former government officials who become lobbyists, Mr. Bucci seems to be lobbying the government on development issues. He recently spoke at the heritage committee in support of Bill 23, where he interacted with the minister's parliamentary assistant. He appeared, this morning, to speak in favour of Bill 39. The cooling-off period exists to prevent lobbyists from putting their former employers in a real or potential conflict of interest.

Why is the minister allowing his office to be lobbied by his former chief of staff?

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

Interjections.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Such disappointment, colleagues, from across the way as I got up; I'm somewhat hurt by that.

Here's the reality, Speaker: They can couch it any way they like—because they have been doing it for not only just the last two weeks, really; they've been doing it for the entire time the NDP has existed. That is the committee of no. They don't want people to have homes. They don't want people to have homes in the GTA. They're happy where we're at—but we've said no right from the beginning; right, colleagues?

We were elected on a mission to make Ontario better than it was when we took over.

So what have we done? We've done better on health care. We've done better on education. We're doing better to put more money into the pockets of the people of the province of Ontario.

While they want people to live in their parents' basements forever, I know a lot of parents here who want their kids out of the basement and in a brand new home somewhere in the province of Ontario. That's what I know. It's the dream of everybody.

I know that when my parents came to this country—do you know what my parents did? They wanted to have a better tomorrow for their kids. And that is what we're all about.

So you can continue to say no, hold people down. We'll move forward and give hope and prosperity to everybody.

VETERINARY SERVICES

Ms. Jess Dixon: I unabashed identify as a pet parent. Unfortunately, I've spent far more time in veterinary clinics than any parent would want to.

We have a significant shortage of veterinarians in my area in Ontario and across the province. I know from first-hand experience, and from my friends, that it's causing significant wait times, problems with emergency clinics, and burnout in our veterinarians. It's also having an impact on our farmers, who can't find people to take care of their livestock. I would ask if our Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs could please highlight what our government is doing in order to address this issue.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I very much appreciate your devotion and the question as well. This is something that people across Ontario are talking about—not just pet owners, but Ontario livestock farmers as well.

I want to be perfectly clear that in terms of access to veterinarian services—this is an issue that's across the nation, but here in Ontario, we're taking action.

This past spring, we met with stakeholders from the veterinarian sector, and they identified very clearly that we needed to modernize. The fact of the matter is, the Veterinarians Act in Ontario hasn't been looked at for over 30 years, but it's our government that is taking action. We are working with our stakeholders to identify how we need to modernize, given the fact that there are new technologies and the scope of practice for both veterinarians and vet technicians has evolved. We need to get with the times and modernize our legislation in this province as well. It's part of our Grow Ontario Strategy that we're going to be moving forward with. I'll speak more about it in my supplementary.

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

Ms. Jess Dixon: It's without any hyperbole whatsoever when I say that I'm incredibly excited about this.

I've spent a lot of time with a lot of our registered veterinary technicians across this province, and I know—again, from experience I wish I hadn't had—just how valuable they are and how extensive their learning experience is, and what they could do to help veterinary services.

I'd ask if the minister could talk a little bit more about how modernizing the Veterinarians Act could allow our amazing registered veterinary technicians to provide more services and help fill this gap.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: To the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler: We are going to be listening, and we certainly look forward to your input as well as input from people involved in the sector from across Ontario.

The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London will be leading these consultations across this province as he goes on tour. We want to hear, first and foremost, how the sector has evolved, how we need to modernize, and how we need to develop legislation in 2022 that creates less red tape and builds a stronger Ontario—because that's what Bill 46 is all about.

As we look to grow Ontario, we want to make sure that people have their voices heard. We're looking very much forward to an expansive consultation process that will identify the new scopes of practice that have evolved for vet techs as well as our veterinarians. First and foremost, the important aspect here is that we are engaging everyone in the veterinarian sector to make sure we get it right.

MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My question is to the Premier.

Front-line mental health and addictions workers have been clear that we are in an acute crisis, with record numbers of opioid deaths in Ontario. This crisis is particularly acute in Thunder Bay, where we have four times the provincial average of deaths.

Will the province increase community-based addiction services, including harm reduction and supportive housing, and increase capacity in publicly funded, publicly run treatment centres in our communities?

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: Thank you to the member opposite for the question.

We know that there is an opioid crisis in the province of Ontario that predated the pandemic and was only aggravated by the pandemic.

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Our government has made historical investments in addiction treatment and mental wellness. Those investments now total \$525 million in annualized investments. In addition to those investments, because of the pandemic, we created an addiction recovery fund—another \$90 million—that created 400 treatment beds and 7,000 new

treatment spots that are all over the province of Ontario. Those investments are being made where they're needed most; the focus was on jurisdictions, on cities and towns where those were needed the most, where we have the highest rates of overdoses. Investments were made in Sioux Lookout—40 beds; in Thunder Bay—35; in Sudbury—15; in Timmins—10; and 54 at Canadore College in North Bay. Why were those investments made? Because we are going to build a continuum of care. We're going to look after individuals from the time that they require withdrawal management, through addiction, through supports, all the way to providing them with supportive housing, because that's what we need to do—

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

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Thank you for mentioning supportive housing. I appreciate that and look forward to seeing more of that in our region.

In Thunder Bay, there are a multitude of for-profit methadone clinics in the business of keeping people hooked on methadone. As for-profit medical practices, it is in their financial interest to keep people on methadone indefinitely. In contrast, not-for-profit clinics work with clients to gradually reduce dosages until the person is drug-free.

Will the government investigate these exploitative businesses and commit to supporting community-based, not-for-profit mental health and addictions treatment that includes mobile crisis response teams and the building of supportive housing—which I'm glad you intend to do.

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

When you stop and think about the amount of supports and services that we need in the province of Ontario—we all know, or we should know, that that treatment should be in the communities. It should be delivered in a way that is measured, so that we know that the outcomes we are getting are the ones that are the best for the people of the province of Ontario. We also know that we need to do more to ensure we have low-barrier access points, to be able to get them into a system to get the supports that are necessary.

When you talk about mobile crisis intervention teams—I support them, and we support them, as a government. We have expanded them throughout the province and will continue to do so, because we know that it's a way to get individuals the help they need. That's the key point here.

We have to get people to treatment, which is why those 400 beds were created and why we have 7,000 additional treatment spots.

And yes, we will deliver services at the same standard and level across the province of Ontario—because that's what every Ontarian deserves to have in their community.

PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Mr. Nolan Quinn: My question is to the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery.

As our lives become increasingly dependent on digital technology, we need to be more knowledgeable about the ever-present cyber threats we now face.

Recently, we saw the negative impacts that cyber security attacks can have, with a school board reporting that it was affected by a cyber incident.

As a province, we must ensure that we are equipped with the necessary tools to stay safe as we access services digitally.

Can the minister please explain what our government is doing to prioritize the safety and security of all the people of Ontario in our increasingly digital world?

Hon. Kaleed Rasheed: I thank the great member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for the great work he is doing for the people of his riding.

Speaker, since our government introduced Ontario's first-ever Cyber Security Strategy in 2019, we have rolled up our sleeves and gotten to work. As many of us know very well, a key pillar of this strategy was the creation of our cyber security expert panel, appointed to help evaluate the state of cyber security across the OPS and BPS. After two years of hard work and collaboration, our government publicly released their final report this October and committed to implementing the recommendations. This report is a major milestone on our path to improving our cyber resilience. Perhaps most importantly, it helps us create even more secure online services for Ontarians.

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

Mr. Nolan Quinn: Thank you to the minister for that response.

Cyber attacks have become more sophisticated and frequent, targeting vital services. As our government continues our ambitious agenda to utilize digital capabilities for programs and services, we are responsible for protecting the public from harmful cyber security threats. The public expects the data they share with their government to be secure and safely managed.

Could the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery please elaborate on the next steps our government is taking to better protect cyber security for all the people of Ontario?

Hon. Kaleed Rasheed: I again thank the member for his question.

Speaker, the work ahead to implement these recommendations will not always be easy, and it will certainly not be immediate. But I can pledge to you today that I will work tirelessly with my colleagues to usher in the changes needed to bolster our cyber security across all of government. The expert panel's recommendations are forming the foundation of our cyber security policies and help develop the best practices that we will share across all sectors.

Our ongoing digital transformation has already delivered significant benefits to the public and businesses, and we must continue to protect them from cyber threats so we can deliver on our government's plan to make life easier and build a stronger Ontario.

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Doly Begum: My question is to the Premier.

Last week, the Minister of Health said that primary care physicians should treat more children so they do not have to go to emergency rooms. However, the reality is that 1.8 million Ontarians don't have a regular family physician to even go to in these situations. OHIP-covered virtual care has been one of the last resorts that parents and their sick children have had to find immediate medical help, which this government is gutting, leaving parents with a cost of about \$29 a month.

Our government is allowing for private ventures like KixCare to charge for virtual pediatric visits.

Dr. Aviva Lowe, a pediatrician who consulted on KixCare, is urging the provincial government to maintain access to virtual care. She said, "Pediatricians ... will no longer be able to offer virtual visits for patients"—and she went on to talk about how it's unequal for people who don't have family doctors.

My question is, at a time when there is a crisis, why is our government gutting essential services like OHIP-covered virtual care?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you very much for the question.

We just want to take a moment to acknowledge the great work done by all of our doctors across Ontario, and we thank them for all of their efforts.

As members may recall, during the pandemic, we started to cover virtual care.

Before the last election, a three-year physician services agreement was ratified by the Ontario Medical Association and its members. It was a true milestone, because it was the first time in 10 years or so that a deal had been reached without an arbitrator. But it also realized another milestone: That agreement made virtual care a permanent feature of our health care system and our health care offering for the first time ever for patients. We're very proud of that. Under the new framework, things have been changing and the way it's compensated has been changing—but that is what the OMA ratified and what the members of the OMA agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Ms. Doly Begum: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the response from the parliamentary assistant—and I would hope that they actually intervene and look at what is happening with virtual care.

Lionel, a parent in Scarborough Southwest, reached out to our office about his recent experience. After getting sick, the only way his family was able to get medical advice and a prescription was through virtual service.

Our government is allowing for profit to be made from essential services like health care and fundamentally taking away the right of Ontarians to publicly funded primary care.

In a CBC article, Leah Littlepage, another Ontarian, talked about her 16-month-old daughter, who stayed out of the emergency room four times in the past year because of virtual care.

The system that you have come up with for virtual care is not working.

My question is, at a time when pediatric hospitals are overrun, especially for infants and babies, and we need to have virtual care service that actually covers these people, like these parents, why is this government taking away options that are available—that are available to save kids—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Member for Eglinton–Lawrence.

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you very much for the question.

As I was saying, under the new virtual care agreement, all medically necessary virtual care services, including patient visits by telephone, will continue to be insured under OHIP, but we're implementing a new pricing structure for virtual care—and that's what we're really talking about here: a pricing issue—that ensures patients are receiving services through the avenue that best reflects a patient-physician relationship. Patients will continue to have access to virtual care where clinically appropriate—in settings, for example, like rural and remote mental health services.

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Our government has been clear with virtual care—because this is what we heard from patients. It's intended as a complement to in-person care—not a replacement. So we are making a requirement that a physician has to actually meet a patient once within a 24-month period. We don't think that's too much to ask. That provides for better patient care, which is what we want in Ontario.

FOREST INDUSTRY

Mr. Kevin Holland: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

We all know the issue of deforestation is a major concern. Trees absorb and store carbon dioxide. Restoring degraded forests is a significant avenue for carbon absorption and storage and one of the strategies for addressing global warming. Since 66% of Ontario is forested and almost 90% of those forests are public, this ministry contributes significantly to our role in helping to protect Ontario in our fight against climate change.

Can the minister explain how our province contributes to sustainable forest development while ensuring the protection of our environment?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you to the member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan. He is doing a tremendous job for the people in his riding in Ontario.

Responsible stewardship and sustainable development of Ontario forests are at the heart of what my ministry does. Healthy forests are essential to environmental well-being and provide important recreational and tourism opportunities for residents here at home and for people around the world.

The forest industry in Ontario generated \$18 billion in revenue from manufactured goods and services in 2020 and supported more than 148,000 direct and indirect jobs in 2021.

Forestry operations are a vital source of good jobs, particularly in rural and northern communities where they may be one of the main sources of employment.

Sustainable Growth: Ontario's Forest Sector Strategy is our government's 10-year timeline to unlock the full potential of our forest sector, and our plan will continue Ontario's history of sustainable development and position the province as a world leader in making and selling forest products from renewable, sustainable—

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

Mr. Kevin Holland: Thank you to the minister for the great work you're doing as Minister of Natural Resources.

In April 2021, the ministry created a Forest Sector Strategy Advisory Committee comprised of municipal, Indigenous and industry representatives to continue improving the sector.

While many innovative companies in our province utilize our forestry products, companies located in rural, remote and northern communities have challenges that other businesses wouldn't have to face. Higher costs, access and difficulties attracting and retaining talent are significant economic development challenges in northern and rural regions.

Can the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry address how our government will support investments and innovation in Ontario's forestry sector going forward?

Hon. Graydon Smith: I want to thank every single employee in the forest industry sector in Ontario, because they're doing a great job every single day.

Forest biomass is an incredible opportunity for Ontario, and it includes trees that aren't used in conventional forest products, as well as sawmill by-products like bark, sawdust and wood shavings. It can be used in medicines and pharmaceuticals, plastics and polymers, textiles, 3D printing, battery energy storage and green hydrogen. It can even be used as a component in jet fuel. Using forest biomass can support both the province's forest management and environmental objectives, helping us to use more mill residues, reduce waste and landfilling, and provide clean energy. As we realize our plan for future uses of forest biomass, these facilities will make important contributions to the forestry sector and regional economies.

Our government is ensuring families, communities and industry can depend on a healthy and vibrant forest sector—

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

WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: Once again, northern Ontario was hit with wicked weather, which caused another road closure. Our record so far is three for three. L'hiver va être long.

In Hearst, this morning, trucks were lined up for 67 kilometres after a 12-hour road closure. On Ontario 511, there are no indications of road closures.

We have contractors who cannot fulfill their contractual obligations. People are calling my office for updates.

How are we supposed to function up north when every snowstorm creates road closures?

To the minister: When will your ministry address this issue? Passing my private member's bill is a good start.

L'hon. Caroline Mulroney: Je remercie le député pour sa question.

Our government is very proud to be nation-leading in our standards for highway clearing across the province, but especially in northern Ontario.

Speaker, our government just recently announced a new standard for clearing highways in northern Ontario—a new Highways 11 and 17 standard called the Ontario trans-Canada standard. We will see our northern highways cleared in 12 hours. That is four hours faster than ever before. It represents the massive investments that we have made in clearing our roads in the north—1,100 pieces of new equipment, changes to our contractors' model, and new weather information stations.

Mr. Speaker, we have been working very closely with our contractors to make sure that we meet those standards and continue to improve road cleaning in northern Ontario.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The government House leader on a point of order?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm just rising in accordance with standing order 59 to outline our work for next week.

On Monday, December 5, in the morning, we will be dealing with Bill 51, the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act. In the afternoon, we will be on Bill 36, which is the Progress on the Plan to Build Act.

On Tuesday, December 6, in the morning, we will continue with Bill 36. In the afternoon routine, there will be two statements by ministers: the first by Minister Fullerton on the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, and a statement by Minister Mulroney on the modernization of the French-language act. In the afternoon, on Tuesday, December 6, we will go to Bill 51 again, which is the Legislative Assembly Amendment Act. And in the evening, we will go to a private member's bill standing in the name of the member for Kingston and the Islands, the Think Twice Before You Choose Natural Gas Act.

On Wednesday, December 7: Bill 39, the Better Municipal Governance Act, and in the afternoon, Bill 39, the Better Municipal Governance Act. In the evening, we will do the PMB from the member for Mushkegowuk—James Bay, Bill 43.

And on Thursday, December 8, there will be a tribute to a former member of provincial Parliament, Mr. David Rotenberg, and then the afternoon is yet to be determined.

GREAT UNION DAY

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

Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta: Today is Romania's National Day and I would like to invite all members to participate in the flag-raising at 12, followed by a reception in room 230.

NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Ottawa South has given notice of his dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing concerning the greenbelt. This matter will be debated on Tuesday, following private members' public business.

DEFERRED VOTES

LESS RED TAPE, STRONGER
ONTARIO ACT, 2022LOI DE 2022 VISANT À RÉDUIRE
LES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES
POUR UN ONTARIO PLUS FORT

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 46, An Act to enact one Act and amend various other Acts / Projet de loi 46, Loi visant à édicter une loi et à modifier diverses autres lois.

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

The division bells rang 1139 to 1144.

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

On November 28, 2022, Mr. Gill moved second reading of Bill 46, An Act to enact one Act and amend various other Acts.

On November 30, 2022, Mr. Yakabuski moved that the question be now put.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Harris, Mike	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Hogarth, Christine	Riddell, Brian
Bailey, Robert	Holland, Kevin	Romano, Ross
Barnes, Patrice	Jones, Trevor	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Ke, Vincent	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Bresee, Ric	Kerzner, Michael S.	Saunderson, Brian
Byers, Rick	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Calandra, Paul	Leardi, Anthony	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, Dave
Cho, Stan	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, David
Clark, Steve	Martin, Robin	Smith, Graydon
Coe, Lorne	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Crawford, Stephen	McGregor, Graham	Smith, Todd

Cuzzetto, Rudy	Mulroney, Caroline	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	Pang, Billy	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Parsa, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Ford, Doug	Piccini, David	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fullerton, Merrilee	Pierre, Natalie	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Pirie, George	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Quinn, Nolan	Williams, Charmaine A.
Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rae, Matthew	Yakabuski, John
Hardeman, Ernie	Rasheed, Kaleed	

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

Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Rakocevic, Tom
Begum, Doly	Glover, Chris	Sattler, Peggy
Bourgouin, Guy	Harden, Joel	Shamji, Adil
Bowman, Stephanie	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Burch, Jeff	Karpoche, Bhutila	Tabuns, Peter
Collard, Lucille	Kernaghan, Terence	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	Mamakwa, Sol	Vaugeois, Lise
Fraser, John	Mantha, Michael	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Gates, Wayne	Pasma, Chandra	

The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 74; the nays are 29.

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

Mr. Gill has moved second reading of Bill 46, An Act to enact one Act and amend various other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjections.

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

Second reading agreed to.

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

Hon. Parm Gill: Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1149 to 1300.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs and move its adoption.

The Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Wai Lam (William) Wong): Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 36, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 36, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

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

Report adopted.

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

STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated December 1, 2022, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

Report deemed adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

RIGHT TO TIMELY MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION CARE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LE DROIT DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES À DES SOINS DE SANTÉ MENTALE ET AU TRAITEMENT DE TOXICOMANIES EN TEMPS OPPORTUN

Ms. Karpoche moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 53, An Act to enact the Right to Timely Mental Health and Addiction Care for Children and Youth Act, 2022 / Projet de loi 53, Loi édictant la Loi de 2022 sur le droit des enfants et des jeunes à des soins de santé mentale et au traitement de toxicomanies en temps opportun.

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 Parkdale–High Park care to briefly explain her bill?

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: Yes, Speaker. Thank you. This bill, the Right to Timely Mental Health and Addiction Care for Children and Youth Act, requires the minister to ensure that a person who is less than 26 years old, resides in Ontario and has been deemed to require a mental health or addiction service receives access to the required mental health or addiction service within 30 days of being deemed to require the service.

PETITIONS

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I'd like to thank Sally Palmer for sending me the petition. It reads, "Raise Social Assistance Rates.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas ... social assistance rates are well below Canada's official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for individuals on OW and soon \$1,227 for ODSP;

"Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);

"Whereas the recent small budget increase of 5% for ODSP still leaves these citizens well below the poverty line, both they and those receiving the frozen OW rates are struggling to live in this time of alarming inflation;

"Whereas the government of Canada recognized in its 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 double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP."

I fully support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Ms. Chandra Pasma: "Petition to Raise Social Assistance Rates.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's social assistance rates are well below Canada's official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for individuals on OW and ... \$1,227 for ODSP;

"Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works (OW) and the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP);

"Whereas the recent small budget increase of 5% for ODSP still leaves these citizens well below the poverty line, both they and those receiving the frozen OW rates are struggling to live in this time of alarming inflation;

"Whereas the government of Canada recognized in its 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 double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP."

I wholeheartedly endorse this petition, will sign my name to it and send it the table with page Kalila.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Chris Glover: This petition is entitled, “Petition to Raise Social Assistance Rates.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

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

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

“Whereas the Ontario government has not increased social assistance rates since 2018, and Canada’s inflation rate in 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 fully support this petition and will pass it to page Scarlett to take to the table.

LAND USE PLANNING

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank the almost 1,000 Parkdale–High Park residents who have written to me to protect the greenbelt. This petition reads as follows:

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Bill 23 is the ... government’s latest attempt to remove protected land from the greenbelt, allowing developers to bulldoze and pave over 7,000 acres of farmland in the greenbelt;

“Whereas Ontario is already losing 319.6 acres of farmland and green space daily to development;

“Whereas the government’s Housing Affordability Task Force found there are plenty of places to build homes without destroying the greenbelt;

“Whereas” the Premier’s “repeated moves to tear up farmland and bulldoze wetlands have never been about housing, but are about making the rich richer;

“Whereas green spaces and farmland are what we rely on to grow our food, support natural habitats and prevent flooding;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately amend Bill 23, stop all plans to further remove protected land from the greenbelt and protect existing farmland in the province by passing the NDP’s Protecting Agricultural Land Act.”

I support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I have a “Petition to Protect Ontarians from Catastrophic Floods.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government’s More Homes Built Faster Act ... continues to erode the powers of Ontario’s conservation authorities; and

“Whereas the government’s recently tabled housing legislation will repeal no fewer than 36 regulations that give conservation authorities oversight over development in order to protect Ontarians from catastrophic floods; and

“Whereas the work of conservation authorities reduces the risk of flooding, which is only getting worse due to climate change;

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

“To instruct the Ontario government to please amend your housing bill and repeal all the changes you have introduced since coming to office that limit the important role of conservation of authorities.”

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

1310

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank Leadnow for this petition. It reads, “For Meaningful Climate Action Withdraw Bill 23.

“Whereas our planet is undergoing significant warming with adverse consequences for health, for agriculture, for infrastructure and our children’s future;

“Whereas the costs of inaction are severe, such as extreme weather events causing flooding and drought;

“Whereas Canada has signed the Paris accord which commits us to acting to keep temperature rise under 1.5 degrees” centigrade;

“We, the undersigned, call upon the government of Ontario to withdraw Bill 23 and to create a new bill to meet our housing needs that is compatible with protecting the greenbelt, creating affordable housing in the current urban boundaries, and meeting our climate targets.”

I fully support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I’d like to thank Dr. Sally Palmer for sending in this petition.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario’s social assistance rates are well below Canada’s official Market Basket Measure poverty line and far from adequate to cover the rising costs of food and rent: \$733 for individuals on OW and soon \$1,227 for ODSP;

“Whereas an open letter to the Premier and two cabinet ministers, signed by over 230 organizations, recommends that social assistance rates be doubled for both Ontario Works ... and the Ontario Disability Support Program...;

“Whereas the recent small budget increase of 5% for ODSP, with nothing for OW, could be experienced as an insult to recipients, who have been living since 2018 with

frozen social assistance rates and a Canadian inflation rate that reached 12%;

“Whereas the government of Canada recognized in its 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 double social assistance rates for OW and ODSP.”

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

INJURED WORKERS

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: This petition is titled “Workers’ Comp is a Right.” It reads, “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas about 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

“Whereas over a century ago, workers in Ontario who were injured on the job gave up the right to sue their employers, in exchange for a system that would provide them with just compensation;

“Whereas decades of cost-cutting have pushed injured workers into poverty and onto publicly funded social assistance programs, and have gradually curtailed the rights of injured workers;

“Whereas injured workers have the right to quality and timely medical care, compensation for lost wages and protection from discrimination;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to accomplish the following for injured workers in Ontario:

“Eliminate the practice of ‘deeming’ or ‘determining,’ which bases compensation on phantom jobs that injured workers do not actually have;

“Ensure that the WSIB prioritizes and respects the medical opinions of the health care providers who treat the injured worker directly;

“Prevent compensation from being reduced or denied based on ‘pre-existing conditions’ that never affected the worker’s ability to function prior to the work injury.”

I fully support this petition and will affix my signature to it.

INJURED WORKERS

Mr. Chris Glover: A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario: “Workers’ Comp is a Right...”

“Whereas about 200,000 to 300,000 people in Ontario are injured on the job every year;

“Whereas over a century ago, workers in Ontario who were injured on the job gave up the right to sue their employers, in exchange for a system that would provide them with just compensation;

“Whereas decades of cost-cutting have pushed injured workers into poverty and onto publicly funded social assistance programs, and have gradually curtailed the rights of injured workers;

“Whereas injured workers have the right to quality and timely medical care, compensation for lost wages and protection from discrimination;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to change the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to accomplish the following for injured workers in Ontario:

“Eliminate the practice of ‘deeming’ or ‘determining,’ which bases compensation on phantom jobs that injured workers do not actually have;

“Ensure that the WSIB prioritizes and respects the medical opinions of the health care providers who treat the injured worker directly;

“Prevent compensation from being reduced or denied based on ‘pre-existing conditions’ that never affected the worker’s ability to function prior to the work injury.”

I fully support this petition. I will pass it to page Eric to take to the table.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I’d like to thank my constituents of Parkdale–High Park for this petition. It’s titled “Protect Tenants: Stop the Speed-Up of Evictions,” and it reads, “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas reports show that the Ontario” government’s new laws “allow landlords to evict tenants faster and use private bailiffs to enforce eviction orders;

“Whereas there is an affordable housing and rental crisis in Ontario;

“Whereas many tenants who have lived in their units for years are being pushed out of their homes through renovations and other loopholes, allowing their” rent to be doubled or tripled;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario ... to: Reject any proposed changes that give” more “power to evict” honest “tenants more quickly; close all loopholes that give landlords incentive to drive people out of their units so they can rent at new, much higher rents, including action in above-guideline rent increases and renovations; and commit to immediate action to increase access to affordable housing in Ontario by building more affordable housing, social housing, supportive housing and increasing rent supplements, etc.”

I support this petition and I will affix my signature to it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

STRENGTHENING POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS AND STUDENTS ACT, 2022

LOI DE 2022 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT DES ÉTABLISSEMENTS POSTSECONDAIRES ET LES ÉTUDIANTS

Resuming the debate adjourned on December 1, 2022, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 26, An Act to amend various Acts in respect of post-secondary education / Projet de loi 26, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'éducation postsecondaire.

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'm pleased to have the opportunity to rise in the House today to address Bill 26, the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act. I have to say, Speaker, that when this bill was first tabled, I was feeling optimistic, as someone who used to work in this sector specifically on the issue of sexual violence and harassment in post-secondary, that we had a real opportunity to make progress for students, faculty, staff and other members of our campus communities across Ontario.

The government's legislative agenda this fall has not been a great source of hope and optimism, as the government seems to be setting fires wherever it goes, while somehow simultaneously ignoring the chaos of our health care system, but I thought this bill showed some promise. Not all the pieces were there yet, and I and many of my colleagues highlighted the areas where we hoped the government would do better during debate at second reading. The government was so steadfast during its speeches that they wanted to protect students and so adamant that this was an important issue that I thought surely the government would come to committee in good faith; listen to the feedback of students, faculty, staff, administrators and experts on gender-based violence; and make the necessary changes to make this a good bill, one that actually makes the changes required to protect students and other members of the post-secondary community.

Instead, what we saw was a situation where every single stakeholder brought forward changes they wanted to see to the bill, and the government refused to make almost every single change requested. That included student leaders pleading with the government in committee and in a press conference last week to do better. The government has not listened to these student leaders.

I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised, Speaker, because this is a pattern we have seen from this government. They refuse to consult with the people who are affected by their legislation, like we saw with Bill 7, which forces seniors and people with disabilities to move into long-term-care homes against their will, and yet the government couldn't be bothered to speak with a single seniors' organization or disability organization, or even hold a committee hearing on the subject; or Bill 28, which trampled all over the rights of low-paid female workers, forcing them out of our education system, thereby ensuring that our kids wouldn't get the fundamental supports they need and deserve. The government rammed that one through, too, without talking to a single worker, parent, education expert, labour lawyer or constitutional expert. Maybe if they had, they wouldn't have had to repeal the bill the following week because they never would have proceeded with such excessively damaging legislation if they had bothered to talk to Ontarians first.

1320

We've also seen the government conduct the barest sketch of a consultation they could possibly get away with calling a consultation—like on Bill 23, where the government refused to hold hearings across the province because apparently cities like Ottawa are exactly like Toronto, or maybe because they still haven't figured out that Ottawa is in Ontario.

They refused to hear from the Association of Ontario Municipalities on a bill that fundamentally affects municipalities, their funding and their democratic structures. They shut down committee hearings. They refused to hear from former mayors like John Sewell. They ignored the feedback of former and current mayors and city councillors in Ottawa and Toronto.

So I guess I shouldn't have been surprised to see the same pattern repeated here. The minister claimed the bill was based on consultations, but all the stakeholders that came before us said the bill didn't do enough, didn't go far enough and didn't do it well enough. All of them asked for amendments. I guess we should be grateful that the government condescended to make a few changes to the bill, but I'm not feeling grateful because this is such a lost opportunity—a lost opportunity to seriously address this issue, to make progress for students, faculty and staff, and everyone who is affected by the issue of sexual violence and harassment.

How long will it be now before we actually see the trauma-informed, survivor-centric, comprehensive and prevention-focused approach to sexual violence and harassment that students, faculty, staff, administrators and experts on gender-based violence are demanding? Is the government going to go back to the drawing board to create a new bill to address all of the concerns and issues that we heard, delaying change for months? Or are they going to continue to ignore the pleas of students, faculty, staff, administrators and gender-based violence experts, refusing to address this issue again for the rest of their term, making everyone wait years for change?

It makes me a little sick to my stomach to think that we might need to wait years to get this issue properly addressed, because we are talking about something so serious, something that has such a profound effect on people's lives.

We heard testimony from survivors like Micah Kalisch about how life-changing the experience of sexual violence or harassment can be. We know that it can cause serious mental, emotional and physical health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression and dissociation. It can create academic challenges and problems at work.

In response to the Statistics Canada Survey on Individual Safety in the Postsecondary Student Population, students said that experiencing sexual violence or harassment made them feel more fearful. It affected how they moved around campus, making them choose different routes or avoid certain buildings, or only travel at certain times of the day.

One of the most disturbing elements of that survey was the revelation that 71% of post-secondary students in

Canada have seen or experienced inappropriate sexual behaviours. That's almost three in four students. Just imagine all the lives affected by this, the mental and physical health effects of this, the academic challenges created by this.

It is urgent that we get this right. People's lives are depending on us. We have an obligation as legislators to try to get this right. I firmly believe that members opposite share that goal with us. I don't think anyone in this House wants to see people's lives derailed by sexual violence. I think we all want to see people protected against this kind of violence.

But that's why I am genuinely baffled by this government's refusal to work with students, to work with experts on sexual and gender-based violence, to work with faculty and staff unions, to work with administrations to get this right. When you want to get this right and yet you don't listen—I don't understand what motivates that. I don't understand what members think they have gained by voting against amendments at committee simply because they were moved by another party, when they were amendments that came from students who were begging you to improve this bill.

Even before the bill came to the Legislature, I don't understand why the government would have ignored all the good work that is being done in this sector and the recommendations that are being put forward, many of them consensus recommendations.

A coalition of 24 student organizations that included the Canadian Federation of Students, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the College Student Alliance, the University of Ottawa Students' Union, the University of Toronto Students' Union and the Wilfrid Laurier student union released a comprehensive report in August called *Our Campus, Our Safety* that had 10 calls to action, including four addressed to provincial and territorial governments.

They called for:

- provincial standards for data collection on campuses, in collaboration with key stakeholders;
- a strengthened legislative and regulatory framework to address and prevent sexual violence that would include prevention education, minimum standards for sexual violence policies, mandatory review processes, mandatory inclusion of students in the development and review of policies, processes and education;
- committees to oversee these policies at each institution, with student representation;
- a provincial advisory committee on campus sexual violence, with paid student representation; and
- sustainable funding for community sexual assault centres and post-secondary sexual assault services.

None of these recommendations are included in this legislation. I asked the minister if she had read the report and she assured me she had. But she had no reason to give me as to why none of the recommendations put forward by our student leaders across the province are included in the bill.

We also had *Courage to Act* testify before committee last week, Speaker. This is a national project, funded by

the federal government, which has brought together 3,500 stakeholders on this issue over the past three years and developed 82 different tools to support post-secondary institutions, students, investigators, unions and, really, all members of the campus community—all the groups that are responsible for dealing with and addressing the issue of sexual violence and harassment on campus to make sure that they are following the best practices based on evidence, experience and research. I've had the opportunity to be involved with *Courage to Act* as one of those 3,500 stakeholders, and so I can say without hesitation that they are doing really amazing work. Really, if you want to get the best understanding and the best advice about sexual violence and harassment in the post-secondary sector specifically, you want to start with *Courage to Act*. And yet I asked if they were consulted by the minister on the development of this bill and the answer was no. Why wouldn't you want to start with recommendations being put forward by the experts on this, Speaker?

Similarly, Dr. Julie Macfarlane is running a campaign called *Can't Buy My Silence* to eliminate the use of non-disclosure agreements in cases of sexual violence and harassment, based on her own experience at the University of Windsor. And yet, not only did the government not consult Ms. Macfarlane or other experts on the subject of NDAs, but we couldn't even get them into committee to testify on this bill because the government wouldn't allow for sufficient time for hearings for all the stakeholders who wanted to be heard.

I don't understand why, if you want to get this right, you wouldn't start by going to the experts in this field. I don't understand why, if you didn't go to the experts right at the start, you wouldn't at least want to bring them into committee and hear from them there to make sure that you have the best possible bill in the end.

What is clear when you look at the recommendations of students, of *Courage to Act*, of organizations like *Possibility Seeds* and the *YWCA*, of gender-based violence experts, of unions like *OCUFA* and *CUPE* and *OPSEU* and *OSSTF*, is that what we need is a comprehensive approach to sexual violence and harassment that is survivor-centric and trauma-informed. These are words that are used a lot in this sector and that came up a lot during the committee hearings, so I just want to pause here to talk about why they are so important.

A survivor-centric approach puts the survivor of sexual violence at the centre, prioritizing their rights, their dignity, their safety and their well-being. Experiencing sexual violence and harassment can be incredibly disempowering, and if we are not careful to centre the survivor, the response can cause further harm and trauma, making someone feel even more disempowered, disrespected and wounded. Because people respond differently to traumatic incidents, what survivors want and need can vary. Being survivor-centric means building processes that, as much as possible, give the survivor agency and control. Even where they don't hold decision-making power, it means checking in constantly with a survivor, making sure they are informed about the process, about timelines, about

possible outcomes and impacts. It means making sure that supports and services are available for the survivor, regardless of what process they choose and what outcomes they want to see. This is really about ensuring that, first and foremost, we do not cause harm.

1330

A trauma-informed approach recognizes that we have all experienced many things in our lives and some of those things may have caused trauma. Trauma affects how we engage and are able to process things. People respond differently to trauma. Some people freeze or become dissociative; others can be in a state of hypervigilance. Some people have memory problems and can't remember the traumatic events clearly while others relive the trauma over and over and over again.

To have a trauma-informed approach to sexual violence and harassment is to recognize that people may come to an experience with pre-existing traumas, but because we all experience events differently and have different resources available to us to respond, one person may have a trauma response to an event and another may not.

To be trauma-informed begins with recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma and requires a response that is informed by knowledge about trauma and its impact. As Klinik Community Health centre's tool kit on trauma-informed care frames it, "The trauma-informed model replaces the labelling of clients and patients as being 'sick,' resistant or uncooperative with that of being affected by an 'injury.' Viewing trauma as an injury shifts the conversation from asking 'What is wrong with you' to 'What has happened to you?'"

I think you can see why it's so important to stakeholders in this sector that our approach be survivor-centric and trauma-informed. It is all about "First, do no harm."

The third element that students, gender-based violence experts and unions have called for is that our response be comprehensive. As the Our Campus, Our Safety report, pulled together by the 24 student groups, says, we have to go beyond stand-alone, individualistic measures. We need an approach that addresses policy, procedures, prevention and data collection. We need meaningful collaboration between government, post-secondary institutions, survivors, students, administrations, faculty, staff and grassroots movements.

Instead of a comprehensive approach, what we got from this government is a bill that focuses on one tool and one tool only: punishment. But why on earth, when we know what the outcomes are, when we know how high levels of sexual violence and harassment are on post-secondary campuses, would we not want to start with prevention, Speaker? When we know how damaging and how life-altering it can be, why wouldn't we want to stop it from taking place in the first place rather than simply punishing perpetrators after the fact? Yet this is a bill that contains not one single preventative measure—not one.

All of the witnesses were unanimous last week: They wanted to see prevention measures included in this bill. They wanted to see, at the very least, the bare minimum, mandatory education for everyone on campus: education

on consent, education on prevention, education on safety measures, education on what your rights are, education on what to do if something happens to you, how to intervene safely if you see something happening to someone else, what to do if someone discloses an incident of sexual violence or harassment to you.

We tried to add that to the bill, Speaker. My colleague the member for Nickel Belt and I moved amendments at committee that would have added a requirement for mandatory prevention education for all students, faculty and staff at publicly funded universities and colleges and private career colleges, but the government voted against it. Their rationale was that they couldn't add this to the bill without doing consultation on it—this despite the fact that students and others have been calling for this for years now. They all called for it during the committee hearings and in their written submissions: the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the Canadian Federation of Students, Courage to Act, Possibility Seeds, the University of Toronto Students' Union, the PEARS Project, OCUFA, Western University.

If the hearings on the bill didn't convince the government that prevention education is necessary, then I'm not sure what would. It would be hard to imagine an issue on which there is more consensus. I worked in this sector for six years and I can tell you that there are not a ton of issues that administrators, students, staff and faculty unions all agree on. So I don't understand the impediment to action here, Speaker, just like I don't understand why the government won't be supporting my colleague from Toronto Centre's bill on Consent Awareness Week. When only 28% of Canadians understand what consent means, surely we want to be doing our best to educate everyone on consent and have conversations across the province. Here is something concrete and tangible that the government can do, supported by stakeholders from all sides, and the government is saying no. It's truly baffling.

A comprehensive approach also means taking into account that post-secondary communities have many different participants, not just students, and that there are shifting roles and responsibilities and many different possible interactions. There are students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, third-party contractors and visitors. We know that all these members of the campus community are affected by and can be victims of sexual violence and harassment, and they are all worthy of our protection—not just one group.

There's also not a firm division between students and workers. Many students are workers filling instructional roles as well as staff roles. There are shifting identities and balances of power in which someone might be a classmate in one setting, a supervisor in another and a supervisee in yet another.

Finally, we know that most incidents of sexual violence and harassment on campus or in off-campus spaces related to the post-secondary institution are student-on-student incidents. Yet in this bill, rather than take a comprehensive approach that takes account of these many identities and the relationships between them, the government has

chosen to focus on only one single relationship and treat it as if it is unidirectional and unchanging. We heard concerns from student groups about the fact that the bill focuses only on faculty and staff and doesn't take into account that students themselves can be faculty and staff.

When asked about it, the minister said there are other tools to address sexual violence between students. But there are also already other tools to address sexual violence between employees and students. The point isn't whether or not there are existing tools, the point is whether the existing tools are good enough, and what we heard from the students was a very firm no.

Finally, "comprehensive" means taking into account that post-secondary education is not what just takes place in the classroom. Post-secondary institutions are places of employment and residences and the location of many social events. There are also interactions between members of the community off-campus and online that are no less connected to the institution just because they're not on campus.

And increasingly, there is experiential learning. In fact, this was an area flagged by multiple witnesses at committee as an area that the government should be paying attention to. The government is pushing for more and more students to do experiential learning or work-integrated learning placements. These placements put students into situations where there is a huge power imbalance, since students depend on these placements to complete their program and get their diploma or degree, to break into the field after graduation, but they don't have the rights and protections of employees. This puts them in a position where it is incredibly hard to stand up or say no to problematic behaviours, where it is hard to report problematic behaviours and where students fear the consequences or repercussions of coming forward.

It's so important that students and the workplaces providing these opportunities know that students are protected by post-secondary sexual violence policies while they are doing these placements. And yet, the government defeated our amendment that clearly spelled out that policies would apply on-campus, off-campus, online and in experiential learning settings. The government members said that the clarification wasn't necessary because the minister had said at committee that the bill will apply in all of these settings. Apparently, the members are very confident, or very hopeful, that there are a lot of people reading committee transcripts from the Ontario Legislative Assembly, because I'm not sure how else students, administrators and employers are supposed to know about the minister's assurances. The way to genuinely provide clarity and assurance to everyone that the policy applies comprehensively across the board in all places and all situations where post-secondary activities take place would be to include it in the bill.

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Student leaders who appeared at the committee last week, like Jessica Look and Octavia Andrade-Dixon of OUSA, and Micah Kalisch of the PEARS Project, made it clear that students can only claim their rights if they know

what their rights are, and knowing what their rights are means clearly spelling out what their rights are. I don't think the minister saying something once in committee clearly spells out to students what their rights are. This is another missed opportunity because the government did not want to listen to students and other stakeholders.

Another element that is missing from this bill that we clearly heard from stakeholders they wanted to see is minimum standards. We already have a requirement for stand-alone sexual violence policies, and now this bill adds the requirement for post-secondary institutions to create an employee sexual misconduct policy, but there is a complete absence of guidance for post-secondary institutions on what these policies should look like and what standards they should have to meet to be acceptable. This means that we will have 48 different policies with 48 different definitions and 48 different standards at the publicly funded universities and colleges alone, and hundreds of different policies if each private career college develops their own separate policy. It also means that what constitutes sexual misconduct at Algonquin College in my riding of Ottawa West-Nepean might not be considered sexual misconduct at the University of Ottawa or Carleton University or La Cité college. Students at these four institutions will have completely different expectations about processes, policies, procedures and supports.

Student leaders have asked for the government to set out minimum standards for these policies to be developed by an advisory committee consisting of the Council of Ontario Universities, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, and representatives from faculty and staff unions. These minimum standards should cover the definitions of "sexual violence" and "harassment," the scope of institutional policies, data collection, training, investigations, confidentiality, campus safety audits and consultations. This would ensure that every student on every campus could count on the same high degree of protection and support.

Unfortunately, when my colleague the MPP from Nickel Belt and I moved an amendment that would have added these kinds of minimum standards to the bill, the government voted against it. Their argument was that we couldn't waste time developing standards that students could expect—the issue was too urgent. Of course, this was shortly before they voted against mandatory education, because, on that one, we had to consult indefinitely on an issue on which there already was consensus and certainly could not hasten to act despite the urgency of the pleas, so no one can accuse the government of consistency on this issue.

We know that the resources of universities and colleges vary from institution to institution: The expertise and the personnel, even the interest that administrators take in this issue and their desire for change. We can see it already in the existing sexual violence policies. There are some very good ones and there are some very weak ones. Why should some students go without adequate protection because administrators couldn't be bothered to create a good policy, or because they don't have the resources and

support to do so? Why aren't we creating more forums for sharing of information and best practices—which, I should note, is something the administrators who appeared before committee told us they would very interested in—and support that work by having a provincial-level committee creating minimum standards based on best practices? When you are trying to protect students, I don't understand why you wouldn't start by listening to students.

Students, unions and experts on gender-based and sexual violence have also been calling for better data collection. This is something we also heard at committee. We can't know how post-secondary institutions are doing in responding to and preventing sexual violence and harassment when we have no idea at all what is happening.

The Our Campus, Our Safety report recommends regular campus climate surveys that are publicly released, so that stakeholders can monitor progress and identify emerging challenges. We also heard from Farrah Khan of Possibility Seeds that these campus climate surveys need to cover everyone, not just students. We have massive gaps in our knowledge about the experience of other members of the post-secondary community. Addressing the problem starts with knowing the problem, Speaker.

We also know that post-secondary institutions could be collecting and sharing aggregate data about disclosures and reports, including what form the response took, whether the complaints were deemed to be founded and what disciplinary measures were implemented. Without any kind of data, there is no way to hold institutions accountable and no way even to know whether the measures the government has put forward in this bill are even effective—although perhaps that is the point here, to the government.

Students have also asked to be treated like equal partners in the work of preventing and addressing sexual violence and harassment on campus. So many institutions pay lip service to student consultation, but don't meaningfully address the concerns and the issues that students are raising.

Faculty and staff also deserve to be consulted on the creation and implementation of these policies. Consulting with members of the campus community will ensure that policies are truly comprehensive, protect every member of the campus community and take into account differing identities and power differentials, different roles and responsibilities. For instance, one of the concerns that has been raised repeatedly about this bill is the fact that it is completely silent on the fact that students are employees, too. Having students and workers involved in the creation and implementation of policies ensures that roles such as student workers are understood and addressed by the policy. These committees can also play a role in assessing the data or reviewing the campus climate surveys to ensure that gaps are being addressed, progress is being measured and no one is falling through the cracks.

Students are also calling for the government to create a provincial-level advisory committee with representation from administration, student groups like the Canadian Federation of Students and Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, faculty and staff unions. This will provide a

constant source of information for the government on the challenges and successes, best practices and shortcomings in this area, allowing for future tweaks through legislation or regulation. It would also allow for the creation of minimum standards. Unfortunately, the government voted against our amendment to set up a permanent advisory committee—no advice needed, I guess.

Finally, students, faculty, staff and administrators were very clear in their call for funding to support the work that is being done and needs to be done. Particularly in the area of sexual violence response, there is a significant funding shortfall. Ontario's sexual assault centres are seeing huge demand and long waiting lists, and the funding from this government is just not keeping up. One sexual assault centre told the CBC in May that their wait-list is at a 33-year high. The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre said that its funding hasn't changed in 15 years, while demand has increased 20% in the last two years alone. This government cancelled an increase in funding to sexual assault centres that was promised by the previous Liberal government, and their funding envelope has not even kept up with inflation, let alone demand.

We heard at committee last week from Farrah Khan of Possibility Seeds that there has been a huge increase in demand for this sector over the past two years, as the pandemic has contributed to an epidemic of gender-based violence. This in turn is resulting in burnout among staff and many staff leaving the sector.

We know that when people are asked to provide care in impossible conditions, that can become a form of trauma or harm in and of itself. People can experience secondary trauma, depression, anxiety or suffer from compassion fatigue. We need to support the people who are doing this important and valuable work. There needs to be both permanent funding to post-secondary institutions to run sexual violence response offices and funding to sexual assault centres and services in our communities. Many students and workers who experience sexual violence or harassment end up seeking support from community organizations. We need to make sure that those organizations have the funding they need to provide that support, to keep staff in place and to provide culturally competent, trauma-informed, survivor-centric care. We need to increase funding to Ontario's sexual assault and rape crisis centres by 30% and make that funding stable.

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We also need to make sure that institutions have the funding they need for prevention programming, like mandatory education and campus safety audits.

The government is happy to talk about punishing perpetrators, Speaker, but is not putting a penny towards preventing sexual violence and harassment from taking place in the first place. It's an odd thing coming from a government that is sitting on billions of dollars in unallocated funding. You would think that the goal of protecting students would actually merit some spending when the government is so flush with cash.

One final element that I will note is missing from this bill. As weak as it is, it excludes one group of students

entirely from the protections that it does offer: students at private universities. When I asked the minister about this at committee, she had no answer as to why they would be excluded. She simply said it was something that the committee could consider changing at the amendment stage.

So I moved an amendment to include students at private universities. If we are trying to protect students, why wouldn't we want to protect all of them? Well, the government voted that one down, too, and I am still scratching my head over their rationale. Their rationale was that the funding model for publicly assisted universities and colleges is different than the funding model for private universities. Well, that's true, but this bill does cover students at private career colleges—and newsflash to the government: The funding model for private career colleges is also different than the funding model for publicly funded universities and colleges.

At the end of the day, what does the funding model even have to do with the rights of students to be protected against sexual violence and harassment? Students at universities that are funded exclusively through private means are not any less traumatized or affected when they experience sexual violence or harassment. They are not less likely to experience mental and physical health effects. They are not less likely to experience academic or employment challenges. They are not any less deserving of counselling or supportive services, and they are not any less deserving of seeing justice served and consequences for the perpetrator. I simply cannot understand why the government does not think that they are worthy of any support or protection just because they go to a privately funded university.

So that's everything that's not in the bill that should have been there. Let's look now at what is in the bill. The bill has three schedules. The first two are nearly identical, with one addressing publicly funded universities and colleges—or as the government likes to call them since their funding commitment is so incredibly low, “publicly assisted”—and the other addressing private career colleges. Both these sections set out the same definitions and requirements for publicly funded institutions and private career colleges, which is why, again, it is so weird that the government couldn't bring itself to do the same for privately funded universities.

The first thing that the bill does is define sexual misconduct. Now, this is a marginal improvement from the terminology in the previous version of the bill at second reading, which was “sexual abuse.” What we heard loud and clear from stakeholders, including Possibility Seeds, Courage to Act, the PEARS Project, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance and others, is that “sexual abuse” was the wrong language. But you will notice, Speaker, that throughout my remarks, I have been using the terminology “sexual violence and harassment,” not the term “sexual misconduct,” which the bill now uses. That is because the witnesses were very clear that sexual violence and harassment were the preferred terms because those are the terms that students and experts in the sector

are using. “Sexual abuse” was not an appropriate term for this situation and this sector—that was very clear. But the government just made up this term of “sexual misconduct.” No one was asking for it.

When my colleague the member for Nickel Belt asked the government members of the committee to name just one stakeholder or expert who used the term “sexual misconduct” or requested that the government use it, the silence from the other side of the table was deafening. No one is asking for this term to be used. Everyone is asking for the term “sexual violence and harassment” to be used. These are the terms that are already being used by students. As the students reminded us several times during our deliberations, students can only claim their rights if they can understand their rights, and understanding their rights means using familiar and recognizable language. We need to listen to what students and experts have told us and use the words that they want. This is not partisan language—it is a definition put forth by the people that we have a duty to protect. If we use language in a bill that they're not using on campus, it is going to be less effective.

My colleague from Nickel Belt and I tried to amend the bill to make the language consistent with what students and experts are calling for. The government voted against that amendment and put forward this terminology with no explanation offered whatsoever as to the reason why it was so important to use a made-up term that no one is calling for. It feels like the government is so dead set on seeing everything as a partisan battle to be won or lost that they can't even make a single change on terminology that is being unanimously demanded by stakeholders because that would somehow be a loss, instead of a victory that we could all celebrate because we are now making students safer.

The witnesses were also unanimous that the definition in the bill is not good enough. The definition of the government's new term of “sexual misconduct” is now up to every single individual institutional policy to determine. At the end of the day, we could have hundreds of different definitions of sexual misconduct across the province. What might be punishable behaviour at one institution might be perfectly okay at the one next door. There's not even a requirement for consultation with anyone—students, gender-based violence experts or legal experts—let alone a minimum standard for what the definition must contain or what it should look like. Institutions are being given this power to determine the definitions without any consultation, with no regard to the fact that they're not disinterested participants in this process. They have a vested interest here in protecting institutional reputations, in downplaying sexual violence and harassment to appeal to donors and prospective students.

This is even more so for private career colleges, who have shareholders that they have to be accountable to. You know what's not good for enrolment and profits? Sexual violence. One way to make sure you don't have a problem with sexual violence and harassment is to make your definition as weak and as exclusive as possible.

On the flip side, the government is giving employers the power here to override the Labour Relations Act and

collective agreements based on the definitions that employers themselves will be able to set forward. Define a behaviour as problematic and suddenly you can fire someone with no recourse to due process, employment rights or rights under the collective agreement. No employer should have that kind of power without some kind of accountability.

Witnesses told us that there were existing definitions out there that could be seen as the gold standard, and that one of those gold standard definitions should be made universal in all of these policies. But when my colleague from Nickel Belt and I tried to move an amendment to put that gold standard definition into the act, the government voted against it because they said that universities and colleges were autonomous institutions that should have the right to make up their own definitions.

It's a funny thing how universities and colleges being autonomous institutions doesn't matter when the government wants to legislate that they all have to create sexual violence—sorry, “sexual misconduct” policies, but suddenly it matters when it comes to legislating what has to go into that policy. And so here we are with a bill that uses a made-up term and an incredibly weak, shifting definition of that term that will vary from institution to institution to institution across the province. And that's just the first part.

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The next part of the bill allows post-secondary institutions to discharge or discipline an employee for committing acts of sexual misconduct. Now, if, like me, you've worked in the area of labour relations for the past few years, you might be wondering, “Well, wait a minute. I thought employers could already discharge or discipline an employee.” And indeed they can.

What this section actually allows them to do is disregard any standard of due process; any rights to appeal; the Labour Relations Act, which is the result of decades of worker activism to ensure that all employees have basic rights and protections; and collective agreements, which in the post-secondary sector are often the result of decades of collective bargaining between workers and employers.

When I asked the minister about this, she insisted that we had to override collective agreements and labour law in order to give universities and colleges one more tool to be able to respond to sexual violence and harassment.

But the reality is that labour law and collective agreements already allow employers to discipline and terminate workers. In fact, they set out the processes and steps that must be followed for discipline and termination. This is to ensure that discipline and termination are not arbitrary, that they follow standards of due process and progressive discipline, and that there are accountability mechanisms such as arbitration or right of appeal. These are safeguards for the person who is accused, but they are also safeguards for the employer.

Now the government is saying none of that matters. As the Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa said, what the government is doing here is setting out a harsher punishment than even the Criminal Code imposes,

because there is no right of appeal. There is no standard that the investigation has to meet, no qualifications that the investigator or decision-maker has to have, no requirements that the respondent has to have the opportunity to offer a defence, no appeal rights if the respondent or the survivor believes there has been a miscarriage of justice.

I know this government doesn't like collective agreements or collective bargaining. I know they like to legislate away workers' rights. I know they're incredibly disdainful of the work that unions do to negotiate protections and rights for workers. We've just seen that with Bill 28, and we saw it again last week at committee when the government attacked OCUFA, as if OCUFA wasn't there like every other stakeholder asking the government to take action to protect students and add prevention measures to this bill.

But this government just can't seem to learn lessons when it comes to using legislation to override workers' rights and trample on collective agreements. These efforts inevitably end up in court, just like Bill 124, and the courts do not look favourably on the government ignoring charter-protected rights, just like Bill 124.

And in this case, what will happen when this ends up in court? A survivor will experience months, potentially years, of additional harm and re-traumatization as the case goes through the court process. And what's so frustrating about all of this is that it's so unnecessary. You don't need to be able to override collective agreements and labour law in order to discipline or fire perpetrators. Employers already have those rights.

The next section concerns non-disclosure agreements. This is another area where the government failed to listen to the experts completely the first time. The previous draft of this bill failed to get this right completely. It banned non-disclosure agreements, but only after a court or adjudicator or arbitrator ruled that sexual abuse had taken place. This ignored the fact that the majority of non-disclosure or confidentiality agreements are used before a decision is ever made and, in fact, were being used in some cases to avoid a decision ever being made.

A respondent could agree to leave voluntarily, no need to finish the process or fire anyone, on the grounds that a non-disclosure agreement be put in place. This could then result in a situation where the wrongdoer could get away scot-free and the survivor or anyone else who shared legitimate information about what happened is the one who faced consequences.

In fact, we know that this already happened with the case of Julie Macfarlane, a professor at the University of Windsor. The alleged perpetrator was able to negotiate a deal with the university that he could leave with an NDA and a letter of reference from the university that made no mention of the allegations or the investigation. But when a perspective employer reached out to Dr. Macfarlane to ask about him and she told them the real circumstances of the alleged perpetrator's departure, it was Dr. Macfarlane, not the perpetrator, who was punished by the University of Windsor.

And that's just one situation. We have no idea how many survivors have been harmed by the use of non-

disclosure agreements. We have no idea how many perpetrators have been able to find other employment in the sector and to continue to harm students because of non-disclosure agreements. And we have no idea how many times non-disclosure agreements have been used to avoid responsibility and consequences.

The stakeholders were all clear: The language in the first version of this bill was not nearly good enough and did not go far enough to ban the most problematic uses of non-disclosure agreements.

But we also want to have a survivor-centric response, and that means recognizing that sometimes survivors want non-disclosure agreements. We need to respect survivors' wishes and allow them to control and direct the process. Sometimes, what the survivor wants to restore a sense of control and dignity is to keep things quiet, so an absolute ban is not survivor-centric. It does not allow survivors to express their needs and wishes.

So many stakeholders called for changes to this section of the legislation: Possibility Seeds, Courage to Act, the PEARS project, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, OCUFA, OPSEU, the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Canadian Centre for Legal Innovation in Sexual Assault Response and Dr. Julie Macfarlane.

Stakeholders also raised concerns about how the government went about making the changes proposed here. I want to read this piece by Dr. Macfarlane which highlights the government's whole approach to consultation and what the effects are for people who are directly affected by this issue and this legislation. It's entitled, "A Tale of Two Committee Hearings on NDAs"

"As the public becomes increasingly aware of the misuse of non-disclosure agreements or NDAs in covering up misconduct of many kinds—sexual harassment, assault, discrimination, abuse and bullying, as well as defective goods, construction and negligence causing harm—governments are starting to legislate to restrict their use. But the approaches being taken are a study in contrasts.

"In Manitoba three weeks ago, the committee hearing on the non-disclosure agreements bill heard from more than 15 individuals who had signed an NDA and could only now, for the very first time, speak about what had happened to them with the protection of parliamentary privilege (otherwise they could have been sued for breaking their NDA by speaking up).

"The testimony ... was incredibly moving, as individual after individual—former nurses, teachers, police officers, IT workers, women, Indigenous people and others—stood up and described how their efforts to complain about ill treatment resulted in a permanent gag on them. 'Former' because for most, standing up for themselves ended their career.

"The committee permitted all those who asked to testify, sitting until after midnight. It was a remarkable exercise in democracy. As Julie Roginsky, co-founder with Gretchen Carlson of US organization Lift Our Voices, who also testified before the committee about the harmful impact of NDAs puts it, 'It's very nice, from this

side of the border, to see comity (civil and inclusive dialogue) in a legislature. We don't get to see much of that.' Numerous others have since pointed to Manitoba's committee hearing as an example of best practice in responsibly presenting critical and otherwise hidden information and experience to lawmakers.

"The bill now proceeding in Manitoba addresses the use of NDAs broadly in complaints about harassment and discrimination. In Ontario, the ... government has introduced Bill 26 that focuses on the use of NDAs by universities and colleges to secretly move faculty and staff who have behaved abusively to other schools (a topic with which I am familiar). Bill 26 held its committee hearing on Tuesday November 22, having asked organizations and individuals to register to testify in a 48-hour window the week before. I registered on behalf of our campaign Can't Buy My Silence, which has been working with lawmakers in PEI (where legislation is already passed), Manitoba and Nova Scotia, as well as with 78 universities in the UK who have signed a pledge not to use NDAs.

"However, neither I nor any other experts on the use of NDAs seem to have been called to testify. Unlike Manitoba, there appears to be no online record of the proceedings. I am also not aware of any who have signed NDAs being called to testify about the impact on them. In short, this seems to have been perfunctory hearing to 'tick the box.'

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"This is especially concerning given the grave inadequacy of the Ontario provision in the proposed legislation. It would only apply to NDAs made after an adjudication. By this point, an NDA is pointless because everything has already been argued in the public domain. In order to actually stop the use of NDAs in universities to cover up wrongdoing and protect students—which is what the Ontario government claims it wants to do—the clause needs to be amended to include NDAs that are forced on complainants in the settlement process. In its present form it will not change the current practice at all. I proposed such an amendment, to be met only by silence from the committee." In fact, Speaker, my colleague from Nickel Belt and I moved Dr. Macfarlane's proposed amendment. Guess who voted against?

But I'm glad the government did listen at least a bit in this area of the bill and did make some of the amendments that were needed here, but there is still more to do. This legislation will only protect students from NDAs, leaving survivors in other sectors still subject to non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements. We need stand-alone, survivor-centric, trauma-informed legislation like Prince Edward Island's to ban non-disclosure agreements in all sectors for all survivors.

Finally, these first two schedules of the bill require institutions to develop sexual misconduct policies that govern the rules with respect to sexual behaviour between employees and students of the institution, examples of acts that contravene the policy and examples of disciplinary measures that may be imposed on the employees who contravene the policy, but once again the government has

chosen to give institutions wide latitude and no guidelines whatsoever on a sexual misconduct policy.

There is no requirement to consult with anyone or to follow any best practices or to meet any minimum standards. Acts that constitute sexual misconduct at Toronto Metropolitan University may not be sexual misconduct at the University of Toronto or York University or Sheridan College or George Brown College. There will be potentially hundreds of variations of what constitutes sexual misconduct across the province.

Student leaders, like the Ontario Undergraduate Students Alliance and the PEARS Project, Courage to Act's Britney De Costa called for institutions to be required to consult with students, faculty, staff and gender-based violence experts on the development of these policies. Faculty and staff unions echoed this concern. Yet, once again, when my colleague from Nickel Belt and I moved an amendment that required institutions to consult with faculty, staff and employees on these policies, the government voted against the amendment. Because post-secondary institutions are autonomous institutions, we apparently can tell them that they have to have a policy, but we can't tell them that they have to talk to anyone in the development of the policy. It's absolutely bizarre, Speaker, that just like with the funding, sometimes it matters and sometimes it doesn't. There is no consistency.

And so, what we are left with is a bill that is much less than it should be. Students, faculty, staff, administrators and gender-based violence experts were all very clear last week that they wanted the bill to do more and to do it better. The government has not listened to those pleas and so we will have to wait now and continue to engage in advocacy in hopes that the government will listen in the coming months and address all of the outstanding work that needs to be done rather than waiting until they are defeated in 2026 for a new government to finally listen to students and other stakeholders and take a comprehensive, trauma-informed, survivor-centric approach to sexual violence and harassment.

Finally, Speaker, I want to conclude by acknowledging that the third schedule of the bill makes the name change of Toronto Metropolitan University official. This is an important step towards reconciliation. Residential schools are a dark stain on our history—a stain whose legacy continues into the present in ways large and small. We should not honour the men and women who devised and implemented this system, who condoned and carried out atrocities against children. We should not celebrate the architects of genocide. Name changes may be a small step toward reconciliation and atoning for our past, but they are a vital step. We cannot achieve reconciliation if we are still celebrating the perpetrators.

One of the things I appreciated at committee last week was the opportunity to hear from Toronto Metropolitan University and the Standing Strong Task Force on the process that was followed in looking carefully at the legacy of Egerton Ryerson and the harm that was caused by honouring his legacy. There are lessons that we can learn here for other post-secondary institutions as they

grapple with colonial legacies and with the work of reconciliation and decolonization.

They heard from thousands of community members, making the time and space for people's experiences to be heard fully. They did not try to set opposing viewpoints off against each other. They engaged in careful research and learning, and they made thoughtful recommendations to genuinely make progress on reconciliation at the end of that process. The name change was only one of more than 20 recommendations that came out of that process. Post-secondary institutions should not be afraid to create space for different voices, to listen, to put aside critical impulses and to take action when harm is identified.

To wrap up, although I think this is a lost opportunity on sexual violence and harassment, I think this bill is a positive step forward on reconciliation and decolonization, and I hope that everyone will learn lessons from that experience. It is never too late to start listening, to start learning, to value the contributions and perspectives and wisdom and experience of others. It is never too late to take actions when harms are identified, when gaps or problems we weren't even aware of are identified. It only makes us stronger—as communities, as institutions and as a province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: The minister and her team consulted over 100 stakeholders when drafting Bill 26, including student unions, faculty unions, faculty associations and presidents from colleges, universities and the private career college sector. Members of the opposition, however, claim that more and better consultation was needed. This is coming from a group that did one day of committee hearings and then wanted to exclude the college sector from being part of a ministerial committee. My question to the member opposite is, how many people did the member's party consult with on Bill 26?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: The work speaks for itself, honestly. The government may have consulted people before the bill was tabled, but stakeholders were unanimous in coming to committee and saying that the bill needed amendments in order to actually address the situation, that what was there needed to be done better and that there was much that was missing from the bill.

As to the length of the committee hearings, that's not on the opposition; that's on the government side. We asked for more time and we were denied.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I want to congratulate my colleague the member for Ottawa West–Nepean for her very thorough explanation of what happened at committee, and the limitations of this bill to effectively address sexual violence and harassment.

I know the member will be aware of the events that happened at Western University in September 2021. We had 30 female students alleging being drugged and sexually assaulted on campus. In the wake of those allegations the university conducted an extensive internal

review and an extensive external review. The first recommendation of both those reviews was to invest in mandatory training and education for all students, all staff, the entire university community.

What does the member think about legislation that is not accompanied by that kind of investment in training and education that would help really move the issue forward?

1420

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thanks to the member for London West for that excellent question. Western University was one of the deputations that appeared before committee last week, and they shared that work that has been done and the training that they've undertaken, which I have to say I find incredibly important and impressive.

But Western University also called on the government to make amendments to this legislation, to include mandatory prevention education. We heard it from all stakeholders, from students, administrators, faculty, staff, gender-based violence experts: The number one thing we need to actually prevent and not just respond to incidents of sexual violence is education, training on consent, making sure that everybody knows what their rights are, how to intervene safely when they see an incident. This was absolutely a lost opportunity to listen to stakeholders like Western University and mandate that kind of education on campuses across Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Jess Dixon: I listened to the member's comments about the term "sexual misconduct," and I'm sorry; I have to ask this question very legitimately: if the member actually Googled that term, it is not made up. It happens to appear in the Canadian Armed Forces lexicon. The reason that it would be used is because "sexual misconduct" refers to all nature of behaviour, not just what would be termed criminal, such as violence or harassment.

So my question would be, why is the member advocating that we would use a term or terminology that would significantly, by definition, limit the conduct that this would apply to, when "sexual misconduct" is a term used frequently to include not just criminal acts, but also everything down to sexist jokes, sexist comments and that type of thing? I'm legitimately baffled, and I would love to hear an explanation from the member.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thanks to the member for the question. Student leaders were incredibly clear at committee that students can only claim their rights if they know their rights, which means putting their rights in language that students use. The member can shake her head all she wants, but it is students who came to committee and told us that on college and university campuses, the language being used is "sexual violence and harassment"; that nobody uses the terms "sexual abuse" or "sexual misconduct."

When the member for Nickel Belt asked the government to say who is asking for the term "sexual misconduct" to be used, the government could not answer. Making up a stakeholder after the fact who might have preferred the term "sexual misconduct" doesn't actually

help with the situation of making sure that students who are at universities and colleges now actually know what their rights are and can claim their rights.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Thank you to the member from Ottawa West–Nepean for the presentation. I know you spent some time on schedule 3, where the name of the university is changed to Toronto Metropolitan University. When we talk about Indian residential schools across the country, where it instituted systemic racism—how it impacted First Nations across Canada—I know we talk about the decades of systemic racism, the decades of systemic oppression.

I know that a name change is a very, very small step. When we talk about the 94 calls to action, do you think this government has gone far enough to be able to implement those 94 calls to action?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I thank my colleague from Kiiwetinoong for the question. I find it incredibly unfortunate that I never learned about residential schools when I was growing up, even though at the time that I was in high school, there were still residential schools open in Canada. We have a lot of work left to do to address that incredibly harmful and devastating legacy, and I think it's really clear that not honouring the architects of that genocide is an important step forward. We should never celebrate people who caused that kind of harm.

But I do also recognize that it is only one small step, and there is a lot of work still to be done on reconciliation. We have a situation in Ontario today where there are people who don't have access to clean drinking water or safe housing or safe roads or fire protection services, for no other reason than because they are Indigenous. I think that's absolutely unacceptable, and a government that was truly committed to reconciliation would be taking urgent action on all of those issues.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Bill 26 is great piece of legislation, but it is unfortunate it is necessary that these kinds of protections have to be put in place. If passed, this bill will set minimum standards to protect our students. This bill will ensure that employees who commit an act of sexual misconduct of a student will be discharged by the institution.

We have heard from many, many stakeholders wonderful things about this bill, and that the government is taking a step in a positive direction. Congratulations to the member from Ottawa West–Nepean for your marathon remarks.

To the member, my question is simple: What are the good things you see in this bill?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thanks to the member for the question. What I see in this bill that's really good is the name change for Toronto Metropolitan University. As I've said, I don't think that we should be honouring and celebrating the legacy of people who committed atrocious acts against children simply because they happened to be Indigenous. We have not done enough as a province and

as a country to reconcile with that legacy and the harm that was caused.

I think Toronto Metropolitan University had a really great process to actually listen to community members, to identify that harm and to recommend multiple steps that could be taken. I'm glad that this bill formalizes that name change so that we no longer honour the legacy of somebody who caused that kind of harm in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Final question?

Mr. Michael Mantha: Just real quickly to the member: We see that there would be benefit not only for those on campus but here in the House to having a discussion about terms of incidents and how they are applied, how they are understood through students as well. With the immediate passing of the private member's bill for Consent Awareness Week from the Toronto Centre member—would there be any benefit to all of us if it was passed immediately?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thanks to the member for such a great question. When I read the description of Consent Awareness Week in the member's bill, my first thought was that that was a conversation that would benefit all of us, even legislators. I think we've all grown up in a situation where there hasn't been enough talk about consent and we would all benefit from a scenario where we did that deliberately.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further debate?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: My thanks to the member opposite for her participation in debate, and my thanks to all members today for speaking to this legislation and for the Legislature considering what I believe is a very important change to the structure that we have in place protecting students in post-secondary educational settings.

I have the great privilege of currently still attending a post-secondary institution. I'm not sure if I'm perhaps one of the only members in the House to do so. I'm currently a McMaster student. Since January 2017, shortly after I was elected, I have been plugging away at my undergrad studies part-time. I'm thankful for that opportunity to be able to go to a world-class university here in Ontario.

Perhaps not a lot of people know this, and I'll share it with the Legislature—it isn't something, I don't think, that I have on the record, but prior to getting elected, I actually was accepted to university for music performance. Music performance is sort of my passion, it's my background, and before getting involved and working in politics, that was my life, really. I spent many hours every day practising: singing in choirs, playing the piano and studying for Royal Conservatory exams.

When I thought about what I wanted to do after high school, I saw the opportunities that an undergraduate degree of, frankly, almost any stripe here in the province of Ontario will provide. I understand and respect those who are getting into the skilled trades. As a government, we've done a lot to promote that. I have many family members who are working in the skilled trades, who are in agriculture, who are in business, and many family

members who went to college as well. I have a very large family, so it's easy for me to say there are many family members in a lot of different areas.

But music was my passion, and I applied to a number of different universities for a degree in music performance. I was accepted; I ended up actually going off to Ottawa, working on Parliament Hill for a year instead, because of some opportunities that arose at that time, and I wasn't able to practise to the extent that, of course, is needed in order to take that level of education in music. But it's still something I try to pursue in my spare time and it's something I believe in.

1430

When I was elected in the fall of 2016—actually, I believe yesterday was the sixth anniversary of my swearing in here in this chamber.

Interjections.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thank you, thank you.

So I'm officially today in my seventh year of service here in the Legislature, and I'm very thankful to the good people of Niagara West for sending me here and for the issues that we are able to debate. But at that time, one of the questions I got a lot in the fall of 2016 was if I was going to pursue post-secondary education. It's no secret that I was quite young when I first entered this House. I was just 19 years old and people were a little bit concerned that I wasn't going to be able to pursue some of the opportunities that I had been planning for. Of course, that would limit my future opportunities as well, in being able to pursue some of the areas that I'm passionate about. I had a lot of people when I was first elected, even during the campaign, come to me and say, "I hope you're going to still go to school, Sam. I hope you're not going to give up on getting a degree or wherever you're going to end up going," and I said, "No, I'm going to make sure I do."

So starting in January 2017, a couple months after I was elected, I went to Brock, which I lived far closer to at the time, and I entered there in a degree for political science and economics. Over time, my wife and I met and married; we have a son, Sullivan, and I moved closer towards the Hamilton side of the riding. It just made more sense, given the proximity, to transfer to McMaster. And so since that time, I've been taking a course a semester almost every semester. Right now, I'm taking a philosophy course.

Over the past six years, I've had the opportunity to interact with so many amazing people in this building and amazing people in my community in my role as MPP. But one of the things I don't really talk about too much because it's something, I guess—people always get so curious about what it's like and then I have to go into a whole conversation about what it's like to be an MPP while being in university for political science and what that means. I could tell you a few different stories. But I've had also the amazing opportunity to be able to be in a classroom in a very practical sense and to speak with students—students who, bluntly, don't know that I'm involved in politics. For all they know, I'm just another undergraduate student like they are. Of course I am, but I'm part-time; I'm one course a semester. I don't go in a suit and tie. I usually am wearing

a sweater, I'll wear some jeans, and I have my notebook out. I'm wearing contacts, actually, this afternoon. I usually wear contacts, not glasses. People recognize me a lot more with glasses, and then things can get a little spicy in a first-year political science course.

But the reason I talk about this, Speaker, is because over those conversations with those post-secondary students, even as recently as last week—to hear their joy and optimism about where they are here in Ontario, in our post-secondary institutions, at McMaster University, a world-class university—with no disrespect to anyone who has gone to any other institution—there's a belief in what they're participating in on that educational journey, and an optimism—dare I call it a “youthful exuberance,” and it feels a little strange saying that—a youthful exuberance about the potential that they're being able to provide to their community, to the world, to our province. They participate in those studies with such enthusiasm, they talk about the issues, and one of the issues that has come up multiple times over the course of my studies is this very conversation that we're having about sexual violence and sexual harassment on campus. I've heard stories from my colleagues, not just here but fellow students in class, about either situations that, perhaps, were just made to feel uncomfortable, or actual stories of tragic sexual harassment and assault on campus—something that is completely unacceptable and that I know each and every single one of us in this chamber condemns, and rightfully so.

Now, in those conversations, unfortunately what I heard was that those were terrible interactions and terrible tragedies that occurred, often between students. But one of the things I've noticed in participating in the classroom discussions—and I'm now a little bit older; I'm 25. I'm almost finished my studies. I'll almost have a degree in about a year, hopefully, if, Lord willing, things continue the way they are. But so many of these are young students, they're 17, maybe 18, maybe 19 or 20 in some of the first-year courses, and the respect that they have for the faculty that they're interacting with, you can see the awe in their eyes and this view of, whether it's the TA or the professor—not that they're unquestioning; of course they're questioning and they have those discussions in a healthy and vigorous way, but you can see they very much trust the people who are teaching them and are there to teach them.

I know that for the vast majority of those staff members, who I have so much respect for, the work and the reason they're there is to be able to help craft and provide insight and knowledge and learning to students who are excited to learn more about the world and their contributions to the world. That is, I believe, a position of sacred trust. It's one that—everyone who has had the opportunity to teach is someone who has had the opportunity to help craft and shape the future of our world in an amazing way.

I believe one of the sayings—I'm trying to figure out which one it is here. I believe it's on one of these pillars, and the saying, when translated from Latin—I can't see them all right now—one of the sayings is, “By teaching, learn.” So there's a real recognition in this House as well

in the inscriptions on our pillars of the value that teachers bring, and I believe that applies also to post-secondary education.

But then to have, in that type of setting where a student is looking up to, admiring, respecting their faculty member, their professor, their TA—to have a terrible destruction of that sacred trust by an act of violence, an act of disrespect, a tragic breaking down of that trust in unfathomable ways that creates often lifelong trauma, that creates lifelong hurt, that creates damage to that person in terrible, terrible ways, is something that I, having sat in those classrooms and still going back to those classrooms—I was thinking about this, actually, just last week when I was in class. Thinking about this legislation, it reminded me of the vital importance of having measures that keep those students safe, that protect them and that bluntly punish those who break those sacred bonds of trust. I believe that that is why we are having this debate this afternoon.

I'm thankful to speak to the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act. I fully support this legislation, because I understand and see the value that strengthening our protections for students in post-secondary education will bring. Those who go to a college campus, a university campus, whether they're involved in an apprenticeship or wherever else, are opening themselves up in a vulnerable way to learning, and, to learn, you have to break down some of the barriers, some of the fences that you might have in your own heart, your own mind, when you're thinking about your perception of a particular issue or a particular career path. Everyone has presuppositions; they have philosophical underpinnings to how they view the world, and those are good; it would be false for any of us to say that we don't have a particular lens that we view the world through, but we also need to make sure that we're able to reduce those fences to learn from others' experiences, to learn from lived experience, to be able to have empathy and to be able to grow.

1440

To think of students who are in that process of learning, of opening themselves up to that knowledge from someone who they believe can teach them, and then to have that trust shattered by a despicable act of sexual violence or harassment or abuse, necessitates a response from all of us as legislators. And I know there has been good work done on all sides of the House, actually, I believe, on this. I think of work brought that's been brought forward by all-party committees of the Legislature. I think of work that's happened from members of the opposition, as well, on fighting sexual harassment and violence. I think of the work that's happened by so many members of our team and, as much as I don't regularly give praise to former Premier Kathleen Wynne, one of the issues I believe she was strong on was with regards to this, culturally, recognizing the damage it causes.

So I think it's important for all of us, as we consider this legislation, to perhaps not get too bogged down in minutia and legalese, if you will. I know I've heard some concerns raised by members of the opposition, and I respect that. I

think it's important that they're able to share. They're the opposition, after all. But I don't believe that the members of the opposition are going to allow those mild concerns that they might have around some legalese within the bill—they might have some phraseology concerns—are going to prevent them from supporting, as I know every member on this side will, legislation that will protect students and that will ensure that, when they come onto that campus—as I saw them again this September.

I hate to go on a little aside, but for a couple of years, most of my courses were online, and there was some benefit to that, I would say, in that I was able to multi-task a little more and able to do some other things at the same time, not having to drive into McMaster. But when I was back in September—I know people have this with me, so it feels very strange saying this—I was struck by how young they were, right?

Interjections.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: And I know; I know. You can laugh. I get that a lot. But frankly, again, these are young people, for the vast majority. They're 17, they're 18, maybe 19. They're coming onto campus. Their joie de vivre, their appetite for learning, is limitless. The best courses are first-year courses, before they become a little bit jaded by the time they get to third or fourth year and they don't engage as much. But the first-year students, they're there to learn, they're there to discuss, they're there to experience post-secondary education, and I can't imagine how devastating and how destructive an act can be to someone coming in with those expectations.

And that, then, is a call to all of us to take that seriously, to act not just in this way—this is an incredibly important piece of legislation that builds on the work that's been done in a non-partisan way, and I know that any member in this House would be the first to say that it's not the end, that there is more work that should be done. I, frankly, don't know exactly what that is. If I did or if we did, then I know we would bring it forward. But I know that that's something all of us share, a belief in always doing more, being better and serving—serving those who we strive to represent, including those young people who are seeking to improve themselves and to contribute, to make a difference in our communities.

And that's why I'm speaking in favour of this legislation this afternoon, Speaker. It's because when I think of the people that I go to school with and the people who have gone to school and have experienced, unfortunately, the terrible trauma, the déjà vu, if you will, of having been abused or having been harassed or having been assaulted by someone who is in a position of authority, in a faculty position, and then going back onto that campus, seeing that person at the front of class, teaching, speaking with authority—I can't imagine what that would be. And I recognize, Speaker, that I'm not someone who is in a position that likely will ever experience that. I pray no one in my family will experience that; I pray that no one I know will experience that. But there are many who have.

So then it's not enough for us just to say, "Well, the existing processes are good enough. It's good enough,

what we've got. Yeah, it's not perfect, but it's good enough." There's a flavour of that in what I hear. Defending these unethical NDAs—the approach of the past, frankly, in approaching these sensitive and important topics, is not good enough. That's why this legislation is needed and it's why I support it.

I would just ask all members to think either of their family members—or perhaps, if not family members, those they know, those they interact with. Think about the university or the college in your community. So many of us have them. There are so many amazing colleges and universities in this province that do fantastic work. Think about when you go there—we've all been there, right? They invite us. Perhaps it's a new facility opening. Perhaps we get asked to speak to a class. Perhaps we're invited to visit a high school and share about our life as an MPP or the policies that our government is providing.

When you look out upon that group of children or young adults or teenagers and think about the terrible statistics that have necessitated this type of action, the fact that so many have experienced terrible abuse or trauma from those in positions of authority—consider that when casting your ballot, and vote yes. Vote yes to a safer university campus. Vote yes to a safer college campus. Vote yes to supports in place that provide opportunity, that encourage growth so that that eager and enthusiastic group of students who I see when I go to campus don't have the devastation and disappointment of experiences that I pray none of us will ever see.

Speaker, in conclusion, I strongly support this legislation. I will be voting for this legislation and I ask all members of this House to join me in doing so. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Chris Glover: To the member opposite, I appreciate your comments today. It was interesting to learn that you're currently an undergraduate student at McMaster University.

Every campus in Ontario has a sexual assault issue—sexual harassment and violence, and 2SLGBTQ students are disproportionately affected by sexual harassment and violence. I'm wondering—because you are an MPP and a student, you are a leader on your campus—what will you do to curb sexual harassment and violence on your campus? Will you join the gay-straight alliance on your campus and will you help out with the sexual assault centres?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Thanks to the member opposite for listening, first of all, to the debate this afternoon. I appreciate his contributions, as well, to recognizing these issues, and I think his question underlines the importance of this legislation. I'm going to be supporting this legislation because I believe it's going to prevent revictimization, whether it's members of the LGBTQ community or any other undergraduate student who deserves to have the respect of not having to see their aggressor on campus, who won't have to re-experience those traumatic events.

Whether it's this legislation or other legislation, I'm committed to working and listening. It's so important to

ensure that we're listening to those who have had lived experiences. Whether it's in seminars or events—I frankly don't get to quite as many events on campus as I would like to, just given the other requirements of the job—I'm going to continue to listen and have those help inform my work and advocacy here as an elected member as well. My thanks to the member for the question.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Nolan Quinn: Thank you to the member from Niagara West. I would like a little bit more context, because when the member takes off his glasses, he's like Clark Kent. I would like to know what the students are saying to you as a fellow student and what you're hearing directly from the students about the issue that we're speaking about now.

1450

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: My thanks to the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry. It's not just the glasses. The glasses are part of it, but I can't wear a collared shirt. I find that with collared shirts, people will recognize me as well, so I have to wear T-shirts. A sweater is preferable, maybe a Mac one.

What I'm hearing from students—and it's unfortunate—is a bit of a feeling that they are on their own and that governments historically haven't had their back. I think that, again, is just why this type of legislation is so important. This type of legislation says, “No, we have your back.” It says to young people who I hear from in seminar—again, they don't know I'm a member; they're just talking about their experiences or their frustrations with the system. They see a piece of legislation like this, and I believe that they know then, “Okay, there's a government that's listening. There's a government that's taking action. They're not using students as pawns. They're not using them as bargaining chips in negotiations or in contract talks; they're listening and they're taking action.” I believe that's what I'm hearing from my colleagues on campus.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I listened to the remarks from the member across the way, and I just want to emphasize how prevalent gender-based violence is on university and college campuses in Ontario. The government's own climate survey showed that 63% of university students—that's two thirds—experienced sexual harassment while on campus, and 23% disclosed a non-consensual sexual experience. It is a crisis at our post-secondary institutions.

But the majority of the sexual violence that is experienced is student-on-student sexual violence; it is not faculty to student. So I'm wondering, when so many organizations came to the committee and urged the government to include prevention in this bill, to include measures to reduce the prevalence of student-on-student sexual violence on campus, why did the government ignore all of that input?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I just can't agree with the premise. I absolutely agree that any case of sexual violence or gender-based violence is far too many, and I agree

that that's something that all governments need to seek to fight against and combat. But I would contend that the way that question was phrased seemed to be an either/or: “You're doing this, but you should be doing this.” Well, we can do this and continue with the action that we're taking to fight sexual violence on campus.

It's not just saying, “This is the end of all harassment on campus”—it's not. Despite the fact that the majority of sexual harassment on campus might be from student to student, that doesn't excuse or stop us from having to take action against that which is based in faculty. I think there's always more that can be done. I know that our government is committed to always doing more, but this is a step in the right direction.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Trevor Jones: Speaker, Bill 26 proposes changes that are, quite frankly, long overdue. They're going to protect students at colleges and universities, like my sons. I have a son who graduated from the University of Windsor, one currently studying at Guelph and one with his whole future in front of him, so I'm so glad this government is making this a priority.

Can the member please outline how these measures specifically will support students, all our children, all our students across this province to support students and survivors of sexual violence?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Speaker, something I heard growing up was that sunlight is the best disinfectant. Ensuring that issues are out in the open, to be able to have conversations around them—especially around issues of sexual violence—is very important. Put bluntly, Bill 26 is going to end the secrecy around faculty violence against students or sexual violence against students. It's going to say that you can't just have a secretive backdoor type of process that might not be transparent. It's about laying those processes out and ensuring that the public is aware of them, that students are aware of them as well and that students are being protected. It's about saying we're protecting students, not perpetrators.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Michael Mantha: First, I want to inform the member that the only instrument I can play is a couple of spoons. That's about it. I take that from my dad. As a young boy, we used to go to camp and Dad would play spoons to a variety of Johnny Cash songs.

My question I do have for the member is—I don't want to see “you, them, us.” I'm looking at him as an individual who is within the university environment; that's what I'm looking for. I don't want to say this is a good idea or you've got a good idea. All I'm asking the member is, would there be any benefit to having a consent awareness week passed through this legislation? Would it not bring benefit to all of us to have that opportunity to have a discussion? Let's forget where the idea comes from. I just want to know from his experience that he's had within the field and while in school, would there be a benefit to everyone?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Well, my thanks to the member opposite. I think it's vitally important, of course, that

awareness is raised around that crucial importance of consent, and I think that all members would agree about the importance of that.

I would say that my understanding of the legislation specifically is that that's not the process that this particular piece of legislation is intending to push for educational awareness around all these issues. This is specifically around that need to address sexual violence, specifically as it pertains to faculty members perpetrating acts against students.

But I also think that the member opposite does raise an important point, which is a call to all of us as individuals, whether we're on campus or whether we are MPPs, to be able to raise awareness around these crucial issues. So I invite the member to promote the awareness of that, as well as myself and everyone else in this chamber.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): We've run out of time for questions and answers. We'll now move to further debate.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I'm very proud to be rising today to speak about this bill and to speak on behalf of the good people of Toronto Centre. It is an absolute honour.

I want to begin my remarks by, number one, thanking everyone who came out to the deputations at committee. I thought it was important that they had an opportunity to speak to this bill. The bill, of course, was introduced and pretty soon it went straight to committee, so I recognize that there wasn't probably a lot of time for everyone to respond, but for those who had a chance to come out, their input was incredibly valuable.

I want to pay particular attention to fact that my good colleagues from Ottawa West–Nepean and Nickel Belt did incredible yeoman's work, trying to respond to a bill that didn't have a lot of time on the floor and certainly wasn't necessarily before us for a length of time, but I thought that just listening to the member from Ottawa West–Nepean provide her remarks was exceptional. She gave a master class in providing input throughout the “consultation” that was provided at the committee, but also just listening to her provide a surgical incision of why the bill's areas could be strengthened was just exceptional. It's hard to imagine that she just arrived here in June—so much respect to that.

I want to begin my remarks, I guess, largely about the things that are good. I really was encouraged to hear members of the government say that sexual violence, sexual assault and harassment should not be a partisan issue, and I wholeheartedly agree with that. Speaker. I couldn't agree with that more. I want to be able to recognize that if this House was truly gripped to address the pandemic of sexual violence and gender-based violence in Ontario, then we should be able to work collaboratively across the aisle, work collaboratively at every single committee to advance amendments based on good practice and good policy-making.

Unfortunately, what I heard from the member from Ottawa West–Nepean was that didn't always take place. So I'm trying to recognize what was said here about the opportunity to collaborate and build better legislation and

work together to make sure it's non-partisan, and then how challenging it was to then also recognize that good amendments that were put forward—oftentimes brought forward by the committee deputants—were then shot down by the government members. So clearly we still have a lot of work to do in reconciling what is said and what actually happens.

1500

I want to try to bring the importance to this debate about what happens when we don't do the good work together. We can get a little bit bogged down by language. “Sexual abuse” then morphed into “sexual misconduct,” and now there's a call from the community that is most directly impacted—which is the students—to make sure that we use the right words and to use the language that students recognize as currently on the campus. What's on campus are not sexual misconduct centres or sexual misconduct policies; what's on campus are sexual violence policies, sexual assault centres. That's the language that the students, as well as the post-secondary institutions, are using, and that's certainly the language that we should be using to make sure that it's consistent but also respectful to what their needs are.

Post-secondary institutions do not have minimum standards right now when it comes to design and implementation of sexual violence policies. They do have them, but they're not entirely standardized, and if we're going to make sure that the work that they are able to do and empowered to do is going to be procedurally fair and consistent, survivor-informed as well as trauma-informed, then we are needing some minimum standards. That's exactly what the member from Ottawa West–Nepean was speaking about.

Now, currently, we have standards everywhere, minimum standards all over the place. We have minimum standards for judges in courts. We have minimum standards for police officers. We have minimum standards in training for nurses and doctors. But when it comes to investigations on campus, that still is not set out in any way that is going to be clear and consistent. The challenge of that is that, while you have a policy that is guiding all of the post-secondary institutions across Ontario, whether the ones that are publicly assisted or the ones that you request of privately funded institutions, if you don't give them more guidance and specific minimum standards, you're going to have policies that are all over the place and entirely inconsistent. Universities and colleges oftentimes look over each other's shoulders, and they do borrow from each other, but it's not enough, because they would have expected that guidance coming from this House that's producing this legislation, that's asking them to do this work.

When it comes to taking a look at how sexual violence intersects with the population on campus, I think what has been incredibly clear and that has been so oftentimes repeated—and it befogs me why the government House members cannot accept that—is that the relationship on campus goes in multiple ways. So it's not always going to be faculty or teachers or professors assaulting students;

most of the violence actually takes place, and the harassment takes place, among students, and there's nothing here that actually addresses that.

Campuses are incredibly porous places. TMU—Toronto Metropolitan University—is a good example, or George Brown College, or University of Toronto—all within my catchment area and riding. Those campuses are incredibly open and porous. People come and go all the time, whether they be alumni, whether they be visitors, third-party contractors, as well as contract staff. It is not a stagnant place where you have binaries of, “You're faculty, and you're a student,” and nothing else—not to mention the sizable amount of administrators as well as guests who come in. This legislation before us, as proposed, doesn't recognize the reality of the dynamism that exists in universities and colleges. So there's another missed opportunity that I think could have easily been closed if there was more willingness on the behalf of the government side to actually listen to the experts and opinion makers and the thought leaders who came before the deputations.

And there is a portion around risk management that I've spoken about before: What happens when we don't actually provide the post-secondaries with the necessary tools to do a good job of developing clear, consistent policies around sexual violence, making sure that the investigations are procedurally correct and consistent every single time? What happens is that, if those policies and procedures are not adequately and clearly communicated, there is a spottiness of expectation, execution and operationalization. What can happen? Students can protest. Actually, it's been the students that have led the charge on campuses across Ontario and right across the country. They are the ones who have stood up and said, “We demand better,” and that they deserve better, to make sure that sexual violence and harassment are addressed on campus.

They're the ones who have been defending their own integrity and autonomy of self, asking for the universities and colleges to do better. University and college administrators—their boards of governors—are actually turning to this government looking for guidance: “Show us how to be better at our job so we can be consistent.” Then the students will know everyone is looking after their best interests, and those who have been harmed, especially survivors, will know that there's some consistent process for them to follow.

Sexual assault centres at post-secondary institutions all need support. We have seen repeatedly that there are now a number of quite alarming surveys and reports that have come out about the level of violence on campus, often-times facilitated through power dynamics or perhaps the person is not entirely informed around consent.

What we know is that 81% of sexual assault centres saw an increase in demand for their services during COVID, and 71% of post-secondary students—71%—have now witnessed or have been subjected to violence. Of that, only 41% are actually reported to the police. Therefore, what we know is that sexual violence and harassment on

campuses are on the rise, especially during COVID. We also know that the request and demand for services are outpacing the actual service provision itself.

Not everything is going to be resolved through policing. We certainly know that. When you have people who know each other—and oftentimes the perpetrators are known to those who receive the harm—they don't always want to go through that system. Which is why it's so critically important that education, public awareness and consent awareness take place, because that's the preventive piece.

Every single administrator, every president of universities and colleges is going to be asking for and clearly begging this House to show them the way when it comes to public education and consent. Don't fail them. Because, Speaker, when we fail them, we leave them alone. When we don't give them the guidance, they're going to be making it up to the very best that they can, and it's not going to be good enough and it's certainly not going to be consistent.

We know that the rape crisis centres in Ontario are already underfunded. They have also seen an alarming rise in violence in the general community. What happens is that you have people who can't get access to services on the campus and the wait-list is long. If you want therapy, the wait-list is long. If you want someone to accompany you to the police or to the hospital to administer the rape kits, that wait-list is long. We've heard questions in the House about that. But when the campus itself can't provide the support for the person who is harmed, who is a survivor, then they go off to the sexual assault centres, which are also overburdened and also drawn out when it comes to their resources.

The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre has said that they have now seen a high in the past 33 years around sexual assault and that their funding hasn't changed in 15 years. If this government was truly, truly serious about addressing sexual violence in Ontario, you would fund the sexual assault and rape centres. Just fund them so that they can actually do the work that you've asked them to do.

The demand for their services has continued to rise, with the funding being stagnated, and at the same time, the rate of inflation and the cost of service delivery have gone through the roof. Every year they're facing funding cuts. They're not being supported, which is of course something the Ontario NDP has been consistently, emphatically speaking about, the need to support our partners on the ground in the community who are doing this extraordinary and good work.

1510

I want to be able to highlight the need for consent awareness, Speaker. I brought forward a bill—and it was actually my first private members' bill. I was really proud to have done so. I gave it a lot of thought. I came to this House with a lot of—back in city hall, I should say, I probably passed more motions than any other city councillor in the past four years, and there are records of how that's done. But it's basically because I love to be able to push forward good policies and bylaws that will serve our community locally. So I came into this building with

probably a dozen private members' bills that were somewhat ready to go.

I really wanted to advance Consent Awareness Week because I thought that it was going to be, number one, important for us to have the conversation around consent and public awareness, but especially in light of what we've seen through Hockey Canada—the national scandal and shame that has buried that sport, our beloved national sport, around sexual violence, and then the deliberate cover-up using NDAs. And I thought, why not put forward what I thought was going to be a fairly straightforward bill that designates the third week of September, at the beginning of every single orientation period in post-secondary schools, as Consent Awareness Week? All that does, Speaker, is actually start the conversation so therefore we can engage as a citizenry in Ontario and talk about public awareness and sexual violence.

Much to my surprise, it was politicized: “Oh, it's not our idea,” from the government side, “so therefore we're just going to vote it down. We're not going to accept it.” But at the same time, I'm hearing from the government side that sexual violence and sexual harassment should not be partisan. But why was Consent Awareness Week so critically important? Because, Speaker, in post-secondary institutions, the first six to eight weeks, statistically, is the highest time for sexual assault and violence on campuses. If we want to prevent sexual violence, if we want to stop it in its tracks, if we want to not be punitive but be proactive, then that was just a great example of how that bill could help.

That bill could still be put into this legislation. You can't be talking about strengthening post-secondary institutions and strengthening the safety of students and faculty and all members of the campus environment and not have consent education. It is a clear and obvious omission that everyone can see who is outside of this building, who has been working on these issues on the ground for decades. But in the absence of government leadership, Speaker, universities and colleges, many of them across the country, are already putting forward consent awareness education. They're doing it in an inconsistent fashion. In some, we have work happening in November; some are doing it in September, but can you imagine how powerful it would be if the entire province—not just the campus environment, but the entire province—spent some time talking about and promoting good education around consent awareness? It would revolutionize how we address sexual violence and harassment in our province. It would make these conversations available to everyone in a healthy and proactive fashion, and it would also be entirely accessible to all: boys and girls, men and women, those in power and those without. We would be able to build healthier, stronger human relationships because of it.

I want to be able to spend just a few minutes to talk about the Toronto Metropolitan University. I am so incredibly proud to be, first, their city councillor for almost 11 and a half years, 12 years, but I'm incredibly proud to represent them as their MPP. They did an extraordinary

amount of work in a very difficult time when they undertook the process of reconciliation. I know many of the community members that actually were asking and calling for the name change, and I know that they did not do that lightly. I also know that it was on the heels of the discovery of children—buried children, skeletons, residuals left over in the school campus environment—of the Indian residential schools.

And in 2021, our nation was rocked to the core. I remember very clearly: How could this happen in this country? We had all heard stories, I suspect, especially in light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We had heard the stories, but there was also an element of disbelief: “Oh, that happened a while ago. It probably wasn't as bad as some of the speakers who came forward”—who spoke to the commission and shared their trauma and shared their stories and basically bared their souls to say, “We have been harmed as a community, as Indigenous people, First Nations and Métis and Inuit people across the country.”

I remember my grief, but the collective grief of Canada when we said we were going to do something about it. So we now have the national day. But then we have an institution like Ryerson University, which has stepped up in extraordinary ways—and to have a very public conversation in Canada's biggest city, recorded by Canada's largest newspapers, on how they were going to tackle reconciliation and to right the path of justice.

It was a privilege, Speaker, to actually see the campus community develop their task force to engage the conversation that involved 10,000 Ontarians to provide insight and value to what could be a better name. And I think that they have done an exceptional job. They've also set up, I believe, a really respectful protocol and template for the rest of us, including cities and towns that are now faced with their own conversation of how to take action on reconciliation. I'm sure that even here at Queen's Park, there are probably places and spaces and monuments and designations that need to be reconsidered in light of the reconciliation conversation, and I'll look forward to that. But I really want to thank Toronto Metropolitan University for leading the way.

In closing, Speaker, I just want to acknowledge that this bill actually does some very important things. Do I wish it would go further? Absolutely. But I'm going to take the government at its word that when the issues of sexual violence and new policy come up, that they will support it, and I'll look forward to having their support on Consent Awareness Week.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Thank you to the member opposite for her remarks. Earlier this week, we saw stories of a professor who has remained in their role despite being found guilty of committing acts of sexual misconduct. During committee, we heard testimony from groups and even comments of the opposition that those found guilty are removed and that there's no need for the punitive aspects of Bill 26. However, articles like this show why these measures are long overdue. So I'm curious what the

member opposite believes should be done with faculty and staff who have been proven to have committed acts of sexual violence?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you for the question. I don't know if I am fully aware of the specific case that you're speaking about, but I think this is a great example of why we need to have consistent policies and protocols at universities and colleges so that there is no need to second-guess. Protocols and policies actually set out a very clear framework for investigation and due process. As long as it is survivor-centred and trauma-informed, I think we're going to get to better outcomes. That's what I would offer you: that if we have those good policies in place, we will follow them.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to congratulate my colleague the member for Toronto Centre on her remarks today, but also her leadership in her private member's bill on Consent Awareness Week. I was privileged to attend the launch of that bill the day that she tabled it in this Legislature, and I heard the widespread support from student organizations who really identified the importance of consent education on campus as a measure that's going to really help reduce incidents of sexual violence on campus.

1520

So I wondered if the member could comment on the shortcomings of an approach, as set out in this bill, that focuses only on punitive cases of faculty-to-student sexual violence and doesn't encompass the kinds of prevention initiatives like Consent Awareness Week.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Yes, thank you so much to the member from London West for the question. What we heard—and I think what every study has shown us now, especially the ones that are created in the university and college climate—is that it's actually the faculty, the students and the administrators; everyone is asking for consent education. Creating that culture of consent is how we actually prevent the more costly approach of reaction to sexual violence and harassment when it takes place.

One thing I would say is that not every act of sexual violence or harassment is going to lead to rape. It's not. So being able to step up and intervene before it happens is actually a much more caring and compassionate and less costly way of responding.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Nolan Quinn: It was interesting that one of the groups who spoke against the measures in Bill 26 was the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, an organization focused on protecting faculty. In a statement, they called the legislation "a narrow and punitive vision for addressing the serious problem of assault and harassment."

On the other hand, organizations like the PEARS Project, a by-survivors for-survivors student organization of the University of Toronto, called for the need of Bill 26 to put an end to the harmful and ineffective practices seen at colleges and universities to deal with matters of faculty sexual violence.

Speaker, through you, who does the member stand with? Student survivors of sexual violence or the faculty associations who think this legislation is heavy-handed?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: My entire life, especially my professional life, I've worked to create safe environments for everyone and to end violence against all people. So the question is, I think, a bit mean-spirited, to be quite honest. But I think, more importantly, it's that creating the environment to stop sexual violence and sexual harassment should be our objective. And I think that if you take a quote from OCUFA and you quote one sentence or another, but not the full package—what they told us, and I think it was really clear in their deputations, is that they wanted to make sure that the process was going to be open and transparent, fair and consistent.

I'm not here to defend rapists or abusers, and neither should any of us.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: I'd like to offer my congratulations and thank you to the member for Toronto Centre for her wise remarks, both on this bill in response to a really bizarre attack on the faculty members who are working really hard to keep people safe across our post-secondary sector and for her kind words to me personally.

The member mentioned the need to be trauma-informed and survivor-specific in their remarks. We heard from witnesses last week at committee how important that is to getting the response to sexual violence and harassment right. But we also know that many people on campuses across the province aren't fully aware of what those terms mean and how they would be implemented in a policy and what that would actually look like in practice, which is one reason why I think minimum standards are so important and why students are calling for those minimum standards to be implemented. Does the member agree that that could be a way of making sure that policies are survivor-centric and trauma-informed?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Thank you very much to the member for the question. Absolutely, minimum standards are going to be a key part of the solution to ending gender-based violence and creating a floor and baseline on how this subject matter and this issue is dealt with.

You will not find a single administrator or president of a university or their governors or even their student leaders that will reject minimum standards when it comes to how they approach, define sexual violence and harassment, and the response and protocol for investigations. Every single one of them will support it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: In these situations involving post-secondary institutions and the faculty that often teach in them and the relationships between those people who, I will just say, are in a superior role and the students, who I will describe as being in an inferior role and even sometimes a dependent role, oftentimes there is a power dynamic. The power dynamic differs from relationship to relationship. Oftentimes we describe these relationships in

legal terms. We might call them something related to a fiduciary relationship, and in common, everyday terms we might describe them as a relationship of trust or respect. Difficulties arise when individuals involved in those relationships cross the line one way or the other.

I would just like to invite the member to comment on how the member perceives those relationships and what might be included in this particular act which might help define those relationships and prevent the crossing of the line, if I may put it that way.

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I believe that the approach to ending gender-based violence, sexual assault, sexual violence and sexual harassment has to be holistic and it has to be comprehensive. If we put an equity lens over that type of policy-making, you're going to find that there are definitely power imbalances. That's why we need to be able to address them with that type of lens.

I would also say that the other thing that's absolutely critical, because we've heard this language used before, is it has to be survivor-centric and it has to be trauma-informed. The bill does not get to the heart of that and that's why it could be strengthened and it should have been strengthened.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): We have time for one quick question.

Mr. Chris Glover: My question is, 2SLGBTQ students are disproportionately affected by sexual harassment and violence. What should campuses be doing to keep 2SLGBTQ students safe?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: First of all, everything we know about it is that it has to be around awareness. It has to be creating a culture of acceptance as well as celebration. Having spaces and opportunities for students to thrive means that we celebrate them in all their diversity, including those who are 2SLGBT. If we factor in the fact that BIPOC students are also experiencing disproportionate amounts of harm, we have to create the policies as well as the solution tools to address exactly that.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): That is the time we have for questions and answers. We now move to debate. Further debate?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you, my colleagues, for the overwhelming support for this wonderful bill. I'm very happy to rise today and talk about Bill 26, Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act. I want to congratulate the Minister of Colleges and Universities and say thank you to our government for standing up for the security and safety of our students in Ontario.

I'm a proud father of three children who have already attained their post-secondary education in Ontario. This bill is near and dear to my heart because of my son Pirathap, my daughter, Kethika, and my son Vernoth. They just graduated not too long ago.

As a parent, I always worried about the security and safety of my children going to post-secondary education institutions in Ontario. Similarly, students attending post-secondary institutions shouldn't have to worry about their security and safety. If they are concerned about their well-being, then they are distracted from the main cause.

As a government, our priority is to support Ontario students and help them access high-quality education, education that will help them develop the knowledge and skills they need to get good-paying jobs and support the Ontario economy. But in order for students to flourish in post-secondary education and beyond, we first need to provide them with an environment that fosters success.

All students in Ontario deserve to learn in a healthy, safe and respectful environment, an environment where they don't have to worry about discrimination or harassment while accessing their education, an environment where the safety and well-being of everyone on Ontario campuses is guaranteed.

1530

Mr. Speaker, that is why today I am honoured to show my full support for the two initiatives outlined in the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act, 2022.

What is the first part of the legislative amendments? As explained by the Minister of Colleges and Universities, the first set of amendments in the bill introduces changes that demonstrate our zero-tolerance stance for sexual assault, harassment and any other form of violence in our communities. The legislation seeks to help institutions better address faculty and staff sexual misconduct against students. This includes equipping the institution with stronger tools to address these instances, should they unfortunately occur.

Institutions would also be required to have a sexual misconduct policy that provides rules for behaviour between employees and students, and examples of disciplinary measures for employees who break these rules.

Finally, the proposed changes would prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements—what they call NDAs—which can sometimes be used to hide the prior wrongdoing of an employee when they leave one institution for another.

I also support the second part of the bill. This bill would also allow Toronto Metropolitan University to legally change its name from Ryerson University. The school adopted its new name in April after a backlash against Egerton Ryerson, an architect of Canada's residential school system.

Mr. Speaker, now I would like to present to my fellow members some facts and figures related to the first part of the legislative amendments. My fellow members, do you feel safe if your daughters, sisters, nieces, granddaughters or any other female family members have to finish an assignment at university and stay there late? Students who experience sexual violence by faculty or staff at a post-secondary institution face significant emotional, psychological and academic impacts, but many students don't report it to their institutions due to:

- lack of clarity about what types of behaviour can be reported;

- not knowing who the incidents should be reported to within the institution; and

- fear of any negative consequences associated with reporting.

Many students saw what happened as not serious enough to report; others cited a lack of knowledge about what to do or a mistrust in how the school would handle the situation.

That is why I am endorsing this bill. Mr. Speaker, I will ask my colleagues from the opposition: Please support this historic change. Please, please support this historic change in our Ontario post-secondary school system.

Our government will always put the safety of students above the career goals of violent offenders. Voting against this bill is to turn a blind eye to a systemic issue of power dynamics and inappropriate behaviour in order to protect union brothers and sisters.

I now want to turn the attention connected to stigmatization, shame and cultural perspectives to sexual misconduct. It will be hard to listen to some content, but we have to take the bitter pill in order to solve this issue.

Getting raped, which is one form of sexual exploitation, results in an immense level of trauma for rape survivors. The victims endure the immediate physical and mental trauma of the actual event as well as many ongoing psychological challenges. As if these challenges are not enough, a strong and significant stigma of being raped persists in Canadian culture. Victims must deal with the added shame arising from the stigma-laden reactions of others that know about the rape.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk about rape. I came from a rape culture. I escaped from Sri Lanka out of fear of persecution. Rape was used as a hated weapon against a certain ethnic community, and I was witness to thousands and thousands of women being raped. So when I saw something happening here with rape and sexual violence, I couldn't believe it when I heard about the incidents and all the numbers, all the heinous crimes taking place at our wonderful institutions.

A rape survivor, whose name is not shared for confidentiality purposes, who shared her experience with the stigma of rape says, "When I told people I'd been raped, I was faced with reactions of utter discomfort. Some people were scared to discuss it, some didn't make eye contact, while others said the necessary things in order to move on and change the conversation." She goes on to explain that these people didn't even realize how they made her feel bad; rather, their reactions gave rise to strong feelings of shame and embarrassment.

This is utterly wrong, Mr. Speaker—wrong, wrong, wrong. We cannot blame the victim. It is not a victim's fault to be raped or sexually exploited. The victim-shaming myths which cause re-traumatization in those who have suffered the unimaginable are real. These myths are often normalized as everyday platitudes that, even when said in well-meaning ways, can pose unnecessary harm to survivors and their healing journeys.

Research has shown the powerful detrimental effects of victim-blaming and victim-shaming statements. Studies have confirmed that when victims encounter negative reactions from professionals, family members and friends, this destructively affects the willingness of victims to come forward to disclose their pain, and only leads to further self-blame and uncertainty about their experiences.

In a study in 2005, "Shame is a negative and disturbing emotional experience involving feelings of self-condemnation and the desire to hide the damaged self from others." In many cultures, sexual behaviour is associated with shame, especially sexual behaviour that violates social taboos.

I represent the most ethnically diverse riding in all of Canada, a beautiful riding called Markham–Thornhill. The victims of sexual misconduct, in certain cultures, would never speak out due to stigmatization. The sacred sanctity of marriage and social structures of families curb victims of sexual misconduct to speak out. Such victims live their lives in shame and silence secretly dreading the act they went through. How horrible it must be for the victims—how painful to live in silence and endure.

The secretive context in which sexual abuse takes place, condemnation of the victim by the perpetrator and explicit threats to keep silent promote feelings of shame. Victims of sexual misconduct face post-traumatic stress disorder. Strong negative emotions associated with traumatic events are aversive. They promote cognitive and behavioural avoidance, which in turn prolong PTSD symptoms.

Mr. Speaker, in light of all the facts and background, in conclusion, let's thank the Minister of Colleges and Universities, the PA and the member from St. Catharines, for their hard work and standing up for women and girls and the university campuses and communities, and being their voice. Let's thank our government, to be their voice.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to share my time with my colleague from Whitby.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Deepak Anand): Further debate?

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'm pleased to join the debate today on Bill 26, the third reading of the Strengthening Post-secondary Institutions and Students Act.

1540

Just by way of context, you'll know that in the official opposition I was the education critic, and in that position I had the opportunity to visit many of the campuses across Ontario. In my own riding I have three educational institutions: Ontario Tech, Durham Trent and Durham College, and the proposed changes that are in Bill 26, I believe, will allow those post-secondary institutions and the students who are in those institutions to succeed going forward.

Now, interestingly, I was also in the standing committee when we discussed amendments, and the member for Nickel Belt was in the course of debating some of the amendments described this legislation as "life-changing" and also "generational." I think those are two important descriptions when we're looking at this legislation and what the effects can be, and will be, given the direction and intent and purpose that's evident in Bill 26.

What's clear, Speaker, as we debate the bill here this afternoon, is that campuses across the region of Durham, like Ontario Tech, Trent Durham in Oshawa and Durham College in my riding of Whitby, are not only places of learning but, importantly, centres of employment and

economic growth for their communities, cities and regions that they call home.

The other aspect of Bill 26 which is important to get on the record is that it's about also creating the right conditions for student success. It's also about creating inclusive, respectful and safe environments for learning, and I think those are qualities that we all aspire to for the youth who are that are on campus, as well as faculty and staff.

What's evident is that the proposed legislation seeks to help institutions like the educational facilities in my riding and other ridings in the region of Durham better address faculty and staff misconduct against students.

First, it will equip these institutions with stronger tools to address instances of faculty or staff sexual misconduct. For example, sexual abuse of a student by faculty would be just cause for dismissal, as it should.

Second, it would prevent the use of non-disclosure agreements, which can be used to hide the prior wrongdoing of an employee when they leave one institution for another. The parliamentary assistant to the Premier, when she spoke earlier in this Legislature, spoke about the effect and cause-effect of that. Also very important, preventing the use of non-disclosure agreements will help to limit instances where an employee leaves an institution to be employed at another institution and their prior wrongdoing remains a secret, unknown to faculty, staff and students.

Third, it would require institutions to have sexual misconduct policies that provide rules for behaviour between employees and students and examples of disciplinary measures for employees who break these rules. These measures will help address instances where faculty overstep a teacher-student relationship with inappropriate behaviour, such as an instance in 2016 when an independent review found that a professor gave alcohol to and made sexual advances towards a student.

Speaker, if approved, the legislation's amendments would come into force on July 1, 2023. Taken together, these changes will require publicly assisted colleges and universities, as well as private career colleges, to have specific processes in place that address faculty and staff sexual misconduct on campus and to make those processes transparent.

At a fundamental level, no student in Ontario can reach their full potential unless they're safe on campus and feel safe on campus. Our government believes that everyone should be able to pursue their studies on or off campus without having to worry about sexual violence, harassment or misconduct. Speaker, this is not something we merely believe in, but as a government, in fact, we've acted on.

The measures included in Bill 26 further build on our government's actions to address the safety of students. What I'm alluding to there, Speaker, is about a year ago, in March, we brought forward a set of regulations designed to make the campuses safer than what they were. And by no means is that to cast dispersion on the robust work taking place on campuses across Ontario, including my riding, overall. But what it does is make sure that the

checks and balances are in place to help our students who are aspiring to careers succeed in their studies to accomplish that.

I want to share with you a couple of comments from people who have looked at the legislation and one that resides with Ontario Tech University: "Ontario Tech University welcomes the province's strong support for the post-secondary community's commitment to eradicating sexual violence and maintaining healthy and safe learning, living, social and working environments for students, staff and faculty members with this bill...."

And, Speaker, I'm conscious of the time, so I'm going to go to my closing, if I could, please.

These proposed amendments, if passed, will benefit students by helping to create a safer, more respectful environment and campus community. Bill 26, I believe, provides measures to help position our post-secondary education sector for continued success for present and future generations, like my granddaughters, Annette and Sophia. The sexual misconduct measures will provide students with more protection—as they should—empowering them to achieve their full potential during some of the most formative years of their lives.

What's clear with Bill 26 is that we're building on past successes to help students feel safe and supporting our institutions to continue to uphold high standards. We will continue to work with our colleges and universities, student groups and other partners to make sure our world-class post-secondary institutions—like Ontario Tech, where I was last Friday, with my colleague MPP Dowie—support a bright future for the people in this province—importantly, the students, the staff and the faculty.

To those members in the official opposition, there are times in this place when we have the opportunity to make a strong decision to affect the lives of young people in our communities. Today is a day when you stand in your place and say yes and support this critical piece of legislation—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I listened to the comments from the members on the opposite side, and I want to ask a question specifically to the member for Markham–Thornhill. He spoke very powerfully and sincerely about his awareness of the devastating consequences of sexual violence for the survivor, in the case of post-secondary institutions, overwhelmingly, the young women who are the people who experience sexual violence on campus.

Now, I wonder if he would agree that the experience would be just as devastating, just as shattering, for that young woman if she is on a co-op placement or an internship or some other kind of work experience learning thing that is mandated by the institution, and if he could answer why there is no oversight of those supervisors for experiential learning placements.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to my colleague from London for your wonderful questions. I could say the sexual violence and the sexual misconduct in post-secondary institutions is alarming. I listened to my children for the last decade, 10 years. One daughter went to

Western University, and she talked about the horrible stories about the sexual misconduct and sexual violence taking place. It's hidden. It's always unreported. This is very sad.

1550

Our government has been restoring the trust and accountability in government. We were elected with a mandate to fix 15 years of the Liberal government's broken promises. They didn't fix it. Our government is taking the bold action to bring the safe and—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I listened to both members on your presentations, and I thought they were both very compelling. I did want to ask the member from Markham–Thornhill: I know you, as well, have had children go through post-secondary schooling. I've got two children going through that in the next year or so, so this is certainly close to home. But we've talked about the sector as a whole and I'm curious to hear more about, specifically, students. I know groups like OUSA have been calling for increased supports around sexual and gender-based violence for some time. Our government, of course, has listened and brought in the changes needed.

So Speaker, can the member tell us, from the student perspective, what the reception to this bill has been?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to my colleague the member from Oakville. We have already talked about the sector as a whole, but I'm curious that so many—your question about consultation: We've heard enough consultation the great work done by the OUSA, the Ontario union of students, and we'll not forget about the other groups, like the PEARS Project and the York graduates' society, that came to committee to provide their support and feedback for Bill 26.

You also have young girls and you heard about your children's and your girls' safety when they go to post-secondary education in Ontario. I think this is the right bill. This is a wonderful bill to come to fruition in our history in Ontario. Thank you for that question.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: My question is to the member from Markham–Thornhill. Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm curious to know: The Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance has noted that they have been calling for minimum standards; they have been calling for the development of policies that have some clear benchmarks. They have also been calling for consent awareness and consent education. Would you believe that it would support the legislation to have that included?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the member opposite for that question. We had enough consultation with various stakeholders. We have been hearing from so many community organizations, so many postgraduate associations. We have been conducting a lengthy engagement with the various stakeholders for the last number of years, and I have been hearing, and our ministry has been hearing, and that's why this bill is so important to

improvement and bringing safety and security for women and students at our postgraduate institutions. We are the ones doing the right things. Thank you for the question.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: My question is for the member from Whitby. He addressed this chamber with his usual statesmanlike manner and the rest of us would do well to learn from his example and follow it more often.

My question to him has to do with the imbalance of the relationship between faculty members and students, sometimes described as maybe a fiduciary relationship but, in less technical terms, just an imbalanced relationship, a relationship where one person is more dependent on the other or perhaps influenced by the other. I would like to invite the member to comment on that relationship and ask him, how does he feel that this bill addresses that relationship and what this bill can do in those situations?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Response? I recognize the member from Whitby.

Mr. Lorne Coe: Thank you, Speaker, through you, to my colleague for that question. It's a question and discussion that I've had on the campuses in my riding, and part of the discussion, in the context of Bill 26, is that in no way should it be perceived as an attack on our faculty or a way to limit their rights or anything else that people might want or suggest to believe.

In fact, many of the faculty and staff on these campuses see the necessity of these sorts of protections, because it keeps them safe and it keeps the students safe. The prime objective of the faculty on campuses, from the conversations that I've seen, is to make sure that the students are safe in every way possible, so that, as I indicated earlier, their aspirations that they have, in fact, can be fulfilled. That's what I'm hearing.

I thank the member for his question—thoughtful as usual.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Ric Bresee: I really appreciate the debate today and the presentations from the member from Markham–Thornhill and the member from Whitby.

I personally had the experience of working for about 20 years at a community college in Ontario and, unfortunately, was aware of situations that this bill directly addresses, situations where an instructor was caught—and I'll say bluntly, "caught"—and it still took a year and a half to go through the processes to make sure that that person was no longer in a position to teach. Unfortunately, I did find out that he had later taught at another nearby institution.

Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the member from Whitby: This government has a history of creating policies that continually build on previous legislation. Bill 26 is no different, and it builds on the regulations that the minister put into place previously. So can the member please outline how this legislation will build on the previous regulations, as he mentioned in his presentation?

Mr. Lorne Coe: I thank my colleague for his question, because this is, I think, one of the key parts of this legislation going forward.

Our government has shown an incredible commitment to the protections of students on campus, and one of the most notable is, in some respects, the funding, but the non-disclosure agreements and dealing with those non-disclosure agreements, and what the effect has been historically, and what the checks and balances that we've put in place now—I think have been significant, Speaker.

Added to that is the work that each of the universities and community colleges have done to put in place their individual policies and programs and services to support their students as well.

I think, taken together—taken together—when the time comes to vote on this legislation, we can satisfy ourselves that we're putting in place the supports that are needed to help students in our communities, our individual communities, succeed and be protected. That's why we're here today to debate the bill. That's why we're going to succeed together in moving this bill forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): We have no further time for questions. Further debate?

I recognize the member for Kiiwetinoong.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. This afternoon, I would like to talk about schedule 3 of Bill 26, which amends the Ryerson University Act.

I know that we spoke about this earlier in second reading. We know the step that Bill 26 takes in the changing of the name of Ryerson University. We know that it's only one step towards a fortified change. It is just that: one step.

We know Egerton Ryerson, the namesake of the university, was an architect of the Indian residential school system. We also know that not everybody knows that Indian residential schools instituted a system that was racist and that negatively impacted First Nations across what we know as Canada.

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Indian residential schools stripped First Nations children of their cultural identity, their ways of life, their languages, but also, they inflicted physical and verbal harm. Not only that, they caused decades and decades of intergenerational trauma.

I think it's important to acknowledge these issues. It's important to know and understand the impacts of these Indian residential schools that are far-reaching for First Nations people and its nations. It's also important to acknowledge and understand that they extend beyond a singular decade and place. These Indian residential schools, they impacted Indigenous nations. They impacted our nations for generations following, and need I remind this House, the last Indian residential school closed in 1997—1997, Speaker.

Following the decades of systemic racism, systemic oppression, facilitated by the government of Canada—and not only that, many churches across the country—we have to understand that First Nations came together to challenge their experiences in the courts. I talk about this because this schedule, schedule 3 of Bill 26, fulfills only one of the 94 calls to action from the truth and reconciliation report. And then, when I talk about the courts, the courts had

previously mandated and allowed the abuse which survivors suffered from to occur.

But also, we have to understand that with strength and resiliency, survivors were able to have their collective experience recognized, which led to the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Throughout the years of hearing survivors' stories, centering their voices, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission developed 94 calls to action. We have to know, Speaker, these calls to action are multi-faceted and work to redress the harm perpetuated by these Indian residential schools.

I'd also like to say that there are a few calls to action that I would like to highlight to acknowledge how reconciliation needs to go beyond just a namesake, beyond just changing the name of the university.

Call to action number 3 calls upon all levels of government to fully implement Jordan's Principle. Jordan's Principle is named after Jordan River Anderson, a young boy from Norway House Cree Nation, in his memory. Norway House is in northern Manitoba. The principle, recognized federally by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, issued that all First Nations children must have the same accessibility, the same availability of services as any other children in Canada.

Where I come from in northern Ontario, sometimes it feels like a different Ontario. Sometimes it feels like a different Canada. I say that because the First Nations in northern Ontario, in my riding—that accessibility, those human rights and that Jordan's Principle are not being upheld.

Again, I talk about this because when you do only the minimal changes and not the systemic ones, it is the low-hanging fruit. I talk about that because every year, young people—as young as 13, 14 years old—leave their fly-in First Nation to attend high school in the south. Imagine: I know in the fall we all come out and speak about how our college-age university students leave for school, but it's different in the north. Grade 9 and 10 students are leaving for high school, leaving home, the reason being that there are no high schools. Not every fly-in First Nation has high schools available because of the unwillingness of the federal government and the unwillingness of the provincial government to step up and provide comprehensive funding for their education. That's how oppression and colonialism work. That's how the long-lasting policies of both levels of government, when we talk about Indian residential schools, continue on, because they have to leave home every fall to attend high school.

The lives of these children and youth are sacred. They lack the support they receive, due to being hundreds or even thousands of kilometres away from their families, from their siblings, from their ways of life; from their language, identity and community. And they pay in full with their lives. I say that they pay in full with their lives because, between 2001 and 2011 in my riding, there were seven First Nations children that lost their lives in Thunder Bay while away from home for school. That's just a way—it has become a way of life.

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I'm going to mention some names that we've lost because we have no high schools in northern Ontario. I'm going to mention their ages and why these are the one who had to pay with their lives: Jethro Anderson, year 2000—he was 15 years old; Curran Strang, 2005—he was 18 years old; Paul Panacheese, 2006; Robyn Harper, 2007, 18 years old; Reggie Bushie, 2007—he was 15 years old; Kyle Morrisseau, 2009—he was 17 years old; Jordan Wabasse, 2011—he was 15 years old. Sometimes these youth, these children, these First Nations students are referred to as the Seven Fallen Feathers, and I talk about them because that's what happens.

I know this bill talks about how they want to change, but those are small steps. We need to do better.

Changing the name of the university is important, but reconciliation requires more than words. Reconciliation needs to have an impact with action. Call to action 12 from the TRC identifies that provincial governments need to “develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families”—this despite the fly-in First Nations schools already being inadequately funded, being limited in resources and infrastructure.

I always talk about this. We know that there's no clean drinking water in 14 First Nations in my riding. A First Nation like Neskantaga is on its 28th year of boil-water advisories. First Nations are expected to do more with less. I've seen how they're treated. I've seen how we've been treated. We do not matter. That's how the systems are built.

For example, when a government does not value education workers in First Nation communities, they do not value children's education. It is the government's obligation under TRC call to action 12 to support “culturally appropriate early childhood education for Aboriginal families.”

Call to action 16 identifies supporting post-secondary institutions “to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.” Reconciliation includes supporting programs that add language revitalization and education initiatives. We are losing our languages at a very fast rate. In 50 years' time, in 100 years' time, if we lose a language, I don't know where we go. We can't go back to another country. We are here. This is where we've been for thousands of years. You cannot continue to make it look as if you're doing something without really doing anything. It has been done for years, and it has become a way of life for people.

It's 2022. It's not too late to look back and realize the inappropriateness of the name “Ryerson” at a university. Again, he was an architect—a school that's supposed to protect, but a system that took away children from their loving families, a system that took away from their communities and destroyed the fabric of our nations. Schools where children died—even today, we are trying to locate our children and to bring them back home.

Even TMU acknowledged that, for years, they did not understand the concern of the community's people, of the Indigenous people who worked and went to school at

TMU—about the name. The neglect to acknowledge the harm behind the name shows how far the work has come and needed to come.

Work has always been placed on Indigenous people to advocate. We're always the ones trying to reconcile. I'm always trying to reconcile—why am I the one trying to reconcile? Why, as First Nations, are we trying to reconcile? It should be the government; it should be up to the settlers of these lands to reconcile.

Reconciliation goes beyond namesake. Meegwetch for listening. Reconciliation is more than a name change.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member for his words today and his tireless advocacy as a survivor and on behalf of the Indian residential school legacy.

Madam Speaker, there's been a lot of work done here. In my previous chapter, I was personally involved in a number of schools in communities in the Kiiwetinoong riding to either be seriously rehabilitated or replaced. All too often, we found or realized that part of the success in building those schools, part of the success around water, waste water treatment, was electrification, the capacity and the stability of it. I think we can agree on that.

The member opposite had an extraordinary opportunity in his community just a week ago to turn one switch off of diesel generation and another switch on. And his own chief admitted and said in jubilation that this was an extraordinary opportunity for, amongst others, school and water infrastructure.

Does he agree with the proposition that other corridors in northern Ontario, particularly the central part of northern Ontario that are not covered by Watay Power, offer us up an extraordinary opportunity for prosperity, to electrify those communities so that critical infrastructure like water, sewer and schools can—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for a response.

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Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I know that I spoke about this: When we talk about prosperity, I know that there can be no prosperity if we're still in a place where we're searching for our children. We cannot have prosperity if we have young girls, young boys—as young as 11 or 12 years old—dying by suicide. There is so much work to be done.

I think electricity is just one piece. I remember for a long time, in my home First Nation, we could not build, we could not expand, because we had our diesel generator over capacity for close to a decade.

I guess my answer is that we could do much better. If you could give us clean drinking water on Neskantaga, I think that would be part of the road to reconciliation.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to thank my seatmate, my colleague from Kiiwetinoong, for his beautiful speech. I know that talking about it is also very personal for him, because talking about the Seven Fallen Feathers, speaking about children, kids who went to school and had to go far

way from their communities because they don't have schools in their communities, and then losing their lives—it's difficult.

I know that there are things over the past years that have been worked on, and I think the member did a great job of pointing out how these small steps—he called it low-hanging fruit; it's something that he mentions to me all the time as well, the low-hanging fruit—don't really do justice to it.

My question to my colleague is, what would it be—and I think this goes beyond that, because when you're talking about the need for clean drinking water, the fact that you need schools and all of those things, there's so much more to be done. Would you be able to just tell us, in terms of some of the concrete steps—you mentioned a few of the reconciliation calls to action.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch for the question. I see three things at three levels. One is at a very high level, perhaps a political level. I see that second level as programs and services funding. The real level is the grass-roots level, the community level.

One of the things that I think is important to talk about is those big issues, as well. I can point back to call to action number 45. It identifies the need to renew and establish treaty relationships based on principles of mutual recognition, mutual respect and shared responsibilities for maintaining those relationships into the future. I think if Ontario started to acknowledge that they are treaty partners—for the First Nations in Ontario, that would be very monumental.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Mr. Rick Byers: I thank the member for his comments. I always appreciate listening to what he has to say on various elements.

As we look at the issues involved in this bill, in talking to my colleagues, we on the government side know the importance of getting legislation crafted well. Bill 26 is survivor-centric, survivor-informed and based on hours of consultation with over 100 different stakeholders. It's a good example of how legislation should be drafted, with this broad consideration.

I wanted to ask the member if he can consider the positive elements of this bill and join with us in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I was thinking about some of the comments within the bill that I've heard this afternoon and from the previous reading as well. I know I'm at a place where I spoke about the northern kids who are missing when they are being sent to cities down south to attend school and never come back. We are still waiting for the remains of our children who never came home to come home, our ancestors to be returned home from the mass graves across the nation. I don't know if I can answer that. Meegwetch.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: I'd like to thank my colleague from Kiiwetinoong for his powerful presentation. His words, "reconciliation requires more than words," is

something that is always resonating with me, and I've always tried to think about how I can use my place in this House to further action on reconciliation. As the critic for child care for the official opposition, I've tabled a motion for the provincial government to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Indigenous families, which is the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action number 12.

But going back to this legislation, I'd like to ask the member—I mean, what is in this legislation is a start, but there is so much more that we can do. There are specific steps that can go into this legislation to make it stronger, specifically for Indigenous and First Nations communities. So I'd like to ask his thoughts on what can be strengthened in this legislation.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I always say this, and I've said this in the House a number of times: The biggest room in the world is the room for improvement. Anything we present for any additional comment on any legislation—once we come together as legislators, that's where the change is.

Reconciliation should not have any strings attached to it. Reconciliation requires no-strings-attached support. It requires more of respecting treaties. It requires speaking with nations prior to doing things, because that's called "free, prior and informed consent" with First Nations. No matter what legislation we talk about, we are the first people who are impacted when legislation happens without talking to First Nations.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): That's the time for questions.

Further debate?

Mr. Chris Glover: It's an honour to rise in here and speak on Bill 26, which is a bill that is designed to help address sexual assault on campus. I think we all agree on the goal of this—all of us. Many of us have children who are on campuses now or have been recently on campuses and were absolutely shocked and terrified that this is happening so frequently on campus and that it blows up in the media once in a while.

We need students to be safe when they go to college or university, and in order to achieve that, we need processes for education—and I'm just getting some water. So I'm just going to pause for a minute while I get the water. Thank you so much, Oriana.

I just want to give a shout-out to the pages here. They work here, this is their—

Applause.

Mr. Chris Glover: Yes. They deliver notes to us. This is different from class. You're actually allowed to pass notes back and forth to each other; in fact, the pages will deliver the notes for you. You're actually allowed to have water in the Legislature here, which is kind of nice when you're starting a 20-minute speech.

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Anyway, it's very clear. I think everybody agrees, and we saw this in the committee reports, that if we're going to really address sexual assault on campus, we need education programs, we need processes for reporting, we

need repercussions and we need supports for survivors. This bill takes some measures on increasing the repercussions for those who are accused or those who are guilty of sexual assault or sexual harassment and violence, but it doesn't do anything on the education front and it doesn't do anything on the supports for survivors. This is where the bill comes up short and should be improved.

Bill 26 provides post-secondary institutions and private career colleges with clearer rights to fire employees when they are found to have sexually abused a student, to stop them from being rehired, and bans the use of non-disclosure agreements. So there are some measures in here, but we've also heard in committee that some of the measures that are in here may not be constitutional. This is a real challenge with this bill, because if they are not, then what this means is that a student may come forward and make a complaint and the complaint will go through the process. It's very clear from the literature and it's very clear from people's experiences and what was written and we heard in committee is that that re-traumatizes the person. You're asking somebody to come forward and make the complaint, and then if this bill is not constitutional, it could be—whatever repercussions are imposed upon the perpetrator, the charges could go to court and get overturned because this bill is not constitutional, it's not within the Charter of Rights. This could actually revictimize the victims. That's why we asked at committee for the government to check this, to make sure that this bill fits within the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Sexual assault is an issue that keeps coming up on our campuses. It's not a new issue, but it does blow up once in a while in the media. We know that it's going on all too frequently.

At Western University in September 2021, during the orientation week, there were reports from social media that suggested 30 or more students were drugged and/or assaulted on campus in on-campus housing. In the same week, an additional four women came forward to police about three incidents of sexual assault. This prompted a school-wide walkout, and it occurred with 9,000 students protesting a culture of misogyny on campus. They called for Western to review policies and procedures for handling these situations.

Western University students actually came to depute at committee. They want more than what this bill is offering.

So let's talk about some facts about sexual assault. Post-secondary students experience a disproportionate number of sexual and gender-based assaults compared to the rest of the population. Forty-one per cent of sexual assault cases are reported by students at post-secondary institutions in Canada. Three out of four students have witnessed or experienced unwanted sexual behaviours while attending a post-secondary institution. One in five women will experience rape, and one in 10 young men will perpetrate rape by the time they graduate. Men are disproportionately the instigators and perpetrators of sexual assault and violence and most often against women. And most sexual assault and gender-based violence is committed by students towards other students and occur in high-risk times and spaces on and off campus.

This is one of the other shortcomings of this bill. It only deals with staff harassment and assaults on students. It doesn't actually deal with student-on-student, which is the most common type of sexual assault on campus. So we need education, we need processes and we need repercussions, both preventive and punitive measures. The stronger punitive measures that are in this bill also don't consider that sometimes graduate students are also staff members. So if a graduate student who is also a staff member is accused and found guilty of sexual harassment or violence on campus, they may be dismissed as a staff member, but what will happen is, they're still allowed to be on campus as a graduate student, and that's one of the things that's not addressed in this bill, and so the victims may have to continue to be on the same campus with the perpetrator.

I want to talk about solutions, because we heard a lot in the committee about what needs to be done. There were a number of organizations that came to the committee, and every single stakeholder who came to the committee brought forward changes that they wanted to see in this bill. Unfortunately, the government refused almost all of the suggested amendments.

The people who came to committee said, "We want a trauma-informed, survivor-centric, comprehensive and prevention-focused approach to sexual violence and harassment." They talked to the committee, they made written deputations and the committee heard from survivors.

A coalition of 24 student organizations that included the Canadian Federation of Students, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the College Student Alliance, the University of Ottawa Students' Union, the University of Toronto Students' Union and the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union released in August a comprehensive report called *Our Campus, Our Safety*. They had 10 calls to action. They wanted provincial standards for data collection on campuses, and that is key, because if you don't have the data, then you don't know the extent of the problem and you can't come up with appropriate remedies. They wanted prevention education. They wanted minimum standards for sexual violence policies. And they wanted mandatory review processes.

There were a number of things that these 24 student organizations asked for, and none of these recommendations are included in the legislation. My colleague the member from Ottawa West-Nepean asked the minister if she had read this report from these student organizations, and the minister said she had read the report, but she didn't give a reason on why none of the recommendations from these 24 student organizations were included in this bill.

The *Our Campus, Our Safety* report says we need to go beyond stand-alone, individualistic measures, and I will say this is one of my biggest concerns with this legislation, because I was a part-time professor at York University in 2015-16, and at that time sexual assault became a hot item in the media. They were talking about it and there was a call to bring an end to sexual harassment and violence on campus.

The government of the time, the Liberal government, gave the universities and colleges \$42 million and they mandated that all of them have sexual assault prevention policies, but the \$42 million went to better lighting and to cameras. At the time, all of these student organizations, all of the advocacy organizations all said, “This isn’t going to solve the problem. It’s a step in the right direction, but this isn’t going to solve the problem. We need a comprehensive approach.”

That was 2015-16, and then in 2021 we had that blow-up at Western University where 9,000 students walked off campus talking about a culture of misogyny. And so the Liberal government didn’t listen to the advocates, they didn’t listen to the experts in designing the legislation and their actions back in 2015-16. Sexual harassment and assault continues on our campuses.

And here we are in 2022, and this government has got another piece of legislation. They haven’t listened to the advocates. They haven’t listened to the experts and designed a comprehensive piece of legislation that will actually address these issues. It’s an incredible lost opportunity, because what I’m afraid is going to happen is that this legislation, because it only addresses punitive measures for staff-on-student sexual harassment and assault, doesn’t take a comprehensive approach, and so it’s going to continue and students are going to continue to be victimized on their campuses.

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Let’s talk about solutions. One of the solutions has actually been presented by my colleague in the NDP. MPP Wong-Tam, the member from Toronto Centre, has brought forward a piece of legislation called Consent Awareness Week Act. It’s Bill 18. It’s before the House, and it was supported by the member from Toronto Centre, the member from Davenport, the member from St. Paul’s and the member from Kitchener Centre.

The point of this bill is to proclaim the week beginning on the third Monday in September in each year as Consent Awareness Week. The goal of Consent Awareness Week is to engage and create space one week every year for Ontarians to have meaningful, positive, intersectional and age-appropriate conversations around consent, what it means and what it looks like. My colleague from Toronto Centre said, “Sexual assault of any kind causes lifelong trauma and impacts relationships for the rest of the survivor’s life.”

That bill was carried at first reading. What we heard is, that kind of action, that Consent Awareness Week and the education that was implicit in that bill, was asked for by every group that came to committee. These groups included Courage to Act, Possibility Seeds, the YWCA and many gender-based violence experts; they included unions, like OCUFA, CUPE, OPSEU and OSSTF. They all asked for a comprehensive approach to addressing sexual harassment and violence on campus. They asked for education: education on consent, education on prevention, education on safety measures, on what your rights are and education on what to do if something happens. They also wanted education on how to intervene safely and what

to do if something happens to you or someone discloses an incident of sexual violence or harassment to you.

I want to talk about consent for a minute. That’s part of the education. We need education about consent. The Canadian Women’s Foundation says that 96% of Canadians believe that sexual activity between partners should be consensual, but only one in three actually know what consent means. They believe consent should be there—96% of people believe there should be consent with sexual activity—but one in three don’t know what it means. That shows there’s this education gap, and that’s an opportunity for this bill to address that gap.

Let’s see. My colleagues, the members from Nickel Belt and Ottawa West–Nepean, in committee moved amendments to mandate prevention education. They wanted it for all students, faculty and staff at publicly funded universities and colleges and at private career colleges, but the government voted against it. It seemed odd. Why would you vote against incorporating prevention education into this bill? The rationale from the government was that they couldn’t incorporate it into the bill without doing consultation on it, but the committee hearings themselves were consultation.

I mentioned a number of organizations that were there, but among the student organizations that were at committee, there was the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the Canadian Federation of Students, Courage to Act, Possibility Seeds, University of Toronto Students’ Union, PEARS Project, OCUFA and Western University. Those are just some of the people who spoke or made submissions to the committee.

So the committee itself was the consultation. There was no reason not to take what they had said, what they were recommending, and incorporate it into this legislation. Even if there was a reason, if the government had doubts about what direction to take this, there’s a thing in the Legislature called “travelling a bill.” So if the government isn’t sure they’ve got the legislation right, they can take the bill and a group of MPPs, travel all across the province and get feedback on it, and then make recommendations and revamp the bill. That was a possibility here as well, but the government didn’t take it.

The other thing that I want to talk about is supports for survivors. After the blow-up in 2021, Western University launched the Action Committee on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence. It was an independent review to identify policy gaps or procedural failures related to the events of September 2021. The report called for preventative measures.

They appointed a special adviser to address campus culture and safety; they required all incoming students to complete a gender-based and sexual violence education, prevention and awareness training program; they hired an additional gender-based and sexual violence support case manager and education coordinator; they created a training program for Western special constables and other security personnel; and they provided more support to student organizations like fraternities and sororities to address issues around gender-based and sexual violence and

helped them to apply for funding through the Canada Research Chairs Program and the Canadian research excellence program.

And so Western University went through this process just last year. They came up with some actions to address sexual harassment and violence on their campus. But the actions that they took, the lessons that Western University learned from their experience, were not incorporated into this legislation, and that's a real concern. This is a lost opportunity.

Let's see. What we heard is that there aren't adequate investments at post-secondary institutions to enhance gender-based violence prevention training and supports. We should be taking an opportunity like this bill to really do everything that we can to prevent future sexual harassment and violence on campuses, and what we're seeing and what we've heard is that this hasn't gone far enough.

I'm speaking particularly to the members opposite, to the members in the Conservative government here. The goal is clear: The goal is to address and prevent and to deal with sexual harassment and violence on campuses. This bill just doesn't go far enough. It doesn't have the comprehensive education. It has some increase in repercussions, but it doesn't have a comprehensive process for dealing with sexual harassment and violence, and it doesn't have the supports that survivors need. This is a real lost opportunity.

I've got one minute left. I want to talk about the renaming of Ryerson University to Toronto Metropolitan University. This is a measure that's good, that's very supportable in this bill. It's something that needed to happen because, as we just heard from my colleague from Kiiwetinoong, there is long-lasting trauma from the residential school system, and it's intergenerational trauma. The renaming of that school will hopefully be one small step towards healing and towards real truth and reconciliation for the First Nations people of this land.

So thank you for that part of it. I wish the government had gone further on the sexual harassment and violence piece.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): It is now time for questions.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the member from Spadina–Fort York for your wonderful presentation. I know you also come from an academic background, and I like your research and your numbers. You passionately talk for the marginalized and vulnerable people in our province.

Members of this Legislature have a rare opportunity to all stand together across party lines and support this piece of legislation preventing sexual misconduct. It's not a partisan issue. So will the member support our government's bill and encourage all of the members to do the same thing so we can send the clear message that MPPs in Ontario don't and won't stand for sexual misconduct in the post-secondary system?

Mr. Chris Glover: I want to thank the member from Markham–Thornhill for the question. We are all agreed

that we need to deal with sexual harassment and violence on campus, and this bill just doesn't go far enough. There should be much more. There should be an education component and there should be supports for survivors built into this bill. That's what was asked for at committee by many, many organizations and experts. Unfortunately, it didn't get incorporated into the bill, which is a real lost opportunity.

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The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Questions?

Ms. Doly Begum: I want to thank the member from Spadina–Fort York for his presentation. I listened very intently because I know he brings in a lot of experience and a lot of research for his presentations as well. One of the things he talked about was our amendments that we proposed during committee, Speaker. He talked about the different institutions and almost a decade now where people have come forward and talked about the different types of issues that are faced, and when we look at this measure—and I completely agree. We all have to come together and address this kind of issue, especially when it comes to reconciliation and when it comes to sexual abuse and how we address that.

But when I look at this bill, the first portion of this bill really looks at punitive measures but doesn't really talk about: How do we prevent it? How do we address it? How do we help students? I wanted to see if he would elaborate a little bit more, in the careers that he's had, to talk about some of those amendments and measures.

Mr. Chris Glover: When you're talking about education, I mean, it's very clear: The statistics are clear that 96% of Canadians believe that there should be consent with sexual activity, but one in three don't know what consent means. So that's where the gap is. That's where we really need education, and that's why I'm really hoping the government will push through the consent awareness act that our colleagues have brought forward, because that is going to mandate education about what consent actually means across the province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Mr. Rick Byers: I thank the member for his comments, in particular given his role in the past in post-secondary education. So I appreciate that and was listening.

But I will say that given the timing of this bill, Bill 26 will happen right before the holiday break across this province. After the break, students will be returning home, ready to start a new semester in the new year, a semester in which students will either have the protections of Bill 26, if passed, or not. Members opposite can make sure this legislation passes. So I'd ask the member, will you join with us in supporting Bill 26 and giving students this protection they do not have today?

Mr. Chris Glover: There's a lot of good things in this bill. There's a lot of things that we should be supporting. I think what's unfortunate—and I still don't understand the government's rationale for not incorporating the changes, the amendments that were recommended by so many

deputants at the committee level. That's a real lost opportunity. Those recommendations for broader education and for support for survivors—I think those really needed to be incorporated in this legislation.

There are some good things in this bill, but this in itself is not going to protect students on campus, and that's got to be our goal. There should be no holds barred on that, like we've got to do—well, we've got to do it within the Constitution and the charter, but we've got to make sure that we're doing everything we possibly can to make students safe on campus. This bill just doesn't go far enough.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: I'd like to thank my colleague the member from Spadina–Fort York for his presentation. He is approaching this bill with a lot of experience, both as a graduate student and as a professor in a university.

He talked a bit about the committee hearings, and I'm interested to know more about the stakeholder reactions—if he could share with this House, particularly what students have said need to go into the bill. What were some of the recommendations that came out of the report from Western University that could be added to this bill?

Mr. Chris Glover: Western University students' union was one of many organizations that spoke or made submissions to this bill, and they were all asking for a comprehensive approach. Western University, because of what it had gone through in the past year, has adopted a comprehensive approach to dealing with sexual harassment and violence on campus. It includes broad-based education that's mandated for everybody. That education includes not only all students and faculty, it also includes the constable services, the security services. So there's that component. Also, they've hired staff to look into it.

The other thing that people were asking for is comprehensive data and province-wide data on this issue, because the data is the key to understanding how broad, how widespread this problem is and then to address—creating real solutions for it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you to the member for participating in the debate. As a few of our colleagues here have mentioned, he does have first-hand experience, being a former faculty member. I want to ask, when he was a faculty member, what kind of training he received, and did he think it was adequate enough?

Mr. Chris Glover: Sorry; I missed that.

Ms. Andrea Khanjin: What type of training did you receive when it comes to sexual assault cases, and do you think it was adequate training?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for a response.

Mr. Chris Glover: I can say this is one of the gaps. This is why we're calling for education, because there was no mandated education on the campus at the time. I was a school board trustee, and we did mandate training at the school board level, but we did not have it on the campus at that time when I was a professor there, and it was a real gap and it should have been there for everybody—students, faculty, all staff members. It should have been there.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): Further questions?

Ms. Natalie Pierre: For too long, students have been silenced by a system that allowed perpetrators to hide behind non-disclosure agreements and continue to move around to each institution. Silence protects predators. Silence is complicity. This bill prevents perpetrators of sexual misconduct from continuing to work at their institution or popping up at other institutions. It allows institutions to integrate their own sexual violence policies alongside the Ontario Human Rights Code and Criminal Code interpretations of sexual solicitation and violence. Will the member opposite support our bill?

Mr. Chris Glover: You know, this is what we're looking at right now, because we want—we all have this common goal of addressing sexual harassment and violence on campus, and we want to do it in the right way. We want to make sure that this bill is going to achieve the goal of actually addressing and reducing or preventing sexual harassment and violence on campus.

The question back for me, especially reading the reports coming out of committee, was, why weren't the recommendations from so many deputants incorporated into the legislation? This bill was an opportunity to address this. The last time that this issue came up in this Legislature was back in 2015-16, when the Liberal government was in. They provided money for cameras and lights and they mandated policies at campuses, but it just wasn't enough and it didn't stop the problem. My fear is that this bill is not going to stop the problem.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly): That is our time for questions.

Report continues in volume B.

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