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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Tuesday 28 March 2023

Mardi 28 mars 2023

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING A STRONG ONTARIO ACT
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2023

LOI DE 2023 VISANT À BÂTIR
UN ONTARIO FORT
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 27, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to implement Budget measures and to amend various statutes / Projet de loi 85, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à modifier diverses lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): When we last debated Bill 85, the member for Don Valley West had the floor. I recognize, again, the member for Don Valley West to continue.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Continuing where I left off yesterday—we need a government that invests in young, high-potential companies. An innovation hub told me that a government contract is more valuable than a grant because it gives them credibility when they go to sell in other markets. We need a government that sees that opportunity and does what it can to support these companies. But we're not seeing that kind of creativity with this government.

Canada's productivity is lagging far behind other major economies, with the OECD ranking us last for future economic GDP per capita growth amongst advanced economies. Ontario plays a role in that. It has been an economic engine for Canada, and we are not keeping up. We must keep firing on all cylinders to make sure that Ontario does its job to be the roaring engine of the Canadian economy. That could include continuing to drive work to remove barriers in freer interprovincial trade. Ontario should be leading these conversations, yet there was no mention of this opportunity in this latest budget document. As Stephen Poloz, former governor of the Bank of Canada, said at an initiative led by the Minister of Economic Development in 2021, "Politics is the art of the possible. I see no reason why this isn't possible." Unlocking this potential would create thousands of dollars per person in GDP in this province.

Speaker, let's talk about the \$4 billion this government has once again put in contingency funds. This government has a predilection for squirreling more away for a rainy day than any other government before it. Clearly, they have no plan to use that money to invest back into our economy and the people of Ontario. Maybe that's why the Premier said, last year, "The worst place you can ever give your money to is the government." That \$4 billion would go a long way in making a difference in people's lives. If the government repeals their unconstitutional Bill 124, they could use this money and the millions they are spending to fight it on paying our health care and other public workers more than a 1% raise. It could go toward the construction of new affordable housing, so that we can provide safe housing to the thousands of homeless people struggling across this province. It could go towards restoring the universal basic income pilot. It could help address the school repair backlog and the surgical backlog. It could go towards addressing the shortfall in municipal budgets and helping municipalities large and small to meaningfully address the opioid crisis. It could go towards key transit projects like the Eglinton East LRT in Scarborough or the waterfront LRT. It could go towards restoring OSAP funding to the more inclusionary levels under the previous Liberal government, and to supporting arts and culture to enrich our lives. It could go towards advancing employee ownership trusts, digital health innovation, and helping drive climate resilience and the energy transition.

There's a long list of unmet needs under this government, and spending our money wisely to support the people of Ontario and drive growth in our economy would help lift everyone up.

Instead, individuals, families, health care and education systems, Ontario productivity and our future economy will continue to struggle under this government's latest budget. If people can no longer afford to live in Ontario, and this government is not investing in people and real solutions to make Ontario the roaring engine of our economy, why would people choose to stay?

Unfortunately, for a lot of Ontarians, this budget means more housing unaffordability, more suffering from the increased cost of living, and more long wait times for care—more unmet needs.

The families of Ontario will not feel any balance from the budget, and that is nothing to celebrate.

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

Mr. Rick Byers: I thank the member for her comments on the budget. I certainly respect, given her commercial background involvement, the comments she made. The

member talked a lot about productivity and how we can make the economy stronger.

I'd point out a number of things in this budget we have done—in particular, the Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit, which is a 10% refundable corporate tax credit for Canadian-controlled private corporations that will get investment in Ontario, increase productivity. There is the Ontario Junior Exploration Program, the savings for small businesses in our reduction of red tape—on and on and on. Those things are attracting huge investments—\$16 billion for our automotive sector, in particular. Does not the member think those things do, in fact, enhance productivity in this budget?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thanks for the question.

As I mentioned, I do believe that those things drive productivity but that those aren't the only sectors in our economy that we need to pay attention to. As I also mentioned, those companies in the manufacturing sector will only benefit from that credit if they actually decide to invest, and investing takes confidence. Business confidence is at an all-time low right now under this government.

I think what we need to be doing is focusing on the things that can build up investor confidence, business confidence. That includes making sure that we do have a strong health care system, a strong education system; that we're investing in our post-secondary education institutions and driving advancement towards a clean economy, a green economy, so that those businesses are here and willing to stay.

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

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the member from Don Valley West for her comments.

I had the opportunity to travel the province with the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs, with the member, during which we heard from no delegation in support of the wage-suppression and wage-restraint legislation of Bill 124. In fact, it's concerning that the government seems ideologically fixed on this costly legal battle. I believe that delegations indicated that Bill 124 was demeaning, was degrading to health care workers—and, in fact, the word that was used that will stick with me forever was that Bill 124 was “humiliating.”

Is it fiscally prudent for the government to continue to appeal legislation that has been defeated in court?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thank you for the question.

I think the member has made a very good point—that, of course, it's not fiscally prudent. The government is very likely to lose this court battle; it has been deemed unconstitutional. In addition to that, we know that it's driving workers out of this province. We heard that in the pre-budget consultations. We heard how it's forcing people who have full-time jobs to seek support in food banks. So we know that it's not only unconstitutional, but that it's damaging our economy, and spending probably in the tens of millions of dollars, if it's consistent with what they've spent on other appeals, is really throwing good money after bad.

0910

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

Mr. John Fraser: I want to note that the member is reminding us of the Premier's statement that the worst place you can send your money to is government. I guess he doesn't fully understand that Ontario's school system, our schools, our colleges and our universities have made us great, that our publicly funded—

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I apologize to the member. I've just noticed that you're not sitting in your seat, and you can't be speaking if you're not.

Mr. John Fraser: Sorry; I got disoriented there for a moment.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Clearly, there's a misunderstanding of what government is here to do—it's what we do for each other.

But in this budget, it's very clear that the message is, if you have a child with special needs in school and their needs aren't being met, you're on your own. If they're having challenges with mental health, you're on your own. If they're just simply falling behind, the government is saying to you, “You're on your own.” If you need paid sick days, you're on your own. If you're a senior looking for eye care, you're on your own.

My question is, what does the overdependence on contingencies and reserves in this budget mean to Ontario families?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thank you for the question.

I think the member has nailed it on the head here when he says that people are on their own.

Again, that money is basically being stored away for a rainy day and potential risks that the government talks about. Well, again, those risks are here. As you've mentioned, children are suffering from the pandemic. Their mental health is suffering, and they're being told, “Here's a couple of hundred dollars to go get some tutoring help.” That will not advance their learning. Seniors are being told, “Wait for your eye care appointments.” People are being told to keep waiting for their surgeries.

That money could be invested in our economy, invested in our health care system, invested in helping the homeless, whom we know are struggling, and that's affecting all of us more broadly in our economy.

The member is quite accurate in saying that that money could be better spent under many different programs, instead of squirrelling it away for a rainy day.

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

Ms. Laura Smith: I want to respectfully thank the member opposite.

I have spoken to countless businesses in Thornhill, and they are in desperate need of skilled trades workers, and we know Ontario needs skilled trades workers as a whole.

Will the opposition please support the proposed investment of \$25 million in the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program so that Ontario can welcome more newcomers with skills needed to build Ontario?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thank you for the question.

Certainly, investing in new immigrants to Ontario and to Canada is important.

I know the government likes to point out that if we vote against the budget, we're voting against the whole thing. I certainly don't think that's the case.

I think the focus really needs to be on keeping the workers we do have. The government is focused on finding new workers. That's because they're driving away workers. They've driven away workers in the health care sector. They've driven away education workers. And they're driving away daycare workers, so that's actually preventing us from achieving the full potential we can around the federal government's program for daycare.

While I support supporting new immigrants to Ontario, we need to also make sure that we're fighting for the workers we have today.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: I want to thank the member for her remarks.

I'm thinking about the implications of the government that, in its budget last week, announced no new money for operating public transit in the province of Ontario—just commitments to these trains they're building that may happen at one point somewhere. We know about them in Ottawa. They don't tend to work very well when they're built by the consultants this government likes.

A 16-year-old, sadly, tragically lost their life this past Saturday, and people have been sounding alarm bells that we urgently need money into public transit so the transit system works well and is safe.

I'm wondering if the member has any comments about how we can make sure that the public transit system that we do have actually works well and is safe?

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thank you for the question.

It was really heartbreaking to hear the interview with the mother of the 16-year-old boy who died. She was very brave and spoke up about the need not only for investment in our transit systems but for investments in the people who are vulnerable—the homeless man who allegedly killed her son.

So I think that, on two fronts, this budget lets us down. It is not investing in our transit systems. There are broken promises related to new lines that the previous budgets have laid out that are not here.

We know that the TTC is having to cut service, and that only leads to more unsafe conditions on our transit systems, because with fewer people around and longer wait times, we know that that can lead to more issues.

Absolutely, the member is correct that we should be investing in public transit and the surrounding supports to make sure the homeless are supported.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: I'm just wondering if the member, given our agreement on this, can protect some space in this conversation for this government.

From your perspective, where should the money be going? Should it be going into operating transit for the TTC? Should it be going to helping folks who are homeless get access to safe, affordable homes with wraparound supports?

Give these folks, who seem to be fixated on trains that have not been built yet and are late, an idea of where the money should be going to.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: Thank you to the member for the question.

We need to be making sure that if we build transit, we actually can run it. We can't run it without sufficient operating budgets. We know that the TTC is one of the most underfunded transit systems in North America, and I expect that's probably the case for others, like in Ottawa.

Again, having government support for that transit system will provide safety, but we also need to talk about how many people are homeless, what kind of supports they need, what kind of housing they need. Let's look at things like small homes that can be affordable, that can be done quickly, to put a roof over their heads so that they can then get the help that they need.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: The unfortunate part is that I only have 20 minutes. This is such a good budget that I would have loved to have had the 60-minute leadoff to talk about this. There are so many things that we're doing in this to improve the lives of people in Ontario.

I'll try to focus as much as I can on my own riding, because I think there are a number of things that this document lays out that will improve the lives of the people in Peterborough–Kawartha.

We know that we have, across Ontario, an addictions crisis. Some people want to refer to it as an opioid crisis, but the reality is, it's an addictions crisis—it's not just opioids. It starts with different things, and it leads to a lot of other challenges. Those challenges affect not just the individuals, but their families.

I've said before in this House that any person who overdoses and dies is someone's son or daughter, and could potentially be someone's mother or father or brother or sister. They are a family member.

We've taken this very, very seriously. Almost half a billion dollars is being allocated to it.

What does that mean for communities like mine? We know that in Peterborough, last year, we averaged one overdose death a week; 52 people in a city of 85,000 overdosed and died. The investments that we're putting into mental health and addictions are things that will make a positive difference. What we've done in our community over the last year and a half are things that need to be celebrated. We have a mobile mental health and addictions bus—we actually have two of them; Peterborough is part of the pilot project for this—taking mental health and addictions supports out into the community, where people

need the service, when they need the service, paid for by OHIP. It goes out into Peterborough county, Northumberland county, Haliburton, which relieves some of the stress in the city of Peterborough, because the services are coming right out to you. We're one of the pilots for this; there are three of them across the province. This is something that's replicable and will make a positive difference, because if we can intervene before it is a crisis, we never develop to that crisis point. We get the supports to the individual, again, when they need it, where they need it.

0920

These are things that are outside-of-the-box thinking. It's not something that is being done widespread across the province. It's not something that was widespread across anywhere in Canada. And yet, this government is investing funds specifically for that, and will demonstrate that this is a service that will work. This is a service that will reduce the number of individuals who find themselves in crisis.

But we know that we do have people who are in crisis right now—and that's where some of these other investments will be. We know that harm reduction is one of those models that is a stopgap. It helps to build trust with an individual. It keeps them alive for a period of time. But it's not the final solution. The final solution is developing ways to get people to treatment. That's what this investment will do—create more treatment opportunities, more chances for people to get to treatment.

In my community, in 2020, 82% of the overdose deaths were in their own homes. These are people who would not be going to a consumption and treatment site. These are people who are not on the street. These are people who are not unhoused. These are your neighbours, and we're providing supports for them, to get them into a better position.

We've heard the NDP talk about how heartless we are, as Conservatives—that we don't do things that they want us to do.

Well, \$202 million is being invested in the homelessness prevention fund. That's an investment to change the narrative, to change the trajectory for some of these people, because we know that if we can get them to stable housing, if we can get them to a point where they feel valued, they will be far more productive.

We also know that one of the best social programs is a job, so we've done things in this budget to increase training, to increase the ability to get people to that next stage. Ready, Set, Go—that funding opportunity will provide education opportunities for a number of individuals who have been disadvantaged and get them to the next step, so that they can improve their lives.

But it's not just about those social programs. We're investing in job creation—the tax rebates, tax cuts for manufacturing. Manufacturing is something that we drove out of this province in droves for 15 years, when the Liberals were in power. We're reversing that trend. We're bringing companies back to Ontario. We're repatriating a lot of that manufacturing, and we're providing a tax

benefit for companies—small companies—in manufacturing to accelerate that, so that more people have that opportunity for a good-paying job.

We know that by reducing taxes the way we have—over the last few years, we've heard repeatedly how horrible it was to put money back into people's pockets, how horrible we were for not increasing taxes. We're projecting record revenues for the province by cutting tax, and the reason we're doing that is, you have more money in your pocket to spend; companies have more money to hire and produce; companies have more money to advertise, market and sell their products. And we're seeing the benefits of that.

We have a record amount of spending in this province now. This budget is more than \$200 billion, and we have a pathway to a balanced budget in a record time. Just last year, we talked about getting to a balanced budget in three years' time. We'll be at a balanced budget in a year, because we're doing the right things. We're saving people money.

There have been comments that we're not doing enough to help the average person, that there's nothing in this budget to help the average person. That is a completely false narrative.

When we were first elected in 2018, hydro rates, electricity rates in Ontario had risen from 2003—the lowest in North America—to 2018, the highest in North America. And if anyone in Ontario believes that you do not pay for electricity—that is a false statement. All of us are paying for electricity. But the relief we have put in there, \$6.5 billion in relief on electricity charges, is money right back into the pocket of every single person in this province. It doesn't matter whether you're using electricity to turn on the lights or whether you're using electricity to heat your home. All of us use electricity. The opposition members want us to move to an electrified system, where we have electric cars. Well, guess what? Every single electric car has to be charged. And how do they charge that electric car? By plugging it into the grid. That is savings for every single person in this province. I know it's a narrative that the NDP doesn't want. I know it's a narrative that the Liberals don't want. They don't want to talk about the good things we're doing.

This budget supports every single person in this province. With the GAINS program, at least 100,000 more seniors will have more money back in their pockets because of that.

That's what this budget does—it puts money back into people's pockets. It gives them the ability to decide how they're going to spend it. And that is how government should function.

With that, Madam Speaker, I'm going to turn my time over to the member for Windsor–Tecumseh.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Windsor–Tecumseh to continue.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Today, I'm pleased and proud to rise to speak in favour of Bill 85.

One of the greatest privileges of serving here in our government is knowing that my community of Windsor–Tecumseh matters. Those who grow up in Windsor–

Tecumseh and Windsor-Essex live in a persistent cycle of economic boom and bust. The opportunity to overcome this cycle is through sound government policy—policy that supports the attraction and retention of employers; policy that supports our wraparound and supportive social services; policy that helps people be their best. On these fronts, the budget delivers.

We know that, in this moment, there is significant economic challenge and uncertainty. But, despite it all, Ontario remains a beacon of hope, a place where the economy is resilient, where we have a government who knows that driving debt onto younger generations—both government and personal—is a poor choice.

Speaker, our plan is truly a responsible one. It helps people and businesses today through a targeted approach. It cares about future generations. It recognizes that we must be mindful of the consequences of our actions. It recognizes that we need to be prepared for the unexpected. It recognizes that we build Ontario up by attracting and protecting investments and jobs. It recognizes that we must not build and ignore, but rather, reinvest in hospitals, schools, transit, highways and infrastructure projects, and that should not cease. Our plan addresses today's challenges head-on, with worker training, connected and convenient health care, and better public services. Our plan offers hope where hope is hard to find. It offers a future where Ontario maintains strength and a resilient economy.

But the truth of the matter is, I don't need to say much more about the budget on my own—I'll let my community speak on this.

Mayor Drew Dilkens of Windsor celebrated the measures of the budget in an interview with the Windsor Star. He noted that measures designed to target labour market issues, health care wait times, and addictions and mental health will benefit the Windsor region. Mayor Dilkens noted, particularly with respect to the economy, the following:

“What the government is doing with respect to the Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit will certainly help Ontario manufacturers. It certainly plays into all of the work that we're doing behind the scenes to get new industrial land ready to support the types of investments we expect to see coming in Ontario, in addition to the EV battery supply chain projects that we see happening.

“This is really good news.

“I think you're going to see a lot of uptake provincially with businesses looking to take advantage of that tax credit, but it means that we have to be ready on the land side and so that's what we're working on, is putting the building blocks together.

“It's certainly good to know that the government is thinking forward about investments that will help drive business and investment decisions here in Ontario to help create more jobs and better pathways for people looking for work.”

On mental health and addictions, Mayor Dilkens welcomes the \$425 million earmarked over three years for support to help the issues “playing out on the streets.”

On the government's \$72-million investment over the upcoming year to expand the number of publicly funded surgeries and procedures performed at community clinics—measures designed to reduce wait times—he noted, “All of those investments I think are very, very strong. Look at someone like Dr. Tayfour and the eye surgeries that he does as a model of how other surgeries can be performed outside of hospital, saving money and increasing the level of service that we all expect as Ontarians. This is good for our community.

“You've already seen traction initially with some of those types of investments, they'll continue to grow but ultimately, (these investments) continue to improve the delivery of service for people who live in the city of Windsor.”

0930

Indeed, Mayor Dilkens referenced Dr. Fouad Tayfour. Dr. Tayfour and Dr. Barry Emara are pillars of our health care community in Windsor-Essex. I call them health care experts. They operate the Windsor Surgical Centre in conjunction with Windsor Regional Hospital. It's a tremendous success story that should be celebrated widely, not protested.

I can't tell you, Speaker, how stunned I was to see the opposition stand outside Windsor Regional Hospital and vow to fight the efforts to get better public health care delivered faster to Windsor-Essex residents, as pioneered by Windsor Regional Hospital.

On the \$202 million more for homelessness prevention, Mayor Dilkens said, “Premier, we are ready to put these \$\$ to work ASAP.”

My friends on this side of the House remind our government frequently to listen to the experts. I encourage everybody to listen to the experts, particularly with respect to health care services. I'm delighted to share what our local experts have to say.

David Musyj, president and CEO of Windsor Regional Hospital, said, “As stated by the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, Minister of Finance, Ontario and the rest of the world are continuing to face economic uncertainty... These challenges have created pressures and risk for the people and businesses across Ontario.

“The last three years have been beyond difficult for everyone.

“I am very pleased to see the Ford government continues to recognize these facts and has made continued, ongoing and significant investments in health care across the whole system and also with respect to Ontario hospitals. The government has signalled a 4% base funding increase to hospitals.

“Windsor Regional Hospital's current annual budget is in excess of \$610 million. We will await the detailed funding letters which will provide exact details to Windsor Regional Hospital.

“Over the past couple of years, the Ford government has invested \$30 million in Windsor Regional Hospital annually to fund 62 additional acute medical/surgical, critical care and acute mental health beds these past few years and for 2023-24. This is significant on its own and

only one example of the ongoing health care investments the Ford government made to Windsor Regional Hospital.”

I will highlight this: “The Ford government has listened to every request made by Windsor Regional Hospital for operational funding, based on a business case, and has responded favourably to every one of these requests.

“At the same time, the Ford government reinforced multiple times in their 2023 budget its support for the new Windsor/Essex acute-care hospital and the Ouellette campus urgent care centre and ambulatory procedures. This project is scheduled to go to tender in 2025 and a ‘shovel in the ground’ is anticipated for 2026.”

To CEO Musy and the Windsor Regional Hospital staff: Our government stands shoulder to shoulder with you in your efforts to take care of the people of our community.

I also want to highlight Bill Marra, CEO of Windsor’s Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare. That’s our mental health facility and chronic care facility. Mr. Marra and I actually ran into each other on Saturday night at the hospice gala held at the Caboto Club, and he let me know how much he appreciated our government’s considerable investment in mental health and addictions. He wrote:

“I want to acknowledge and commend Premier Doug Ford and his government for the recent 2023 budget announcement which includes proposed investments in children’s mental health, adult mental health and addictions as well as supportive housing. His commitment to improving access to mental health care and supportive housing is a significant step forward for Ontario and it will have a profound impact on the lives of countless individuals and their families.

“Further to that, with the recent acknowledgement and investment of our provincial government recognizing HDGH as a centre of excellence in mental health and addictions care along with the expansion of 68 in-patient acute mental health beds due to arrive on our campus within the next few years, it is clear that this government understands the priorities ahead. As we continue to grapple with the long-term fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for mental health care and supportive housing has never been more pressing. The pandemic exacerbated existing mental health and addiction challenges leaving many vulnerable individuals without the support they require. With this proposed investment strategy, the government of Ontario is taking a crucial step towards addressing this urgent need and providing much-needed relief for those who are struggling.”

Mr. Marra concluded—I won’t read it all—supportive of the supportive housing investment: “I applaud Premier Doug Ford and his government for taking this important step forward and improving our health care system in addition to the supportive housing strategy. We must continue to work together to build a healthier and more resilient Ontario for all Ontarians.”

Mr. Marra also noted that Hôtel-Dieu Grace is looking to construct a long-term-care facility.

I see I only have a minute and a half on the clock, so I’ll just finish off with some of the investments that

haven’t been really heard in our community, with the absence of a government member. These great news stories are hard to find.

I’m happy to celebrate these investments in long-term care made by our government in the city of Windsor:

—36 new and 60 upgraded beds at Brouillette Manor in Tecumseh;

—40 new and 120 upgraded beds at DTOC-Leamington;

—85 new and 75 upgraded beds at an Arch home in Lakeshore;

—192 upgraded beds at a new Banwell Gardens Care Centre in Windsor;

—11 new beds and 181 upgraded beds at a new Berkshire Care Centre;

—88 new beds and 72 upgraded beds at a new Regency Park Long-Term Care Home.

Dr. Sonja Grbevski of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex county branch, has equally celebrated the investments made in this budget. She noted, “This budget commitment shows that the government understands the strain our sector is facing as we support Ontarians living with mental health and addictions challenges. We are grateful for this critical investment, which will help us to maintain a high quality of care for the individuals we serve in our community.”

Supportive comments have also been made by Rukshini Ponniah-Goulin, executive director of the Downtown Mission of Windsor; Tim Brady, owner of Brady’s pharmacy, speaking to the new measures for pharmacists; and Rakesh Naidu of the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce.

I could go on for probably another half hour on this.

My community supports our budget. I’m very happy to share the good news with my community.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We’re going to move to questions.

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you to the members opposite for your comments on the budget.

I was genuinely heartened to hear the member from Peterborough–Kawartha spend so much time talking about the importance of people in crisis; I truly agree that that should be a priority for this government. But I was really surprised to hear him say that the budget supports every single person in this province—to begin with, because I can list many people in this province that the budget does not support, but mainly because the budget does not support some of the people who are the most in crisis in our province, which is people who live with disabilities, people who are living on Ontario Works, who are living in such incredibly deep poverty that they are going hungry every day, who are using food banks in record numbers, who are unable to afford rent because the benefits that they are receiving are significantly lower than the rate of rent in the province.

Does the member not agree that, if we genuinely want to help people in crisis, we should start with the 900,000 Ontarians who are living in very deep poverty, and double the rates of Ontario Works and ODSP?

Mr. Dave Smith: Obviously, the member didn't actually listen to everything I said, because I did talk about all the things that we were doing to support everyone in Ontario.

The reduction in cost for electricity of \$6.5 billion affects every single person, whether they are on Ontario Works, ODSP, or whether they are working someplace, whether they are retired. It makes no difference; it affects every single person in this province in a positive way.

We've increased funding to ODSP by 5% and tied it now to inflation so that they'll never find themselves in a position where they're falling further behind. This is the first time any government in Ontario has done this—tied it to inflation to make sure that they do not fall behind.

Madam Speaker, this is a fantastic budget, and the opposition needs to stand up and vote in favour of it, because it helps everyone in this province.

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

Mr. Robert Bailey: Ontario has reached a population of somewhere around 15.4 million people.

I'd like the member for Essex, for example, to explain how those capital investments are going to make improvements both to Ontario as a whole and to Essex in particular.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I thank the member from Sarnia–Lambton for his question.

It's no secret that the delivery of health care has been a struggle in our community. We actually compete with the city of Detroit for our nursing staff. In fact, my next door neighbour, Sandra, a phenomenal nurse, was cut back by a previous government in her career, so she was scooped up by an HMO in Michigan.

0940

We need to provide modern facilities. This government has brought that hope and optimism back by finally approving the Windsor-Essex regional acute-care hospital, giving practitioners the dignity of a sound place to work, with proper equipment that's not left over from 40 years ago. This is a tremendous investment. This is the only government to get behind it. I'm so happy that it made this investment prior to my arrival and that we're going to get the job done in delivering this much-needed facility for the people of Windsor and Essex county.

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

Ms. Jessica Bell: My question is to the member for Peterborough–Kawartha.

When I looked at the budget, one of the things I noticed is that when you look at the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's budget, you see a \$124-million cut. That's on top of the \$5-billion loss in infrastructure spending that is occurring across Ontario because of this government's Bill 23.

What is this government's plan to properly fund affordable housing projects so that they can actually get built?

Everything I'm seeing in this budget is looking like a cut.

Mr. Dave Smith: Wow. That is really all I have to say on that.

Thank you so much for voting against bills that would reduce the cost of building things in Ontario.

We are cutting the development charges for not-for-profit housing. Is that not what your question was about? Then you asked, how are we doing that? We're cutting the development charge in the GTA. In some portions of the GTA, it's \$167,000 for a development charge. Not-for-profits will not have to pay that. That is a significant reduction in the cost per unit—\$167,000. What is that in terms of mortgage payments right now, with the interest rates that we have? That is hundreds of dollars per month—close to \$500 per month—that is not going to have to be paid for not-for-profit housing builds. That helps.

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

Ms. Donna Skelly: My question is for the member from Peterborough–Kawartha.

You spoke about the need to attract more jobs.

I recall, as a reporter, reporting on the number of jobs that fled Ontario under the previous Liberal government due to what I believe were some of the worst pieces of legislation ever introduced in the province of Ontario, including the Green Energy Act. For so many years, business owners—women and men who played by the rules, worked hard and simply wanted to take care of their families, and who created jobs for others to take care of families—felt like they were under attack. Every possible barrier that could be brought forward to stifle them from growing their business was introduced.

But our government has turned the corner, and we have done so much to create more jobs.

Could the member please expand on the initiatives in this budget that attract more jobs and encourage more people to get into the manufacturing sector in Ontario?

Mr. David Smith: This gives me a great opportunity to talk about some of the things that are in the budget that are going to help not just large businesses but small businesses.

I'll start on the small business side. We have changed the employer health tax exemption now. It's going from \$490,000 to \$1 million. How many of your small mom-and-pop shops have \$1 million worth of payroll? Very few. This is putting money right back into their pockets so that they can reinvest that in people.

We have a small business tax cut, down to 3.2%. That is something that will help every single small business in this province.

But probably the greatest thing in this is how we are attracting industries to come back to Ontario. The Liberals pushed out 350,000 manufacturing jobs. If you want to know if our plan is actually working, all you have to do is look at St. Thomas and Elgin, with 2,000 new jobs coming in from VW, moving to Ontario—something that would never have happened under the previous Liberal government.

This is real results for the people of this province. This is real leadership by Premier Ford.

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

Mr. Jeff Burch: I just want to pick up on a question that was asked by my colleague from University–Rosedale.

First of all, not-for-profits in Toronto already don't pay development charges, so we really wish that the government members would stop repeating that talking point over and over again, because it's not true.

Secondly, aside from the argument about whether or not development charges should be charged—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I apologize. I'll ask the member to withdraw.

Mr. Jeff Burch: Withdraw.

Setting aside the question about whether or not development charges are charged, this government promised that they would make municipalities whole for that money, and they haven't done that in this budget.

So why did the government break its promise to municipalities?

Mr. Dave Smith: It's lovely when you hear the opposition stand up and say something that you are doing is really, really good—"But let's not talk about that. Let's put that one aside right now, because we don't want to talk about that. That doesn't fit our narrative."

There is more to the province of Ontario than the city of Toronto, and if you come to any riding outside of the 25 that are in Toronto, they would say that they should also get the same level of respect and that they should get the same benefits as what the Toronto members of the NDP are trying to advocate for Toronto.

In my riding, I know that people are happy about the idea of housing being built; I know that people are happy about the idea of jobs being brought back to the province.

I could go across any single riding of the PC government members, and they would all say the same thing: Ontario is on the right track, because we're attracting businesses.

VW would not be here if it was not for the work of this government, the leadership of Premier Ford and the leadership of Vic Fedeli—sorry, the member from Nipissing, the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We ran out of time for the response.

We don't have time for another question, so we'll have to move to further debate.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch, Speaker. It's always an honour to be able to get up in this place, to speak on behalf of the people of Kiiwetinoong. You have to understand that the Kiiwetinoong riding is 294,000 square kilometres, and we are one of the richest ridings in Ontario—rich in resources such as water, such as the land, and also the lakes that we have, the animals and the fish that live in those waters.

Remarks in Anishiniimowin.

At this time, I will speak your language, which is English. You all know that Anishiniimowin, my language, is not allowed to be spoken in this place. I think we have to understand, as well, that this place, Queen's Park,

the Ontario Legislature, was never built for people like me—First Nations [*Remarks in Anishiniimowin*]. I always acknowledge that this is a place that is very colonial. English is my second language. I have to speak your language.

It's an honour to be able to speak on this bill, Bill 85, Building a Strong Ontario Act. I speak on behalf of the people of Kiiwetinoong.

Yesterday, just down the road, I attended a gathering hosted by the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools. This was their third National Gathering on Unmarked Burials. There may be a lot of you who do not know: The office of the special interlocutor works closely and collaboratively with Indigenous leaders, communities, nations, survivors, families and experts to identify needed measures to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment and protection of unmarked graves, but also the burial sites of children at former Indian residential schools. In Ontario, we are still looking for children who never came home from those—I don't know if I should call them schools. They were not schools. I talk about that because it's very important work that is being done at these gatherings, and it's an honour to be there. I won't be taking part in today's sessions, question period, because I'm going to be with all the survivors who are here, just down the road, from across the country.

0950

We honour the survivors, the Indigenous families and the communities across Turtle Island who are leading the work of recovering the unmarked burials and the missing children.

We also honour and acknowledge those who lead the search and recovery efforts, often reliving their trauma as they work to bring honour and dignity to the spirits, to the bodies, to honour the remains of our children who never came home.

I know we speak about prosperity and a vision forward, but there are things that are happening—like the fact that there are still unmarked graves, unmarked burials of children, on former Indian residential school sites and other associated sites across Canada due to the inaction and the decisions of Canadian governments, provincial governments, and especially the churches who administered these institutions.

We also cannot forget that our children were often sent to other places, like the federal Indian hospitals, sanatoriums, provincial hospitals and provincial reformatories.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified that further work is needed to be done to locate all the unmarked burials, including at associated sites, to locate the missing children.

Today, the survivors, the families of these survivors, Indigenous families and communities carry the burden of leading the search and recovery efforts. It is a burden that they should not have to carry. But that's the reality. That's a dark history.

That's the real history that all Canadians, all Ontarians never knew, which brings me to the budget—\$25.1 million in additional funds to identify remains at former residential school sites over 2023-24. Without this being itemized, it just appears to be an additional \$5 million over \$20 million over three years committed to date. When I see those numbers—how do you put a price on finding our children? How do you put a price on the children who never came home? This is what Ontario has decided—that it's worth this much.

In relation to Indigenous people, this budget mainly talks about two things: (1) the searches for Indian residential schools and (2) the Ring of Fire.

It's certainly interesting how important mining is to this province, to this government.

Before we even had treaties in Ontario, there were people coming into the territories of Indigenous people and mining without agreements. It was in the 1840s—a very important piece of history that took place in Mica Bay at Pointe aux Mines, north of Sault Ste. Marie. This was just before the creation of the Robinson Treaties.

A few years after the discovery of minerals on the shores of Lake Huron and Lake Superior in 1841, the Canada West company generated \$60,000 from mining leases and patents, and stood to earn \$400,000 once the patents were paid in full. We have to understand that this was a lot of money at the time. Government officials of the day continued to ignore the concerns of local Indigenous leaders, whose homes and sources of food were now threatened by this activity. Also, the chiefs of the area were aware of the value of the minerals and questioned the legality of surveying unceded territory.

On November 1, 1849, a group of several hundred Anishinaabe and Métis warriors, led by Chiefs Oshawano, Shingwaukonse and Nebenaigoching, travelled to Mica Bay by boat. They took a small cannon from the lawn of the crown lands agent Joseph Wilson, and other weapons supplied by local merchants who supported their cause. At that time, they secured a lawyer, Allan Macdonell, who joined them with an artist. When they arrived at the mines, the chiefs met with management and gave them an ultimatum of shared profits or a complete shutdown of the operation. The company closed the mines, and his workers began to disperse with their equipment in the following days. Rumours began to spread that there had been an "Indian massacre" with hundreds of casualties. Other mine owners became uneasy after hearing the sensationalized reports, though there had been no deaths at Mica Bay, and pressured Canada West to act. The lawyer and the artist were arrested, alongside two Métis and two Anishinaabe chiefs. The group was sent to Toronto for trial, where they were eventually released and returned to help with the negotiations for the Robinson treaty.

1000

Premiers like to make promises. The current one likes to talk about bulldozers a lot.

George Ross was the fifth Premier of Ontario, from 1899 to 1905, and he talked a lot about railroads. He needed a way to build the Temiskaming and Northern

Ontario Railway, renamed Ontario Northland in 1946. The way he did it was through treaty. He sent survey parties to examine possible routes for a new railroad going as far as James Bay. The initial survey area was covered by the 1850 Robinson-Huron Treaty between the crown and the Anishinaabe people. By 1905, both Queen's Park and Ottawa were pushing for Treaty 9 to be signed to ensure clear title for all the land up to Hudson Bay. The land would be needed for mining, timber and the railroad.

George Ross's 1902 budget stated that resource development was the central government priority. Ross explained later to the House that a modern government "has to be the pioneer ... of manufacturing and commerce." Sounds familiar, right?

Shiri Pasternak, a professor at Toronto Metropolitan University, recently wrote an article about critical minerals and settler colonialism. She said, "The transformation of industries like automotive manufacturing with the rise of electric vehicles, the energy sector with solar and wind infrastructure, and medical innovations in cancer treatment all rely on extracting 'critical minerals' in mostly traditional ways."

But we have to ask ourselves: How is this new extraction different from the old practices of colonization? When we listen to the government talk about critical minerals, it gets framed as clean energy and responsibly sourced materials. The government says that they need critical minerals for national security and to be more important globally. But you have to think more about the land that these minerals come from. Those minerals lie under the treaty lands of the people who have cared for the lands and the waters since the Creator put us there.

What is the trade-off needed for a green economy? Whose lives will these companies be changing forever to make their shareholders richer? How much does it cost to change the ways of life for the people in Treaty 9 forever? And how is it fair to go in and push these projects through in First Nations that don't even have access to clean drinking water, in these reserves? I don't see a \$1-billion commitment to that in the budget—just a road that will mostly make money for a company that can't possibly understand the importance of the lands and the waters, that can't possibly understand the ways of life of the people in Treaty 9. How can I believe that, when every day I look at the mace over here? There's a diamond in there that came from Victor mine, that came from Attawapiskat. During its operation, the Victor mine yielded about 1.1 million carats of diamonds. It's hard to imagine how much that is worth to an average person.

I was in Attawapiskat before, and they have to haul their water in jugs. Their community reserve line is so maxed up, they can't build any more homes. It is important that we acknowledge that.

The government talks about prosperity. I was in the community about two months ago. This community is a signatory to one of the mines nearby. There is literally needless death and unnecessary suffering. I see children who are four years old suffering with skin conditions. The government talks about mines and prosperity to me, to

First Nations. We've had that mine for 30-plus years, and there is no prosperity in there. I think it's important to be able to try to acknowledge that.

I come from a different Ontario. I come from a different Canada.

Thank you for listening. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to questions.

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: I thank the member for his heartfelt comments on behalf of his riding and community. It's very important that we listen and learn.

I want to ask, specific to the bill that we are debating, Bill 85, budget 2023: Will he and his colleagues in His Majesty's official opposition support the increase in the investment in homelessness prevention and the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program, which is proposed to be over \$200 million annually, to give more people a safe place to call home?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch. Reserves were created to get us off the lands where the resources are. Where I grew up, it became a reserve in 1976, and they moved there in 1966. We never had welfare. We were never homeless. In the context of homelessness, I think you can talk about the four walls, but the land is our home. We're not homeless. The land is our home, and people are going back to the lands. That's where our home is. Meegwetch.

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

Mr. Joel Harden: It's always an honour to rise in this House after remarks from our friend from Kiiwetinoong.

In 2019, we saw the second hunger strike of the former Attiwapiskat chief, Theresa Spence. I had the honour of meeting her briefly during the Idle No More movement, when the chief came to our community and told us about the living conditions of her community versus the diamond mine that was being created, which had fresh water, which had food.

When you talk about the juxtaposition of the four-year-old children who have rashes on their skin, when you're talking to the people in Neskantaga and other places, is this what you're hearing from community members—that they fear this constant pattern of discrimination is going to be repeated? What's talked about is prosperity, as you said, but what gets delivered to people in the communities is just a repeat of this continuing. I was wondering if you could elaborate for our benefit.

1010

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: First of all, thank you for the question.

As the first peoples of these lands, as a First Nations person from these lands, I know that's one of the first things that happened—governments took our land, and they took our children.

When you ask about Neskantaga First Nation, a community of 300 people—they have had a boil-water advisory for over 28 years, starting on February 1, 1995. There is no way this would be allowed in any other place in Ontario, anyplace in Canada. But it happens. That's

how colonialism works. That's how oppression works. That's how racism works. That's how discrimination works. We live it on a daily basis. It has become a way of life, and it has detrimental impacts on the wellness and the health of children who live in these communities. Meegwetch.

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

Mr. Rick Byers: I do thank the member opposite for his very heartfelt remarks this morning. We heard them all.

I want to raise two things—first of all, a comment about the incremental support in this budget for the RAISE program, racialized and Indigenous supports for entrepreneurs, at \$15 million. In particular, I want to comment and confirm the additional \$25.1 million in the budget to support identification, investigation, protection and commemoration of residential school burial sites. I respectfully ask whether that additional investment is sufficient to allow the member to support the budget as tabled.

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Meegwetch to the member for the question.

We are at a time when we are again talking about trying to find our children. I know that incremental funding and incremental change further perpetuate the oppression, the colonialism, the crisis in our communities. I think it would be better if you started looking at the 94 calls to action and started investing resources behind those calls to action. I have lived it. I have seen the incremental funding. I have seen the incremental help that governments do, but it perpetuates the crisis in our communities. We've got to do it, full stop, where we will provide the full resources. Yes, I welcome that \$25.1 million, but what's the number on finding our children on former Indian residential school sites?

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

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you very much to the member for Kiiwetinoong for those comments. I learn so much from your remarks in this House, and I really appreciate the reminder of how badly we are failing on two fronts: first, how long we have failed to meet our treaty obligations; and, second, having acknowledged that we did harm and committed to reconciliation, how we are failing to make good on that commitment because we are allowing this persistence of two Ontarios, two standards of living, and completely different expectations and treatment for Indigenous peoples in this province.

What measures would the member like to have seen in this budget that would have actually made a meaningful step toward meeting our treaty obligations and commitment to reconciliation?

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: I think reconciliation can be more than hanging woodland art in our facilities and our offices. That is not reconciliation.

We have to understand that in the numbered treaties from 1 to 11, Treaty 9, where I come from, is the only treaty with the province's signature on it. That's Ontario.

We are your treaty partners, not your stakeholders. Meegwetch.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We now have to move to members' statements. That's all the time we have for the debate.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON

Ms. Laura Smith: On April 2, we celebrate Education and Sharing Day to honour the work and teachings of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson. Established in 1978, it pays tribute to his endless commitment for better education for the children of North America.

The seventh leader in the Chabad-Lubavitch dynasty, Rabbi Schneerson was born in Ukraine in 1902 and moved to New York to escape the Holocaust.

If the Holocaust showed the world the evil of which human beings are capable, the Rebbe reminds us of what good people we can be.

He was devoted to teaching the infinite value of every human life and the practice of loving your neighbour. The Rebbe inspired millions, not only with his wise words, but with his actions.

He created a global network of Chabad emissaries in over 100 countries, offering social service programs and humanitarian aid all around the world.

A tireless advocate for youth, he promoted education as a cornerstone of humanity, and in an era when a woman's education was not valued the same as a man's, the Rebbe staunchly created more educational opportunities for girls. He was even known to write, "There must be a girl!" on educational materials that only depicted boys.

April 2 will mark the Rebbe's 121st birthday. In Hebrew, we say, "Ad meah v'esrim," which means "until 120."

The Rebbe may not have reached 120, but his legacy certainly lives on.

MELINDA MOOTE

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Tragically, we have lost an amazing young woman in our community, Melinda Moote. Friends and family described her as "the best humanity has to offer."

Melinda suffered from a rare disorder which was in remission, but symptoms recurred and she went to emergency in medical distress. There were only three triage nurses working, with 34 people waiting in front of her. Despite her life-threatening condition, she waited for hours. Finally, a nurse found her vomiting blood in a garbage can and barely conscious. Everything that could go wrong did—the long wait; important blood tests and plasma treatments missed. The family left wondering if this could have saved her life.

Melinda used her last days to write about our health care crisis from her hospital bed. True to her kind nature, she began by thanking the overwhelmed nurses and strangers who came to her aid. But she warned that our health care system is a broken system. Melinda said, "I'm hoping to add my voice so people know how bad it is. People aren't dying from mysterious illnesses, it's from lack of accessible preventable care." She herself died a few days later.

This government's cuts are literally letting people die needlessly—good people, our loved ones.

So for anyone hearing our pleas or the pleas of Melinda's family, if your loved one has struggled with the health care system, join us in demanding urgent action. It's going to take all of us to speak up, just like Melinda did in her dying days.

HEALTH CARE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: Working closely with the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus administration, we are establishing the Scarborough Academy of Medicine and Integrated Health, the first-ever medical school in Scarborough.

Remarkably, the last time a medical school was built in Toronto was in 1843, almost two centuries ago.

The Scarborough medical school represents more than a symbol of progress; it's a beacon of hope for our long-neglected community. By training health care professionals who understand the unique needs of Scarborough, we can deliver top-quality, comprehensive care.

Our government's recent budget plan allocated an additional \$100 million to expand and accelerate medical education across Ontario. Moreover, they have invested \$33 million to create 100 postgraduate seats and 154 undergraduate seats in the next three years.

This initiative is a core component of our government's plan to solidify and strengthen health care in Scarborough for generations to come.

1020

TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: March 31 marks the International Transgender Day of Visibility. This is a day to celebrate the achievements of transgender people and raise awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide. This day encourages us to recognize that trans and non-binary individuals continue to resist oppression by simply being who we are.

Challenges, however, do exist. This is exactly why we are seeing a rampant rise of bigotry and violence against trans, non-binary and queer communities. Driven by irrational fear and destructive political gamesmanship, there are 431 pieces of legislation pending across America that target transgender people—those numbers are hard to get out, Speaker.

A week ago, the Ugandan Parliament passed anti-homosexual legislation that imprisons people for just identifying as 2SLGBTQ+. Some offences carry the death penalty. Such a hateful and violent law must be condemned by every parliamentarian in this House.

Here in Ontario, we have the opportunity to be a world leader on trans human rights, starting with improving access to health care this year, with my private member's bill, the Gender Affirming Health Care Advisory Committee Act.

And don't forget, this government could show its commitment to trans health care today by committing to restart the Connect-Clinic with an alternative funding plan so that everyone in Ontario, no matter how remote-access they are, has access to gender-affirming care.

To all my trans and non-binary community members in Ontario: The Ontario NDP sees you, supports you and values you today and every other day.

LAMBTON COUNTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Mr. Robert Bailey: It's an honour to rise today to share with the Ontario Legislature important news from Sarnia-Lambton. I'm extremely pleased to inform the members of this Legislature that Ontario's Minister of Health recently appointed Dr. Karalyn Dueck as the new, permanent medical officer of health for the county of Lambton. Dr. Dueck previously served as the acting associate medical officer of health for the Middlesex-London health unit. She has also worked in public health roles in Peel and York region, and as a family physician in both Guelph and Bramalea.

Dr. Dueck's appointment is key to helping the hard-working team at Lambton Public Health advance important public health programs and services that support the positive health and well-being of our community.

I'm extremely pleased to welcome Dr. Dueck into her new role. I look forward to working together with Dr. Dueck and the Lambton Public Health team in the coming weeks and months.

Congratulations, Dr. Dueck, and best wishes for a great future in your new role.

VICTOR LEI

Mr. John Vanthof: Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to make the House aware of a very sad day in Timiskaming-Cochrane. Today at the Floyd Hembruff Civic Centre, people are about to pay their respects for the passing of Victor Lei. Victor was born in Timmins on August 24, 1994. He studied pharmacy at the University of Waterloo, gaining his doctor of pharmacy in 2018. He worked at the Guardian Pharmacy in Iroquois Falls. In northern Ontario, where we're so short of primary health care, pharmacists are lifelines, and he was a true lifeline.

On Wednesday, March 22, while going home from work, at 28 years old, Victor lost his life on the Trans-Canada Highway. The accident is still under investigation.

But we need to remember that the Trans-Canada Highway—for Victor, for us—is our main street.

I'd like to take the opportunity on behalf of everyone here in the House to pay our respects to Victor's family, friends, his loved ones.

Thank you very much for your attention.

KRISTA DUCHENE

Mr. Will Bouma: I never tire of saying that Brantford-Brant is home to world-class athletes.

Today in the House, I welcome champion marathoner Krista DuChene and her family.

Krista's esteemed athletic career started with high school track and later being named the MVP for Ontario University Athletics top scorer for the University of Guelph hockey team.

In 2005, Krista was the first Canadian woman to cross the finish line at the Boston Marathon.

Krista won the Mississauga Marathon on Mother's Day in 2009.

In April 2015, Krista raced in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, to become the first Canadian in 20 years to qualify for the Olympics in the women's marathon. Her time of two hours, 29 minutes, 38 seconds was her second-fastest marathon.

Krista currently holds the record for the fastest 50-kilometre race in Canada for women, with a time of three hours, 22 minutes, 22 seconds.

Krista ran all six marathon majors: London, Boston, Berlin, Chicago, New York, and Tokyo. Tokyo was the last on the list for DuChene, and she finished in a stellar two hours, 38 minutes and 53 seconds—the only Canadian to break a record in that race.

Krista's favourite quote is, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast! And when I run I feel his pleasure."

Krista, you make Brantford-Brant, Ontario and Canada proud.

HEALTH CARE WORKERS TRAVAILLEURS DE LA SANTÉ

Mr. John Fraser: The greatest challenge we have in our hospitals right now—indeed, in our health care system—is not having enough people to care for those people who need care. There is a health care human resources crisis in Ontario, and what it means is, we're not fully using our operating room capacity, we still have emergency room closures, and the surgical backlog from the pandemic persists, all because our hospitals are desperate for nurses, doctors and other front-liners.

Bill 60, as it stands, risks setting up a parallel for-profit system that is only going to make it harder for our hospitals to retain and recruit the people they need to clear that surgical backlog. It will pit patients' interests against the interests of shareholders. If we're going to effectively

cure the backlog and reduce wait times, Bill 60 must be amended.

Il existe une crise des ressources humaines dans le secteur de la santé en Ontario. Les temps d'attente restent élevés et l'arriéré chirurgical dû à la pandémie persiste parce que nos hôpitaux ont désespérément besoin d'infirmières, de médecins et d'autres travailleurs de première ligne.

Le projet de loi 60, dans sa forme actuelle, risque de mettre en place un système parallèle privé. Cela ne fera que compliquer la tâche de nos hôpitaux, qui auront du mal à recruter les personnes dont ils ont besoin pour résorber l'arriéré—

Le Président (L'hon. Ted Arnott): Merci beaucoup.

ARTHUR BOON

Mr. Matthew Rae: I rise today to recognize a great man who passed away on March 12, in his 99th year.

Arthur Boon was a skilled hockey and baseball player. He was invited to the Detroit Red Wings camp, and for many years he played senior A hockey in New Hamburg. He continued to play hockey every Sunday night until the age of 84. He was also a member of the Stratford Nationals in the Intercounty Baseball League, until a broken ankle ended his career. However, that did not stop him from playing slo-pitch until he was 71. He also coached minor baseball and was there to watch his sons, Art Jr. and Rick, play their games, and eventually his grandchildren.

Speaker, in addition to these sports accomplishments, and being a loving husband and father, he was also a World War II veteran. At the age of 15, Art signed up and eventually joined the 19th Canadian Army Field Regiment. His first action in the war was the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944. He would fight in many battles up the coast of France, through Belgium, Holland and eventually Germany.

After returning home, Art proudly served with the Perth Regiment, eventually retiring as chief warrant officer.

Art was given the Order of Military Merit, the Order of St. John and the French Legion of Honour.

For over 75 years, Art organized and played a major role in the Remembrance Day service in Stratford.

We owe a great debt to Art, his family, and his fellow veterans. We will remember them.

1030

JEFF GUSTAFSON

Mr. Kevin Holland: Today I'm going to shine a light on a tremendous citizen from Minister Rickford's riding, in Kenora.

This past weekend, northwestern Ontario's very own Jeff Gustafson brought home an international fishing championship after competing in the Bassmaster Classic in Knoxville, Tennessee. The first Canadian and second non-American to ever win the top prize, Jeff honed his craft on Lake of the Woods, winning tournament after tournament from the young age of 10. Gustafson was able

to secure his win with 13 ounces over second place, catching two fish that weighed six pounds combined during Sunday's final round. He described the event as one of the hardest days of his life. Nevertheless, Jeff showed tremendous grit and determination in his triumphant victory down south.

When he's not winning fishing championships, Jeff spends his days as a full-time outdoors guide, and he has written for countless outdoor publications and is even the feature of his own television show.

I'd like to congratulate Jeff Gustafson on behalf of myself and Minister Rickford.

You're an inspiration to many, and we all wish you luck in your next Elite Series event, coming up this April.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery today Mr. Luca Zelioli, consul general of Italy in Toronto. Please join me in warmly welcoming our guest to the assembly today.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to welcome to the House Canadian Olympian and champion marathoner Krista DuChene and her family: Donald, Aimee, Aidan, Genvieve, Martin and Leah.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I'd like to welcome representatives from the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council who are in the chamber today, and especially the board chair, Mario Villeneuve, who's from my riding.

Bienvenue, Mario. Thank you for the important work you do throughout the province. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to welcome representatives from the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council from across this province to Queen's Park today. We're looking forward to meeting with them.

With us we have Brianna Puigmarti, Ivan Levac from R.W. Tomlinson, Lisa Laronde from Powell Contracting Ltd., Mac Carmichael from Green Infrastructure Partners Inc. and, perhaps, one of my most favourite constituents, Michael McSweeney.

Ms. Laura Smith: I would like to welcome to the House Francis Lindayen, CEO for ITS Electronics, a leading global supplier of advanced microwave amplifiers, frequency converters and intelligent wireless sub systems for commercial, government and defence customers.

Welcome, Francis Lindayen.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I would like to welcome Vince Accardi, president of the Ontario Motor Coach Association and other members of the coach association: Brian Denny from Denny's Bus Lines and Shawn Geary from McCoy Bus Service.

Welcome to the House. It was a pleasure to meet with you.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I, too, would like to welcome representatives from the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council;

specifically, Mark Mallett, Doubra Ambaiowei, Steve Manolis, Matt Powell and Alfredo Maggio, who I'll be meeting with later today. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. David Piccini: At the risk of being repetitive here, on behalf of the government, I would like to welcome the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council. I value their work with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

And a special shout-out to my good friend Michael McSweeney—thank you for being here.

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: It's my pleasure to welcome Fanshawe College today. They're going to be hosting us in room 228, so please make your way there after question period.

Mr. Adil Shamji: I'm delighted to welcome a group of political science students from the University of Toronto today. They are our future, and I'm delighted that they're here to witness democracy in action.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Speaker, I wish a warm welcome to David Colle of Green Infrastructure Partners, Peter Hamstra of Dufferin Construction, Andrew Hurd of the Ontario Road Builders' Association, Rick Tamburro of Miller Group, and Steve Smith of Roto-Mill. Thank you so much for being here with us today.

Mr. John Vanthof: I would like to welcome the Taykwa Tagamou First Nation to the House today; specifically, Chief Bruce Archibald and Deputy Chief Derek Archibald. I invite you all to their reception happening this evening.

I'd also like to welcome Doubra Ambaiowei, Mark Mallett, Steve Manolis, Matt Powell and Alfredo Maggio from the Ontario Road Builders' Association. I'm looking forward to meeting them this afternoon.

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to introduce some special people, entrepreneurs and doctors from the riding of York Centre: Dr. Lew Pliamm, Mr. Alaa Tamous, and Dr. Robert Cooper and his wife, Mrs. Simone Cooper.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I'd like to extend a warm welcome to page Paul Hu, who I think is page captain today, as well as his mother, Jennifer Hu, and his grandmother Wendy Nichols, as well as Glen Hung from my riding. Glen is a first-year political science student at U of T. He was president of his model UN club at York Mills Collegiate, and he also had an honourable mention from the UN club from Princeton University. Welcome.

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: I would also like to welcome representatives from the Ontario Road Builders' Association and the Ontario Asphalt Pavement Council who are in the chamber today and attending meetings throughout the day. I'll be meeting with them this afternoon.

Thank you for the important work you do throughout our province to keep building Ontario. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): If there are no objections, I'll continue with introduction of visitors.

Hon. Todd Smith: I know the member just mentioned the TTN is going to be here for their reception tonight, but

he left out the best part, Mr. Speaker. While everybody is going to the ORBA reception—TTN has brought in some star power tonight for their reception: Doug Gilmour, Shayne Corson and Ric Nattress. A bunch of Toronto Maple Leafs all-stars are going to be there. So come on down and get your picture taken.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: I'd like to welcome Ben de Haan, the father of page Ryan de Haan, who's here from my riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to welcome Evan Dickson, Kourtney Adamson, Steve McEachen, James McVeety and Jamie Di Laudo, who are here with the Ontario Road Builders' Association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Stan Cho: Joining us today from the Ontario Motor Coach Association we have Vince Accardi, Shawn Gerry, Brian Denny, John Temple, Doug Badder and Ray Cherry. Welcome to the Legislature.

QUESTION PERIOD

OPTOMETRY SERVICES

HEALTH CARE

Ms. Marit Stiles: My question is to the Minister of Health.

Yesterday, the Minister of Health defended her government's recent decision to make seniors wait longer between eye exams. She claimed that cancelling eye exams for seniors is "actually going to increase care" for people with ocular diseases. She claimed that their planned reductions in care will give "better access" to eye exams.

Through you, Speaker: Could the minister explain how making seniors wait longer leads to better care?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Yesterday I was happy to applaud the efforts of the Ontario Association of Optometrists and the Ministry of Health in finally getting an agreement after 12 years. In the province of Ontario, we have not had an agreement with the Ontario Association of Optometrists since 2011.

It is very historic that we have been able to settle on something that is going to improve services for our seniors, for individuals on OW and ODSP, and for individuals who have glaucoma—making sure that individuals who actually have eye issues are getting in front of their optometrists and getting the services they need.

So, yes, I am incredibly proud of the agreement that we have settled on.

1040

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it's not just seniors that they're serving up. Yesterday, we learned that adults aged 20 to 64 with lazy eye will lose OHIP coverage for eye exams and will now be forced to pay out of pocket. Adults 20 to 64 with strabismus will lose their coverage and must now pay out of pocket, unless it just developed suddenly.

And we found out that people with cataracts are losing their eye exam coverage unless they're referred for surgery or have "clinically significant decreased vision."

Back to the Minister of Health again: How is reducing access to preventive eye care going to help anyone?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: If the member opposite actually understood the clinical reasoning behind the changes that we made, she would understand, as an example, that lazy eye in adults is something that is a stable condition that does not change once you're in adulthood. We have listened to the experts, listened to the clinicians, listened to people who actually understand how these improvements are going to make a difference to the people who have emerging eye issues. And for those individuals who are stable and have the opportunity to access through their primary care, or, yes, their optometrist—that will continue.

As I said, I am incredibly proud of the work that the Ontario Association of Optometrists did with the Ministry of Health.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, yesterday the minister bristled when we asked questions about her decision to cancel the Physician and Hospital Services for Uninsured Persons program. She says, "Listen to the experts," but doctors across the province continue to express real concern about this cancellation. One said it was "a horrid affront to the values inherent in Canada's universal health system."

This program cost an average of just \$5 million a year. I've got to tell you, Minister, that's the salary of just four OPG executives right there, under this government. But the point is that this program helped more than 400,000 uninsured people since it was implemented, not just four. Quick math—that's \$37.50 a person, and it helped save lives.

So my question to the minister is, will she reverse this callous decision and help save lives?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Again, I must return to where we were pre-pandemic. This agreement was made to protect individuals who could not return to their home communities to access health care services. Ontario absolutely did the right thing, put some physician codes in to ensure that those individuals who, because of travel restrictions, could not return home—now we have gone to pre-pandemic levels; exactly identical to a program that has existed for many, many years in the province of Ontario, ensuring that individuals who are not able to, for any number of reasons, have access to an OHIP card, have it through 75 community health care centres, of course.

There is not an individual in the province of Ontario who would ever be turned away at an emergency department in our hospitals.

Those programs—

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

The next question. The Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Thank you, Speaker. I hope the next minister does better.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Ms. Marit Stiles: The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services is a very important file that affects the lives of some of the most vulnerable Ontarians. With a new minister in that role, it's a chance for a fresh start.

We all know that this government refuses to make their mandate letters public. They've even gone so far as to waste public money by going to the Supreme Court to keep them secret.

But I want to ask the new minister: After years of mismanagement, what direction have you been given for this critical role?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank the honourable leader of the official opposition for the question.

Mr. Speaker, I am truly humbled and honoured to be entrusted with this position by the Premier, and I thank him for the opportunity.

I also want to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Merrilee Fullerton for all the great work and her leadership on the file.

As an individual who immigrated here to Canada for a better opportunity for my family and friends, I will make this very clear to the House and to my honourable colleagues, to every single person here: We live in the best province in the greatest country in the world—one that can only remain that way if we leave no one behind. I will promise to every single member here and everyone in this province that I will work night and day to make sure every individual, every child, every youth in this province is cared for, is looked after. I'll give you my promise.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I've got to tell you, that's a real shame, because I just heard that it's going to be more of the same.

The latest report from the Financial Accountability Office found that this government had budgeted but failed to spend nearly \$500 million on social services by the third quarter of the last fiscal. That's half a billion dollars that this government planned to invest in Ontarians and then just didn't. That's \$500 million withheld from the critical services that people rely on, at a time when Ontarians, when people in this province, are really struggling.

My question to the minister, again, is, are you going to stand up to this Premier and fight for the people who need your help?

Hon. Michael Parsa: Again, I thank the honourable colleague for the question.

It's, in fact, under the leadership of this Premier that we have brought in supports for the people of this province like never before, and we're not going to stop there.

Again, I'll reassure this House and every single member of this House that I will give everything I've got every single day, and I will come back the next day and try even harder for the people this province—that means the record investments that we have made.

If you look at the programs under the previous government, we've doubled funding under the autism

program thanks to—before, there were only 8,500 children and youth receiving support, but now there are more than 40,000 children and youth receiving support.

One of the things that we are doing as a government, and that I will continue to do, is making sure that the well-being of every single individual is a top priority for our government. That's why I thank the Minister of Health for the great work they're doing, I thank the member from Brampton Centre for her leadership when it comes to—

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Supports? Look around you. Look at what's happening in our communities. Look at the lineups at the food banks down the road, in every community across this province.

I really wonder about these figures that I'm hearing from the members opposite. This government has no problem finding \$650 million hidden between seat cushions so they can pave over a public park and then hand it over to some Austrian corporate conglomerate to build a private spa. But they can't find a measly 5% increase—that's all they can find, is 5% for people on ODSP or OW, well below the cost of inflation, not nearly enough to help people put food on the table.

My question is to the minister. Will you commit to ending this legislated poverty by immediately doubling ODSP and OW?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I will just remind my honourable colleague and all members across that it was this government that increased ODSP by 5%. For decades, it hadn't been done. Again, I remind my honourable colleague that when the previous government was in power, they held the balance of power for years. They could have made that a priority; they didn't.

This was the largest increase to ODSP support in decades. It doesn't end there. It's also tied to inflation. Beginning this July, it will continue to increase. But it will go beyond that. Those who can, are willing—we have the jobs in this province for those who are able to. Thanks to the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, there are 300,000-plus jobs that are going unfilled.

This is going to be my question to the leader of the official opposition and all my honourable colleagues across—I want them to come with us, to work with me to make sure that we help people in this province so that we don't leave anyone behind—

Interjections.

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

Members will take their seats.

1050

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Restart the clock.

The next question.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Speaker, the budget tabled on Thursday is over 200 pages, and it did not even mention the Ontario Autism Program. I have stood in this House time after time, sounding the alarms for the OAP, because it is not working for families—and we hear in all of our offices that it is not working for children. This government continues to use the same talking points and does nothing to address it.

Through you, Speaker, to the new minister: How are you going to set a new tone for your ministry and support families looking to access the OAP if there is no extra money in the budget?

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

The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services to reply.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank my honourable colleague for the question.

Here's what I'll tell my colleague across: I'm asking you for your help and support. Come by and actually support us so that we can help the people of this province, instead of continuously objecting and opposing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Hon. Michael Parsa: Speaker, as I mentioned to you, under this government, the Ontario Autism Program—the funding for this was being doubled, from \$300 million to \$600 million. Before, there were only 31,500 registered under the OAP program and only 8,500 were receiving support. Now over 40,000 have been registered and are receiving support—almost five times the amount before—and it isn't just to one service; there are multiple ways of now receiving service under the OAP.

I thank the honourable member and ask her once again to come help me, to work with us to make sure that we support every single youth and child in this province—

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

Miss Monique Taylor: Speaker, what I'm hearing is, the new minister is already feeling that he's not able to do the job. That is what I'm hearing.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Miss Monique Taylor: We know that there are over 60,000 children on the wait-list.

Interjections.

Miss Monique Taylor: I wish the members would listen. This is a serious—

Interjections.

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

I'd ask the member to take her seat.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to ask the government side to come to order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Brampton North will come to order. The member for Kitchener–Conestoga will come to order.

Restart the clock.

The member for Hamilton Mountain has the floor.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you, Speaker.

The minister talks about doubling the budget. You also doubled the wait-list for children's services. You talk about 40,000 children actually getting services. They're not getting core services—what these families need and deserve.

I think the minister needs to really look at his speaking notes again and fight his government to ensure that there are real dollars available to families to actually do something to clear the wait-list.

Will this minister actually work hard within his own government to ensure that there's money in the budget to support families in need?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I'm disappointed that the member across is once again going to just oppose—never has any solutions, will never have anything positive to actually put forward.

Mr. Speaker, here's the difference. Once again, I'll go back and I'll just remind the members that the NDP had the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives. The NDP had the balance of power. They failed the people. They weren't able to deliver. When the previous government didn't do enough, they continuously supported them. It's not going to continue that way.

As I said before, we not only doubled the funding; we made sure that more people are receiving support—better support. This is a program that was developed by the community for the community.

When it comes to this side of the House and the majority middle over there, we will continue to fight for every single child, youth—every single person in this province—with or without the help of the opposition.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. David Smith: My question is for the Associate Minister of Transportation.

Many individuals and families in Scarborough count on the GO train so they can get to work and attend appointments in the downtown core or travel outside of the city.

The previous Liberal government left the public transit sector in a mess and ignored the urgent needs for necessary improvements.

Union Station is a major transit hub in the city of Toronto. Under the leadership of the Premier and the ministry, we know that work is already under way at Union Station.

Can the associate minister please provide an update about the Union Station enhancement project?

Hon. Stan Cho: Thank you to the member from Scarborough Centre for his question and his non-stop work on behalf of everyone in his constituency.

Speaker, last week the Minister of Transportation and I toured Union Station to see the fantastic improvements that our government is delivering. Some of the terrific

enhancements to Union Station include creating two new, wider GO train platforms with canopies; building two new south tracks; and establishing a new south passenger concourse spanning between Bay Street and York Street, so that when the Raptors win the championship or the Leafs win the cup, you can get in and out of the arena a lot easier. In short, these improvements will make travel easier, safer and faster for thousands of riders who rely on the GO Transit network through Union Station each and every single day.

Unlike the NDP, who supported the Liberals when they did nothing to build transit, this government is getting it done for commuters.

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

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

The Union Station improvements are great news for my constituents and for all who take the GO train in and out of Union Station.

However, it will take more than station upgrades to significantly improve fast and reliable transit service. Our government must continue to invest in building transit infrastructure projects that will benefit our communities now and for future generations.

Can the associate minister please explain how our government is further expanding transit service in our province?

Hon. Stan Cho: That's another great question.

Whether you're coming from Barrie or Hamilton, Bowmanville or from my fine friend from York Mills Collegiate—go Titans—you should be able to get from point A to point B seamlessly.

We have a transit gap that was left by the opposition after decades of building zero transit. This government is filling that gap.

The Ontario Line alone will have trains picking up passengers every 90 seconds.

The Scarborough subway extension will make 34,000 jobs accessible within a 10-minute walk from transit.

The Eglinton West extension, which will finally connect us to Pearson International, will reduce travel times from Yonge and Eglinton to Square One by nearly 15 minutes.

What's more, Union Station improvements will enable two-way, all-day rail service every 15 minutes or better along the GO rail network.

Unlike the opposition, we believe in building the biggest transit expansion in Canadian history. This government is going to get it done.

ASSISTED HOUSING

MPP Lise Vaugeois: Seven years ago, the Ontario Ombudsman published a disturbing report entitled *Nowhere to Turn*. His report highlighted systemic issues faced by hundreds of adults with developmental disabilities, including many in hospital because no other placements were available.

Yesterday, the Ombudsman announced a new investigation because so many adults with developmental disabilities are still being forced to live in hospitals because there's no appropriate housing for them in the community.

The government can ensure adults with developmental disabilities have the quality of life they deserve and can free up much-needed hospital space by investing in assisted living.

Can the minister explain why they didn't include any new funding in the budget?

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

Hon. Michael Parsa: We'll continue to work with both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Long-Term Care to transition adults with developmental disabilities who no longer require acute care into appropriate community-based settings, and we'll work with the Ombudsman's office during their investigation.

When our government took office, it is important to note that we saw that adults with developmental disabilities and service providers across the province were continuing to face many of the same challenges that they were facing 10 to 15 years ago. We're changing that.

We're ensuring people with developmental disabilities can fully participate in their communities, and we're doing that with our 10-year developmental services reform strategy, Journey to Belonging.

1100

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

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I remind the minister and the government that they have been in power for five years, and nothing has been done to remediate the situation.

One family has been waiting nine years to place their son in a group home. Like the other families caring for their developmentally disabled adult children, they're terrified of what will happen to their children as they themselves become too old to look after them.

Speaker, things are far worse than they were seven years ago, distressingly, and yet there's no additional funding for assisted living services in the new budget. The government tabled a bill that doesn't seem to recognize the urgency of this situation.

When will they start prioritizing people with developmental disabilities by making meaningful investments in assisted living?

Hon. Michael Parsa: I thank my honourable colleague for the question again.

I wanted to mention that we're also backing that strategy up with real investments, with funding over \$2.9 billion in developmental services, including more than \$1.8 billion for residential supports.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the great work of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and thanks to the Minister of Finance, you saw that, in the budget, \$2.2 million will be invested for supportive housing. The minister has said many, many, many times that we are in a housing supply crisis in the province of Ontario—one that affects every single person, one that we're trying to address, one that the

opposition continuously votes against, doesn't seem to understand. So in order to get housing right for everybody, we need to address the supply crisis that we're in, and I thank the minister for his leadership on that.

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. Kevin Holland: My question is for the Minister of Infrastructure.

All Ontarians need reliable and affordable high-speed Internet, no matter where they live. I hear from the business community, including the agricultural industry across northern Ontario, that access to high-speed Internet services is essential to successfully managing and operating their businesses. Individuals and families living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities all need Internet access for their day-to-day lives, to improve access to health care, and to keep connected with family and friends.

Can the minister please explain how our government is connecting Ontarians in rural, remote and northern regions of our province to fast, reliable, high-speed Internet?

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

We are making incredible progress in terms of connecting every single premise in the province of Ontario by the end of 2025. To date, we have committed \$2.2 billion to nearly 200 high-speed Internet and cellular projects across the province.

This month, the member from Brampton West, in partnership with the federal government, was able to announce \$13 million for high-speed Internet projects in eastern Ontario and \$48 million in York region. This will connect 10,000 premises in 40 different communities. And I just want to thank my parliamentary assistant for his help in making sure that no one is left behind.

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

Mr. Kevin Holland: Thanks to the minister for that response.

Ensuring that individuals and families across our province have access to reliable, high-speed Internet is a necessity, not a luxury.

The previous Liberal government failed to invest in priorities that are important to Ontarians living in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

Under the leadership of the Premier and this minister, we know that the plan for accessing high-speed Internet is currently being implemented, but the people in the north are seeking assurances that they can be confident in our government's ability to deliver on the promise to bring access to unserved and underserved communities.

Can the minister elaborate on how our government is building high-speed Internet infrastructure and connecting the communities in the north?

Hon. Kinga Surma: We as a government recognize how important access to high-speed Internet is for everybody, but particularly for the hard-working people in northern Ontario.

This month, we again joined the federal government in terms of announcing \$61 million to bring high-speed

Internet to 16,000 homes in 47 different communities, including three First Nation communities. Communities such as Pickle Lake, Iroquois Falls and O'Connor will now be connected.

I want to thank my northern members, but in particular the Minister of Northern Development for his help, working with my ministry to address challenges in the north and to make sure that we got it right.

HEALTH CARE

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: Last week, Uganda passed a deadly law criminalizing LGBTQ+ people. On Sunday, at an emergency meeting with 150 people, I heard first-hand about the homophobic violence.

Until March 31, Ontarians without status have access to health care because of the province's Physician and Hospital Services for Uninsured Persons program.

Will the Premier please listen to the Ontario Medical Association and reinstate health care for undocumented people, set to expire in three days?

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

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I want to be as clear as I can possibly be, because it is deeply disturbing that the NDP continue to put a false narrative out there. We—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'll ask the minister to withdraw.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Withdraw.

We are returning to a funding model that existed pre-pandemic, that ensured that individuals who do not have an up-to-date OHIP card have access—that ensured 75 community health clinics that have funding models that ensure individuals without OHIP coverage get access.

Individuals who appear at emergency departments in our Ontario hospitals get health coverage.

It is deeply disturbing that we continue this narrative with the NDP opposition to suggest that there is a change that is not happening.

We are returning to what we had in March 2020. It was there under the Liberals. It was there because it assists people.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question? The member for Nickel Belt.

M^{me} France Gélinas: The minister should know how disrespectful her answer was to the people I represent, who live four hours away from the nearest community health centre.

Yesterday I and the minister and received thousands of emails calling on the provincial government to ensure continued access to medically necessary services for people living in Ontario. These people are Ontarians like you and I, Speaker. They are not able to get an OHIP card because of systemic barriers.

How is a homeless person supposed to go to ServiceOntario with a proof of address? They are homeless, but they deserve care.

What is the minister going to do in the next three days to ensure that she removes barriers so that every Ontarian who qualifies for a health card gets one?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Health.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Again, I will remind the member opposite that community health care centres, midwifery care and emergency care all will continue, whether that individual has an up-to-date OHIP card or not.

Health811 is another program that is available all across Ontario to ensure that individuals can speak to a registered nurse to find out about their health condition and see what the next steps are.

To suggest, as they have, that Ukrainian refugees are suddenly going to be without health care coverage is completely and utterly false, and if the member opposite really wants to have credibility in this field, she needs to stand up and say that in the province of Ontario, Ukrainian refugees, individuals without a health card, will have it as they had it in March 2020.

LAND USE PLANNING

Mr. Mike Schreiner: My question is for the Premier.

The financial cost of sprawl is huge. One study determined that it costs 2.5 times more to service sprawl than to service a new built home in existing developed areas. Another study showed that when you factor in both tax revenue and servicing costs, homes constructed in built-up areas pay for themselves, while sprawl represents an ongoing cost for property taxpayers.

1110

Speaker, people are struggling with a cost-of-living crisis and a housing affordability crisis.

So why is the Premier pursuing a sprawl agenda, that paves over the greenbelt and makes housing and life less affordable for people and communities?

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

Hon. Steve Clark: Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. I've said this in the House before and I'll say it again: Ontario municipalities are still able to collect development charges on most market housing, provided that these are increased at a reasonable and predictable rate.

At the end of the day, more homes and growing communities make sense for taxpayers. They increase the tax base. They allow municipalities to be able to provide services to their local communities at a lower cost. That's something that our government subscribes to, but municipalities need to do the same.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: With all due respect, I wasn't talking about development charges—although that's a problem as well; I'm talking about the cost of sprawl.

There's overwhelming evidence that the cost of sprawling out will hit people, municipalities and taxpayers' pocketbooks hard. There's overwhelming evidence from the government's own housing task force

that we do not need to open the greenbelt to address the housing crisis.

Speaker, there's a whole generation of young people wondering if they will ever be able to afford a home.

The government's sprawl agenda will result in more expensive homes, higher property taxes, and elevated climate-fuelled flood risk.

So will the government stand up for property tax payers and people struggling to find an affordable home by cancelling their expensive sprawl agenda and keeping their promise not to develop the greenbelt?

Hon. Steve Clark: Speaker, what I am going to do is I'm going to listen to this guy's mayor, Mayor Cam Guthrie from the city of Guelph, who spoke last Tuesday about our budget. Here's his quote: "Today's budget speaks directly to the homelessness, mental health and addictions issues our communities are facing. The government has listened to municipalities and stakeholders and responded by providing base funding increases to these programs by committing \$202 million in additional funds on these issues. Budgets are about helping Ontarians, and this budget will help dearly."

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Ross Romano: My question is for the Minister of Northern Development and Indigenous Affairs.

Under the previous Liberal government, so many opportunities for fostering economic growth across northern Ontario were missed. They were ignored—quite frankly, they were squandered.

Unlike the previous Liberal government, our government must recognize the value and the potential that is present in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. The people of my riding and all the other communities across the north are counting on our government to deliver on the commitments that we made to invest in meaningful priorities that strengthen our local economies.

Can the minister please explain how our government is building a stronger and a more inclusive Ontario?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I want to thank the member for his question.

I rise in this place often to talk about the modernization of the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund and the help it has given to businesses and leveraging. It's time we started to chat about the incredible opportunities it provides for job creation and job protection, and how internship programs support that.

When we modernized the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, we committed to trying to understand better how our youth and young people could access jobs in their own communities—in Timiskaming–Cochrane, to the tune of almost a million dollars, a medical recruiter to plan and implement a physician recruitment strategy, saving them money, allowing them to go out with somebody and recruit physicians; an economic development assistant; the Northwood Recovery clinic's registered practical nurse intern; and the Northern Policy Institute, to hire a data and analytics intern.

Mr. Speaker, more than 80% of these people retain their jobs when they're in internship. I'm sure the member opposite supports this kind of—

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

Mr. Ross Romano: Thank you to the minister for that response.

It is evident that under our leadership—the leadership of our Premier and this minister—investments made by our government through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp. are resulting in positive, tangible outcomes for the people of the north.

Our government's respect for the people of the north and our well-thought-out plans are a sharp contrast to the pattern of neglect that was evident under the previous Liberal government.

Speaker, I've knocked on thousands of doors throughout Sault Ste. Marie and other northern communities, and when you just speak to the average person in northern Ontario, the message is always the same: They felt ignored by the former Liberal government. They felt like they didn't matter. And now, they're seeing a government that's putting them first and putting a lot of attention on the north.

In order to remain current and competitive, our government must continue to focus on addressing the needs and the opportunities that will advance prosperity.

Can the minister please elaborate on how this funding will contribute to economic prosperity for communities in the north?

Hon. Greg Rickford: In Timiskaming–Cochrane, we talked about almost a million dollars and 34 jobs or internships.

Let's move a little farther northwest, Mr. Speaker, where we're into Kiiwetinoong and Mushkegowuk–James Bay. More than \$500,000 helped us create 14 jobs and/or intern positions.

And listen to the diversity of these opportunities for young people: The municipality of Red Lake hired an infrastructure intern and recreation and activities programmer—we have a similar one in Vermilion Bay, and it works great—the Institut de recherche InnovaNor to hire a psychometrics and administrative assistant; Smooth Rock Falls Hospital in Cochrane district hired a detox centre program worker.

Mr. Speaker, those are just a few examples. What's really exciting is the Indigenous Internship Program. The Obishikokaang Resources Corp. hired an Indigenous business service coordinator intern.

These folks are keeping their jobs when they're finished their internship, staying in their communities, and providing a better opportunity for their community.

EDUCATION FUNDING

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Violence in our schools is at deeply concerning levels. Students at York Memorial Collegiate have staged a walkout in protest, while parents in

Ottawa have picketed Vimy Ridge Public School calling for action.

Parents, principals, teachers and education workers are calling for increased mental health supports and staffing to keep students and staff safe.

But even though half of our schools have no mental health resources, this government voted against our motion to provide school boards with adequate resources. Instead, they're forcing school boards to make cuts.

Why is the government refusing to make investments to keep our children safe?

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Mr. Speaker, we are deeply concerned about the rise of violence in communities across this country, and part of our response was to increase base funding in education in the most recent budget by an additional \$1.3 billion. We have added and expanded mental health funding by 400%, compared to the former Liberals—\$10 million more this year; \$20 million in student nutrition programs; an expansion of after-school programs. We created the Black graduation coach program and expanded the Indigenous programs to help those kids reach their full potential.

We have increased support and staffing by a quantum of 7,000 more front-line workers to help reduce the risk and keep children safe and focused on learning in the classroom.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary question. The member for London North Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Speaker, the minister doesn't even mention school violence, and school violence does not show up once in this budget.

My question is back to the Premier.

Violence impacts every student when there's an incident in the classroom. It impairs learning. It changes the culture of trust, respect and engagement.

In their 2023 budget submission, ETFO Thames Valley Teacher Local reported that in London-area schools, the six-month average is 636 violent incidents per month—636 per month. The highest month? Almost 1,000 violent incidents in a school. But most violent incidents go unreported.

What is this government doing to directly address the rising tide of violence in schools and make sure that students are safe?

Hon. Stephen Lecce: Speaker, to answer the question—we are increasing funding by \$1.3 billion this year. We have increased staffing by 7,000 more education workers.

The member opposite speaks about getting to the root cause of crime, and therefore, I would ask members opposite to stand with this government and every provincial Premier to urge the federal government to end the revolving door of justice and get tough on violent criminals who put too many of our kids at risk. That's the way we do it. The other way we do it is if we're prepared to stand with law enforcement against violent crime that's impacting too

many children in our schools, in our communities and across our country.

1120

We're going to increase investments. We're going to support our kids and, more importantly, ensure they are safe when they're in their school premises.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Adil Shamji: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health, who, in three days, plans to cut health care funding to the most vulnerable people in Ontario. In doing so, the minister is sending the message that those without OHIP do not deserve the same care as the rest of us. But this is Ontario. This is Canada. Everyone deserves care.

The reality is, most uninsured people actually are entitled to health insurance, but they face social and physical barriers that prevent them from getting an OHIP card. This government is singling out the people who need their help the most and telling them they would rather save a buck than fund their health care. Uninsured people will still get care once they are sick enough, and it is downright sad and not the least bit surprising that the minister is perfectly fine pushing the financial burden onto our already strained health care budgets.

Why does the minister think it's a good idea to financially drain our public hospitals further, and why must she do it by draining the dignity of our patients?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Oh, Speaker, that is really rich considering we're actually returning to a program that existed under the Liberal government, that ensured individuals who do not have an active and up-to-date OHIP card have access to service, whether that is through Health811, where they can speak directly to a registered nurse; whether it is through midwifery care, community health centres—75 that operate within the province of Ontario; and, of course, through our publicly funded hospitals.

It is very, very challenging for me not to look at that member and say, "Look at your party's history and say what was wrong with it in 2020 that suddenly doesn't make it sufficient today."

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary?

Mr. Adil Shamji: Well, I'll tell you one difference, Mr. Speaker. We have heard the minister insist that COVID-19 is no longer a factor and that therefore these programs no longer need to be in place. Well, I'm sorry to break it to the minister, but someone has to: This isn't over. Our health care system remains strained beyond belief. Last fall, our emergency wait times were the highest they've ever been. The Red Cross had to save our ICUs, and the surgical backlog is bigger than ever before. The pandemic struck at the heart of our health care system, and the wound is just beginning to heal. Now is not the time to be cutting programs that both hospitals and patients need.

In the week of March 12 to 18, there were almost 4,000 COVID cases in Ontario and 213 hospitalizations. What happens when that number begins to rise again next fall and all of this funding is cut and none of these programs

are in place—no paid sick days, no hospital funding, no coverage for uninsured people? Who will pay for the minister's cruelty and recklessness then?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm going to caution the member on his language.

I'll return to the Minister of Health to reply.

Hon. Sylvia Jones: Mr. Speaker, where was the member opposite when we were actually putting these programs in place? Where was the member? They were voting against it. Where was the member opposite when we invested through the ministry of OMAFRA \$2.2 million in southwestern Ontario that actually provides additional service for our international and agricultural foreign workers? Where was the member opposite? Sitting on his hands and voting against those investments.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. Dave Smith: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Many rural and remote communities across Ontario have experienced difficulties and challenges as a result of extreme weather events. These include fast and powerful storms known as derechos, such as what we witnessed in May of last year, as well as tornado activity in July. These events pose a significant threat to life and safety in several communities, including my own. Individuals and families experienced first-hand the mess that was left behind from downed trees as well as other debris. We also know that downed trees can create other hazards, including the risk for fires and flooding.

Can the minister please explain how our government is supporting communities across Ontario in responding to incidents of severe weather and the potential risks they create?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you to the member from Peterborough–Kawartha, a riding that is part of the God's country network of ridings.

Speaker, we have seen terrible damage to property on crown and private forests, forest access roads and other public roads across Ontario. For the town of Peterborough, and in eastern Ontario, the rebuilding and repair are ongoing.

Sometimes that damage left behind from these natural disasters can actually pose new risks to public safety. Those downed trees and the debris on land and water can lead to an increased risk of flood and fire incidents today. So, even as you work and return things to normal, last year's severe weather continues to create concerns.

I know from direct experience how small communities work hard to support one another in tough times like these. And our government is committed to doing our part and building a strong Ontario for now and in the future.

Yesterday I was pleased to announce in the GTA, the greater Tweed area, that the ministry will be providing \$5.5 million to municipalities impacted by last year's derecho.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: I've never heard of the GTA being referred to as the greater Tweed area before.

I want to thank the minister for his response.

Ontario communities that have been hit hard by flooding in the past are paying attention to major waterways in anticipation of ice breakup, which is expected to begin in early May.

Flooding in Ontario is typically caused by a combination of factors that has included rapidly melting snow, ice jams, high lake levels or storm surges from heavy rain.

However, last year's significant weather-related events left debris that can also increase the risk of flooding.

Can the minister please elaborate on how the funding investments made by our government will reduce the risks that come with severe weather events?

Hon. Graydon Smith: Thank you to the member again for the question.

During my time as mayor, in Bracebridge, in 2013 and 2019, we saw the results of natural disasters when flooding led to a state of emergency. So I'm speaking to you today with a keen awareness of the importance of community, both here and across Ontario.

Currently, the province's Surface Water Monitoring Centre continues to monitor water levels in other areas at risk throughout the province.

The funding announced yesterday, \$5.5 million, will ensure that the destruction caused by last year's severe weather events do not pose a threat to public safety. That means rivers that were once blocked by collapsed trees will now flow unobstructed, and drying brush piles will be chipped and stored safely. It will also help carry out forest regeneration and support the continued health and well-being of those forests. I'm confident that this funding will help towns affected by the weather events of last year to make meaningful progress towards recovery.

ONTARIO PLACE

Ms. Bhutla Karpoche: My question is to the Premier.

This Conservative government is expected to spend an estimated \$650 million in taxpayer dollars to build an underground parking lot at Ontario Place, only to then hand it over to Thermëa, a private Austrian spa company, in a secret agreement. In the hearings at city hall last week, we learned that this enormous price tag for taxpayers is being justified with a highly inflated estimate of 14,000 visitors per day. That's 4,000 more than the CN Tower and the ROM combined; 3,000 more per day than Canada's Wonderland.

My question is, will the Premier make Ontario's agreement with Thermëa public and explain to the people of Ontario what we are getting out of this deal?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Infrastructure?

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

Our government has been completely transparent with the public in terms of our intentions for Ontario Place. In 2019, we told the public that we wanted to redevelop

Ontario Place. We have two choices before us. We could just leave the site as is, let it continue to be in a bad state of repair, let it continue to be flooded, let it continue to not be enjoyed by the public; or we could work with the city of Toronto and bring Ontario Place back to life. I think the answer is very clear.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary. The member for Spadina–Fort York.

Mr. Chris Glover: I live near Ontario Place, and I can tell that you it is well used. In fact, on Saturday, I participated in a nature walk at Ontario Place put on by Ontario Place for All and the Toronto Field Naturalists. As well as the incredible array of birds and other wildlife there, it was a good reminder of how Ontario Place was designed to showcase Ontario. The original architect, Eb Zeidler, and the landscape architect, Michael Hough, were both Ontario-based. The Cinesphere was the world's first movie theatre to feature IMAX movies, an Ontario invention. And Eric McMillan, who designed the Children's Village, invented the ball pit, which has provided generations of children with a lot of fun.

1130

Your government is leasing out the land to an American event corporation and an Austrian spa company with a hefty taxpayer-funded donation that you refuse to disclose.

Why doesn't your government believe in Ontario-based businesses, and why don't you work with Ontario companies to redevelop Ontario Place?

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

The Minister of Infrastructure to reply.

Hon. Kinga Surma: I will repeat the member's words: "well used."

I have been the minister now for a little bit of time, and every single time I have visited the site, it is not enjoyed by Torontonians or Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, we are leasing the lands to a tenant, and we are preserving the pods and the Cinesphere as part of the heritage pieces of Ontario Place.

We are going to bring Ontario Place back to life, back to what it was many years ago, when millions of people would come to the site and enjoy it with their families.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Mr. Andrew Dowie: My question is for the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility.

Seniors in Ontario want the ability to live their lives independently and to be active and socially connected in their communities.

In fact, just last night I had a wonderful opportunity to listen to Nadia, who lives in East Riverside, about how important support for seniors really is—especially their ability to socialize.

Across our province, many seniors are currently struggling with the high costs of food, everyday goods and services. For seniors with limited incomes, the current economic climate translates into ongoing hardship and

difficulty. Seniors across Ontario are looking to our government to put forward measures that will provide them with the direct help and support that they need.

Can the minister please explain how our government is working on behalf of seniors during these uncertain economic times?

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Thank you for asking that good question.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Windsor–Tecumseh is doing a marvellous job advocating for seniors in his riding.

Our government is working for all seniors in the province so they can live comfortably with dignity.

Thanks to the leadership of the Premier, we are proposing to expand the Guaranteed Annual Income System program. Thanks to the leadership of the Minister of Finance, we are providing financial support to more low-income seniors. This program will make sure that when their costs go up because of inflation, our support for them will go up as well.

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

Mr. Andrew Dowie: Thanks to the minister for that response.

It is truly reassuring that our government is focusing on actions and investments that will support vulnerable low-income seniors by expanding and annually indexing the GAINS program.

Under the strong leadership of the Premier and this minister, our government is demonstrating respect for the hard-working men and women who have built our province.

As Ontario's population continues to age, our government must continue to respond to the needs of seniors and provide them with the support that will improve their overall quality of life.

Can the minister please explain more about the expanded GAINS program?

Hon. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: Thank you for asking another important question.

Our government takes the well-being of seniors very seriously. Increasing our investment will help our vulnerable seniors. They deserve to have steady and reliable programs, services and income supports. That is why we are proposing, through the budget, to invest an additional \$1.5 million into seniors community grants.

Our government will always be here to provide services that build a strong Ontario that supports seniors.

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

Ms. Doly Begum: Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour.

Last week, we were all shocked to hear about the 64 Mexican nationals who were labour-trafficked here in Ontario.

Advocates across the province are calling for an end to the exclusion of migrant workers from Ontario labour laws.

The minister, when boasting about the new Working for Workers 3 act, his legislation, told the Toronto Star that his ministry is establishing an anti-trafficking team—changes to ensure that workers like these in this story will be protected.

Can the minister clarify exactly how the Working for Workers 3 act would have ensured that these migrant workers would have been protected?

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

Hon. Paul Calandra: This act is a continuation of a number of acts that we've brought in place since forming government to improve working conditions for the people of the province of Ontario; for the workers who are helping build a bigger, better, stronger province of Ontario. The bill that is before the House right now, of course, strengthens that end. As the minister said, it will take serious actions on what the minister called "scumbag" employers who do not follow the rules.

What we're doing when it comes to workers, Mr. Speaker, is ensuring that we have a workforce, by working with the Minister of Colleges and Universities and the things that the Minister of Labour is doing—that we have a workforce that can support the incredible infrastructure investments that we are making across the province of Ontario, and the workforce that is needed because of the investments that the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade has brought to the province of Ontario. That's over 600,000 jobs that have been created in the province of Ontario, because of the environment that we have put in place.

We need 300,000 jobs that are still unfilled, and it's because of the hard work of this government that we will meet those targets and continue to build—

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

Ms. Doly Begum: In case the government members are not aware, the 64 Mexican workers I'm referring to fell under the purview of the foreign nationals act, like international students that I spoke about last week, for example, who also don't qualify for many of the things in this bill—as do temporary foreign workers, like the Mexican workers I just mentioned, who were the victims of trafficking, wage theft, a broken system of injured workers. They would not have had any rights from this government. These Mexican workers the minister was using to boast his bill deserve an apology, because they would not have been protected. They would not have any new rights after what took place. Mr. Hussan from the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change Canada told the Toronto Star that these workers are looking for rights, not rescue.

My question is, what is the minister doing to ensure that migrant workers like these, who contribute to our province, will be protected?

Hon. Paul Calandra: Again, Working for Workers 3 is another piece of legislation meant to protect workers across the province of Ontario.

The member, of course, knows that the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is a program that we, in co-operation with the federal government, implement, and that these workers are so important to the province of Ontario, especially in our agricultural sector. That is why we have stepped up consistently to make sure that those workers are protected.

But when it comes to the NDP and workers, let's talk about the NDP themselves and their own post-mortem of their election. Let me tell you what they said. They said that they should have been better. They outspent their rivals and they had a diminished Liberal party, and yet the NDP dropped to 31 seats from 40, lost 813,000 votes—and were the only party to do so. They have suggested that in order to get better, they have to do a better job of connecting with workers, like the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario has done. Congratulations.

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS

Mr. John Vanthof: In his response, the government House leader talked about the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and that it's very important for agriculture and for many sectors. We acknowledge that. But, when we see news reports about workers being abused, outside of temporary foreign workers—we want to know what action the government is actually going to take to protect the foreign worker program from people who are abusing it.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, again, here's the NDP. They want to protect workers, but every single piece of legislation that this government, particularly the Minister of Labour, has brought in to protect workers in the province of Ontario—they have voted against it, every single time.

When the cameras are on, you can always depend on the NDP to say something that is important. They try to take credit for the things that we have done. But when the cameras are off, they vote against it. Whether it's on protecting workers, whether it's on health care, whether it's on bringing jobs to the province of Ontario, they say one thing and do another. You don't have to take it from me. Their own post-mortem from the last campaign suggested that they got it all wrong, and it suggested that if they are ever to regain power—which they have never had but one time—they have to be more like the Conservatives and listen to the people of the province of Ontario. Maybe then they'll do a better job of attracting votes.

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

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Peterborough—Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: I'd just like to wish a happy ninth anniversary of her 29th birthday to the member from Carleton.

CORRECTION OF RECORD

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

Hon. Michael Parsa: I just want to correct my record from earlier. In response to my honourable colleague from Thunder Bay—Superior North, I indicated that there was an increase of \$2.2 million in supportive housing—in fact, it's \$202 million of increase. Thank you very much—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

There being no further business this morning, this House stands in recess until 3 p.m.

The House recessed from 1142 to 1500.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 74

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, I move, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 74, An Act to amend the Missing Persons Act, 2018, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Mr. Calandra has moved that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 74, An Act to amend the Missing Persons Act, 2018, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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 will be a 30-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1502 to 1532.

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

Mr. Calandra has moved that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 74, An Act to amend the Missing Persons Act, 2018, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Hardeman, Ernie	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Mike	Riddell, Brian
Barnes, Patrice	Hogarth, Christine	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Sandhu, Amarjot
Byers, Rick	Jordan, John	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Calandra, Paul	Kanapathi, Logan	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Skelly, Donna
Coe, Lorne	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Crawford, Stephen	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martin, Robin	Smith, Graydon
Dixon, Jess	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Dowie, Andrew	McGregor, Graham	Smith, Todd
Downey, Doug	Mulrone, Caroline	Surma, Kinga

Dunlop, Jill	Oosterhoff, Sam	Tangri, Nina
Fedeli, Victor	Pang, Billy	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Flack, Rob	Parsa, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Ford, Michael D.	Piccini, David	Tibollo, Michael A.
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Pirie, George	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Ghamari, Goldie	Quinn, Nolan	Wai, Daisy
Gill, Parm	Rae, Matthew	Williams, Charmaine A.
Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rasheed, Kaleed	Yakabuski, John

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

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 69; the nays are 0.

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

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The bill is therefore referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

PETITIONS

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank the 1,764 people who have signed this petition since Sunday. It goes as follows:

“Keep Coverage for Uninsured People in Ontario.

“Whereas the Ford government is set to cut access to health care for uninsured people on March 31, 2023;

“Whereas three years ago, the ... government expanded access to health care for uninsured people across Ontario, with coverage for all hospital-based care and some community-based care;

“Whereas cutting access to health care will lead to immense suffering and possibly death for migrants, the homeless and others without health insurance. It also burdens our already strained health care system, as people may delay seeking care until they are very sick;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reverse” the “decision” of the government “to ensure access to health for all.”

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Shah to bring it to the Clerk.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. Dave Smith: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in the First and Second World Wars, over 7,000 First Nation members, as well as an unknown number of Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous recruits, voluntarily served in the Canadian Armed Forces; and

“Whereas countless Indigenous peoples bravely and selflessly served Canada at a time of great challenges for Canada; and

“Whereas this spirit of volunteerism and community marked the life of the late Murray Whetung, who volunteered to serve in the Second World War; and

“Whereas many First Nations individuals lost their status after serving in the wars off-reserve for a period of time; and

“Whereas despite this injustice, many continued to recognize the value in continuously giving back to their community; and

“Whereas the values of volunteerism and community are instilled in the army, air, and sea cadets across Ontario; and

“Whereas the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act establishes an award for the cadets and tells the story of Indigenous veterans’ sacrifice and mistreatment;

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

“To urge all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support the passage of the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act, 2022.”

I fully endorse this petition, will sign my name to it and give it to page Ethan to take to the table.

FERRY SERVICE

MPP Jamie West: I have some more petitions from the Wolfe Island ferry and Glenora ferry workers.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly...:

“Whereas the Wolfe Island ferry and Glenora ferry have had serious service disruptions due to a staffing crisis created by the Ontario government; and

“Whereas residents and visitors to Wolfe Island have been trapped on the island for up to 12 hours with no way to leave, even for emergencies or work; and

“Whereas Glenora ferry has had a reduced schedule during this year’s busy tourism season, creating hours of lineups and delays for passengers; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) ferry workers are drastically underpaid in comparison to the rest of the marine industry, causing recruitment and retention issues; and

“Whereas instead of paying competitive wages and hiring more permanent staff, MTO has contracted out the work to Reliance Offshore,” which is “an out-of-province, private temporary staffing agency, which charges up to twice as much hourly as ministry staff earn; and

“Whereas contracting out the work is a waste of our public funds on a stopgap solution that doesn’t provide long-term stability to our ferry system;

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

“(1) Fix our ferries—stop the service disruptions and reductions caused by ministry understaffing.

“(2) Repeal Bill 124, which has imposed a three-year wage cut on already underpaid ferry workers during high inflation, and pay them fair, competitive wages”; and finally,

“(3) End the outrageously expensive contracts with private temporary staffing agencies and hire permanent Ministry of Transportation ferry workers to work and live in our communities instead.”

I fully support this petition, Speaker. I’ll have page Keya bring it to the table.

1540

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Mr. Brian Saunderson: I will read in my petition:

“Whereas in the First and Second World Wars, over 7,000 First Nation members, as well as an unknown number of Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous recruits, voluntarily served in the Canadian Armed Forces; and

“Whereas countless Indigenous peoples bravely and selflessly served Canada at a time of great challenges for Canada; and

“Whereas this spirit of volunteerism and community marked the life of the late Murray Whetung, who volunteered to serve in the Second World War; and

“Whereas many First Nations individuals lost their status after serving in the wars off-reserve for a period of time; and

“Whereas despite this injustice, many continued to recognize the value in continuously giving back to their community; and

“Whereas the values of volunteerism and community are instilled in the army, air, and sea cadets across Ontario; and

“Whereas the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act establishes an award for the cadets and tells the story of Indigenous veterans’ sacrifice and mistreatment;

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

“To urge all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support the passage of the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act, 2022.”

I will affix my name to this and give it to—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Petitions.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I really want to thank Dr. Sally Palmer for her advocacy and for getting these petitions and presenting them to me. This petition is, “To Raise Social Assistance Rates” in Ontario.

“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” OW and 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 certainly support this petition, will be signing it and giving it to page Mikael.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Ms. Laurie Scott: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in the First and Second World Wars, over 7,000 First Nation members, as well as an unknown number of Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous recruits, voluntarily served in the Canadian Armed Forces; and

“Whereas countless Indigenous peoples bravely and selflessly served Canada at a time of great challenges for Canada; and

“Whereas this spirit of volunteerism and community marked the life of the late Murray Whetung, who volunteered to serve in the Second World War; and

“Whereas many First Nations individuals lost their status after serving in the wars off-reserve for a period of time; and

“Whereas despite this injustice, many continued to recognize the value in continuously giving back to their community; and

“Whereas the values of volunteerism and community are instilled in the army, air, and sea cadets across Ontario; and

“Whereas the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act establishes an award for the cadets and tells the story of Indigenous veterans’ sacrifice and mistreatment;

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

“To urge all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support the passage of the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act, 2022.”

It’s a very valid petition, Mr. Speaker. I sign my name and give it to page Jonas.

SPECIAL-NEEDS STUDENTS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I want to read a petition on behalf of Kitt Tremblay from London and thank them for submitting this.

“Demand Fair Funding for Provincial Schools.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the provincial schools for the deaf and blind provide high-quality education in an accessible, supportive and affirming environment; but

“Whereas under successive Liberal and Conservative governments, these schools have been faced with deep cuts and are under constant threat of closure; and

“Whereas these cuts have led to fewer teachers, support staff and less specialized support and resources for students with disabilities; and

“Whereas provincial schools for the deaf and blind have seen programs, resources, staff and services cut and downsized to a skeleton staff while key infrastructure like pools and heating systems are left in disrepair; and

“Whereas deaf and blind children are being denied access to services and programs, or forced onto growing wait-lists for services from the resource department, including painful waits for psychological and psycho-educational assessments; and

“Whereas parents of students at the schools have been forced to advocate in the media and at public rallies because the ministry has not addressed their concerns;

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

“Call on the Ontario government to immediately increase funding for services, staffing, infrastructure and resources at the provincial schools, and act to improve transparency and accountability while improving the working and learning conditions at the provincial schools.”

I fully support this petition, Speaker. I’ll give it to page Morgan to take to the table.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Ms. Laura Smith: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas in the First and Second World Wars, over 7,000 First Nation members, as well as an unknown number of Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous recruits, voluntarily served in the Canadian Armed Forces; and

“Whereas countless Indigenous peoples bravely and selflessly served Canada at a time of great challenges for Canada; and

“Whereas this spirit of volunteerism and community marked the life of the late Murray Whetung, who volunteered to serve in the Second World War; and

“Whereas many First Nations individuals lost their status after serving in the wars off-reserve for a period of time; and

“Whereas despite this injustice, many continued to recognize the value in continuously giving back to their community; and

“Whereas the values of volunteerism and community are instilled in the army, air, and sea cadets across Ontario; and

“Whereas the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act establishes an award for the cadets and tells the story of Indigenous veterans’ sacrifice and mistreatment;

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

“To urge all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to support the passage of the Murray Whetung Community Service Award Act, 2022.”

I will affix my name to this petition and give it to legislative page Jonas to bring to the table.

EDUCATION FUNDING

MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam: I’m very proud to rise in this House to present this petition on behalf of Churchill

Public School, as well as the Elementary Teachers of Toronto.

“Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario from the Elementary Teachers of Toronto to Stop the Cuts and Invest in the Schools our Students Deserve.

“Whereas the Ford government cut funding to our schools by \$800 per student during the pandemic period, and plans to cut an additional \$6 billion to our schools over the next six years;

“Whereas these massive cuts have resulted in larger class sizes, reduced special education and mental health supports and resources for our students, and neglected and unsafe buildings;

“Whereas the Financial Accountability Office reported a \$2.1-billion surplus in 2021-22, and surpluses growing to \$8.5 billion in 2027-28, demonstrating there is more than enough money to fund a robust public education system;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly ... to:

“—immediately reverse the cuts to our schools;

“—fix the inadequate education funding formula;

“—provide schools the funding to ensure the supports necessary to address the impacts of the pandemic on our students;

“—make the needed investments to provide smaller class sizes, increased levels of staffing to support our students’ special education, mental health, English language learner and wraparound supports needs, and safe and healthy buildings and classrooms.”

I will proudly affix my signature to this petition and send it with page Skyler back to the centre table.

SUBVENTIONS POUR LES ARTS ET LA CULTURE

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais remercier la D^{re} Claire-Lucie Brunet, ainsi que des centaines d’autres résidents de Nickel Belt, pour cette pétition.

« Investir dans les arts et la culture de l’Ontario.

« Alors que le secteur des arts et de la culture contribue 28,7 milliards de dollars au PIB de l’Ontario et crée plus de 300 000 emplois; et

1550

« Alors que le budget du Conseil des arts n’a pas été augmenté au taux d’inflation de l’Ontario, ce qui exacerbe la précarité du revenu des artistes et des travailleuses » et travailleuses « culturels, dont certains gagnent moins de 25 000 \$ par année, et encore moins pour ceux » et celles « qui appartiennent à des groupes méritant l’équité; et

« Alors que la précarité des revenus a été aggravée pendant la pandémie par des problèmes d’injustice réglementaire dans le secteur des arts et de la culture, ce qui a eu un impact disproportionné sur le secteur des arts de la scène et sur les groupes prioritaires déterminés par le CAO, notamment les artistes et travailleuses » et travailleuses « culturels BIPOC, autochtones, femmes, personnes handicapées et LGBTQIA2S+; »

Ils et elles demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario « de maintenir le budget de 65 millions de dollars du Conseil des arts de l’Ontario dans le budget provincial ... et d’investir adéquatement dans le secteur des arts et de la culture, notamment en soutenant les groupes qui méritent l’équité, les petits et moyens collectifs dans nos communautés, ainsi que les artistes individuels afin d’assurer leur survie personnelle et économique. »

J’appuie. Je vais la signer et je demande à Evelyn de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That concludes the time we have available for petitions this afternoon.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING A STRONG ONTARIO ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2023

LOI DE 2023 VISANT À BÂTIR UN ONTARIO FORT (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on March 28, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to implement Budget measures and to amend various statutes / Projet de loi 85, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à modifier diverses lois.

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

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It’s an honour to rise for second reading of Bill 85, the government’s budget bill, which comes at a critical moment in time for people in this province. People are still dealing with the effects of the pandemic. Inflation is affecting cost of living, and a possible looming recession is providing a lot of anxiety.

With multiple crises that are resulting from this, Speaker, I believe this budget fails to meet the moment, especially when it comes to addressing the housing affordability and cost-of-living crisis: the fact that people on ODSP and OW are living in legislated poverty, being particularly affected by inflation and cost of living; the fact that our health care, education and mental health systems are suffering from a lack of people and investments in the people who deliver those services; and finally, the cost of the climate crisis that’s already affecting us.

Speaker, the government talks about fiscal prudence, but oftentimes fiscal prudence requires us making investments with a rate of return that improves people’s lives. I want to give you a few examples.

Every \$10 invested in supportive housing saves \$21.72, yet this government fails to make the investments needed for that rate of return. Poverty costs this province \$33 billion a year, and yet this budget continues to force people with disabilities on ODSP and Ontario Works to live in legislated poverty, especially at a time when inflation is creating a cost-of-living crisis for everyone in this province.

Speaker, we will not address the crisis in our health care system and in our mental health system if we don't actually invest in the people who deliver the care, who care for our loved ones. And yet, this bill does nothing to say, "Hey, we're going to stop wasting taxpayer dollars appealing Bill 124 and actually start paying nurses and front-line health care workers fair wages, fair benefits and provide better working conditions."

Finally, we're already facing a climate crisis. According to the Financial Accountability Officer, this decade alone, the next seven years, the climate crisis is going to cost public infrastructure alone \$26.2 billion. Most of that's going to fall on the backs of our municipalities, who own most of that infrastructure. There's nothing in this budget to prepare our communities, to prepare our transportation systems, our buildings, our storm and water systems for the crisis that is already here.

Speaker, we have to wake up. The government has to get its head out of the sand and make the investments our communities and our people need.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to questions for the member.

Mr. Billy Pang: During this budget, building highways, transit and infrastructure projects are the main keys of this budget. We are going to deliver the most ambitious capital plan in Ontario's history, with planned infrastructure spending of more than \$184 billion over 10 years, including:

- \$27.9 billion to support planning and construction of highway expansion;

- \$70.5 billion for transit over the next 10 years;

- over \$48 billion in hospital infrastructure over the next 10 years;

- \$15 billion in capital grants over 10 years, supporting a full continuum of care of first responders who have experienced post-traumatic stress injury and other current mental health disorders.

Madam Speaker, through you, I want to ask the member opposite why he is not supporting this great initiative.

Mr. Mike Schreiner: All of that infrastructure the member is talking about is going to be threatened by the risk associated with the climate crisis. It's already being threatened by it. The Financial Accountability Officer says we need \$26.2 billion in investments for public infrastructure alone just to make it resilient to the climate crisis. So why is there nothing in this budget about that? Because that's how we can build infrastructure that's actually going to save us money, because it's going to be able to withstand the crisis that we're going to face.

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

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I thank the member for his presentation. He always is very well rehearsed and speaks so well here in the House.

My question is—you speak to everyday Ontarians, families and individuals in your community. We are now in the midst of an unprecedented affordability crisis and this is a very, very, very tough time, coming out of an even tougher time as well, from the pandemic. Do everyday

residents in your community express hope with this budget? What are they saying to you?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: There are two critical pieces to that. One is housing affordability. We haven't actually built deeply affordable homes in this province since the 1970s and 1980s, when the province actually stepped up and supported co-op and non-profit housing—nothing for that in this budget to actually address that issue.

I also just want to say, the poor people on Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Payments—who can survive, Speaker, on \$731 a month, or \$1,200 a month? We are better than that in Ontario. I know we are better than that. We can double social assistance rates, improve peoples' lives and save the province \$33 billion a year.

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

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: My question to the member opposite is around the Ontario Veterinary College, which is in his riding. I'm sure he's aware of the crisis that we have on our hands with regard to the need for more large-animal veterinarians. In this budget, we are demonstrating that we're listening and we're working for people across this province, introducing new skills and opportunities to meet the needs.

I ask the member opposite, surely you're going to support this bill because you understand the need for more large-animal veterinarians and that by having the 2+2 program, seeing the University of Guelph and Lakehead University collaborate to address this crisis—I know we can count on your support. Is that not right?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: I appreciate the member opposite's question. I just want to say, Speaker, when I've been asked in numerous interviews, "What's one thing you really like in this budget," it is the funding for the Ontario Veterinary College, because we have a shortage of veterinarians in this province. There's one university in Ontario—it happens to be named the University of Guelph, located in the great city of Guelph—that can help solve that problem. It's something I've been advocating for, and I just want to acknowledge the fact that the Minister of Colleges and Universities and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs have also been advocating for this.

This budget provides critical funding to support us in developing a partnership between the University of Guelph and Lakehead to address the shortage of veterinarians, especially in northern Ontario and especially when it comes to large-animal agriculture. That is something I do support in this budget, even though there are things in this budget I don't support. I want to thank the member for the question.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're out of time for questions. We're going to move to further debate.

1600

Mr. Matthew Rae: It's an honour to rise here today and take some time to recognize the many important investments and changes that our government is making to build Ontario. I'd also like to say, Speaker, that I'll be

sharing my time with my great colleague from Markham–Thornhill as well.

All of us here today and all Ontarians can be proud that Ontario is seen as a leader and as a role model not only by other Canadian provinces but jurisdictions around the world. This reality reflects just how hard our government is working to make sure Ontario is a world-class place to live, work and play. Having said that, Speaker, our work is far from finished, and indeed we are just getting started.

With the federal government announcing a plan that would see half a million new immigrants to Canada each year by 2025, it's imperative that we create an environment here in Ontario that is welcoming to new Canadians and provides opportunity to prosper. Just a few weeks ago, Speaker, Ontario's Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, alongside the federal Minister of Immigration, announced Ontario will be doubling the number of economic immigrants it accepts to 18,000 people by the year 2025. In this budget, Speaker, we're also investing an additional \$25 million over three years to ensure that as we welcome more people to our province, especially skilled workers, we provide the supports they need. All of this is to say that, while our government has taken important steps already to promote new jobs and promote innovation in a variety of sectors, there's much more to be done to build an Ontario that can fill the dreams of hundreds of thousands of new Canadians that will call Ontario home in the years to come.

It's not easy to pick up your life and move across the world to a different country, but our government has taken action every step of the way to ensure every new Canadian who looks to call Ontario home is supported and has opportunities to succeed. We're building a strong Ontario in order to welcome new Ontarians who will help us build an even stronger Ontario in the years to come.

So let's take a trip and look at exactly how our plan put forward in the Building a Strong Ontario Act will address current priorities and support the dreams of all those who will come to call our province home. While many newcomers to our province will likely fly into Toronto Pearson International Airport, they might soon decide they want a quieter lifestyle outside of the big city of Toronto or the GTA—no offence to my GTA colleagues in the place today. They might look to places like St. Marys or Palmerston, each unique in their own ways but with a growing immigrant population. They may even decide to call these rural communities their new home.

Well, that's good news, because, as our government has outlined in our plan to build a strong Ontario, this plan benefits all communities across the province of Ontario. This budget highlights supports for all Ontarians looking to start a family, grow in their chosen trade or profession and play an active role in their community. In communities like mine, our government's investments in the Dual Credit Program to expand the veterinary training and rural infrastructure will help build a strong Ontario.

Speaker, our government has overseen the licensing of over 13,000 internationally trained nurses, with over 3,100 soon to receive their licence to practise in Ontario. Beyond

that, we have taken significant steps to expand training and employment opportunities for health care workers right across the province. The Ontario Learn and Stay Grant: Our government is targeting up to 2,500 post-secondary students in nursing, medical laboratory technologists and paramedic programs aimed at reinforcing our health care capacity in under-served communities in rural and northern Ontario, benefiting Perth–Wellington directly as well.

To ease the pressures faced by nurses and other health care workers on the front lines, our government is more than doubling our previous investment by allocating an additional \$100.8 million over the next three years to expand and accelerate the rollout of undergraduate and post-graduate seats at Ontario medical schools. We're also investing an additional \$33 million over three years to add 100 undergrad seats beginning in 2023—this year, Speaker—as well as 154 post-graduate medical training seats to prioritize Ontario residents trained at home and abroad beginning in 2024 and going forward.

We're taking steps to further alleviate pressures on our health care system by investing an additional \$3.3 million over the next three years to expand access to the Dual Credit Program and health-care-related courses. Our government is investing in supporting an additional 1,400 secondary school students across Ontario to get their career started in health care. So not only does our government have a plan to license and integrate internationally trained health care workers into our hospitals and long-term-care spaces in Perth–Wellington and right across the province, but our plan protects and expands the capacity of our health care system now and well into the future.

Connectivity is an important part of ensuring high-quality care for all those who need it. We all know too well the devastating impact that mental health crises are having in our communities across Ontario, and I'm sure that every one of us in this place today knows someone in their life who has struggled with mental health issues. It's not an issue that is exclusive to one group of people. The unfortunate reality is that mental health struggles have taken root in each and every one of our communities. That's why our government is providing an additional \$425 million over three years—in addition to our \$3.8-billion commitment in previous budgets—to address mental health and addiction supports.

Community-based mental health and addiction services provide crucial supports, ensuring a swift delivery of care to those who need it and where they need it most. To that end, Speaker, our government recognizes that those who struggle with mental health and addictions are often some of the most vulnerable in our communities. That's why we're also investing an additional \$202 million each year in the Homelessness Prevention Program and the Indigenous Supportive Housing Program.

More than just a roof over their head, the supportive housing initiatives our government is establishing are directly integrated with mental health and addiction supports, job training and providing a springboard for vulnerable Ontarians to recover. This approach is supported

by experts, municipalities and other stakeholders. In addition to reducing costs in other sectors, supportive housing provides people in Ontario with an opportunity to live happier, healthier and fulfilling lives.

In rural Ontario, part of what makes us a healthy, happy and fulfilling place to live is our agricultural roots in our communities. For generations, we have taken pride in the fact that many of us make a living growing our crops and raising livestock, not only for our own communities, our cities in the province of Ontario, but across the world.

The people of Perth–Wellington and across rural Ontario know just how complex and integrated our agri-food sector is, and while our farmers themselves play a central role, they also rely on food scientists, transport workers, engineers and veterinarians, to just name a few.

With that in mind, this budget is addressing the pressing issues faced by our agriculture sector, including improving access to veterinary care for our livestock farmers. Speaker, our government is investing \$14.7 million over two years to launch a collaborative doctor of veterinary medicine program at the University of Guelph, of which I am a proud alum, and Lakehead University—a crucial step in the right direction to protecting and expanding our agriculture sector in southwestern Ontario and right across the province.

Veterinarians play an important role in our agricultural sector. Speaker, at the most basic level, vets are there to make sure farmers can be confident in raising healthy livestock by diagnosing and treating diseases and disorders and advising farmers on hygiene and general strategies for their animals. At a broad level, vets are stewards of the food safety and security standards we have here in Ontario and that we expect and are so proud of.

To this point, I was encouraged to hear some of our agriculture stakeholders' comments surrounding these important investments. For example, Peggy, president of the OFA—many in this place know her—and these are her comments: “Limited veterinary capacity leaves people, animals and ultimately our food system at risk and this multi-faceted approach will help maintain healthy, safe and sustainable food protection.”

Speaker, another quote which I found encouraging: Jack Chaffe, Beef Farmers of Ontario, president and also a constituent of mine, “The commitments included in the 2023 Ontario budget to improve access to veterinarian education and service capacity come as welcomed news to BFO and Ontario beef farmers, particularly those in under-served regions of the province.”

Speaker, by engaging the University of Guelph with this initiative, our government is expanding our partnerships with an institution already well recognized around the world. In my community and communities across Ontario, the Ontario Agricultural College at the University of Guelph is a recognized and trusted source of capable workers for the agricultural sector, and I can tell you our communities are so happy to see further investment in this industry.

At the same time, Speaker, our government is looking out for our farmers and farm families that work on the

front lines, feeding our communities and protecting our food safety and security. We're especially aware of the evolving role advanced technologies play in large- and small-scale agricultural operations.

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We owe it to our family operators, those who choose to invest in Ontario's agriculture sector to ensure we have reliable, high-speed Internet across the province, including in rural communities such as mine in southwestern Ontario. That's why our government is taking concrete action through an investment of nearly \$4 billion to ensure every community—urban, rural and remote—has access to high-speed Internet by the end of 2025. Just to frame this closer to my home in my riding: The residents of southwestern Ontario can expect to see more than \$63 million invested through our government going directly to support more homes, businesses and farms across our region through the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology, or SWIFT, initiative.

Speaker, for those who already live here and for those who dream of starting a life here, our plan is to build a strong Ontario that shows our government is taking the right actions at the right time.

Having said that, let's pass this budget. Let's build a brighter future for a strong Ontario for our grandparents, parents, my generation and for generations to come in Ontario. Let's get it done.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member from Markham–Thornhill.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to my colleague from Perth–Wellington for sharing the time with me. I'm honoured to rise today about budget 2023, Bill 85. This is a people's budget. This budget has brought hope and optimism to all Ontarians. This budget gives a sense of relief to the people of Ontario when the world is still facing many economic challenges. We have been through many difficulties, like the COVID pandemic, for the last three years; rising cost of living, hunger and homelessness; as well as global issues, including geopolitical challenges like the war in Ukraine, rising levels of inflation and the disruption of the supply chain.

In spite of all odds, our government is able to propose a feasible budget for our people of Ontario. Madam Speaker, Ontario is not an island. We are connected to the North American international economic nerve. Despite all the economic turbulence, we came out triumphant, strong and resilient to protect our Ontarians. Thank you to the Minister of Finance and his wonderful PAs and his team for their hard work and bringing robust revenue growth, fiscal prudence, disciplined planning and clear priorities.

Ontario is the fastest-growing province in Canada and also the economic engine of Canada. This budget favours not only the immigrant settlement in Ontario, but also doctors, nurses, seniors, teachers, students, homebuyers, people with disabilities, small businesses and so on and so forth. Through this comprehensive budget, we are investing in housing, highways, transit, education, health care and skilled trades, manufacturing and mental health. Madam Speaker, that is what the people of Ontario want.

Let me explain the salient features of this budget. How are we going to address health care? We are spending an additional \$15.3 billion in the budget. Ontario is investing \$200 million to extend supports to address immediate health care staffing shortages, as well as to grow the workforce for years to come.

We are supporting more than 3,000 internationally educated nurses to become accredited nurses in Ontario through the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership. It's never happened before—the first time happening in Ontario, opening the door for internationally trained nurses. More than 2,000 internationally educated nurses have enrolled in this program, and over 1,300 of them are already fully registered and practising in Ontario.

Through 50 new major hospital development projects, our government will add another 3,000 new hospital beds over the next 10 years. The government is reducing the wait times for people across the province by investing an additional \$72 million in 2023-24 to make more surgeries available at community surgical and diagnostic centres to connect people to care faster. Doctors like my wife, Dr. Rajes Logan, are getting phone calls from patients, and they are on the waiting lists to get into surgeries. Most of the doctors are going to be happy about this budget and about this news.

In education, the government will enhance supports under the Plan to Catch Up, including early reading enhancements, which will invest \$25 million over two years to provide support for students in senior kindergarten to grade 2. Students will be assessed twice a year for their reading skills, using evidence-based screening tools. The government plans to work with the school board to establish a consistent set of recommended screening tools. Targeted math supports include an additional \$12.6 million investment over two years to double the number of school math coaches, who will be responsible for implementing early intervention strategies and providing other math-related supports for students at targeted schools across the province.

Preparing more students for the jobs of the future will involve creating stronger links between classroom learning and good-paying careers. Over three years, our government is investing \$6.2 million in targeted supports for students with disabilities or intellectual challenges to pursue co-operative education opportunities. Continued curriculum updates will focus on life and job skills by revising the curriculum in language; science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM; and skilled trades. This includes a new computer studies and revised technological education curriculum, beginning with the implementation of new grade 10 courses in September 2023 and revised grade 9 and 10 courses to be offered in September 2024.

Ontario is providing more hands-on learning opportunities for post-secondary students to develop the skilled workforce of the future. This is why the government is investing an additional \$32.4 million over the next three years to support about 6,500 high-quality research internships through the Mitacs program.

My colleague from Peterborough eloquently talked about how we are continuing to provide more than \$6.5 billion a year in electricity price relief for both consumers and job creators under the comprehensive electricity plan, Ontario Electricity Rebate and other targeted programs for eligible low-income households and on-reserve First Nation consumers, as well as eligible rural or remote customers.

We are continuing to cut the gas tax and fuel tax rate until December 31, 2023.

We'll eliminate the double fares for most local transit services in the greater Golden Horseshoe for commuters using the GO Transit network. It will help in my riding of Markham because of the less effective public transportation system in Markham. We're reducing child care fees for children aged zero to five by 50% and working toward further reducing fees to an average of \$10 per day by September 2025.

How we are helping on ODSP: The government increased the Ontario Disability Support Program income support rates and the maximum monthly amounts for the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program by 5% in 2022.

We are addressing homelessness through Supportive Housing Ontario, which is investing an additional \$202 million each year in the Homelessness Prevention Program and Indigenous Supportive Housing Program.

What is in the budget for seniors? The Guaranteed Annual Income System program, GAINS: To ensure that more seniors who need financial help get it, the government is proposing to make changes to expand the eligibility for GAINS starting in July 2024, which would see about 100,000 more low-income seniors receive payment, for a 50% increase in recipients. It's very welcome news for many seniors in Markham-Thornhill.

We are not only helping seniors, but our government is investing over \$170 million over three years to improve outcomes for youth leaving the child welfare system and set them on a path to financial independence and fulfilling careers.

Our plan is a responsible, targeted approach to help people and businesses today, while laying a strong fiscal foundation for future generations.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We're going to move to questions.

MPP Jamie West: Thank you to the members opposite for their debate. The member for Perth-Wellington had talked about mental health supports, and it's always great to hear about funding for mental health supports. What makes me nervous, though, is that on September 10, 2020, the Premier and a couple of ministers were at NISA, the Northern Initiative for Social Action, in Sudbury, announcing \$14.75 million for mental health supports. Just two months ago, I was at NISA asking them how the money has been helping them. They said they've never received any of the money. That was two years, six months, 18 days ago.

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During the announcement, the Premier said, "We know mental health is just as important as physical health."

Everyone, including our heroic frontline workers, can sometimes experience burnout, depression or anxiety. Even though you may feel alone or helpless, we want you to know that we have your back. If you need someone to talk to, please reach out to one of these amazing mental health and addictions organizations. They are caring, compassionate and knowledgeable people who can help.”

How much money will NISA get out of this funding announcement?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): To answer, the member for Perth–Wellington.

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you to my colleague across the aisle for the question. What I can speak about, Speaker, is the investments we are making in this budget and in this bill. The \$425 million extra, as I mentioned, is in addition to the \$3.8 billion. I know in my riding, I actually just recently had an opportunity to tour a youth wellness hub. It's called Grove. It brings youth supports, capital and programming supports, so the wraparound supports, to rural communities in my riding that traditionally never had it.

When I went to school in Palmerston, they didn't exist there, and now they have a Grove Hub there. They're very appreciative of the investments we've made to bring these supports to communities that traditionally may not have had these supports and had to travel to Guelph or Kitchener in my area or larger urban centres.

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

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the member from Markham–Thornhill. Speaker, over the last four years, I think one of the things that has most struck me about my colleague from Markham–Thornhill is his absolute passion for people who are less fortunate in the province of Ontario. We share that passion. In fact, he leaned over to me and said to me a couple weeks ago, “I never knew that you were such a social justice warrior.” I've never thought of myself as that, but we share a passion for the less privileged in the province of Ontario. I really appreciate being able to work with him and the perspective that he brings to caucus when he talks about those issues in his riding.

Our government announced last year that it would increase the ODSP rate by 5%, and now with budget 2023, we have confirmed that ODSP will be indexed to inflation. I was wondering if the member from Markham–Thornhill would be able to highlight why this is such an important move. I know he has during his speech, but I was wondering if he could put further thoughts into that.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to my good colleague from Brantford–Brant for the kind words and for your hard work, not only as MPP but also looking after the wonderful people in your riding as a doctor.

Madam Speaker, ODSP is a very important program for my riding and across Ontario. Almost every residence in my riding has seniors, and they face a lot of social and economic challenges. For the first time in history, our government is increasing the ODSP rate by 5%. Inflation has left many Ontarians, especially the more vulnerable,

feeling pressure on their household budget. The government understands the challenging times for many across the province as a cue to provide the relief. This is other great news, because not only are we increasing the 5% ODSP rate, but also—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. That's all the time.

The member for Humber River–Black Creek for the next question.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I want to thank both presenters. I know they work hard, and they speak passionately here in the House.

There has been conversation about increases to ODSP in both of these presentations. The ODSP that's being increased, that's being looked at, is in fact less than the cost of inflation. I think we're all struggling and shocked when we hear people reach out to our communities, to our offices, to us and tell us that people on ODSP are contemplating medically assisted suicide because of the challenges they're facing with health and with the expenses that they're facing. Considering that the government is considering a 5%, below-inflation increase, do you believe that in this time this is simply enough for people like them and others to get by?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the member for that question. Our government has announced last year that we'd increase the ODSP rate by 5%. Now, with budget 2023, we have confirmed ODSP will be indexed to inflation. Not only the ODSP—and he was telling us that most of the seniors are living with limited income. We also increased the earning exemption from \$200 to \$1,000 per month—it has never happened in history—without interrupting their ODSP benefits. So these are the great information, great initiatives that are coming from, through the budget, our government. These are the good news stories for most of the seniors, not only in my Markham–Thornhill riding but across Ontario.

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

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: I thank both the speakers who shared their time for their thoughtful remarks. I have a question specifically, though, for the member for Perth–Wellington, if I may. We've heard from the Minister of Finance in this House, and we've heard a bit from both speakers about the importance of the Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit. Can the member explain to this House or elaborate further on why this is such an important initiative in the proposals contained in Bill 85?

Mr. Matthew Rae: Thank you to my colleague from Durham for the great question. It's a great opportunity to highlight how this tax incentive—a 10% tax incentive with corporate taxes—would benefit my riding of Perth–Wellington. So it not only benefits—it was great news from Minister Fedeli on the Volkswagen plant coming to St. Thomas. Plenty of my car manufacturing parts suppliers in my riding of Perth–Wellington will benefit from that. They will feed into that plant and other plants, and more investment we're bringing, whether it's down in Windsor, whether it's in Alliston—you name it—it will benefit the car manufacturing parts plants in my riding.

Over the weekend, I heard from car salespeople, car manufacturers and people in the manufacturing sector that this was great news for our region and area and all of southwestern Ontario.

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I would really like an opportunity to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing a question, so I'm hoping the members can answer what I have here.

Like all our ridings, Hamilton is losing affordable housing faster than we can build it. Renovictions are a huge part of the problem because this government has put in absolutely no protections for tenants, so tenants are losing their affordable housing units. We have experts that have pegged the price of one new social housing unit to build at approximately \$450,000 a unit.

This government is proposing \$202 million for social housing. If you divide that by the 444 municipalities there are in this province, surprisingly that comes out to \$455,000 for each municipality if they share that equally. So are you truly saying that the amount of money you're proposing is going to build one social housing unit per municipality when we know that we have tens of thousands of people that are homeless or underhoused in this province?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Point of order?

Mr. Todd J. McCarthy: In the beginning of the question, I heard the member opposite reference the absence of a particular minister, and if she could be called to order on that, please.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you. We'll just make a reminder that we shouldn't be calling on members that are absent.

And I'll call on the member for Perth–Wellington to answer the question.

Mr. Matthew Rae: It's a pleasure to rise as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

To respond to the question the member opposite posed to me, I'd like to highlight it's \$202 million additional dollars that we're proposing. And I'd also like to point out that the members opposite had the opportunity to help facilitate more non-profit, affordable and attainable housing, but they chose to vote against Bill 23 and those decisions, which is shameful. But this side of the government and the middle over there, Speaker, will continue to fight for my generation that's looking to get in the market and the future generations in this province to build more homes—all types of homes across the housing continuum—and this budget is one key step in that platform.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): We'll move to further debate.

I recognize the member for Mushkegowuk–James Bay.

M. Guy Bourgoïn: Merci, madame la Présidente. Écoute, ça me fait plaisir de me lever et de parler du projet de loi 85, « bâtir un nouvel Ontario ». Ça m'impressionne tout le temps, les titres qu'ils mettent. C'est donc

dommage que les projets de loi ne reflètent pas les titres, parce qu'on aurait de beaux projets de loi si on se fiait juste aux titres.

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Mais les gens de cette province éprouvent des difficultés par tous les sens et de tous les côtés. Le coût de la vie est tellement élevé. On a une inflation, si je ne me trompe pas, de près de 8 %. L'épicerie n'est pas abordable. Les loyers sont dispendieux. Le coût des services publics tels que l'électricité, le gaz naturel, le pétrole, etc., augmentent toujours sans fin. Les gens ne savent plus à quoi s'attendre quant à leur paiement mensuel de factures puisque c'est toujours en voie d'augmentation, alors c'est impossible de planifier d'avance pour ceux sur des salaires fixes, les petites familles monoparentales ou bien ceux sur l'assistance sociale.

On paye plus pour vivre, et nous avons de moins en moins de services en retour.

Je pense à la madame de Smooth Rock Falls—une jeune dame de 86 ans—qui m'a appelé. On s'est parlé quasiment pour une demi-heure, trois quarts d'heure. Elle disait que sa facture de gaz, son chauffage, a monté de 160 \$ à 360 \$ par mois. Ça, c'est une personne à salaire fixe. La dame me demandait : « Comment je fais pour arriver? Comment je vais faire pour arriver? »

Je sais que ce gouvernement va dire : « oh, la taxe de carbone, la taxe de carbone »—ils l'ont perdue, cette décision-là, en cour. Ils l'ont amenée en cour; ils l'ont perdue.

Alors, on n'a pas vu dans ce projet de loi de l'aide pour aider les personnes à salaire fixe, les jeunes familles monoparentales ou les assistés sociaux pour s'en sortir. Dans le Nord, veux, veux pas, nos hivers sont beaucoup plus longs et ils sont beaucoup plus froids—puis on est dans le même secteur qu'Ottawa. Dans le temps où les fleurs bourgeonnent à Ottawa, nous, on est encore sur la glace; on va encore avoir de la neige; notre hiver ne sera pas fini. Fait que, veux, veux pas, on paye beaucoup plus cher pour beaucoup plus longtemps. Mais ils n'ont pas considéré de nous aider, parce que je peux vous dire qu'il n'y a pas une journée où il n'y a pas personne qui vient, dans mon comté, pour parler de ça.

Mais, non, c'est la taxe de carbone qui est le problème. Ils l'ont perdue, la décision.

Il y aurait eu une chance de faire la bonne chose dans le budget ici pour aider les gens du Nord, pour les compenser pour les coûts extravagants—elles se sont plus que doublées, en passant, les factures.

Je n'ai rien qu'à vous donner un autre exemple : la Maison Verte, à Hearst. Ils font des semis, plantent des arbres, et il y a d'autres projets qu'ils font. C'est une entreprise sociale. Sais-tu combien ils ont payé pour deux mois, madame la Présidente? Quatre-vingt mille piastres pour le chauffage.

Ils ont investi dans un nouveau système à gaz naturel, en passant, et ils vont passer à travers. Surprise. Puis ça fait au-dessus de 40 ans, plus de 40 ans, qu'ils existent. C'est tout à leurs honneurs. Mais, là, ils sont peut-être au point où ils vont être obligés de fermer leurs portes.

Il parle encore d'un « friendship centre ». Ils ont tous de bonnes idées. Ils veulent investir; ils veulent créer des maisons à prix modique. Ils ont du financement pour ça. Mais, sais-tu combien ça a coûté, un mois, au « friendship centre » de Kapuskasing? Dix-huit mille piastres pour un mois. Il faut le faire, là.

Ça c'est la réalité qu'on vit dans le Nord. Ça c'est [*inaudible*]*—*puis des exemples de même, il en mouille. On en a de tous les bords. Puis ce n'est pas unique à chez nous. Je suis certain qu'à la grandeur de la province, quand tu es au Nord, je peux vous dire, c'est la même situation.

Comment attirer et même retenir des travailleurs quand nous n'avons pas de services, pas de logements et les salaires sont gelés? Quelque chose ne marche pas ici. Il y a quelque chose qui ne marche pas, là.

Je parlais avec le recteur de l'Université de Hearst. Il dit : « Guy, je peux attirer des étudiants de l'étranger, internationaux. Ils veulent venir, mais je n'ai pas de place où les mettre, pas de place pour qu'on puisse les loger. »

Ce qu'on ne réalise pas c'est que c'est une manière d'attirer des immigrants dans notre communauté, de l'expertise, des jeunes qui vont s'établir, qui vont rencontrer un époux ou une épouse, puis qui vont contribuer au Nord et contribuer à nos communautés. Mais parce qu'on a un manque de logement, un manque d'investissement—puis on a entendu tout le gouvernement et comment ils disent qu'ils ont investi des millions et des millions, mais ça ne se reflète pas sur le terrain. Où est-ce qu'ils vont ces millions-là? Tout le monde se pose la question.

Avec ces propositions, les Ontariens et Ontariennes vont payer plus, et pas seulement de leur poche, mais en manque de services. L'argent des coffrets du secteur public en santé est de plus en plus transmis au privé : moins de soins, plus longtemps d'attente dans les hôpitaux et pour les chirurgies, et des fermetures de salles d'urgence. On n'a rien qu'à regarder—on en a parlé souvent en Chambre—Horizon Santé-Nord, qui est à Sudbury. Ils ont 17 salles d'opération. Sais-tu combien il y en a qui opèrent? Ils opèrent sur 14. Mais on se permet, par exemple, d'investir dans la santé privée quand on a la santé publique pour répondre aux besoins de la communauté, aux besoins des payeurs de taxes. « Bien non; on se le permet, nous. On est capable d'amener ça. » Oui, ce n'est pas dur de faire ça de même quand ça arrive à nos amis.

Mais quand c'est le temps, qu'on a l'infrastructure publique et qu'on n'est pas capable de la « maxer », de la mettre au maximum, ça ce n'est pas gérer comme il le faut. Quand on paye trois fois plus pour des infirmières privées, quand on pourrait payer—et en passant, on gèle les salaires avec le projet de loi 124—puis qu'on dit qu'on est « fiscally responsible », qu'on est responsable fiscalement? Bien je ne sais pas, moi; je pense qu'on est capable de compter pas mal mieux que ça. Vous avez une responsabilité de faire mieux que ça. Puis de juste dire que le privé est la solution, ce n'est pas vrai; ça nous coûte deux fois plus cher, sinon trois fois plus cher. Et les solutions, le plus tu vas au Nord, le plus qu'elles sont

chères. Allez voir sur la baie James combien ça coûte. Probablement que pour la même infirmière, c'est quatre fois plus cher. Et vous dites que vous êtes responsables fiscalement? Je ne sais pas, moi; ma mère m'a montré à compter beaucoup mieux que ça. Si tu peux avoir la même personne pour la même piastre, tu le fais. Ce n'est pas en gelant les salaires qu'on répond à un besoin de la communauté. Les municipalités vont devoir taxer leurs résidents. Pourquoi? Pour balancer leurs budgets—la « Ford tax », comme on va apprendre de plus en plus, comme on va entendre de plus en plus.

Ça, c'est une réalité. Parce qu'il n'y a rien qu'un payeur de taxes. Ce n'est pas en coupant—et de dire : « Nous autres, on ne montera pas les taxes, mais on va en donner moins aux municipalités. C'est eux autres qui vont s'arranger, qui vont laver le linge sale. » C'est ça la réalité qui se passe dans ce budget ici.

Puis les municipalités le disent : « On a besoin d'investissement parce qu'on n'aura pas le choix de réagir. » Ce n'est pas populaire, et ce n'est pas plus populaire pour le gouvernement que ce ne l'est pour une municipalité de monter les taxes. Ce sont les mêmes personnes, les mêmes payeurs de taxes, mais on passe la puck aux municipalités.

Plus de difficulté à trouver des maisons à prix abordables : laissez faire les unités à prix modiques; ce budget n'offre pas le soutien aux organismes à développer des complexes ni pour restaurer les bâtiments existants. On a des bâtiments qui sont condamnés, comme c'est là, chez nous. On a une pénurie de maisons. Ça serait si simple d'investir pour essayer d'accueillir ces familles-là, puis ce serait beaucoup moins cher.

Nous, on aimerait voir une province où les gens à faible revenu ont quand même une qualité de vie et n'ont pas à faire le choix entre l'épicerie et chauffer leur maison; où les gens sur l'assurance sociale peuvent également supporter leur famille avec une pension plus élevée; avec des écoles où tous les jeunes en difficulté sont encadrés avec le personnel nécessaire pour accommoder leurs besoins; et où les travailleurs sont bien rémunérés. Même chose pour les garderies : des prix abordables avec des travailleurs et travailleuses motivés et bien compensés. On entend ça constamment dans les écoles—constamment dans les écoles—qu'on a besoin de personnes qualifiées. Parce que les classes sont trop grosses, il n'y a pas assez de personnes qualifiées. Dans les garderies, c'est la même chose : elles ne sont pas capables d'attirer du monde parce que ce n'est pas bien rémunéré.

Puis c'est tout encore relié au projet de loi 124—que c'est un gouvernement qui s'acharne à taper sur la tête des personnes. Pourquoi? On se pose la question. Ça fait, quoi, trois ans ou quatre ans, qu'on martèle ce fameux message-là? Mais ils s'acharnent. Même s'ils savent qu'ils ont perdu la décision, que c'est anticonstitutionnel, ils s'acharnent à continuer ce combat-là. Pareil, comme les libéraux l'avaient fait, puis ils ont perdu—même chose. Comment qu'ils disent ça? « Liberal, Tory, same old story » : l'histoire qui se répète. Mais c'est une réalité que le monde voit aussi.

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Des hôpitaux avec du personnel, au besoin, en place et bien rémunéré; peu de listes d'attentes pour des chirurgies et des rendez-vous; les Premières Nations avec des systèmes d'eau potable, des logements abordables et des services de soins adéquats : c'est ça que nous, on veut comme province. C'est ça qu'on demande au gouvernement de faire.

Malheureusement, ce budget n'est pas à la hauteur des besoins. Vous avez manqué l'opportunité. Vous n'avez pas été là au moment. « You missed the moment », comme on dit en anglais. Vous avez manqué le moment. Vous avez eu l'opportunité et vous avez su, parce que vous êtes constamment lobbyé. On vous le dit sur ce bord de la Chambre. Vous dites que vous êtes à l'écoute, mais ça tombe dans l'oreille d'un sourd.

Quand je parle aux Premières Nations—le temps s'écoule. Je sais que je vais manquer de temps. Quand on regarde aux Premières Nations, l'eau potable—le Traité 9 est un des seuls traités auquel le gouvernement d'Ontario est signataire. Tu ne peux pas passer la puck au fédéral. Vous êtes aussi responsable. Vous êtes aussi responsable que le fédéral. Puis on a des communautés dans le comté de Kiiwetinoong qui encore—28 ans ça fait qu'ils bouillent leur eau; 28 ans. Le budget est silencieux là-dessus—radio-silence pour l'eau potable.

J'ai une communauté, Attawapiskat, où tu ne peux pas prendre ta douche trop longtemps parce que tu pognes des rashes. Des enfants pognent des rashes sur leur peau. Ils disent de garder la porte ouverte ou une vitre si vous prenez une douche parce qu'il y a trop de chimiques dans l'eau. Le budget : radio-silence. Si ça ce n'est pas manquer le moment, c'est quoi? Si ce n'est pas manquer le moment—hé, le train est passé. Vous n'avez pas embarqué sur le bateau, vous autres, comme mon gars m'a dit. C'est pour ça que je l'ai répété, parce qu'il va rire en entendant ça. Mais, le train est passé. Vous n'étiez pas là pour embarquer, pour aider ces communautés-là.

On parle d'eau potable, de l'eau pour se laver. Ils sont obligés de charrier de l'eau; ils sont obligés d'aller chercher des pichets d'eau pour boire dans une communauté ici en Ontario, la province la plus riche. Mais on ne se gêne pas de donner des milliards au privé—des milliards au privé, puis on se pète les bretelles et on dit que c'est la solution. Elle est où la solution pour les Premières Nations dans ce budget-là? Elle est où? Je vous le demande encore.

Ils ont demandé une expansion de leur communauté—Attawapiskat, encore. Ils ont demandé un « ATR », comme ils appellent ça : une extension de leur réserve. Pourquoi? Ils n'ont plus de place. Ils n'ont plus de place de mettre de maisons, parce que la communauté, elle a bien de sans-abri et elle a besoin des maisons pour être capable de répondre aux besoins.

N'oubliez pas : vous êtes signataire au Traité 9, pareil comme le fédéral. L'affaire de passer la puck au fédéral—quand ça vient au Traité 9, arrêtez de faire ça. C'est un manque de respect aux communautés. C'est un manque de respect au document que vous avez signé, puis vous devez le respecter.

Quand ça vient, justement, à l'expansion de la communauté d'Attawapiskat, vous avez signé d'autres ententes. Si ce n'était pas assez de signer le traité qu'on devrait respecter, on en signe d'autres, puis on ne les respecte pas. En 2014, 2019 et puis je pense la dernière fois était en 2020, on a signé des ententes pour dire qu'on va travailler pour faire une expansion de la réserve. La dernière fois que j'ai parlé à la chef, elle a dit : « Guy, il ne se passe rien. » Ça, c'était le fédéral puis le provincial. Le provincial et le fédéral, ils disent qu'il y a certaines choses qu'ils vont faire, mais quand ça vient à l'extension de la communauté, c'est le provincial, parce qu'il y a un chemin qui se perd—l'ancien chemin qui allait à Victor Mine. La mine a mené une dispute sur le chemin, ce qui fait que le gouvernement a dit : « Non, on ne peut rien faire. On ne peut pas continuer à grandir la réserve sur ce bord-là. » Mais il y a un autre bord où ils peuvent aller : c'est sur le bord de l'aéroport. Mais il faut que tu déménages l'aéroport. Là, ils ont un plan pour déménager l'aéroport, mais ça tombe dans l'oreille d'un sourd. Ils amènent des solutions et ça tombe dans l'oreille d'un sourd. Les solutions sont là, mais il n'y a rien qui se fait. Mais tout ce temps-là, par exemple, la communauté, qu'est-ce qu'elle a? Il n'y a plus de place et le gouvernement, comme solution, leur envoie des igloos en plastique—deux igloos en plastique. C'est sur une plateforme; ça gèle, les tuyaux cassent. On s'entend là, ce ne sont pas de gros igloos. C'est une vraie honte. On devrait avoir honte, comme gouvernement. C'est une vraie honte.

Pire que ça, la chef m'a amené, puis elle m'a fait un tour de la communauté. Elle m'amène à la dompe, au dépotoir. Sais-tu d'où ça vient, leur eau potable? Du lac juste à côté du dépotoir. Ça veut dire que, à toutes les fois qu'il y a une inondation, le printemps quand l'eau coule—où est-ce que ça va, penses-tu, cette eau-là? Puis après ça, on se demande pourquoi il y a plein de chimiques dans leur eau quand il y a la rivière qui passe juste à côté. Ce serait si simple de prendre un tuyau, d'investir de l'argent dans cette communauté, de répondre à ce besoin qui crie—qui crie. Ça tombe dans l'oreille d'un sourd.

On signe des documents, on ne les respecte pas, puis on dit qu'on le passe au fédéral. C'est une vraie honte.

Mais, eux autres, ils continuent de vouloir travailler avec nous, et ils veulent trouver des solutions, si seulement on avait un gouvernement à l'écoute.

La crise d'opioïdes, c'est un fléau dans le Nord. Ils demandent de l'aide du gouvernement pour essayer d'identifier les drogues qui rentrent ou les médicaments qui rentrent, encore.

Comment ça se fait, madame la Présidente, que les fois où vous êtes dans la chaise et que je parle, je manque de temps?

Les affaires francophones : on attendait dans le budget l'annonce de l'Université de Sudbury. Quelle belle annonce vous auriez eu l'opportunité—quand on parle d'avoir manqué le moment, cela en est un autre bel exemple. La communauté demande d'avoir notre Université de Sudbury pour former notre réseau. Pourtant,

elle a répondu à tous les critères du ministère. Elle a soumis toute l'information. Elle attend le gouvernement. L'opportunité était là, quand on parle d'avoir manqué le moment. Notre communauté a droit à ces services-là. On a droit à nos institutions francophones. Puis, encore, radio-silence.

Je veux parler des radios communautaires, ce que j'aurais aimé voir, parce que ça, c'est de quoi qu'on demande—la communauté demande ces radios communautaires. J'ai envoyé une lettre à la ministre; je suis allé lui parler, encore une fois—ce n'est pas la première fois que j'adresse ça avec la ministre—qu'on va faire des annonces au Québec. Pourtant, on a des radios communautaires, des radios qui peuvent répondre, pour faire des annonces en français. Bien non, on va donner notre argent au Québec, quand on a des institutions chez nous; pas d'argent là-dedans. Fait que, c'est ça qui advient : après une secousse, il y a une frustration qui s'installe.

Dans le Nord, bien—écoute, j'étais content de voir le Northlander. Ce sont de bonnes nouvelles. On va investir des millions pour acheter des trains, des wagons, mais il manque un gros morceau de robot. Il nous manque de quoi qui va nous dire qu'on l'a finalement. Sais-tu c'est quoi l'affaire probablement la plus importante? La date. Quand va-t-il venir ce fameux Northlander? On dit qu'il est là—quoi, ça fait trois budget qu'on entend parler du Northlander? J'étais pour dire de quoi, mais je ne le dirai pas. Au moins il y a des montants. Il y a des trains. Mais pourquoi ne pas mettre une date pour que, au moins, la communauté du Nord va voir la lumière au bout du tunnel? On parle de train—« la lumière au bout du tunnel ». Pourquoi ne pas mettre une date, parce que c'est ça qu'on veut voir. Écoute, on est content qu'il y ait de l'investissement, par ce qu'il faut le ramener; c'est un grand besoin pour le Nord. C'est la date dont on a besoin. C'est la date.

Puis, cinq millions de dollars pour l'entretien des routes hivernales? Je peux juste vous dire que cette année, le gouvernement s'en est tiré chanceux. Moi, par chez nous dans ma région, à toutes les tempêtes de neige, il y a eu des fermetures de routes. Mais ils ont été chanceux parce qu'il n'y a pas eu beaucoup de tempêtes de neige. On s'en est bien tiré. Mais on doit avoir plus d'investissement pour entretenir nos routes hivernales, parce que l'année qu'on va pogner de grosses tempêtes de neiges—48 heures. La dernière tempête de neige : 48 heures de fermeture. Ça, c'est des accidents. C'est des routes fermées mal-entretenu.

Mais il faut investir aussi pour adresser le manque d'expérience derrière les volants de ces camions-là, parce que, trop souvent, on a vu des accidents. J'ai mon collègue de Timiskaming qui en a parlé. Trop souvent on en voit. Et ce ne sont pas tous les conducteurs, on s'entend. Mais il y a des institutions qui donnent des licences—puis voilà le problème. Les institutions qui donnent des licences à des chauffeurs qui ne devraient pas être derrière la roue, ça devrait être criminel. Parce qu'on doit protéger tout le monde sur nos routes, que ce soit sur la 11 ou la 17, à la

grandeur—ça, ce sont nos artères. Merci, madame la Présidente.

1650

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Merci. On va passer aux questions. We're going to move to questions.

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Thank you for your presentation. You spoke about the Northlander and the funding, of course. The railcars are on order, as you well know, but my question would be: In 2012, when the Liberal government gutted the Northlander from northern Ontario—our home—why did your government physically sit on their hands and support the gutting of the Northlander from our very homes?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Je le remercie de la question, mais c'est un gouvernement qui aime passer la puck tout le temps, puis tout le temps revenir blâmer tout le monde. Je peux vous dire : mettez une date; ce n'est pas plus compliqué que ça, monsieur le Ministre. À la place d'accuser puis de tout le temps retourner en arrière—vous êtes le gouvernement. Faites donc la bonne chose et mettez la date du Northlander. Répondez aux besoins. Vous dites que vous répondez aux besoins—mettez la date; c'est aussi simple que ça.

Parce que vous êtes un gouvernement—vous avez oublié que ça fait cinq ans que vous êtes au pouvoir, puis on a des crises qu'on vit en province. Tu sais, quand on pointe quelqu'un du doigt, combien de doigts est-ce que tu penses re-pointent à toi? Regarde comme il faut : quand tu pointe du doigt, il y en a trois qui re-pointent. Faites attention quand vous dites que vous voulez accuser tous les autres partis parlementaires. Je ne fais juste que de vous dire que quand on accuse quelqu'un, on devrait se regarder dans le miroir, puis si le chapeau te fait, porte-le.

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

M^{me} Sandy Shaw: Je voudrais remercier le député de Mushkegowuk—Baie James. Merci pour vos paroles ici. Je suis vraiment d'accord que ce gouvernement a vraiment manqué le moment avec ce budget. Vous avez parlé du Nord pour nous. Il y a une pénurie de logements; il y a des sans-abris. Vous avez parlé souvent, dans la législature, des routes dans le Nord. Et vous avez dit que plus qu'on voyage au Nord, plus ça coûte, plus c'est cher.

Comme vous, nous ici dans l'opposition sommes vraiment déçus avec ce budget. Est-ce que c'est possible pour vous de décider quelle est la chose la plus décevante de ce budget?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci pour la question, à ma collègue. Le plus décevant, c'est qu'ils ont manqué le moment. Ils ont manqué l'opportunité d'adresser les problèmes qui persistent depuis belle lurette. Quand on pense aux Premières Nations—j'en ai parlé : 28 ans à faire bouillir l'eau. Puis on est signataire au Traité 9. C'est ça qu'on semble oublier, parce qu'ils aiment bien ça dire : « Ah! C'est le fédéral. » Mais ils sont signataires. C'est une honte. On devrait avoir honte, comme gouvernement. Parce que ces communautés-là n'ont pas d'argent pour le réparer ou remédier au problème. Ça prend du fédéral et

ça prend du provincial. Si le fédéral n'est pas prêt, mettons nos culottes, faisons notre travail, allons réparer le problème pour qu'il y ait de l'eau potable, parce qu'il y a une génération qui ne connaît pas ça, boire d'un robinet. Ils boivent d'une bouteille d'eau. Ils vont en dehors, et ils boivent l'eau parce qu'ils n'ont pas confiance. C'est un moment manqué. C'est une honte qu'on a sur notre province qu'on ne devrait pas avoir, puis ça, c'est de leur faute.

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

M. Stéphane Sarrazin: J'aimerais poser la question au membre de l'opposition : est-ce qu'il a bien lu le budget qu'on présente, notre gouvernement de l'Ontario? Puis, est-ce qu'il a vu les investissements majeurs de 139,5 millions de dollars dans le transport et aussi avec le projet du Northlander? Puis aussi, est-ce qu'il est en faveur de ce budget-là? Est-ce qu'il voterait pour ce budget-là, qui offre plus que des sommes exorbitantes pour le transport mais aussi qui offre des initiatives pour attirer des entreprises comme jamais dans notre province?

Donc, ma question est : est-ce qu'il votera en faveur de ce budget qui donne la chance aux Ontariens de prospérer ici même dans notre belle province?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci à mon collègue de Prescott-Russell. L'argent investi dans les projets routiers : la route 101, à l'est de Foley, remplacement de pont et de travaux, et réfection à l'ouest de la route 144. « Réfection », en passant, j'ai dû le vérifier; je ne savais pas c'était quoi. C'est « repaver ». Route 69, rivière des Français : élargissement au nord de la route 652. Routes 11 et 17 et route 61 à Thunder Bay : travaux de réfection sur l'autoroute de Thunder Bay. Routes 11 et 17—très ambigu, ça. Très ambigu. Où? L'ouvrage qui se fait sur la 11 et 17 [*inaudible*] la route 61? Je sais c'est quoi—et travaux de réfection sur l'autoroute de Thunder Bay.

Vous me demandez si je vais supporter un projet de loi qui a de l'ambiguïté, qui n'a rien qui donne la date pour ramener les choses. J'ai des communautés autochtones qui n'ont même pas de l'eau potable. J'ai des communautés autochtones qui n'ont pas de place pour accommoder leurs résidents. J'ai des communautés où ça fait 30 ans qu'ils se battent pour avoir une extension de leur réserve. Puis vous me dites si je vais le supporter? Je pense que ta réponse—je n'ai pas besoin de te répondre à ce point-là.

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

MPP Jamie West: Merci aussi à mon collègue. Il travaille très fort pour les membres de notre communauté. Mon collègue, il parle de ODSP, le Programme ontarien de soutien aux personnes handicapées. J'ai des lettres de citoyens d'Ontario. Cette personne qui habite à Niagara—elle parle en anglais. Je vais le lire en anglais :

“I'm 61. There is not enough for food.... Why does” the Premier—she says the Premier's name—“hate the disabled? Five per cent was nothing, and 58 bucks, that covers nothing. I don't drive, smoke or drink. I can't afford food. I can't work. I'm permanently disabled. I'm also

diabetic and can't afford the food that keeps me healthy.” So this is from Diana.

Diana a une question pour toi et pour le premier ministre. Pourquoi le premier ministre déteste-t-il les handicapés?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci, mon collègue de Sudbury. C'est une bonne question : pourquoi? On se demande pourquoi ils sont tellement intransigeants? Je ne suis pas prêt à dire qu'ils n'aiment pas les handicapés, mais ils sont intransigeants envers les personnes sur OW et ODSP. On leur a demandé de doubler. Pourquoi doubler? Parce que le coût de la vie, on a parlé de, quoi, 8 %, là, l'inflation. Puis on dit qu'on va augmenter de 5 %—5 %, en le faisant, ils savaient que ce n'était pas assez. Ils ont manqué le moment—encore, un autre exemple de manquer le moment dans le bon temps.

M^{me} Sandy Shaw: Un autre échec.

M. Guy Bourgouin: Un autre échec. Cinq pour cent n'est pas suffisant. On force le monde à prendre des décisions où ils ne devraient pas. Ils ont des familles, ce monde-là, comme les nôtres. Pourquoi est-ce qu'on s'acharne puis on leur dit qu'on n'est pas capable de doubler quand on sait qu'ils l'ont besoin? On parle de personnes handicapées—pas à cause qu'elles ne veulent pas travailler. Elles sont démunies. Elles n'ont pas la capacité. Puis on dit que 5 %, c'est suffisant, quand on sait que le coût de la vie est 8 %—

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Merci. On va passer à la dernière question.

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: Over the next decade, we will need approximately 100,000 workers in construction alone. So will the member opposite support this proposed legislation, which would invest \$224 million to expand training centres, including union training halls, and leverage private sector union expertise to train more workers in the skilled trades?

M. Guy Bourgouin: Merci au député de Rouge Park.

Écoute, on n'est pas ici à dire qu'il n'y a pas de bonnes choses dans le projet de loi 85. Mais ce qu'on dit, c'est qu'il y a d'autres choses qui ont été mises de côté, qu'ils n'ont pas adressées. Ils ont manqué le moment.

Dans ma circonscription, je vais vous donner—dans le budget, c'est radio-silence encore. C'est un autre manque du bon moment : aucun engagement envers le recrutement des 400 docteurs et spécialistes dans notre région qu'on a besoin. Il n'y a rien là-dessus. Je n'ai pas une journée, madame la Présidente, qu'il n'y a pas une personne qui vient me voir pour demander, parler du « travel grant ». Le « travel grant », ça fait des mois, des années qu'on dit qu'il faut que ça soit révisé. Il n'y a rien qui est mentionné là-dedans—un autre bon moment manqué, et pas à cause qu'ils ne le savent pas. On les lobbie. On leur en parle. On leur demande; on pose des questions, fait des « members' statements », des pétitions, et la liste est longue. Mais on reçoit 41 cennes—

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Tout le temps s'est écoulé. Merci.

We're going to move to further debate.

1700

M. John Fraser: Je vais partager mon temps avec mon collègue le membre d'Orléans.

It's great to be up here to get a chance to debate the budget. What I've heard from the government consistently since last week is that they're on a path to balance. I don't agree, and here's why.

Ontario's families are not feeling the balance. Gas prices are going up. Rents are going up. Groceries are going up. Utility prices have doubled. Interest rates have gone up. For Ontario's families, simply getting by has gotten harder. They work hard and still they feel like they're falling further and further behind. What they're looking for is for their government to make their lives just a little bit easier. That's not here in this budget, and it's not in the long-term plan.

Ce que les familles souhaitent, c'est que leur gouvernement leur rend la vie un peu plus facile.

Ontario's families, looking for something to make their lives just a little bit easier, can't find it in this budget. The government is sending them a different message. If you have a child in school who has exceptional needs and they're not being met, the message is, you're on your own. If your child is struggling with their mental health or is just simply falling behind at school, the message is, you're on your own. If you're looking for child care so that you can return to the workforce, the message from this government is, you're on your own. If you're too sick to go to work, the Premier's message is, you're on your own. If you're one of two million Ontarians who can't find a family physician or a nurse practitioner, the message is, you're on your own. If you're a senior and you need an eye exam, what's the message? You're on your own. If your mom needs home care but she only gets it half the time, what's the message, folks? You're on your own. If you're a low-income family and you're struggling with the cost of food, rent and all those other things that are going up, what's this government's message? You're on your own.

Instead of making lives just a little bit easier, the government and this Premier are making people's lives harder.

Interjections.

Mr. John Fraser: Folks, if you listen up, you might hear this. If you listen to the people of Ontario, this is what you might hear. They want you to make their lives just a little bit easier by doing things like increasing the Ontario Child Benefit to help those struggling low-income families, or maybe a tax credit to help kids get into recreation or sports at school, or maybe a transit tax credit—something small. But no, it's not there.

Ontario's families ain't feeling the balance, folks over there. All they want is for you, for their government, to make their lives just a little bit easier. And by not addressing those things in this budget that families depend on, like their schools, like their hospitals, like getting a family doctor, the cost of rent, the cost of food, getting your mom home care or simply support for families that are struggling, this budget isn't making families' lives easier; it's making it harder—because making their lives

just a little bit easier means a whole lot to those people out there who are struggling.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Orléans.

Mr. Stephen Blais: It's an honour to rise tonight to speak to the budget measures act for fiscal year 2023-24.

As we know, budgets are important because they tell us and they tell the people of Ontario, the people we represent, what our government's priorities are. Now, when it comes to this budget, what we can tell, both from the budget itself and from the minister's speech, is that the government's priority is everywhere other than Ottawa.

During the speech, you will all remember, the minister took us on this little travelling trip across the province. It was an impressive tour of the province, stopping off in this community and that community. They talked about all the things they're planning to do. But the minister, on this little fictional trip that he took us all through, didn't come to Ottawa. In fact, the furthest east the minister got on his little fantasy trip, I think, was Oshawa. He completely ignored all of eastern Ontario and the second-largest city in the province.

The minister did not tell us how his government is going to support the city of Ottawa or Hydro Ottawa recover from the tens of millions of dollars spent on disaster relief from violent windstorms last spring. What's even more surprising is that the government recently announced a small amount of funding for weather-related disaster relief and left Ottawa completely out of the list of cities to get support.

Residents in the rural communities of Navan and Sarsfield in the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell and in the community of Carlsbad Springs and Orléans and other parts of Ottawa are still being left out in the cold by this government—literally left in the cold, Madam Speaker, as their farms and their barns still have holes in the walls or holes in the roof from the violent windstorm, the derecho last spring, as a result of not receiving supports from their government.

We've heard a lot from this government about how they recognize the importance and the value of our Franco-Ontarian communities.

C'est certainement très important pour les résidents d'Orléans et les résidents d'Ottawa et de toutes les autres communautés francophones en Ontario. Et le gouvernement parle beaucoup de leur respect pour la communauté franco-ontarienne, mais on ne le voit pas dans le budget. Dans le budget, il y a une réduction pour le ministre des services francophones, madame la Présidente.

On sait que le Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans est un centre communautaire essentiel pour les résidents d'Ottawa et pour tous les francophones et francophiles de l'Ontario. Construit par la communauté, le MIFO est un endroit où les francophones et les francophiles peuvent se rassembler pour participer aux arts, à des activités physiques, et à leur programmation pour les enfants. Et c'est clair que le MIFO a besoin d'une expansion de leur centre communautaire pour offrir plus

de services pour une communauté franco-ontarienne qui a grandi à Orléans et tout partout en Ontario et à Ottawa.

Et ils ont demandé plusieurs fois pour une subvention de ce gouvernement, en participation avec le gouvernement fédéral et la ville d'Ottawa, pour les fonds nécessaires pour construire ce nouveau centre, et cette subvention n'est pas dans le budget. Le gouvernement parle beaucoup de leur affection pour tous les bons programmes que le MIFO offre, mais il n'offre pas l'argent pour accommoder l'expansion du MIFO.

As I said, Madam Speaker, a budget is an opportunity to see what the government's priorities are. It's time for all of us, as leaders, to demonstrate to the people that we're putting their money where the government's mouths are.

The government claims that the budget is about a path to balance. But for middle-class families, for families in the suburbs who are facing higher grocery bills, higher hydro rates, higher housing costs, for these families, I don't think that they would say that they're feeling the balance. For middle-class families, all of their costs are going up. None of their costs are going down.

For Ontario's families, simply getting by has gotten harder and harder. They're facing skyrocketing cost-of-living increases, unaffordable housing and a health care system that is in crisis. And yet, this budget offers nothing in terms of relief for these families who are feeling the pinch every day when they go to buy groceries, these families that feel the pinch every day when they go to pay for their basic expenses.

As my colleague from Ottawa South mentioned, there are no immediate supports in the budget that will help Ontarians get by. There is nothing in the budget to make life just a little bit easier. Where are the targeted tax credits? Where are the fee reductions? Sometimes, it's not always about reducing costs. I know lots of people who are willing to pay a little bit more to get a little bit more. So where are the service enhancements? None of that exists in this budget.

When Ontarians are feeling the pinch, they should know that their government has their back. But in this budget, that's non-existent. There's nothing in the budget that will help the bidding wars that are going through the rental market. We need this government to bring back the rent control on new builds that they cancelled when they were first elected. That would provide immediate relief to tens of thousands of people who are just trying to put a roof over their heads. With the skyrocketing housing prices right across the province, that would make life just a little bit easier for all those families and those individuals that are struggling to make ends meet.

1710

Now, Madam Speaker, I truly believe that a budget is one of the most important ways that a government demonstrates to the people that it's aware of what's going on, it's aware of the pressures that people are facing. And it's an opportunity for the government to present their priorities to the people. We get to see their actions, their spending, their priorities; we get to see that those things match their rhetoric, match the things that they're saying,

match the things that they're trying to convince Ontarians they believe in. But what we've seen with this budget is that the government's rhetoric is writing cheques that their treasury just isn't willing to cash. Ontario families deserve better.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: We're going to move to questions.

Ms. Laura Smith: I listened to the member opposite, respectfully, make his submissions, but it's clear that this government is trying to improve the lives of Ontarians. Why won't the opposition support these measures to keep costs down for those who need it and build the skilled labour force that the province needs with a responsible and flexible plan?

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): To respond, the member for Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Because you're not actually taking care of those things that matter most to families. You're cutting education when we know we need more. What I said about children struggling in schools and your message being, "You're on your own"—that's it right there.

If your mom is trying to get home care, you've done nothing to really address the health care human resource crisis. As a matter of fact, your government supported Bill 124, which just made it worse, and now you want to set up a parallel for-profit system to compete for the staff that hospitals can't get right now. That's why I can't support this budget.

Your message to Ontarians—to Ontario families—is, "You're on your own. On health care, on education, on the environment, you're on your own, folks. We're not doing anything to help you." Even the Ontario Child Benefit that you could have increased—as a matter of fact, the government on this side did—you guys can't even see fit to increase that by \$50 a child a month while families are struggling to put food on the table. That's why I can't vote for this budget. I won't—

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

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My question is for the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: Oh, all right.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: My riding is Thunder Bay–Superior North, and I've visited all those communities recently—or most of them—and what I hear in every single community is that there's no housing. They're in desperate need of housing, and affordable housing, and what people need to realize is that it costs a lot more to build in some of the small communities because the materials and labour have to be brought from Thunder Bay, in this case, or somewhere else. So what I'm wondering is if you see anything in this budget that might help those communities build new housing.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you. I wasn't running out; I'm having a meeting with actually one of your colleagues, and I was just going out to do that.

No, I don't see that. This government had an opportunity to create something called the Ontario housing corporation so that we could actually build affordable

housing for people. But this government's solution to the housing crisis is to actually give away the greenbelt to people who are already doing quite well so they can do even better, and they won't be able to build affordable housing out there. What we need is housing inside our urban areas, inside our small towns, rurally—everywhere.

It's a crisis. Bring back real rent control on those new-build units. There are bidding wars. People are couch-surfing. Families can't get a place to live. It's not in this budget. The message is, "You're on your own, folks."

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

Mr. Graham McGregor: Look, the member talked in the speech about how he wanted to see more measures to make Ontarians' lives a little bit easier. Now, I want to put this a little bit against the member's own voting record. When we did the LIFT tax credit, exempting the lowest-income workers from paying income tax, the member voted against that. When we brought in the gas tax cut to make gas a little bit cheaper for people, the member voted against that. And I know I heard in the speech that gas prices are record high right now, and I feel the pinch coming from Brampton, so I guess my question for the members from the Liberal Party is: How much higher do we have to make our gas tax cut for them to consider supporting our budget?

Mr. Stephen Blais: What's clear is that middle-class families are feeling the pinch. Under this government, their hydro rates have gone up, not gone down. Their grocery prices are higher. Rent and housing is more expensive. In the last five years under this government, the costs for families are higher, and in this budget, there was an opportunity for the government to present targeted measures to help families, to help individuals deal with the rising costs that they're facing, and the government chose not to do those things.

We're seeing a government in Ottawa that's choosing to make targeted tax measures in their budget, Madam Speaker. I'm not sure why this government here in Toronto chose not to do the same thing.

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

Ms. Sandy Shaw: We've been saying here that this government has absolutely failed to meet the moment, and I think you would agree.

One of the biggest issues is homelessness in all of our communities. AMO, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, said that "homelessness is the return on provincial underinvestment." They also went on to say, "The homelessness crisis in your community"—and all of our communities—"is a made-in-Ontario crisis that results from underinvestment and other disastrous policy choices made by the government of Ontario." That's from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

I know that in the city of Hamilton, we're facing a huge budget increase because of the lack of revenues that are coming to our municipalities—it's happening all over our province. AMO estimates that given this government's decisions, it will cost the municipalities \$1 billion. And

who's going to pay for that? Municipal taxpayers and ratepayers that are already burdened.

So can you say further how this lack of investment for municipalities is going to further make life difficult for the people in your community?

Mr. Stephen Blais: Well, we've seen in the city of Toronto a property tax increase of over 7% as a result of some of the measures brought forward by this provincial government. There are at least two members of the cabinet who are former presidents or chairs of AMO, and so you would think that they would take recommendations and advice from AMO more seriously. They had an opportunity to invest or to bring back something called the Ontario Housing Corporation to facilitate the construction of affordable housing. They chose not to make that commitment in this budget or any of the other legislation they've brought forward since the election.

It's clear that, as you said, this budget doesn't meet the moment. It does nothing to make life a little bit easier for middle-class and suburban families that are struggling every day to pay the basic costs of utility bills and groceries and all the other costs in their lives that have gone up.

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

Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam: The member opposite had a chance to support this government's affordability measures when the costs were going up last year. And now the inflation has slowed but still remains high, and we are still continuing to support those who are in need the most. Will the member opposite fix their mistake and support this legislation?

Mr. Stephen Blais: You know, the member opposite is right: Inflation is high. Costs for everything are up, Madam Speaker. The cost of groceries is higher. The cost of utility bills is higher. Every cost that families have every single day, every single week, is higher, and there is nothing in this budget to provide any immediate relief for families. There are no targeted tax measures. There are no service enhancements. This is a status quo budget that doesn't actually bring balance to middle-class families who are struggling.

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

MPP Jamie West: As you know, I've been sharing voices from across the province.

Anna talks about ODSP. She says, "I am on ODSP and can't afford rent, groceries and anything in basic needs. We need help. We are drowning and" the Premier—it says the Premier's name—"is doing nothing with the crazy rent rates across Ontario."

Julie from Barrie-Innisfil also says, "I'm not surviving. I can't afford groceries, prescriptions, rent. It's horrible living in poverty."

Would the member like to comment about the bill and how it addresses people who are on ODSP and living in poverty?

Mr. Stephen Blais: I appreciate the question. As I said, families across the province are struggling. Families and

individuals who are amongst the lowest paid or have the lowest revenue such as those on ODSP are struggling even more.

When we talk about rent, we have a government that removed rent controls on new builds after 2018. That's something that's affected me. My rent for my condo here in Toronto went from \$2,100 to \$2,600. That's outrageous. And I'm fortunate: We have an allowance that pays for that, and I'm a person of means and can afford to absorb that. Most families couldn't absorb a 20% or 25% rent increase.

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Imagine if you're, then, amongst the lowest-income earners in the province, those who are on ODSP and other social supports. How are they supposed to get by? This budget does nothing to make life a little bit easier for those individuals and others who are struggling with high costs as inflation is running rampant.

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

Mr. Deepak Anand: Madam Speaker, before I start, I want to say this: that I will be sharing time with our wonderful member from Carleton, my colleague.

Today I rise in the House to talk about a budget to build a stronger Ontario, an inclusive Ontario. Colleagues, I want to share with you that this morning I had an opportunity to go with the Premier to Pearson airport. I was actually standing in terminal 3 arrivals, exactly the point where, on January 15, 2000, I landed. Those memories came back.

When I landed on January 15, 2000, at terminal 3 of Pearson airport and I came out of those doors, I saw my brother's friends Puneet Sharma and Chetna Sharma, with a sign in their hands—because they had never seen me, and back then there was no WhatsApp and no Facebook, so they had no idea how I looked, so they were holding a sign with my name.

As I was coming out of those doors, I was excited for a better future, but at the same time, I was concerned. I had no idea where to start. There was a concern about the decision and how it would pan out, especially when you have a young family. My son was five months old. My decision—or maybe I'd rather say “our decision;” my wife and I took that decision. How will it impact him, his life? There were no ready answers available. Twenty-three years later, I just want to say two words, and those words are “Thank you.” Thank you, Canada, for helping us to build a life here in Canada.

I want to add more thank-yous to the list, Madam Speaker. I want to start by thanking the Indigenous community for taking care of this land for thousands of years. Thank you for allowing us to come and meet here.

We see we have infrastructure here—we have such a beautiful building—but it didn't happen overnight. It didn't happen by itself. Thank you to all the immigrants who came to Canada 300 years, 500 years back and worked hard to build this country. Many of their

descendants are the MPPs, my colleagues here, so I want to say thank you to the ancestors of all of you for building such a wonderful, strong Ontario; an Ontario which allows everyone to realize your dreams. We have infrastructure, we have health care, we have services and we are going to build homes in the future. But it's not going to happen by itself, Madam Speaker. To build, we need skilled workers.

I had the opportunity to criss-cross the province as part of the finance and economic affairs committee, and we heard from the stakeholders. I want to say, in addition to the thanks, thank you to Felix, Jeri and Beth, the members from the staff who were there before us and stayed after us, so that we had a smooth consultation, so that we could hear from our stakeholders. A big thank you to all of you.

Through this budget, we're making a promise to ensure Ontario remains competitive on the global stage, and it's not going to happen by itself. To achieve this goal, we are providing an additional \$75 million for the Skills Development Fund for the next three years. As you know, since 2020, the government has invested \$700 million to support people facing barriers to employment. We've been able to help 400,000 people directly through 388 projects. We're providing \$224 million for the Skills Development Fund's new capital stream, a stream for brick-and-mortar projects which will help build training centres. Through those centres, we'll be able to help Ontarians to upskill their skills and build a stronger Ontario.

We're investing an additional \$50 million for Better Jobs Ontario. Madam Speaker, it's not been easy. Sometimes it's not under your control. I'll give you an example. There were a lot of people who were working as taxi drivers, helping people to commute at the greater Toronto airport when the number of visitors was 50 million. But the number came down, due to COVID, to 10 million, 15 million, 12 million. Obviously there was less need for the jobs, less need for that service, and those taxi drivers who were helping for decades had no place to do. What should they do now? Investments like Better Jobs Ontario helps Ontarians like them. It helps with up to \$28,000 to cover expenses like child care, tuition and transportation for 52 weeks, so that you can enrol in a training program. It will help you or somebody looking for a skill to succeed and give back to the community.

Speaker, the Ontario government is working for our women. As our associate minister talks about, when women grow, Ontario grows. We are expanding our support for the Investing in Women's Futures Program, adding 10 new sites, bringing the number of locations to 33. I'm happy that two of those locations, Achēv in Mississauga and Roots Community Services Inc. in Mississauga, will benefit residents from our riding. This program has helped 1,300 women in Ontario secure employment, start their own business or pursue further training or education.

Another big announcement we're going to see through this budget is providing an additional \$25 million for three years to support the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program to fight the labour shortage. The allocation for the ONIP program will increase from \$9,000 to \$18,361 in 2025. I want to give a shout-out to Minister Monte McNaughton for being a champion for Ontario to build this number.

We're providing an additional \$3 million through the Ontario bridge training program. When we talk about it, we want to say that we have a place for you in Ontario where you can come and grow. But of course, it's kind of saying that when you take a plant and move it from one place to the other, it may take time to adjust to the soil. It may take time for you to get your leaves back. Remember, your government is here to welcome you. Through the Ontario bridge training program you can get the training to get back into the workforce when you're a new immigrant.

This program, in 2021, helped almost 6,000 newcomers secure a bright future and stable employment, and this additional investment will help our government support newcomers with more opportunities. We're investing \$32.4 million over the next three years to support 6,500 quality research internships, and of course, health care is our key focus as well.

We're making investments. Through this budget, we are spending, over 10 years, \$100 billion in transit, \$57 billion in health and \$22 billion in education. We're making sure that we're building Ontario's economy for today and tomorrow. To do that, we are giving a 10% refundable corporate income tax credit for qualifying investments. We're building the skilled workforce of today and tomorrow.

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Madam Speaker, this is a budget which is building a strong Ontario. Let me get straight to the point. The message through this budget is loud and clear to everyone watching across the globe: If you are looking to invest, Ontario is the place. If you're looking to come and join, Ontario is the place.

As I stood at the airport today, looking back at my life, I could also look forward and talk about the wonderful future we have. But I want to take a pause here and hand over the mike to my wonderful colleague from Carleton.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): The member for Carleton.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: I'd like to first of all thank the member from Mississauga–Malton for his wonderful speech and for the kind words.

I'm pleased to rise to speak about our government's 2023 Ontario Budget: Building a Strong Ontario. Let me just say, Madam Speaker, it's such an honour being part of this government with Premier Ford and representing my friends, neighbours and constituents as their member of provincial Parliament for the riding of Carleton.

First of all, let me congratulate our Minister of Finance, the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, and our dedicated parliamentary assistants to the minister, PAs Rick Byers and Stephen Crawford. Your hard work in consulting with Ontarians and working diligently to prepare this budget is commendable. Thank you for all of your hard work.

Madam Speaker, it was such a pleasure to take part in pre-budget consultations across this great province. From Ottawa to Timmins to Kenora, I heard the same things: Ontarians wanted a budget to build a strong economy, now and for the future. They wanted a budget that would build more roads, highways, transit and broadband. They

wanted a budget that would build new long-term-care homes, hospitals, schools and child care spaces. They wanted a budget to build a strong health care system that connects people to the right care. Madam Speaker, our budget will do just that, while at the same time returning Ontario to a balanced budget.

In 2022-23 fiscal year, the deficit is projected to shrink to just \$2.2 billion. And in 2023-24, our government plans to further reduce the deficit to \$1.3 billion. Starting next year, our government will ensure a modest surplus of \$200 million in the budget. Let me be clear: Under the reckless spending of the Liberals and NDP, this would have never been possible.

I'm excited to share what we're doing for Ontarians under this budget. From Uxbridge to Kitchener-Waterloo and Fort Frances to Cornwall, we are building and redeveloping hospitals and ensuring that Ontarians get the health care that they need. In fact, Ronald McDonald House, which is in Ottawa and is such an important place for hospice care, is receiving over \$3 million in funding in this budget.

Madam Speaker, as part of our plan to build a more connected and convenient health care system, we're implementing the most ambitious plan for hospital expansion in Ontario's history, investing over \$48 billion over the next 10 years in hospital infrastructure, including over \$32 billion in hospital capital grants. Recent milestones have included the Queensway Carleton Hospital mental health redevelopment project. In December 2022, construction of this project was completed. It adds two new acute mental health beds and expands space for mental health and addictions programs and services. The remaining renovations are scheduled to be complete by November 2023, and this will benefit my constituents in Carleton and indeed all of the Ottawa and eastern Ontario region.

Moreover, our budget adds more than \$48 billion over the next 10 years in hospital infrastructure, including over \$32 billion in hospital capital grants. This will support more than 50 hospital projects that will add 3,000 new beds over 10 years to increase access to reliable, quality care.

Investments are also being made to support hospital projects, including support for redevelopment of the existing hospital and regional trauma centre on a new site for the Ottawa Hospital Civic Campus to expand access to programs and services, as well as meet bed capacity needs.

Under our health care plan in this budget, we know that every child in Ontario should be able to get the care they need, when they need it. Our government has committed more than \$200 million to connect children and youth to care in hospitals and close to home in their communities, including new funding for surgical and diagnostic wait times, pediatric hospitals and rehabilitation programs, as well as mental health and other community-based supports. The government is also increasing access to high-quality care for patients across Ontario, including care at children's hospitals.

The best experts for certain conditions may not be based in a family's local community, and families sometimes travel long distances for specialized care. And as I mentioned earlier in my speech, Madam Speaker, Ronald McDonald House Charities provides families with accommodation, meals, activities, peer support, respite, support for siblings, laundry, school and many other services to take care of the entire family while their child is being treated at a nearby hospital. I had the pleasure of visiting Ronald McDonald charity house in Ottawa to get a tour of this amazing facility and to learn more and see first-hand how they are supporting not just children, but their families and caregivers.

That's why, Madam Speaker, I am so pleased that our government is investing \$3.1 million in 2023-24 for an expansion of the Ronald McDonald charity Ottawa house. This expansion will more than double the capacity of RMHC Ottawa house from 55,000 to 115,000 overnight stays per year for families with children being treated at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

Madam Speaker, our government is getting it done for health care, and let me be clear: It will always be paid for with an OHIP card.

I'm delighted to speak about our province's investment in our transportation system. Our government is investing \$27.9 billion over the next 10 years to connect communities, fight gridlock and keep goods and people moving across the province. The Ontario highways program includes more than 600 expansion and rehabilitation projects that are either under way or planned over the next four years. The Ontario highways program also includes widening existing corridors to increase capacity and enhance road safety for travellers. In particular, I am excited about the projects that have been and will be completed that will benefit the people of Carleton. Recently, construction was completed on Highway 417 in Ottawa, which saw bridge rehabilitation and replacement at Innes Road and Ramsayville Road. We will also get it done for Ottawa and eastern Ontario by completing the widening of Highway 17 from two to four lanes for 22.5 kilometres between Arnprior and Renfrew.

Madam Speaker, the Liberals and NDP never spared much thought to highways or the people stuck on them. Last election, voters noticed that our government does not take drivers for granted. We will get these highway projects done for Ontario drivers—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I apologize to interrupt the member. I have to interrupt the member; I apologize.

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

The Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Jill Dunlop: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Debate to continue, please.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Thank you very much. The member for Carleton can continue.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you. Madam Speaker, from Pickering to Ottawa, Atikokan to Windsor, our government is building new schools. Under this budget, a new English Catholic elementary school will be constructed in Nepean that will serve 507 students and include 39 licensed child care spaces.

Under this budget, a new English public elementary school will be constructed in Ottawa that will serve 628 students and include 39 licensed child care spaces.

Under this budget, a new French public elementary school will be constructed in Ottawa that will serve 475 students and include 49 licensed child care spaces.

Madam Speaker, we are getting it done for the students of Ottawa and Ontario.

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Finally, we know that small businesses and entrepreneurs keep our province moving, and that is why our government is supporting regional innovation centre hubs. Regional innovation centre hubs play an important role in supporting entrepreneurship by collaborating with other regional innovation centres and innovation organizers to ensure entrepreneurs have access to the tools they need to start and fuel their businesses. Our government will always stand behind small business owners and entrepreneurs, and this budget does just that.

In conclusion, our plan for a strong Ontario is a truly comprehensive plan. We have the right plan. We have the right Premier. We have the right team to build an Ontario that will continue to have a resilient economy, an Ontario that has the best infrastructure in place, an Ontario that connects you to the care you need and an Ontario that has a bright future for you, your family and generations to come.

I am pleased to support our government's budget and urge all members to join me in getting it done for the people of Ontario.

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

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: I was listening to my colleague from Mississauga-Milton who thanked the First Nations for taking care of the lands. We've seen in this budget—we've talked a lot of the Ring of Fire, the investments of building the road and everything that is tied to the Ring of Fire and the minerals up north. We heard also some communities are saying no to the road to the Ring of Fire, because of what's happening in Neskantaga. And even the Chief was pretty adamant when it came to the Ring of Fire road. Don't forget, Neskantaga has 28 years of boil-water advisories.

I ask you, the First Nations—because even in my riding, there are two communities who made a moratorium on their traditional territories. So I ask you, if First Nations say no, what will your government do?

Mr. Deepak Anand: First of all, I want to say thank you to the member opposite for the question. By the way, my riding is Mississauga-Malton. Our minister from Milton is doing an incredible job, so I'll let him take care of Milton.

Madam Speaker, talking about—and I truly say yes when I talked about that I want to say thank you to our

Indigenous community for taking care of this land for thousands of years. I actually had an opportunity to meet this afternoon the members from Taykwa Tagamou Nation. When they were talking about building a centre of excellence—I think it's a great idea. When it comes to supporting the First Nations, the Indigenous community, this government will stand shoulder to shoulder. That's why we're investing in the Skills Development Fund with an additional \$75 million. We are investing \$224 million for the new capital stream so that we can build those kinds of centres of excellence to support all Ontarians, including our Indigenous community.

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

Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto: I want to thank the two members from Carleton and Mississauga–Malton for their great debate today.

With the ambitious plan that we have to build 1.5 million homes in the province of Ontario, Ontario needs the workforce to build the infrastructure and homes of the future. How will this budget help to build that with the workforce that we need?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you to my colleague from Mississauga–Lakeshore. You're right. In your riding, there's huge home construction coming up, and thank you for all the hard work you are doing to make sure that the new Canadians—like me, 23 years back—when they come here, they want a dream of their home, and you are helping them to achieve that goal. What our government is doing—these homes are not going to be built by themselves. We need a skilled workforce. That's why our government is making sure that we're investing \$75 million in the Skills Development Fund and \$224 million in the capital stream. And not only that; we're actually making sure that we are providing an additional \$25 million over three years to attract more skilled workers through the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program so that we can build those 1.5 million homes, and all the people from Ontario who are looking to thrive can thrive in the province of Ontario.

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

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: So I'll try this again. We've got Neskantaga First Nation; we have Grassy Narrows, Kashechewan, Fort Albany—these are some of the communities I know that have moratoriums on their traditional territories, saying “You will not do anything on our traditional territories if you don't get consent from us.”

So I ask again: If you don't get consent from the communities of the James Bay coast that are affected by the Ring of Fire road construction, what will your government do? Because most of the budget—there's a lot of investment related to these materials that's going to happen. So I ask you, what will your government do if you don't get the consent from these First Nations communities?

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you to the member for the question. You know, our government doesn't focus on hypotheticals; our government focuses on facts. And the reality is that our government continues to support the

environmental assessments for the Marten Falls community access road project, the Webequie supply road project and the northern road link project, which is led by the Marten Falls First Nation and Webequie First Nation.

The terms of reference for the provincial environmental assessments for the Marten Falls community access road and the Webequie supply roads were approved in 2021. The terms of reference for the northern road link were approved in March 2023. I hope this answers the member's question.

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

Ms. Laura Smith: I thank both members for their submission and I was very interested in the member from Mississauga–Malton's discussion on a targeted approach. He mentioned immigration. He mentioned different places to support people and businesses to grow. Could he emphasize on those points and explain how that's part of a plan to build?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Thank you to the member from Thornhill for that wonderful question and being an advocate for the communities you serve. Madam Speaker, this budget is the budget to build a strong Ontario. That's why we're investing \$204 million through this budget. We're making sure that we're bringing manufacturing jobs back to Ontario. We're making sure we're spending, over 10 years, \$100 billion in transit, \$57 billion in health and \$22 billion in education. And we're making sure we have a workforce available to do that, and we are upskilling those skills to build a better, stronger Ontario.

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

M. Guy Bourgoin: Je vais répondre à la députée : non, ça ne répond pas à ma question. C'est parce qu'on a des communautés qui sont directement affectées, soit qu'elles sont à l'amont—puis je sais qu'elle comprend bien le français, ce qui fait que je vais lui parler en français—de la rivière. Parce qu'on sait tous que l'eau coule vers le nord.

Marten Falls est dans ma communauté. Je ne suis pas après de dire que les communautés autochtones sont contre le développement économique; au contraire, elles ne le sont pas. Mais ça revient à ce que ton collègue a dit : il faut protéger leurs territoires ancestraux, qui sont très fragiles. On a une communauté, comme Neskantaga, qui dit non. On a des communautés, comme Grassy Narrows, où ils ont mis des moratoires. On a Kashechewan, qui a mis un moratoire, et Fort Albany, qui a mis des moratoires. Tu as des territoires ancestraux qui viennent tous dans la même région. C'est beau, le chemin, mais le problème, ils disent, c'est que l'environnement—que l'étude environnementale était trop étroite. Ils veulent que ce soit beaucoup plus agrandi pour répondre aux questions des Premières Nations.

Si vous n'avez pas le consentement de ces communautés-là, allez-vous poursuivre pareil, oui ou non? Une simple question.

La Présidente suppléante (M^{me} Lucille Collard): La députée de Carleton.

Ms. Goldie Ghamari: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I do understand French, but speaking back, c'est comme ci, comme ça, alors je vais répondre en anglais.

Madam Speaker, our government is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities by focusing on initiatives that promote economic prosperity and create a better future for everyone across the province. And that's why we have terms of reference for the provincial environmental assessments for the Marten Falls community access road and the Webequie supply road, which were approved in 2021, and the terms of reference for the northern road link was approved in March of 2023.

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

Mr. Billy Pang: This question is for our great member from Mississauga–Malton on building Ontario's economy. Launching the new Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit would provide a 10% refundable corporate income tax credit to help local manufacturers lower their costs, invest in workers, innovate and become more competitive; and also advance Ontario's Critical Minerals Strategy, which supports better supply chain connections between industries, resources and workers in northern Ontario and manufacturing in south Ontario; and also improve competitiveness by planning to enable an estimated \$8 billion in cost saving and support for some Ontario employers in 2023; and also talk about attracting over \$16 billion in investment by global automakers and suppliers of EV batteries and battery materials to position Ontario as a global leader on the EV supply chain.

The list can go on and on. Can the member explain more about—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Please don't go on and on, because you're out of time.

Interjection.

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

For a quick answer, the member for Mississauga–Malton.

Mr. Deepak Anand: A quick answer is: Each one of you, support this budget. That's how we're going to build a stronger Ontario.

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

We're going to move to further debate.

Mr. Deepak Anand: Point of order, Madam Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): A point of order.

Mr. Deepak Anand: While answering my question, I would like to correct my record. For one of my answers, I should have said the First Nation in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): Further debate?

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: I'm going to be splitting my time with the MPP from University–Rosedale.

Last Thursday, the government dropped the budget. I was there. The delivery of this finance minister was powerful. It was incredible salesmanship. I've heard him speak like that. When I've heard him speak like that, it was

usually about auto insurance companies and the PR he does for them. Because usually, when I ask questions about it, he still had that level of love and salesmanship when he sold that budget.

I was so inspired that on Friday of last week, I flew all the way up to Thunder Bay, and I thought I would take a trip of my Ontario, our Ontario, and experience that Ontario myself.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: Let's hear about it.

Mr. Tom Rakocevic: Thank you.

I visited my good friend in Thunder Bay, and the first thing that I saw—and this is not something that I can speak happily or brag about, but I saw a 60% increase in food bank usage. And it was very difficult.

From there, I went and visited my friend in Mushkegowuk–James Bay. I took Highway 11. I had to wait; there was a 48-hour road closure. I wanted an EV car, actually. I forgot to mention that, because the first thing I did when I arrived was try to purchase an EV car. But I couldn't, because you know the credit the government got rid of was for EV vehicles some years back. I couldn't afford it. There was no talk about increased charging stations. I'm not sure how I would have got there in the first place. But I went along. It was dangerous. I was white-knuckling as I drove two-lane highways.

And then, I went to visit my good friend in Sudbury, where the first-ever tent city is happening since the establishment and the founding of Sudbury itself. That's what happened.

From there, I got on the 400, eventually made my way through Toronto and went all the way out to Hamilton, where services for people facing mental health challenges—multiple service providers were cut, doors closed because they didn't have the funding that they needed.

From Hamilton, I came all the way back to downtown Toronto. I visited people living in a condominium where this new family had just got the keys for their brand new condominium unit. As the critic for consumer protection, this is something of big interest to myself and all of us here on the NDP side. After making that first purchase of a home and a condominium, they faced a 50% increase in condominium fees. In this time and age, they're struggling.

Meanwhile, their neighbour, a friend in another building actually, is fighting down their condominium board over an issue, and they can't afford it. The court costs are through the roof. They're hoping that this government will actually expand the Condominium Authority Tribunal, so that they can get fair and quick justice, but they're still waiting.

In fact, the Auditor General has a series of recommendations going back from a bill tabled in 2015 that could fix condominiums here in this province and what some of the condominium owners are facing. We're still waiting for those to be proclaimed.

From downtown Toronto, we came up to my community, Humber River–Black Creek. I spoke to an ODSP recipient—and at this point I do want to pause and I want to recognize and congratulate the new minister for

children and social services. I know that he speaks powerfully and I know that he has got a very tough role to fill. But I want to tell the minister and I want to tell everybody here about an ODSP recipient in my community. Imagine he's listening to the budget. He wasn't inspired like I was, because he heard he was getting maybe a 5% increase—5% in this difficult time; imagine that.

As I mentioned earlier, and this is very terrible to hear, there are people facing disabilities and challenges who are considering medically assisted suicide. That is how difficult it is. That is how terrible it is right now, and so it is a tough file, and I hope that he will be able to talk to the Premier and to all the people on his side about the fact that 5% doesn't go far enough. It really doesn't go far enough. We need to double those rates, so I'm hoping that he will be able to work through and make that happen.

From my community, I decide I'm going to go visit my good friend over there in Brampton. To get there, I would consider taking the 407, but I can't afford it—the 407, maybe not just the most expensive highway in Ontario, maybe not just the most expensive highway in Canada, maybe not even in North America or the world, but in the entire visible universe. That's what we're dealing with. And it's a highway, may I remind this government, that last year owed this government a billion dollars, and the government said, "Do you know what, 407?"—because it was part of the contract, and we should respect those contracts—"We don't need your money. We don't need that money. Keep the money. A billion dollars? Don't worry about it." Did they actually say, "Hey, do you know what? We won't ask for that billion—maybe let's go revisit and modify some of those contracts, because drivers are getting gouged"? They didn't do that. They said, "Keep the money." I get it; it's their friends.

And so, where did I end up? I came to visit my dear friend in Brampton, where, under this government we are

seeing in this province of Ontario, with some of the safest drivers in all of Canada—literally, when you look at the drivers, they are the safest; our roads, relative to all of Canada, some of the safest—that we are paying the highest rates. And so I go to visit my friend in Brampton, under this government, that is absolutely refusing to stand up to these auto insurance companies that, during the end of the pandemic, made 27% in profits.

And yet, imagine: It's always the same story when they reach out to the government. They sit around, probably in boardrooms, and they work backwards: "What are we going to charge people? Come up with ideas. What are we going to say?" It's happening. It's literally happening: 27%. And then, when they go to their shareholders, they say, "Invest with us. We're making so much money, hand over fist." But when they talk to FSRA and they talk to the government, they say, "Oh, no, do you know what? We can't afford this. It is really tough for us." It is the same story.

In the little bit of time that I have left: This budget, delivered with the gusto that this finance minister delivered it with, seems to be completely out of touch. It is not understanding a moment in time where each and every one of us—on a serious note, the members of our community, everyday regular families—are struggling under this affordability crisis. And what we saw in that budget, whether by design or perhaps simply forgotten, was that the people in our communities—

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I apologize to the member, even though I know you knew this was coming.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (M^{me} Lucille Collard): I do have to interrupt the debate, as it is 6 o'clock and it's time for private members' public business.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Valerie Quioc Lim, Wai Lam (William) Wong,

Meghan Stenson, Christopher Tyrell

Temporary Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes par intérim: Mike Civil

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barnes, Patrice (PC)	Ajax	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough- Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Byers, Rick (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Flack, Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Premier ministre Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Holland, Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Hunter, Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Jama, Sarah (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première vice-présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Ke, Vincent (IND)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kemaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
McCarthy, Todd J. (PC)	Durham	
McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York / Beaches—East York	
McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
Quinn, Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Président du Conseil du Trésor
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Vice-présidente et présidente du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associée du Logement
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Vacant	Kanata—Carleton	