

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



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de l'Ontario

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(Hansard)**

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6 April 2023

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Jeudi  
6 avril 2023

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Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott  
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Todd Decker

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 6 April 2023

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 6 avril 2023

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prières.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Next we'll have a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### LESS RED TAPE, STRONGER ECONOMY ACT, 2023

#### LOI DE 2023 VISANT À RÉDUIRE LES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES POUR UNE ÉCONOMIE PLUS FORTE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 5, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to enact two Acts, amend various Acts and revoke various regulations / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à édicter deux lois, à modifier diverses lois et à abroger divers règlements.

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

**Hon. Graydon Smith:** Good morning, everyone. I'm honoured to kick off our day here this morning. I'll be sharing my time with the great member from Durham a little bit later on.

It indeed is an honour to be before you all today to talk about details about the important measures that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has put forward in our government's proposed Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act. I also want to take the opportunity to thank Minister Gill and his entire ministry staff, who I know have worked tirelessly to take the lead and introduce this important bill for the betterment of Ontario.

Speaker, the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act is building on the government's strong track record of reducing red tape. Since 2018, the changes we've put in place have saved businesses, non-profit organizations and the broader public sector nearly \$700 million annually in regulatory compliance costs, and that is just a fantastic and tremendous number that has real and tangible impact.

Since the day we took office, we've lowered the cost of doing business in Ontario by \$8 billion each and every year, and in continuing to build upon this progress, my ministry has proposed amendments to two statutes that, if passed, will further improve Ontario's competitiveness and reduce burden for businesses.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has proposed changes to the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act

to accommodate innovation in new technologies, including those that can reduce emissions, such as carbon storage. In addition, we've proposed amendments to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act that will provide greater flexibility for businesses that train dogs to support the hunting industry.

The proposed amendments to the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act represent phase 2 of a multi-phased approach of my ministry that's leading an effort to develop a regulatory framework for carbon storage in Ontario. It's critical that we work to establish this regulatory framework to authorize carbon storage projects in Ontario because of the many benefits this activity could bring to the province.

I know I talked a little bit about this before in the debate around the last red tape bill that this government brought forward, but I wanted to give a brief recap as to what carbon storage is.

Carbon capture and storage refers to technologies that capture the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide and permanently store it underground so that it does not contribute to climate change. The carbon dioxide can be captured from large emission sources like power generation or industrial facilities, and directly from the atmosphere.

There is growing worldwide acceptance of the important role that carbon capture and storage can play in achieving net-zero emissions in the global economy. It also has a role to play in the production of low-carbon hydrogen. In fact, carbon storage would help advance Ontario's low-carbon hydrogen strategy, which sets out a vision for a low-carbon hydrogen economy in our province, where we can develop a self-sustaining sector in Ontario, evolve our energy system, create local jobs and attract investment, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. I want to underline that point every time I say it.

Several other jurisdictions have recognized the potential of this activity, and they have already jumped on board. Our research indicates that as of September 2022, there were over 190 commercial carbon capture and storage projects at various stages of development worldwide. This number is only growing.

Without a regulatory framework in place to authorize geological carbon storage projects in Ontario, we hurt our national and global competitiveness and risk being viewed as unresponsive to business needs.

To get feedback on this activity and how we might regulate it, my ministry posted a discussion paper in January 2022 that explored enabling carbon storage in Ontario. Through this engagement, we heard about the

importance of working quickly to remove barriers to carbon storage in the province, as well as the need to ensure access to all available geologic storage resources and to maximize the economic viability of these projects. Our government listened to what we heard and once again, we have acted.

As part of the Less Red Tape, Stronger Ontario Act, 2022, my ministry implemented the first phase of our approach to developing a regulatory framework for carbon storage in Ontario by proposing amendments to the Oil, Gas and Salt Resources Act to remove the prohibition related to carbon storage.

In continuing to make progress towards establishing a regulatory framework for carbon storage in Ontario, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is beginning phase 2 of our plan.

These changes are responsive to what we heard through engagement and would increase our government oversight on the testing and demonstration of carbon storage projects throughout the province.

As carbon storage is new to Ontario, we want to ensure that the activity is done responsibly. The proposed amendments include provisions that enhance the protection of people and the environment through a variety of tools.

This is also an exciting new tool for us to consider in managing the province's emissions. It will help in producing low-carbon hydrogen and increase sector innovation that will improve our competitiveness and allow companies to access federal money for projects.

Large businesses across Ontario have expressed this exact sentiment. In fact, Jim Redford, vice-president of energy services at Enbridge Gas, said, "We are pleased to see the government of Ontario signal next steps to explore carbon capture, utilization and sequestration (CCUS) opportunities. CCUS offers an important path to reduce carbon emissions from energy-intensive, hard-to-abate industries, including those located in southwestern Ontario, by capturing them where they are produced and storing them permanently deep underground." We can make a difference. "We look forward to continuing working with government, industry and local partners to explore next steps for CCUS and to leverage opportunities to drive economic development and job creation."

I also want to talk for a moment about the amendments we have proposed to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act that would provide greater flexibility within the hunting industry for dog train and trial facilities and allow for the tradition of training and hunting with sporting dogs in Ontario. Train and trial facilities are used to prepare hunting dogs and their handlers for sporting activities safely and responsibly. Over the past several years, key stakeholder groups have approached the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry with the request that Ontario consider changes that would allow licensed train and trial facilities to continue to operate in Ontario.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is proposing legislative changes to provide flexibility for existing licensed train and trial facilities to operate under

new ownership, which will give opportunities to new individuals to assume the operation of existing facilities.

My ministry is also proposing to allow for the issuance of licences for new dog train and trial facilities in our province, which would be facilitated by a one-time 90-day application period.

#### 0910

With these proposed amendments, my ministry is being responsive to our stakeholders' business needs and is supporting the continuation of train and trial facilities in the province by helping to maintain opportunities for training, field trials and hunting tests for dogs in these facilities.

One of the stakeholders, Angelo Lombardo, the executive director of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, spoke highly of these amendments. He said, "The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters is pleased to see the introduction of these amendments. With this proposal, the government is recognizing hunting with dogs as an important tradition, for which the cornerstone is well-trained dogs. This proposal marks one of the first significant updates to dog training and trialing in over 20 years. These areas provide a safe and controlled environment for dogs and their handlers to become proficient in specific hunting practices, a convenient location to expose youth to an important outdoor activity and an economic opportunity through the hosting of training and trialing events."

We, of course, recognize the importance of ensuring these facilities are operated safely and responsibly, and will ensure that they continue to meet strict regulatory requirements. The humane treatment of wildlife and improving animal welfare standards in Ontario continue to be important priorities of this government.

My ministry will be publishing a proposal notice on the Environmental Registry regarding proposed legislative and associated regulatory changes at the time of bill introduction. Implementation of licence transfers and issuance of new licences would not happen until consultation is complete and amendments to the act and regulations are finalized, which is not expected until late 2024.

I'll conclude my portion of the time by saying that, once again, I'm grateful for the opportunity to address the Legislature. I want to thank all who are present here today for giving me the opportunity to speak about how my ministry is improving Ontario's competitiveness and reducing burden for businesses.

The Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act will continue to provide much-needed relief and cost savings for Ontario businesses, not-for-profit organizations, municipalities, universities and colleges, school boards and hospitals. I am proud of the contributions my ministry is making to advance this important work.

I'll yield the rest of my time to the member from Durham.

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

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** On behalf of my constituents in the riding of Durham, it is my pleasure to join the debate this morning to speak about moving forward with our



government's bill, the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act, 2023.

Mr. Speaker, this bill confirms our government's commitment that was made to my constituents and all Ontarians to improve Ontario's competitiveness in several key areas by reducing regulatory burdens for people and businesses in the province of Ontario.

When I was here yesterday, I was pleased to hear that the House leader for His Majesty's loyal opposition supports reducing red tape. So maybe the NDP is finally getting it. As I have indicated before, when we reduce regulatory burdens and red tape and we grow the economy, and when businesses prosper, we create an environment where there are thousands more jobs—there is good news on that front today—and we have the revenue to fund our core public services in health care, education, social services, infrastructure. That's what it's about. A strong economy is what it's all about. Government does not create jobs or create a strong economy; government creates the environment for both.

Ontario's spring 2023 red tape reduction package is about that—creating the environment for growth and prosperity for all. It was introduced in this House by my colleague the Minister of Red Tape Reduction, and it includes 42 new initiatives that, when fully implemented, are estimated to save businesses, not-for-profits and the broader public sector \$119 million in net regulatory compliance costs—\$119 million in savings. Think of how that money can be reinvested back into Ontario businesses and Ontario's manufacturing sector. Think of the positive impact that would have on business growth, job creation and strengthening Ontario's economy for the next generation—and to support all of our important public services that the people of this province depend on the government to fund.

Mr. Speaker, we have already seen the positive results in Ontario's productivity.

Since taking office in 2018, just five years ago, our government has introduced numerous red tape reduction packages. This legislation will be our 10th red tape reduction bill. Our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford and the Minister of Red Tape Reduction, has solidified our strong track record of improving access to government services and making it easier to invest and build in Ontario. To date, we have taken more than 450 actions to reduce regulatory burdens, all without compromising health, safety or the environment. This legislation continues to build on that progress, and we must move swiftly and decisively to pass the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act for the sake of businesses, entrepreneurs, families, and the next generation of Ontarians.

To summarize for my colleagues in this House, some of the key items in this package include:

—first, amending the Building Broadband Faster Act to help speed up the delivery of high-speed Internet. High-speed Internet access must come to every community by the end of 2025. I know many of my constituents in the rural parts of my riding—families and businesses residing

specifically in Columbus, Enniskillen, Burketon and Tyrone—have been asking this government and the previous Liberal government for the same high-speed Internet capacity that the rest of the province has had for the last 15 years. I say to the citizens of my riding in those communities, stay tuned—promises made, promises kept by Premier Ford and this government;

—second, strengthening occupational health and safety in the mining sector by changing regulations to reflect modern technology and to better protect workers;

—third, enabling the next phases of carbon storage innovation by piloting technology that has the potential to store 30 years' worth of carbon emissions;

—fourth, implementing The Hague Convention on international recovery of child support, reducing frustration for families involved in the province's child and spousal support orders system. This will enable enforcement of support orders in more than 55 countries;

—fifth, improving safety on Ontario's roads and highways by updating the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit drivers from overtaking working snowplow operators unless a full lane is available.

When it comes to reducing red tape, our government is getting it done, and it has never been more important for us to continue this important work. It is a significant barrier to our productivity and Ontario's economic competitiveness to do nothing, as the previous Liberal government did, and in fact, to add to that burden, as the previous Liberal government did. And what we saw is what happened—it discouraged trade with other jurisdictions; it hinders investment and did hinder investment under the 15-year Liberal regime; it hindered innovation with global partners; and it cost Ontario jobs. It cost Ontarians jobs—300,000-plus manufacturing jobs fled the province. But under the leadership of our government, jobs are coming back by the tens of thousands.

Madam Speaker, I would like to elaborate on some of the details within this package; in particular, some elements that the constituents from my riding of Durham have repeatedly requested, and now our government is delivering.

We are taking steps to amend the Building Broadband Faster Act—as indicated, proposing legislative amendments to ensure this gets done. In today's technology era, where everything, including most government programs and ministries, requires online access and enrolment, it is absurd to think that there are still some parts of Ontario, right here in the nearby GTA, that are unable to access safe and reliable Internet. While that is the legacy of the Liberal regime of 15 years, supported in part by the NDP, that legacy will be wiped away as we get it done and bring broadband Internet to all. This is a necessity of life.

Once the needs of all Ontarians in underserved Internet areas are met, they, along with all Ontarians, will benefit from the amendments we are making to the Pension Benefits Act to include electronic communications. This was initiated by the Ministry of Finance, and our government is reducing administrative requirements

for provincially regulated pension plans and keeping costs down by proposing changes to the Pension Benefits Act. These would allow pension plan administrators to continue to send electronic communications to members who retire, without the need for paper or electronic reminder notes.

**0920**

My riding is made up of several agricultural stakeholders and farmers, who, for generations, have dedicated their lives to producing homegrown Ontario products, to feed our families and export their products to other parts of Canada and North America. I've listened to the farmers in my riding, and they have told me how red tape and regulatory burdens have cost their farming operations tens of thousands of dollars.

Amanda Kiezebrink is the fourth-generation owner of her family's farm in north Oshawa, and she informed me of the specific negative impact of regulatory burdens and red tape under the Liberals. She supports our government's plan to get it done.

With respect to the Milk Act proposals, these will assist many dairy farmers in Ontario, like Sargent's dairy farm in north Bowmanville. Here, Ontario is proposing to amend regulation 761, Milk and Milk Products, under the Milk Act, which would reduce the burden on the dairy processing industry while improving food safety. We're getting it done for Sargent's dairy farm and other dairy farmers. That is a promise we have made to Ontarians to provide the environment to produce healthy, homegrown food, and a promise that we intend to keep so that farmers thrive.

As a trial lawyer for over 30 years before being elected, I've witnessed first-hand some of the regulatory delays and burdens placed on the legal profession and the courts.

There are four areas where the Ministry of the Attorney General is acting to move forward to modernize our courts. Amendments, as well, in this bill include amendments to the Creditors' Relief Act, amendments to the Execution Act, amendments to the Trustee Act, and amendments to the Courts of Justice Act.

Lastly, our government has proposed amendments to a regulation under the Law Society Act which would make the Law Society Tribunal function more effectively by recognizing the expertise of the chair and giving the chair of the tribunal the choice to assign either a one-member or a three-member panel where regulation states cases must be heard by three members.

I am proud to support this bill, and I look forward to hearing further debate.

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

**M. Guy Bourgouin:** Ça m'étonne toujours d'entendre le gouvernement dire que le NPD a « propté » les libéraux quand ils étaient au pouvoir. Hier, on entendait le député de Kitchener-Conestoga dire, comment can you prop up a government when they're a majority?

The Conservatives should think about this, because they were in power—the last time, the Liberals were in power for two majorities, but you were the official opposition.

Vous étiez officiellement—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Guy Bourgouin:** Holding a power of majority government? You should be a lawyer—you say you're a lawyer; you should know this.

The thing is, they were a majority, and you were the official opposition, so you voted, percentage-wise—and you can verify it; it's on record—the same as us, if not a little bit less than us.

My question is to the minister. For the bait zoning, I'd like to hear from you where we are with—where your government is, because—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Response?

**Hon. Graydon Smith:** I appreciate the passion from the member opposite this morning. He just got a little bit of a question out there, at the end.

I will say, in general that I could not be more happy with what I'm seeing from this government, writ large, within this bill and the previous red tape bills that have come before it. We continue to support businesses, non-profits, organizations throughout Ontario to make their job simpler and to save them money, and a big component of that is the time component. I think about small business owners in my riding and what they have to do and how they have to do it, and they only have so much time in a day, in a week to get that job done. This bill helps them and helps everybody.

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

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I really enjoyed the conversation that both of the members provided.

My question is to the minister.

As a small business owner, I understand some of the challenges that small businesses go through, and I was very interested in the dog training facilities. It's actually my understanding that they are becoming few and far between.

Could the member please advise on why this is happening and what our government can do?

**Hon. Graydon Smith:** I thank the member for the question and also for the great job she does for her constituents every day.

When we look at train and trial facilities in Ontario, we're seeing a decrease in the number of those facilities. Since 1997, that number has gotten smaller and smaller, because there's no way to sell a facility and there has been no way open a new facility. Imagine if that were you and that was part of your livelihood, and you had a business where the asset was essentially devalued because you couldn't transfer the ownership. That would obviously be very, very troubling.

This is an opportunity to right that wrong, to open up the ability to transfer these licences—which will still very much be given lots of oversight from the ministry and create new opportunities for new business owners throughout the province. I think it's very, very important, not only from a business standpoint but also from the cultural heritage of hunting and dog training in—

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

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** When your Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre met President Biden, he was clear that opposition was an act of loyalty. So I want to make sure—His Majesty’s loyal opposition—that’s what we’re doing, our job here, holding you to account, just like your Conservative leader has said.

My question is very specific. You talk about not wanting duplication or red tape. You’ve taken out the Auditor General’s ability to audit the Office of the Children’s Lawyer. The Attorney General said, “We don’t want to hire more people. We don’t want to spend taxpayers’ dollars.” So explain to me why, then, you are requiring audits, for example, in the city of Toronto. The city of Toronto has auditors. They audit their books. They do all of that work. They have a chief financial officer. But you’re requiring an external audit to see how they can recoup all of those development charges that are leaving a hole in their revenue. How do you explain that duplication?

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** There are many redundancies in government left behind by the previous administration—much unnecessary overhead and burdens and hoops to jump through.

But there is plenty of oversight for the Office of the Children’s Lawyer, and the Auditor General continues to have a very broad mandate for value-for-money audits.

What we’re doing is removing redundancies, removing duplication. That’s part of reducing red tape and regulation without compromising oversight. That’s the key to this bill.

Again, a little bit of a history lesson when we talk about minority governments and official opposition—yes, His Majesty’s loyal opposition, that’s the name for it for a reason. However, minority versus majority governments—when there is a budget bill, when there is a minority government, you can bring the government down. The NDP could have done that from 2011 to 2014 but did not do so. They aided and abetted the Liberal legacy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Simcoe–Grey.

**Mr. Brian Saunderson:** My question is to my colleague from Durham, who, I understand, had a long and fruitful practice in law. I’m wondering if he could speak to some of the changes that are being made through this legislation that will impact the legal profession, such as changes to the Creditors’ Relief Act and the Execution Act.

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** Thank you to the member for the question, a fellow member of the bar before being elected along with me on June 2, 2022.

There are a number of acts being amended or proposed to be amended by this bill.

The Courts of Justice Act—to remove the requirement of the Auditor General to audit the accounts and financial transactions of the Office of the Children’s Lawyer. Again, oversight is still there, but it’s removing duplication.

The Creditors’ Relief Act will include electronic formats, if those amendments are passed.

The Execution Act—for a principal residence exemption in forced sales. That amendment will be made if this act is passed.

Updating hearings before the hearing and appeal divisions under the Law Society Act—I covered that off in my speech, but that gives the chair the discretion to go to one-member tribunals instead of three, if appropriate.

Amending the Substitute Decisions Act, updating that—this would clarify that an attorney has the power to access personal information about an incapable person.

Updating the Trustee Act to facilitate investment of trust investments—and, of course, the amendment to The Hague Convention to allow proper enforcement of child support orders.

**0930**

These are very important measures, and I urge all members of the House to support them.

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

**Mr. Jeff Burch:** I have a question to the member from Durham. He talked about Internet capability, and there are some changes here that nibble around the edges. We’ve been talking about public versus private. The member has stated that he wants Internet for everybody in Ontario. How is that going to happen with a private delivery model, when it’s not economical for any of those companies to locate in many areas of the province?

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** When it comes to innovation and delivery and getting it done, the people of this province and, I can tell you, the people in the hamlets in my riding who have not had that Internet access—they don’t care how it’s delivered, as long as it’s fair, reasonable, and the government has an ability to have oversight and to keep costs down. That’s what we’re doing. That’s what we’re committed to. The kind of question that is raised here results in the kind of dithering that doesn’t get it done. The people in my riding in those hamlets have been waiting a long time, and we’re going to get it done for them. Promises made, promises kept.

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

**Mr. Deepak Anand:** My question is to the member for Durham, and the question is very simple. If you look at the title, it says, “Less Red Tape, Stronger Ontario.” What is the correlation between the two?

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** Yes, in fact, the title tells it all. There are, I think, as many as 30 or more schedules to it and so many pieces of legislation affected by it.

Less red tape means a stronger Ontario; a stronger Ontario means building Ontario; building Ontario means tens of thousands of more jobs; more jobs means that we have productivity, growth and prosperity for all and the ability to fund the core public services that all Ontarians rely upon.

Ontario is stronger when we have less red tape, and we have growth because we have less red tape and regulatory

burden. That is what this bill, as part of a series, is all about.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** It's time for further debate. I recognize the member for Hamilton Centre.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Thank you for letting me give my inaugural speech today.

The word “hooyo,” which means “mother” in Somali, is derived from the root word “hooy,” which translates directly into the word “home.” My mother provided me within her own physical body my first home and birthed me into a world that wasn't built for me. She gave me the tools I needed to survive in this world, as a child with cerebral palsy who was deemed a vegetable at birth and a future burden to the state.

Under the leadership and wisdom of my mother, I learned the beauty of unconditional love and compassion. I also learned what it meant to advocate fiercely for those you love through watching her navigate impossible circumstances in order to raise me and my siblings. She single-handedly pushed back against discriminatory pressures from school boards when I was told in grade school that I didn't belong in integrated classrooms. My mother pushed to make sure that I had the best health care access and supports in place when navigating systems steeped in misogynoir and ableism. She taught me to speak up for myself at times when no one would listen. If not for her, I wouldn't be here today, so I'm beginning this off by thanking her.

I also want to thank everyone in Hamilton Centre who has shown me, through their constant commitment to organizing, what radical love and care can look like. Thank you to Sahra, Sabreina, Amr, Koubra, Ahona, Vic, Kojo, Rain, Matthew, and so many others for believing in me and pushing me as your comrade to run for office. Thank you to Daniela for being the backbone of my campaign, and to Sara, Shirven, Robbie, Anika, Davin, Daunte and so many others—alongside the Ontario NDP caucus—for the countless hours that you spent over your lives that you committed toward sending me to Queen's Park.

Of course, thank you to everyone in Hamilton Centre who voted to support my candidacy.

My name is Sarah Jama. I am 28 years old, and I'm the newest addition to the Ontario NDP caucus. I represent the riding of Hamilton Centre—a riding within a working-class city with strong labour roots, filled with caring community members who support one another when times get tough. Throughout the years, my friends and I have organized to make sure that care has been felt in this riding. To us, over the last decade, care has looked like a number of us delegating at council, asking for investments into our public transit system; it has looked like a number of us organizing to feed thousands of disabled residents, at the onset of the pandemic, through a makeshift, community-led, community-funded food delivery service.

This care in our community has looked like non-profits banding together to push for vaccine prioritization for COVID-19 for Black and racialized people in Hamilton,

and community-run vaccine clinics. In fact, Hamilton was the first city to prioritize Black, racialized and disabled people for vaccines—and it was part of that work.

This care also looks like hundreds of Muslims who gathered at Bayfront Park last year to pray together in public, in solidarity with hate crime victims in London, Ontario.

This care has looked like many of us working together as organizers to successfully get police out of schools in the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

This care has looked like many of us standing out in the rain, watching police officers shove the tents and belongings of homeless people, some of whom were pregnant, into the garbage, and doing all we could to replace those lost belongings.

Care in Hamilton Centre has looked like a number of us, at 20-something years old—and I'm including myself in that—starting non-profit organizations like the Disability Justice Network of Ontario or the Hamilton Encampment Support Network, trying over and over again to fill gaps created by cruel and harmful bylaws and legislation which work in tandem to continuously criminalize disabled people without homes for trying to survive.

This care has looked like a number of us in Hamilton Centre who made the decision to camp outside in the freezing cold for two weeks in Hamilton, in solidarity with homeless folks who died in part due to no housing or shelter options being available.

This care in Hamilton Centre has looked like a number of us getting arrested because we were trying to stop the eviction of Black and Indigenous people from a park in the aftermath of a traumatic fire, where their belongings were lost.

This care in Hamilton Centre has looked like a number of us continuing to try to improve the material conditions of those around us, with very little resources, over and over and over again, while some of us experienced housing precarity ourselves or were deeply unwell.

This care has looked like organizing multiple funerals for our friends, who shouldn't have died a year ago—almost to the day.

This care has looked like organizing peaceful demonstrations to call attention to the ways police have harmed our communities.

This care has looked like my friends and I running for office at different levels and being successful in Hamilton Centre, succeeding in those elections, fuelled by the desire to improve the material conditions of people who are struggling. I'm shouting out my fellow organizer Sabreina Dahab, who is now a trustee, and Cameron Kroetsch, who is a councillor in ward 2—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I apologize to the member for Hamilton Centre.

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

I recognize the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

**Hon. Graydon Smith:** Please continue the debate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Once again, I apologize to the member for Hamilton Centre. You may continue.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** That's okay. I'm still learning the rules.

This care has looked like, in Hamilton Centre, us organizing peaceful demonstrations to call attention to the ways police have caused harm in our communities.

This care has looked like my friends and I running for office at different levels of government in Hamilton Centre, succeeding in those multiple elections within the last few years, fuelled by the desire to improve the material conditions of people who are struggling in this riding.

0940

Mr. Speaker, I want this House to be very clear that I am not here as an elected official today because I believe wholly that the system is fixable solely by electing good-faith actors. Last night, I was speaking with Mariame Kaba at a Police Free Schools meeting, She is an accomplished author, organizer and abolitionist. She reminded me that I am here to keep my foot in the door to keep the rupture that was successfully caused by my successful election open. And I agree with her. I am here today because of what has been and continues to be at stake under the leadership of the Ford government and to draw attention to it. But nobody in this House seems capable of absolutely fixing what this government continues to intentionally break.

Disabled people who are homeless continue to get stuck in this shelter-to-park-to-prison-to-park cycle because there is nowhere else to go. Shelters demand that you change how your body functions, including suddenly stopping the use of drugs, in order to access supports—a completely ableist framework, that you must change how your body needs to function in that moment in order to access care and love. Jails like the Barton Jail in my riding routinely withhold psychiatric medications from people who have been arrested, contributing to that prison-to-park-to-shelter pipeline.

Disabled people on the Ontario Disability Support Program or Ontario Works are living under legislated poverty, unable to afford food or rent. This government is well aware of that.

Many people are choosing and have chosen medical assistance in dying because of no other options being made available. It can take up to two years to access a pain clinic in this province.

In fact, someone I know in Hamilton successfully used MAID because she was vomiting cyclically due to her disabilities, and while on ODSP, she couldn't afford the food she needed in order to live the life that she wanted. She has passed away.

We have seen so much death in Hamilton Centre, and that's the only catalyst that pushed us to run to access a bit of power.

Disabled people have been warehoused in crumbling long-term-care systems under this government, without real choice, and the privatization of our health care system is a direct attack on the sickest members of our communities. People deserve the right to age in place at home, instead of sitting in their feces and urine for days on end, like Chris Gladders did, before he chose to die through MAID because he was in at LTC and was not being provided supports.

I would argue that together, these legislative decisions and underfunded social assistance, while continuing to warehouse disabled people and fund the disproportionate criminalization of disabled people in poverty, work together to paint the picture of modern-day eugenics.

This government has been so preoccupied with being tough on crime and sending people back to work, when the truth is, people have multiple jobs and still can't afford to live in this province; when the truth is, criminalization is disabling, rips people away from stability and is not rehabilitative; when the truth is, some disabled people can't work and are punished for it through underfunded social assistance rates.

Today, I am thinking of all the racialized disabled people I know who have died after being forced to interact with the so-called justice system: Soliman Faqiri, a Muslim man with schizophrenia who was beaten to death by prison guards; DeAndre Campbell, who was 25—he was younger than me—and routinely called police for help when he was in crisis, but he was killed by a rookie cop on the job who thought he was a threat; Ejaz Chowdhury, a Muslim man who was killed on a mental health call; and so many others I could name, who were not only racialized but disabled too and needed supports.

None of this is normal. It's not normal that people can't afford their medications. It is not normal that disabled people are warehoused into long-term care or are over-represented in our prison systems. It is not normal that people can't afford places to live and then get into trouble for having nowhere to live. It is not normal that sending kids to school these days with a smile is nearly impossible for parents of disabled students. It is not normal that teachers are taken to court. It is not normal that the people in this House with the most legislative power to do good are causing so much harm.

There have been a lot of questions leading up to me taking this seat in the House about who I am, what motivates me and what issues I care about. There has also been a lot of fearmongering about me as the "defund" caucus member.

Let me be really clear: My goal as an elected official is to take care of the people in my riding by improving their material conditions as best as I can, because I truly believe we don't have any other options left. I am not here to get lost in the theatrics of this colonial place. I am here to bring light to the issues impacting working-class people and to support my caucus in forming government in 2026, under the leadership of Marit Stiles, because we do not have any other options left. People are dying because of the choices made by people across this aisle.

I'm here to collaborate with my comrades Trustee Dahab, Councillor Krotesch, Councillor Nann, and MP Green in Hamilton Centre to also make sure we are building a riding in Hamilton Centre that continues to take care of those who need support the most.

Mostly, I am here and participating in this system as an elected official to hold this government accountable for the harms caused.

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

**Mr. Rick Byers:** I thank the speaker for her passionate remarks this morning. I could hear that passion across the aisle. All of us choose to seek elected office in their own timing and pace, and for some it happens later in life, even those with grey hair like mine. I wonder if the member could explain to the House when her decision first arose and when that passion first started for her.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Thank you for the question.

I've been pretty involved in politics for some time because I see it as a form of harm reduction. I don't believe in removing ourselves from the space. I co-managed the successful campaign of Councillor Ninder Nann. I've been involved in the provincial and the federal levels of the NDP for some time.

I made the decision to run when my predecessor announced that she would step down. My friends and I worked together to sign up over 600 people to the party, to show that people want to re-engage in politics. People have been disengaged for a long time, in general. Voter turnout is abysmal, in general. I think in deciding to run, it was a statement of, it's not just me taking this seat, but it's a lot of us who care about wanting to be involved.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I listened intently to my new colleague from Hamilton Centre.

I would just like her to describe a feeling that we have all felt the first time that we were in this Legislature as an elected official.

I think it's safe to say that few, if any, of us have faced the challenges that you have getting here—and if you could just describe what it was like coming into the Legislature, as an elected MPP, for the first time.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** I think this building is a testament to the fact that we're probably not going to meet the markers of the AODA in 2025. A lot had to change just for me to be able to sit here. I'm looking forward, as the disability critic with the caucus, to being able to put forward some ideas around how to meet those markers. A lot more work needs to be done to make sure that disabled people can sit in this House.

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

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** I congratulate the newly elected member from Hamilton Centre on her election on March 16 and joining us in this 43rd Parliament—although the newest member of the provincial Parliament, we will all be in the picture for the 43rd Parliament, with our names on the wall, after this Parliament is complete.

I just want to ask—I get teased about this: I ran a couple of times to try to get here, before I got here. It looks like the member successfully ran and won the first time. Going way, way back, I was in student politics, student government at the University of Toronto, right next door. How many elections has the member run in, compared to me—student included?

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Student included—that would be two.

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

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm very pleased to ask my colleague a question after her inaugural speech.

I came to this place as an educator, and I know how important it is to inspire youth, to have youth engaged in our process in this House.

What do you think it would mean to the girls in grade 5 who are learning about government for the first time, to the grade 10 students who are learning about civics, when they see you here? What might that mean for them?

**0950**

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** I hope it means that they'll consider running one day.

These spaces were not built for a lot of us. They were built for a very small number of people who understand how these colonial processes work. Every day I come in here, I'm still very confused about why you all are clapping or banging your desks. I'm figuring it out.

What it means is that this process becomes more accessible and that everyday people can decide that they will choose to run one day.

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

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** Thank you to the member for that passionate story you told for this House.

I came as a political refugee, and I never thought that one day I was going to be in this House.

Thank you for sharing your stories.

I left a war-torn country—same as you and your native land. You left your war-torn country in East Africa. I know you brought a different perspective as a woman, diverse—and you're going to put in so much value and so many ideas to this House.

I would ask the member, what made you choose to come to this position? What voice do you want to bring to this House? I'd like to hear that from you.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** I ran because I want to—it's about harm reduction. A lot of us on the ground were trying to do what we could, with no resources. Now we have resources and a little bit of power. I'm hoping that some useful change can be affected here.

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

**MPP Jill Andrew:** To the new member for Hamilton Centre: I'm very glad to see you here today. You spoke with such passion. Your commitment to the causes that you spoke to was overwhelming. It was literally one of, if not the best, inaugural speeches I've heard, going back to our first class in 2018.

You mentioned misogyny; I know that a lot of people, if not everyone in this building, doesn't know what you're talking about. I'm wondering if you could explain what misogyny is and also how that impacted you as you were running, how you feel it may impact you in this House, and what tools, what practices or what communities you will lean on to be supported. This House, as you said, was not built for you and I, but we are here, and we are doing as good as we can for the people of Ontario. I'm wondering how and what your support system looks like whenever you bump up against misogyny or other systems of oppression.

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** To me, misogyny is the double-impact of being oppressed because you are a woman and because you are Black. I brought that up in the context of my mother, who had to navigate so many systems here, as a newcomer, to make sure that I could stay alive. She was pressured to terminate her pregnancy with me, actually, and just experienced the most racism and discrimination from the health care system and taught me how to push against that. How it impacted me as an elected person was many talking about me as though I was this angry, upset person without asking why or what experience influenced the things that I believe. And the vilification of my personhood and my physical body and the way that I communicate are, I think, examples of, over the past weeks, misogyny in action in this space and during the course of the campaign.

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

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** I want to thank the member from Hamilton Centre for being here. Congratulations on your victory.

I ran in my riding in 2017 for the nomination. My family has been in that riding since 1950. I was told by people that I wasn't good enough for that community, as the son of an Italian immigrant. I ended up winning the nomination, and I defeated probably the toughest Liberal opponent—the finance minister—in that riding.

What was your toughest challenge getting here?

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** The toughest part of the campaign for me was people taking my principled stances and turning it into theatre.

When I talk about policing, it's because I know people who have died.

When I talk about Palestinian human rights, it's because, literally, I know Palestinians who have been affected.

The media and people in this House have taken my stances and vilified the person instead of talking about actual issues, so I found that really, really difficult to navigate, because it erased my humanity and the humanity of the very people I was talking about during the entire course of the campaign.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** We are now moving on to further debate.

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** I rise to highlight just what kind of work our government has done. It is this government that

is building to ensure this province is a leader, not only in Canada, but across the world.

Our government introduced the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act, 2023, which, if passed, would help businesses grow, pave the way for better services, and save people valuable time. As many of my colleagues have already stated, our government's plan is taking significant actions to drive growth by building Ontario's economy. Our government made a commitment to get it done when it comes to cutting red tape across the province, and we are doing just that.

In 2018, when we formed government, we knew that we needed to remove the unnecessary and outdated regulations holding this province back, and we did.

Since 2018, this government has reduced the number of regulatory compliance requirements affecting businesses by 6.5%, a pretty astonishing figure, Speaker, if you truly think about it.

This government increased jobs and investment in Ontario by making it less expensive, faster and easier to do business—and to set one of the best regulatory service standards in North America.

To date, our government has thoughtfully taken more than 450 actions to reduce red tape without compromising public health, safety or the environment—a proud accomplishment.

The Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act will, if passed, pave the way for better services, help Ontario businesses grow and save everyone time.

We have made historic progress so far by saving businesses nearly \$700 million per year in net annual regulatory compliance costs. This is an increase of \$120 million in savings since the 2022 Burden Reduction Report. Speaker, \$120 million is a significant amount of savings for our business community, especially at a time of global uncertainty. Every small business owner I've spoken with during my time in business, and now as a member of provincial Parliament, wants to see all levels of government work efficiently with and respect tax dollars. This \$120 million more in savings will allow businesses to reduce debt at a time of high interest rates, invest into equipment, staffing, and their communities.

Putting money back into Ontario businesses keeps our economy competitive amongst other provinces and nations around the world.

Speaker, this work is so important because under the leadership of the former Liberal government, Ontario was the most heavily regulated province in the country—nothing to be proud of.

Reducing red tape is an important part of building a stronger economy and improving services for all the people of Ontario.

The 2023 red tape reduction package adds to our track record of improving access to government services and making it easier to invest and build in Ontario. Ontario's spring red tape reduction package includes 42 new initiatives that, when fully implemented, are estimated to save businesses, not-for-profits and the broader public

sector \$119 million in net annual regulatory compliance costs.

Key items from the package include—the first one, and this one excites me the most, coming from a rural riding—amending the Building Broadband Faster Act to help speed up the delivery of high-speed Internet access to every community by the end of 2025. I know many in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry will be excited to hear of the expedited time frame.

Other key items include strengthening occupational health and safety in the mining sector by changing regulations to reflect modern technology and better protect workers; enabling the next phases of carbon storage innovation by piloting technology that has the potential to store 30 years' worth of carbon emissions; implementing The Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support, reducing frustration for families involved in the province's child and spousal support order system by enabling enforcement of support orders in more than 55 countries; and improving the safety of Ontario roads by updating the Highway Traffic Act to prohibit drivers from overtaking a working snowplow unless there's a full lane available.

#### 1000

Speaker, I'd like to echo what my colleague the Minister of Red Tape Reduction said: "Reducing red tape is not just about counting the number of regulations and trying to reduce them; it's about the impact those changes are having on real people and businesses across our ... province."

I can say with confidence that the bill we are debating today proposes substantial changes that will have those real impacts for people—changes like accelerating the time frame for municipal approvals for broadband projects, supporting our goal of bringing high-speed Internet to every community in Ontario by 2025—again, coming from rural Ontario, after the pandemic, this is extremely important to the residents of my riding; helping the business community embrace new technologies so they can improve safety standards for their workers or reduce their carbon emissions; saving people time and frustration when they access government programs by offering more services online so people don't have to wait in line—even myself, who likes the human interaction, enjoys the online side of things. To be brutally honest with this House, my wife does all my online stuff. I am not comfortable with the Internet; I don't trust it, but a lot of people do, and the Internet is a great form to be able to be effective and efficient.

The work done is the product of continuous collaboration across all of government with our ministry partners, as well as extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders and people across the province to develop an inventory of red tape reduction ideas.

The legislation we are debating today, the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act, is our 10th and our largest burden reduction bill. It sets out measures to build a stronger economy, improve services, and save Ontarians their most valuable resource: time. It's an important part

of our larger spring 2023 red tape reduction package, which contains additional regulatory amendments and policy changes that contribute to a common goal of reducing red tape. This bill, if passed, would streamline processes and modernize outdated practices across multiple areas of government in multiple sectors of Ontario's economy.

It is not wrong to say that we find ourselves in uncertain economic times. We all see it in the daily headlines when we watch the news or look at inflation coupled with rising interest rates. While Ontario has remained resilient, we cannot take anything for granted.

That's why it's so important that we continue our efforts to streamline Ontario's regulatory climate to make it easier to invest and to do business in our province. How we work together to address regulatory burden will affect us now and for future generations to come.

Having young children of my own, I want to ensure that we are using taxpayer dollars wisely and making sure that there are no burdens on small businesses and businesses across the province. My children will need a healthy economy to be able to thrive when they grow up. My oldest is 10 years of age, and I know she's very passionate about art and about the restaurant that I own. She has decorated cakes on many, many weekends; it's to help build her confidence; whereas my son, who is a little too confident, comes to the restaurant and does a bit more cleaning work: sweeping, doing the bathrooms, doing the tables and stuff like that. I'm trying to build them up similarly, to make sure that they're both ready for the future, which is fraught with a lot of unknowns.

To ensure that my children are ready for the future that's in front of them and to ensure that our economy is ready for the next generation is extremely important.

And this red tape reduction bill will make Ontario one of the most effective economies in not only Canada but across the world.

With the competition that's out there—we saw this with Volkswagen, with the super mega sites that we brought to Ontario; a lot of states in the US were jealous and wondering what we did differently than them. Removing barriers for business is important so that we can ensure that businesses thrive.

Without a healthy economy, we can't have healthy people. Ultimately, we need to have those good-paying jobs that are going to ensure that people can go home at night and have a comfortable place to live—but also a job that's going to be able to keep up with inflation and ensure that they're able to look after their family and their children.

I bring up my children quite often in the House because most of what I do is for the future. I want to ensure that what we do in this House, when my children look back in 20 years—because they're not paying attention right now—that they're not embarrassed by what I've done or bills I've stood for. At this point, I'm very proud of our government's record.

Again, coming from the restaurant industry, there's a lot of paperwork, and to bring some of that paperwork digitally—even though I am hesitant to do anything



online, I will still see the burden reduction at the business side of things. Nowadays, as I'm trying to juggle my family life, my role as a member of provincial Parliament and as a business owner, some efficiencies in how I do things at the restaurant is a good thing. Some of my five managers have been getting me on online payments and certain things like that, so I don't have to necessarily run back to the store and write a cheque, but I'm still stubborn, and I still push back any time my managers are trying to change things too quickly for me.

As much as I am a millennial, technology and me don't get along, but ultimately, I do know we need to do things more efficiently when it comes to doing business. Representing small businesses in this House—I'm extremely proud of that fact. When I go out into my community and other communities, I hear from the small businesses. I hear their pressures. I understand their frustrations with staffing, with the supply chain and with time. Time, as a business owner, is a challenge. You always feel like you should be at home when you're at work and like you should be at work when you're at home.

Prior to becoming a member of provincial Parliament, I used to work seven days a week at the restaurant, especially during the pandemic, knowing that we had supply chain challenges and staffing challenges. I'm going to step up, and I want to lead by example with my staff, so their seeing me in the restaurant every day and trying to work just as hard as them—I believe it's leading by example.

Most of my staff know that I started at my restaurant as a clean-up kid. I am an introvert—I always debate it with my colleague to the right of me. I truly am an introvert, and as I started at the restaurant, I was too shy to be able to interact with customers and make eye contact. The only reason I actually was successful in that first job was that the old owner was my neighbour, and one of my brothers worked there and was a manager at the time. So they took a chance on me at 14. Again, I cleaned toilets. I think it was a great way to start, because everyone in the restaurant knows that I'm not above doing anything.

Even in my previous months working, before I got elected to this chamber, I would change garbages more than anything. I would do the dishes and clean the parking lot, because (1) it allowed me some personal time to understand what priorities I needed to work on; and (2) I always want to lead by example. It was one of my business partners who forced me not to cut the lawn at the restaurant.

This red tape reduction bill will truly make it more efficient for business owners who are pressed for time, right now and into the future, to be able to do things more efficiently and ensure that they don't waste time on needless paperwork, because paperwork does pile up.

Previous Minister Fullerton—it's "people over paperwork" that she mentioned at the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. I believe that this bill does stand on that statement as well, because ultimately, it's going to be a few years before we have a more stable labour market, and the red tape we are reducing will allow

businesses to feel less pressure during a time of high pressure, during a time of global uncertainty with the war in Ukraine, with the storms that have just come through.

I'm from eastern Ontario, and we had a severe ice storm yesterday. It did not hit Toronto, but it was almost to the stage of ice storm 1998, which was pretty significant when I was young. We were weeks without power. Our energy minister has been upgrading our infrastructure on the energy side, and we don't have as many power outages. In 1998, there were months that people in my riding did not have power. I believe, in 1998, the army came to Toronto to help out as well. There are many without power, but the worst of it is a lot of trees that are down. The power system seems to have handled it fairly well, and that is something I'm proud of—that our government has invested in the resources. Speaking to my wife yesterday afternoon—she was very concerned that we were going to be without power. I live in the country. She didn't fill up the bathtub before going to school yesterday with water, so she was very anxious that we may not have water, being on a well. With saying that, again, there were many tornadoes that went through the US yesterday. That storm was very significant.

So to ensure that we are reducing red tape and barriers, whether it's for public services, for business, for the mining sector—I think it's extremely important, because we are in such a competitive environment that, ultimately, we need any advantage we can have over other jurisdictions, in Canada and across the world.

#### 1010

We know that Ontario is a place to live and it's a place that many people are choosing to call home. That's something that I'm very, very proud of—that ultimately we are a place of choice for many immigrants to come. When they come to Canada, the majority of them will settle in Ontario. Ontario is one of the best jurisdictions—I'm very biased; obviously, I've lived my whole life here.

Something that we need to ensure is that we're not burdening the small businesses and business in general with onerous red tape. Ultimately, red tape can cause everything to inflate. Ultimately, if there's more red tape and I need to shuffle through that red tape—businesses are in it to make a profit, and if red tape is slowing down the business owners or the staff of the businesses, it's going to make it that we need to recover those costs. If we can make business much more efficient for all the businesses across Ontario, we're all going to win with that—and that includes my children and, to be honest, my future grandchildren, to think further ahead. When the economy wins, we all do win.

Ultimately, that's what this bill is trying to do—is to make it that we can do things more efficiently here and that we don't have barriers and we don't have overlap in certain regulations. I'm pretty proud of Minister Gill's ministry for bringing this forward. I'm also impressed with the amount of savings to small businesses. Ultimately, small businesses and businesses in general invest into their communities. With \$120 million of extra savings with this bill, businesses will be able to donate more to their

communities. Ultimately, communities thrive when the businesses thrive.

I mentioned it earlier, but with rising interest rates, a lot of businesses took on extra debt during the pandemic—so to be able to remove some of these tax burdens with the red tape that we've done and to save that extra \$120 million will allow those businesses to possibly pay down more debt, so, ultimately, they can push forward on the best financial standpoints so that they can employ more Ontarians.

To me, it's all about ensuring that people have jobs and that they have a steady income.

The reducing red tape act will help businesses to hire more people to be more productive with their time and, ultimately, to grow our GDP here in Ontario.

I'm very proud to stand behind this bill.

I look forward to some questions.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Unfortunately, we are out of time.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** Last Friday, I was proud to join the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Long-Term Care and my colleagues from Mississauga at the Village of Erin Meadows in Mississauga to announce an investment of almost \$500,000 in three long-term-care homes in Mississauga–Lakeshore, through the Local Priorities Fund, to help seniors with complex medical needs, like dementia and bariatric care, connect to specialized care and support in their long-term-care homes instead of in the hospital. Partners Community Health will receive \$250,000 for wraparound support for residents at Camilla Care until they're able to relocate later this year into two new, state-of-the-art homes on Speakman Drive—which were just named Wellbrook Place last week. They will open later this year for 632 new residents. Erin Mills Lodge will receive \$122,000, and Sheridan Villa will receive \$110,000 for a variety of medical equipment.

These three major projects in Mississauga are part of a \$20-million investment in long-term-care homes right across Ontario. Providing these services in long-term-care homes will give seniors more convenient access to the services they need and also help to reduce the pressure on our hospitals so that all Ontarians have better access to care.

I want to thank my friend the Minister of Long-Term Care for his outstanding leadership and all the work he is doing to fix long-term care, after 15 years of neglect from the Liberal government, so our seniors can get the quality of care they deserve.

### CANADIAN FORCES NAVAL RESERVE

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Today is the 100th anniversary of Canada's naval reserve, and we are honoured to have

senior representatives from the seven Ontario naval reserve divisions in the gallery with us today. They will be attending question period, going on a tour, attending an NDP reception, and then meeting with other MPPs.

On the 31st of January, 1923, the government of Canada authorized the organization of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. It was seen as a great way for our young navy to build support across the nation by establishing naval reserve divisions in major Canadian cities, to bring the navy to Canadians living far from the coastlines.

From World War II to peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia and the Sinai peninsula, the naval reserve has played a critical role in Canada's safety and security as a vital element of the Royal Canadian Navy and Canadian Armed Forces.

Today, as it celebrates the 100th anniversary, the naval reserve has 4,100 sailors across 24 naval reserve divisions, from Victoria, BC, to Saint John, New Brunswick. They have been pillars in their communities, whether they're training for service at sea or coming to the aid of their neighbours in need.

Can we all join in and give a round of applause for the 100th anniversary of Canada's naval reserve?

*Applause.*

### HOMELESSNESS

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** I rise today to say it's an honour to represent the people of Ajax.

In my riding of Ajax, the Ajax Homelessness Task Force, which is comprised of non-profits, service agencies and places of worship is working to address immediate needs as well as identify long-term solutions to address homelessness in Ajax.

I have connected and worked with partners in the community who are supporting the ongoing needs of the unhoused community in Ajax.

I would like to thank Ivan Dawns and the IUPAT team for doing turkey dinners at the Back Door Mission.

I'd also like to thank providers like Storehouse Community Food Bank by Southside Worship Centre, as well as the Salvation Army, who both provide hot meals and mobile food programs.

Thanks to all those who help the unhoused community.

Homelessness is a serious and complex issue, and our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford, is committing to continuing to work with municipalities and local service providers to provide solutions for the unhoused. Our government—and I'm glad to support this—is providing an additional \$202 million to help homelessness.

I look forward to the supportive housing initiatives that are upcoming in my community.

### COST OF LIVING

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Speaker, it's an honour to rise in the House to share the stories and the voices of the people of Toronto Centre—people who are seeing their

lives get harder and harder while they're being short-changed by this government's budget.

I shop locally, and I talk to my neighbours in the grocery aisle, and we lament the costs of a \$5 loaf of bread, a \$10 stick of butter or a \$6 carton of eggs. For goodness' sake, Speaker, if you can find baby formula, you will see that you're paying \$60.

Prior to the pandemic, the GTA's 128 food banks saw about 65,000 clients a month—today, that number has quadrupled to 270,000 people, the highest number in its 40-year history.

Speaker, Ontarians have learned that Galen Weston's wage increased by over \$1 million last year.

But this budget does nothing to stop grocery chains from price gouging hard-working Ontarians.

The Daily Bread Food Bank has reached a breaking point, and they are spending an unsustainable \$1.8 million a month to buy food to feed hungry Ontarians. Its CEO is calling on the province to step up and help to fight the high cost of groceries.

The budget doesn't even deliver the help that food banks are asking for.

It's time for real leadership in Ontario. Make the minimum wage a living wage, double ODSP, and crack down on the "greedflation" forcing Ontarians to use food banks.

1020

#### RAMADAN

**Mr. David Smith:** I rise today to extend, on behalf of all the residents of Scarborough Centre, our best wishes to everyone observing the sacred month of Ramadan. Ramadan Mubarak. During this occasion. I would like to recognize the work of our many mosques in Scarborough Centre that teach our children the values of peace, respect, equity and tolerance—not to mention helping the poor and needy, through their charity work.

I would be remiss if I didn't highlight the incredible contributions and sacrifices of our growing and vibrant Muslim community that is positively contributing to many areas of our community, whether it is in education, construction, medicine, business or politics. For example, Mr. Mohammed El-Karouni, who is sitting in the gallery here today, is a successful businessman whom I had the chance to meet two weeks ago at the grand opening of the second location of his Al'Deewan Bakery, a bakery that specializes in manakeesh, Lebanese mini pies, flatbreads, and other baked goods. Mr. El-Karouni—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. The next members' statement.

#### EDUCATION FUNDING

**Ms. Doly Begum:** We need to invest in our schools. In fact, the lack of support for Ontario school boards, including the Toronto District School Board, in the 2023 education budget is deeply concerning. Our government's failure to provide reimbursements for pandemic-related

expenses not only affects the financial stability of the board, but it also has a direct impact on the education workers who provide vital support to our students.

With the potential cuts to nearly 500 positions, we risk losing the expertise and support of educational assistants, child youth counsellors and administrative staff, who are critical to the success of our students.

Many of my constituents have shared their worries about the already underfunded education system and how further cuts would only make things worse.

A parent in my riding, Bethany Lynn-Rice, shared that her son, who has an IEP and is diagnosed with ASD, hasn't received adequate support due to staff shortages, leading to an unsettling year. Bethany also shared about her daughter, who has been facing bullying, especially at recess, because there aren't enough supervising staff to supervise during recess. Bethany and so many other parents are worried that cutting more staff positions will only make things worse for her children and for many children across this province.

We have seen far too many school safety issues over the past year as students transition back into in-person learning.

With these funding cuts, we also risk losing important mental health support staff, who are critical to the well-being of our future generation—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Thank you very much. The next members' statement.

#### SAUGEEN VALLEY CHILDREN'S SAFETY VILLAGE

**Mr. Rick Byers:** Last Friday, it was my pleasure to meet with the Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village near Hanover, in my great riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. The safety village hosted a community engagement workshop as its recognition event for receiving a Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund grant. The workshop included many organizations and members of our community focused on health, safety and children. Big Brothers Big Sisters, the food bank, public health, St. John Ambulance, Lions Club, Launch Pad, Keystone, and Women's House were all there to support the safety village. It was a fabulous show of support and a great demonstration of the community spirit in our Grey Bruce community.

The Saugeen Valley Children's Safety Village is an interactive educational facility dedicated to aiding in the elimination of preventable childhood injuries and death. Children participate in hands-on safety programs.

Have you prepared your children for a fire emergency? The safety village children practise dropping and moving along the ground, they hear and see a firefighter, they crawl across the floor, and they get out safely. It is a great learning experience.

Thank you to Marilyn Rosner, the volunteer board and the whole team at the safety village for your amazing work and your great contributions to our Grey Bruce community.

### VIMY RIDGE DAY

**Mr. Stephen Crawford:** This Sunday, April 9, we'll observe Vimy Ridge Day. This is a day when we'll remember thousands of Canadians who fought and gave their lives in the battle of Vimy Ridge.

On April 9, 1917, on a cold Easter Monday in northern France, Canadian soldiers braved rain, mud and machine gun bullets to capture Vimy Ridge. This battle marked a turning point in our history as four divisions of the Canadian Corps fought together for the first time. It brought together young men in their late teens and early twenties, united to fight for freedom.

While Canada emerged victorious at the Battle of Vimy Ridge, it came at a tremendous cost. Nearly 3,600 Canadians died, and more than 7,000 were wounded, making it one of the bloodiest battles in Canadian history.

In 2010, Bill 19, An Act to proclaim Vimy Ridge Day, was passed. Members from all parties in the Legislature unanimously came together in support of this legislation.

Ensuring that we never forget the sacrifices made by these brave soldiers, this Sunday flags at the Ontario Legislature will be lowered to half-mast in their honour.

Among the World War I veterans who were there in Europe was my grandfather Robert Irwin Crawford.

Let's take this time to remember the brave soldiers who fought to defend our freedom, our rights and our democracy. May they rest in peace. Lest we forget.

### SKILLED TRADES

**Mr. Todd J. McCarthy:** I rise to share wonderful news, from last Friday, in my riding of Durham. Together with my colleague the member for Scarborough Centre and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, we confirmed the wonderful news that Bowmanville High School has received \$77,200 in grant funding from the ministry's Skills Development Fund for the purchase of high-tech machinery to better prepare our students for careers in the tooling and machine industries.

Mr. Speaker, with hundreds of students graduating each year from Durham College's various industrial programs, this investment is an excellent example of our government's commitment to invest in the skilled trades and encourage the youth of Ontario to pursue rewarding careers in the skilled trades.

Under the leadership of Premier Ford and the Minister of Labour, along with the valued partnerships of the Canadian Tooling and Machining Association and the Ontario Council for Technology Education, our government is fulfilling its commitment to our youth to invest in new technology and invest in the skilled trades at the college and secondary levels.

I'd like to recognize all who joined my colleague and I, including the chair of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Steve Russell, his colleagues, and Mayor Adrian Foster, all of whom pledged to support our government's investments in a key industry that will create well-

paying, long-lasting jobs for our youth and contribute to Ontario's prosperity in the future.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon:** I'd like to introduce to you Brendon Samuels, an amazing advocate involved with FLAP. If you're not familiar with FLAP, it's the Fatal Light Awareness Program, and it's helping to save our beautiful birds from untimely and early deaths. He's actually here today at Queen's Park because he is monitoring and checking in and caring for the red-tailed hawks that are nesting on our roof. So when you're out and about taking a walk, look up and enjoy the birds, and let's work together for their safety.

**Mr. Sam Oosterhoff:** I have the privilege of welcoming to the Legislature today some wonderful constituents from the riding of Niagara West. We have with us today Joshua and Yvonne Bulk, along with their children, Ella, Otto, Charlotte and Theodore.

Welcome to the Legislature today. It's good to have you here.

**1030**

**Ms. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** Today in the gallery, I'd like to welcome Central Region captain from the Royal Canadian Navy, Sean Batte; Central Region chief representative, Chief Petty Officer Second Class Jason Semenzow.

Welcome to your House.

I know that the rest of you are going to be introduced by your MPPs from your region.

Thank you for coming.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** C'est vraiment avec plaisir que je veux souhaiter la bienvenue ici aujourd'hui à Rachel Gouin, qui est directrice générale du CAP, qui est un institut vraiment important à Ottawa-Vanier qui donne des soins de santé mentale et de dépendances—so mental health and addictions. She is accompanied by Linda Godin. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

**Mr. David Smith:** This morning I got a little cut off there, so I want to recognize Mohammed, who owns a new bakery in my community. It's the first time for him, coming to Queen's Park. He has a Lebanese background, and he has been doing great business in our community. By the way, he's also a police officer from my area. He has been doing great work out there.

I'd like to also recognize my staff: Omar Farhat, my executive assistant, and Victoria Gangadeen, my constituency assistant.

I welcome them all to Queen's Park today.

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** It is my great honour this morning to welcome to Queen's Park from HMCS Star, Hamilton, Lieutenant Commander Michael Di Berardo, commanding officer. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Stan Cho:** From the Bayview Cummer Neighbourhood Association and father of Willowdale page Evelyn, my friend Paul Yeung—welcome to the Legislature.

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** It's an honour and a privilege to welcome Lieutenant Commander Farley Farn, executive officer with the HMCS Griffon, Thunder Bay.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I'd like to introduce the rest of the members of the Royal Canadian Navy reserve. We have Commander Christopher Knowlton; Commander Francois Desjardins; Lieutenant Commander Michelle Moore; Commander Richard Hillier; Lieutenant Commander Chris Elliot; Commander Paul Hong; Commander, Chief Petty Officer Second Class A. Rooney; Lieutenant Commander Michael Di Berardo; Lieutenant Commander Daniel Karpenchuk; Lieutenant Commander Jack 'tMannetje; and Acting Sub-Lieutenant Diego Ortiz.

Please join me in giving them all a round of applause.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** It is my honour and pleasure to introduce to the Legislature today two bright young students here, alongside a former federal Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, the Honourable Navdeep Bains. I would like to welcome my friends Alexa Sherer, a grade 11 student from TanenbaumCHAT; and Lachlan Ross, a grade 11 student from Northview Heights Secondary School. Our youth are our future, and we're happy to keep these seats warm until they're ready to take our spot.

I also would like to introduce a large group of nurses who are joining us from the Ontario Poison Centre—Crissy Amiana, Jacqueline Burke, Marie-Christine Ceganda, Mailyne Garraz, and my sister Faiza Shamji.

**Hon. Monte McNaughton:** I, too, want to welcome the Royal Canadian Navy reservists, on behalf of Premier Ford and the government of Ontario. Thank you for your service not only to Ontario, to Canada. Thank you for all your support and assistance as we brought forward military reservist leave to support all of our men and women in uniform.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, it's my honour to introduce two London members here today: HMCS Prevost Commander Chief Petty Officer Second Class A. Rooney, coxswain, and HMCS Prevost Lieutenant Commander Paul Hong, commanding officer.

Welcome to the Legislature, and thank you for your service.

**Mr. Vijay Thanigasalam:** Mr. Speaker, it is my honour to welcome Leah Wilson, my new OLIP intern, and Vyssnavi Vaseekaran, my new constituency assistant.

Welcome to the Ontario Legislature today.

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** It's a pleasure to welcome one of my amazing constituency assistants, Dawson Mihichuk, who is visiting from Thunder Bay today.

Welcome, Dawson.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I'd like to give a very warm welcome to two of my constituents, Chanel Wallace and Sylvia Smith, who are joining us for question period.

#### WEARING OF SHIRTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery has a point of order, I believe.

**Hon. Kaleed Rasheed:** Speaker, I'm seeking unanimous consent to allow members to wear a green shirt in the House to mark April 7 as Green Shirt Day, which honours Logan Boulet, who tragically passed away in the Humboldt Broncos bus crash, and raises awareness for organ and tissue donation.

I would also like to thank Minister Parsa and Minister Clark, and Minister Clark's constituent Ethan Bos, for their work on Bill 112, the Green Shirt Day Act.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear a green shirt in memory of Logan Boulet of the Humboldt Broncos. Agreed? Agreed.

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** It is now necessary for me to ask our pages to assemble.

It is now time to say a word of thanks to our legislative pages. Our pages are smart, trustworthy and hard-working. They are indispensable to the effective functioning of this chamber, and we are very fortunate to have had them here.

To our pages: You depart having made many new friends, with a greater understanding of parliamentary democracy and memories that will last a lifetime. Each of you will go home and continue your studies, and no doubt, you will contribute to your communities, your province and your country in significant ways. We expect great things from all of you. Maybe someday some of you will take your seats in this House as members or work here as staff—who knows? We wish you all well.

Please join me in thanking our legislative pages.

*Applause.*

#### QUESTION PERIOD

##### GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS CONSEILLERS GOUVERNEMENTAUX

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Speaker, this Conservative government failed to notice \$10.8 million being siphoned off by a senior bureaucrat—money that was intended to support families during the worst of the pandemic. And the Liberal government before that failed to notice \$36.6 million stolen through a computer consultant scam by the same thief. He could do this, in large part, due to the fact that this government and others are over-relying on expensive, private consulting firms.

To the Premier: Will he cut down on his government's use of overpriced consultants to protect public money?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** To respond, the government House leader.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Of course, we have been fighting right since the beginning, since 2018, to restore Ontario's fiscal situation, and we've been doing an extraordinary job at that. In fact, not only have we restored fiscal sanity in

the province of Ontario, we've done it while at the same time cutting taxes for the people of the province of Ontario, reducing costs to our small, medium and large job creators to the tune of over \$8 billion, which has seen our income rise by over \$50 billion—\$50 billion. We've done it while stabilizing electricity rates. We've done it while investing a record amount in infrastructure—nationwide, a leading amount in infrastructure—while building 58,000 new and upgraded long-term-care beds, while building new schools. We're seeing thousands of jobs come back to the province, billions of dollars in economic activity. And we're doing it because we have had a plan since 2018. That plan is working, and today Ontario again led the nation in job creation, something—

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

1040

**M<sup>me</sup> Marit Stiles:** Ceux de nous ici, de ce côté de la Chambre, nous le savons très bien que ce gouvernement se présente comme grands admirateurs des consultants—grands admirateurs. Les conservateurs devraient donc certainement être favorables à plus de transparence et de responsabilité en ce qui concerne leurs contrats. Particulièrement puisque ce gouvernement envisage de privatiser encore plus de services publics, comme la santé.

Alors, monsieur le Président, revenons au premier ministre : est-ce que son gouvernement prévoit à mettre en place une liste « sunshine » pour ces consultants surpayés?

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

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Thank you to the member opposite.

Merci beaucoup pour cette question très importante pour nous dans cette Chambre ici. Comme le leader a dit, nous avons un plan pour le peuple de l'Ontario, sans doute—un plan pour bâtir l'Ontario. En ce qui concerne la « sunshine list » et tout ça, c'est très important que nous, ensemble, travaillions pour bâtir un Ontario propre, un Ontario fort.

Et comme le leader de cette Chambre a dit : We've balanced the budget three years earlier, not just for some Ontarians, but for all Ontarians, so that we can build Ontario today and deliver a better Ontario to future generations.

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

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I find that rather astonishing, because the Conservative federal leader is calling for more transparency and accountability into consulting contracts at that level of government.

Back to the Premier: Does the Premier think that there should be a lesser standard for his own government?

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

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Obviously, since we've taken office back in 2018, we've done an extraordinary job of ensuring that the people of the province of Ontario are well served by their government. That has included, of course, a reduction in the use of outside consultants, but at the

same time it is clear that we had two years' worth of a pandemic and, on occasion, we did need to have some outside assistance. What has that meant for the people of the province of Ontario? It has meant a province that led not only North America—but one of the leaders, in terms of the entire planet, in getting us beyond COVID. What does that mean? That means that Ontario again is leading the nation in job creation.

So I understand why the Leader of the Opposition is talking about anything other than creating jobs, because we're leading the nation in terms of job creation. I know why she doesn't want to talk about infrastructure, because we are leading the nation in terms of building infrastructure. I know why they don't want to talk about energy, because we've stabilized it when they tried to destroy it.

On every single measure, Ontario is leading North America. I think it's something to be proud of.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** This government has nothing to be proud of. One in four kids is using a food bank right now.

Speaker, I'm here for answers for the people of Ontario, and we're not getting any on that question, so let's just try something else here.

#### LAND USE PLANNING

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** The government is bulldozing 7,400 acres of protected land in the greenbelt and handing it over to developers who just so happen to be big Conservative donors and insiders. But time and time again, this government refuses to tell Ontarians exactly how they picked this land. Through freedom-of-information requests, the NDP, and now investigative journalists, too, have uncovered the existence of a key document that would provide answers, but this government has blocked its release.

To the Premier: Will the government stop stonewalling the release of this document so Ontarians can finally get some answers?

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

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** As I've said right from the beginning, of course we will continue to work with the Integrity Commissioner.

But at the same time, I know why they don't want to talk specifically about building homes for the people of the province of Ontario—because when they had the balance of power, along with the Liberals, what did they do? They put obstacles in the way, which has led us to a crisis of housing in Ontario. Imagine: Ontario, somewhere that I think Italy fits into 34 times—and we have a housing crisis here in the province of Ontario. Do you know why that is? Because the policies that they support day in and day out stop people from being able to develop. In Stouffville, I have a developer who wants to build, and 12 years later, only now was able to get a shovel in the ground, because of those policies.

Thanks to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we're taking away those obstacles. We're building homes for the people of the province of Ontario.

We're leading the nation in job creation yet again.

Ontario is on the move. We're on the right track, and I hope you'll support us on that.

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

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** We know this isn't about housing. If you cared about people and you cared about affordability of housing, you'd bring back rent control. You'd start with that.

Here's another fact for you—  
*Interjections.*

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

The government side will come to order so that I can hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Restart the clock.  
Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I hit a nerve there, I guess.

Speaker, before last year's election, the Premier promised up and down that he would not touch the greenbelt. But on November 4, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing broke the Premier's promise. It's hard to believe that the minister would betray such a big promise without the Premier's permission.

Back to the Premier: Did the Premier or anyone acting on his behalf direct or authorize any ministry officials to remove lands from the greenbelt prior to last November 4?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I think the Minister of Municipal Affairs has been very clear on that.

What we've said from the right beginning, right from 2018, is that we had to build more homes in the province of Ontario—because that was virtually stopped under the Liberal-NDP coalition in this province. People could not build homes. People could not find new homes.

We knew that a Conservative government would restore the economy of this province, that millions of people would want to flood back into Ontario, that billions of dollars of investments would want to come back to the province of Ontario.

What are we seeing? Month after month after month, Ontario is leading the nation in terms of job creation; yet again, today, we're doing it. It is built on the back of the investments that we're making through the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

We have a bill in front of this House today by the Minister of Red Tape Reduction which will continue to take away obstacles to job creation and growth. I hope the NDP will do the right thing and support that and support the thousands of people who finally have the dignity of a job because of the policies of this government. That—

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

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** The House leader is spinning so fast he's going to take off.

This government is having a lot of trouble following along, so I'm going to make it very, very simple for them: Will the Premier rule out any further removals of land from the greenbelt? Yes or no?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** It's not the government House leader that has taken off; it's the economy of the province

of Ontario that has taken off, and it's driving them crazy.  
*Interjections.*

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

The minister has some time.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I'm excited. Why would I not be excited in yet another month when Ontario is leading the nation in job creation?

I guess it is a tough time to be the leader of His Majesty's opposition. It's a tough time, when you're leading in terms of job creation. It's a tough time, when you're leading in terms of building infrastructure. It's a tough time, when you're leading in terms of building new schools. It's a tough time, when the Minister of Labour has reopened the economy to allow people to get jobs right here. I understand why they're so upset.

But this is also a good time. It's a good weekend. We're having Passover. It's Easter.

The Ontario economy has risen from the dead—which was what the Liberals and NDP brought to this province—and we're on the right track.

1050

#### TENANT PROTECTION

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** The House leader was asked a very simple question there and failed to provide an answer.

My question is to the Premier.

Last weekend, I joined hundreds of people from 25 St. Mary Street and 145 St. George Street who were rallying to save their homes and their buildings from being demolished and turned into condos. These people are stressed and worried because they fear this government is going to gut Toronto's rental protection laws and make it practically impossible for them to return to their homes once the construction of the new building is complete. Over 3,441 affordable, purpose-built rental homes are at risk of being demolished and turned into condos. We cannot afford to lose these homes, Premier.

Will this government commit to preserving Toronto's rental protection laws so these people can keep their homes?

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

**Hon. Steve Clark:** This member has a habit, near our housing supply bills, to make statements that simply aren't true, and this is one of them.

We have not made any changes—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to caution the minister on his use of language and ask him to withdraw.

**Hon. Steve Clark:** Withdraw, Speaker.

We have not made any changes to these bylaws that are in effect for those municipalities. They remain in place. Despite this, this member and the opposition continue to falsely tell tenants that we have removed—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Once again, I'm going to ask the minister to withdraw the unparliamentary remark and not make another one.

**Hon. Steve Clark:** Thanks, Speaker.

In fact, we announced yesterday that we are proposing to explicitly require that municipal replacement bylaws include compensation.

So we've been clear on our consultations on setting common rules in the province.

This member continues to oppose—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The minister will take a seat.

The supplementary question.

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** Ontario's eviction protection laws are as flimsy as tissue paper.

I want to talk about the Landlord and Tenant Board. New evidence shows that tenants are being pushed to the back of the queue and are waiting twice as long as landlords to get a decision at the Landlord and Tenant Board. I would call that discrimination.

What is this ministry going to do to reform the Landlord and Tenant Board so everyone can get access to a fast and fair hearing equally?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Attorney General.

**Hon. Doug Downey:** Thank you for that friendly question. The number of things that we're doing is phenomenal. We have put resources into reforming the system, in how it operates—the backbone of the system—but the opposition voted against it. And then we put resources into recruiting more adjudicators and more back office staff, but the NDP voted against it. And just yesterday, with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, we announced that we're doubling the number of full-time adjudicators so that we can speed things up for the independent tribunal that sets its dockets, to protect both landlords and tenants.

## FEDERAL BUDGET

**Mr. Will Bouma:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. Our province, like the rest of the world, is experiencing the effects of global economic uncertainty, high interest rates and inflation. In responding to the challenges and pressures facing people and businesses, our government recently introduced a budget that laid out a solid plan to invest in the priorities that matter most to the people of Ontario, as we build for a stronger future.

However, individuals, families and workers in my community of Brantford–Brant are looking to all governments for help.

The federal government also recently introduced their 2023 budget.

The people of Ontario expect their provincial leaders to work with the federal government to make life better for everyone.

Can the minister please explain how the most recent federal budget will help address the needs of Ontarians?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Thank you to the hard-working member from Brantford–Brant for that question.

We really appreciate the federal government working with us in a number of areas that help Ontario families, Ontario workers and, of course, businesses right across

this province. Together, we have attracted billions of dollars in investments, putting Ontario and Canada back on the map as an automotive powerhouse—including Volkswagen's recent announcement that it has chosen St. Thomas as the new home of its first-ever offshore battery plant. When we work together, we can accomplish great things.

That's why it's good to see the federal government's 2023 budget providing support in responding to the US Inflation Reduction Act.

Ontario is leading the way in getting good jobs, manufacturing jobs back to Ontario for now and for the future. Ontario, as was evidenced by the employment numbers this morning, is leading the country in job creation.

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

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you, Minister, for that response. It's great to hear that there is ongoing federal co-operation and support for our plan to build a stronger EV manufacturing economy here in Ontario.

Our entire province reaps the benefits and is more prosperous when people are working and our manufacturing sector is strong.

However, for the people in my riding and in communities across Ontario, local and regional economic uncertainty still remains a major concern.

The people of Ontario need to be confident that our government understands what is happening at the federal level in Ottawa and is working on behalf of Ontarians to tackle problems that are important to our province.

Can the minister please elaborate on what priorities our government wanted to see reflected in the federal budget?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Thank you again to the member from Brantford–Brant. That's a great question.

First of all, housing: We expect that the federal government will work with us on the housing affordability crisis that we talk about every single day in this House. And we continue to call on the federal government to defer the harmonized sales tax on all new, large-scale, purpose-built rental housing projects to help spur the construction of more rental units.

Next, the Ring of Fire: The Ring of Fire wasn't mentioned once in the budget. This is a missed opportunity for workers, for Canada's growing electric vehicle and battery supply chains, as well as northern Ontario and Indigenous communities.

Just a few days ago, I released Ontario's 2023 budget. While our government is working hard to build a strong Ontario for today and for tomorrow, we know that governments make faster progress when they work hard together. So please join us in working hard together for all Ontarians.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** My question is to the Premier.

Life is becoming more and more unaffordable. Even for Ontarians in the first few months of life, the lack of affordability is affecting their lives.



Deb's grandson was placed on Enfamil A+ formula at three months of age. She wrote to me about the price gouging her family is struggling with while they search for baby formula. She said, "My daughter and son-in-law are always scrambling to locate a store that has it on the shelf. When they do find it, the price has doubled."

Children in Ontario are going hungry while this government makes excuses.

When is this government going to stop gouging and make sure every family who needs it has access to affordable baby formula?

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

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I appreciate the question.

Of course, Health Canada is the lead on this and has been working very closely to ensure that there is a stable supply of formula on the shelves. It is something that the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Health have been monitoring very closely.

At the same time, let me assure the people of the province of Ontario that we are working very closely with Health Canada, we are working very closely with federal health officials. We are assured at this time that, unlike the challenges that the federal government had early on when it came to pediatric medicines, we are not in the same position right now.

I do appreciate the question from the member opposite. She has our assurance and all parents across the province of Ontario have our assurance that we're working very, very closely with Health Canada to ensure that we have a stable supply.

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

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I appreciate the government House leader's attention to this, because baby formula is not affordable.

Deb wrote, "At first it was about \$37 for a box, my daughter just found some at Shoppers Drug Mart ... priced \$67 a box. On Amazon? \$77 a box." This concerned grandmother asks, "How are these companies allowed to claim shortages and then price gouge young parents? This makes me so disgusted."

I will ask you her question. Deb would like to know, "How are single parents making minimum wage supposed to feed their child?"

1100

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Specific to the question with respect to that formula, we understand. It is something that the Minister of Agriculture was immediately alerted to—and contacted Health Canada and federal officials to ensure that there was a stable supply for the people of the province of Ontario.

I think the question in itself, though, highlights some of the other challenges that we're having. The member highlights that when there is a lack of supply, prices increase and things become unaffordable. It's at the heart of everything that we've been doing since 2018, here in the province of Ontario, because we understand that the way to bring costs down for the people of the province of

Ontario is, in part—when it comes to housing, for instance, having more supply will reduce the costs for the people of the province of Ontario. And they have not been in favour of that.

We also understand that when it comes to red tape—by reducing red tape and obstacles, it helps bring the costs down.

At the same time, we brought in things like doubling of the ODSP.

We brought in, of course, the LIFT tax credit. We are there.

The Minister of Education, of course—bringing in a nation-leading child care program which is half the cost for the people of the province of Ontario.

So—

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

#### ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION

**Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta:** My question is for my great colleague in Mississauga, the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery.

On April 6, 2018, Ontarians were heartbroken to hear the news of the devastating bus collision carrying the Humboldt Broncos hockey team. Speaker, 16 of the 29 passengers lost their lives, and the 13 who survived will bear physical and emotional scars for the rest of their lives.

Humboldt Broncos defenceman Logan Boulet succumbed to his injuries the following day, on April 7, and Logan's parents, Bernadine and Toby Boulet, courageously offered to donate his organs so that six people could live. What an incredibly difficult decision for any parents to have to make. For the Boulet family, their decision represents the difference that can be made through the act of giving.

Speaker, currently in Ontario, there are 1,600 people on the waiting list for an organ transplant.

Can the minister please speak to the significance of this day and the importance of continuing Logan's legacy of organ donation?

**Hon. Kaleed Rasheed:** Thank you to the amazing member from Mississauga Centre for the question.

While April 7 remains a difficult day for many people and families, it has also become an opportunity that many others have embraced to raise awareness for organ donation, marking this day as Green Shirt Day in honour of the Logan Boulet effect.

Just like Logan and his family, everyone who is comfortable and willing to sign up for donation has the power to save the life of another. And my ministry continues to work tirelessly to ensure that Ontarians have every resource necessary to stay informed and access this service if they choose to do so.

If you want to register to donate, you can do so in person at any ServiceOntario location near you, or go online at [serviceontario.ca/beadonor](http://serviceontario.ca/beadonor) and check whether you have already registered as a donor, or update an existing registration, as long as you are an OHIP-eligible Ontarian age 16 and up.

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

**Ms. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta:** Thank you to the minister for that response. I just want to reiterate the website: [serviceontario.ca/beadonor](http://serviceontario.ca/beadonor). I encourage all members of this House to go today and check if you are an organ donor, and if you're not, please register so that we can save lives.

Speaker, I'm proud to be part of a government that works to raise awareness about organ donation and how these efforts can make a difference in saving lives.

As a nurse working on the front lines, I have personally seen how organ donations can restore hope and provide a future.

However, we know that the number of patients who need a life-saving transplant is greater than the number of organs and tissues that are available. While almost 90% of Canadians say they support organ donation, only 32% have registered their intent to donate.

I also wanted to praise the great work of the Trillium Gift of Life Network and their Be a Donor campaign, which is taking place this week.

Can the minister please elaborate on what our government is doing to support organ and tissue donation registration?

**Hon. Kaleed Rasheed:** My thanks to the great member for the supplementary question.

I'm proud to stand in this House and share that over 4.6 million Ontarians are registered as organ and tissue donors. It is a reminder of the selfless nature that makes us the proud, vibrant and community-oriented province that we are. I'm proud that my ministry has enabled over 1.1 million registrations, checks and updates through the online donor registration service and more than an additional 3.3 million in-person registrations at our ServiceOntario locations. Each and every one of those individuals has the power to perhaps one day save the lives of up to eight people and impact as many as 75 others.

Today, I want to also to remind Ontarians that April is Be a Donor Month. In memory of Logan, the Humboldt Broncos and their families, I hope Ontarians continue to raise awareness and remind others that they, too, can give the gift of a second chance at life.

#### COST OF LIVING

**MPP Jill Andrew:** This is to the Premier.

At home in St. Paul's, the lineup around our Beeton Cupboard Food Bank, run by St. Michael and All Angels, routinely wraps around the block. I remember the first time I handed food to a child.

According to the Daily Bread Food Bank, one in four food bank users are children.

This Conservative government has made things worse. They failed to act on the affordability crisis. Children are paying the price. They're paying the price in food banks, while this government eats steak.

Will the Premier finally take responsibility for the affordability crisis so kids aren't lining up at food banks,

or will they keep passing the buck—on a full stomach, I might add?

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

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

With the cost of everything going up, our children are paramount in this country and this province. That's why we have to be very focused on the issue of affordability.

While many are feeling the pinch, and while we've done many things, I would just point to one aspect of food inputs, which is, frankly, the federal government and their carbon tax. They just increased the carbon tax again by three cents. Not only is that a challenge for many at the pump, many who take their children to school or drive to work, but it's also a major input in the cost of groceries and the cost of food.

When you keep increasing taxes, that's hurting people—as opposed to this government, which reduced the gas tax to help people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The supplementary question. The member for Spadina–Fort York.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if the minister actually answered the question.

A food program in my riding, Spadina–Fort York, saw a record number of users in the previous month, and one is a senior, Carolyn. She's using a food bank for the first time. She wrote, "It is sad and shameful that we are in this situation and the cost of everything is impossible to live on"—because of the cost of rent and food.

The five biggest grocery retailers have been making record profits while the people buying groceries can no longer afford the food they need.

Will this government address record grocery chain profits, or will they continue to depend upon charities and food banks to feed the people of this province?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** To the member opposite: It's very important that we all work together to help as many people in this province as possible. That's why the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, through the social services relief fund, provided, through the pandemic, food supports and many supports for those most in need. That's why, through the Ontario Trillium Foundation, \$83 million to help provide grants to non-profits, to help with food banks, to recover from COVID. That's why we're supporting the children and youth and families with \$8 million in further funding for Feed Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I come back to what I just said: We are taking action on a lot of fronts, including supports for low-income seniors, including lower taxes through credit rebates for low-income workers. But the federal government could do their part and lower the carbon tax. We did that—we dropped the gas tax. We're doing it for the whole year. That's how we're helping people.

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#### COST OF LIVING

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** My question is for the Premier.

The alarm bells have been ringing for a while now. The cost of living continues to rise astronomically. Grocery stores are raising food prices. Landlords are raising rents. People are falling behind, and they're now turning to food banks in record numbers.

In Toronto, for example, the number of people relying on food banks has quadrupled over the last three years. At the Daily Bread Food Bank, there were nearly 270,000 visits in March alone—a record. One third of visitors actually have full-time employment, but they cannot make ends meet. For the first time in 25 years, under this government, the number of children using food banks is going up. One in four visitors at the Daily Bread Food Bank is a child.

Ontario is experiencing a crisis of food insecurity.

We're talking about hard-working people who can no longer keep up with the skyrocketing cost of living.

Why is this government failing so spectacularly at protecting Ontarians from falling victim to food insecurity?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** I want to thank the member from Don Valley East.

First of all, I want to acknowledge my niece, my brother Rob's daughter, up there, from Michael Power. It's good to see you, honey. I love you. One day you'll be sitting down here.

Talking about affordability, the member from Don Valley East voted against a 10-cent cut of the gas tax. They voted against getting rid of the tolls on the 412 and 418. They voted against increasing the ODSP by 5%. You voted against increasing the minimum wage—the highest minimum wage in the entire country.

Our province is on fire. We created another 21,000 jobs last month; that's six consecutive months in a row. Some 640,000 more people are working today than when they had the regime for 15 years and destroyed this province from top to bottom.

*Interjections.*

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

Order.

Start the clock.

Supplementary question.

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** The government across has destroyed health care from top to bottom, and now they're turning to the economy.

When the level of food insecurity has reached the epic proportions we are seeing now, it is a clear sign of this government's failures. We are literally talking about parents and children struggling to eat—even parents who have full-time jobs, making more than minimum wage.

We need to adequately address the historic levels of inflation Ontarians are experiencing with proactive financial relief.

The rising costs of things like food and housing have vastly outpaced this government's half-hearted measures as they pay lip service to the struggles of Ontarians. For a government with \$44 billion in contingency funds, \$12.5 billion in excess funds over the next three years, and a well-documented underspending habit, you would think

they could find some room in their budget to address the most essential needs.

Something isn't right.

How can this government run a province, let alone an economy, if hard-working families with full-time jobs can't even afford to feed their children?

**Hon. Doug Ford:** It's pretty rich, coming from a party that destroyed this province for 15 years, chased 300,000 jobs out of our province because of high energy costs, high regulations and high taxes. All they believe in is taxing the people.

We believe in giving back to the people. Speaker, 1.1 million low-income workers have received a tax cut. We made sure that we increased minimum wage, as I said. We extended 10% off tuition for those great students up there—they're going to university, and they're paying 10% less; under the Liberals, all they did is jack up the costs.

On health care: We've hired 60,000 new nurses registered in Ontario—8,000 new doctors registered. You destroyed health care in this province. There was hallway health care. We've never seen a worse system. We're fixing that system.

We're making Ontario prosperous, and people are going to thrive and prosper in Ontario.

## CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

### ÉTABLISSEMENTS CORRECTIONNELS

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** My question is for the Solicitor General.

Constituents in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan see that significant work is under way in correctional facilities across the north. Major infrastructure developments are occurring in facilities located in Thunder Bay and Kenora. It is vital that modernization and improvements to these facilities address the safety needs for staff and provide a high standard of care and supervision for those in custody. All workers need to be assured that they have the tools they need to do their jobs safely and well.

Can the Solicitor General please provide information about the progress and implications of these projects?

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** I'd like to thank the incredible member from Thunder Bay–Atikokan for this question. Mr. Speaker, I was recently in Thunder Bay with him and I can tell you how truly impressive the sites are.

The ultimate goal of our correctional infrastructure projects is to create a safer environment for our correctional staff and those in our custody.

Not only have we expanded the current Thunder Bay Correctional Centre, but we've added a 50-bed new, modular, state-of-the-art build. We've also started breaking ground on the \$1.2-billion correctional complex in Thunder Bay.

Mr. Speaker, public safety is the utmost priority for our government.

Monsieur le Président, pour moi, c'est personnel. Grâce au travail des services correctionnels, les Ontariens se sentent en sécurité dans leurs communautés.

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

**Mr. Kevin Holland:** Thank you to the Solicitor General for that response. It is encouraging news that our government is focused on investing in a series of projects to modernize correctional services, to improve the health, safety and security of provincial facilities.

While our government is taking action to prioritize safety for correctional staff and for those in custody, we must respond to serious concerns about capacity pressures in the correctional system. Overcrowding creates a difficult, unsafe and unhealthy environment for everyone and leads to increased workplace health and safety concerns.

Can the Solicitor General please elaborate on how these infrastructure projects are addressing capacity in Ontario's corrections system?

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** I want to thank my friend for the question.

I am truly excited by this project because we're replacing out-of-date infrastructure that goes back to the 19th century. This new, modern facility will provide staff with the tools and technology and a healthy work environment to do their jobs safely and effectively.

And it has been an honour, I might say, to meet many native inmate liaison officers during my visits. These are truly amazing people.

Our new facility in Thunder Bay, due to be completed in about four years, will have a 345-bed capacity to address the pressures, create additional space for programming, and expand supports for inmates with mental health issues.

Monsieur le Président, je suis fier de notre personnel correctionnel tous les jours. Ce sont des gens formidables qui nous protègent au quotidien.

#### CHILDREN'S HEALTH SERVICES

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Deondra is a four-year-old child who has severe sleep apnea. A sleep test showed that 85% of Deondra's airway is blocked by adenoids when sleeping, and she was referred for urgent surgery. Her surgery was scheduled for March at SickKids but was cancelled, and the reason given for the postponement was the COVID surgical backlog. Worse, a new date was not given. SickKids have told the family that they're trying to get through as fast as they can. We know they have a backlog of 12,000 surgeries.

Speaker, Deondra has had to be resuscitated at least once after nearly suffocating to death while sleeping.

My question is, how long does the Premier think is an appropriate time for Deondra to wait?

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

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

I'd certainly be happy to look into this case, if you want to talk to me about it afterwards.

Nothing is more important to all of us than protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians, and especially our children.

We're working with pediatric hospitals to ramp up their capacity wherever possible, and that means making permanent investments to increase the number of critical care beds at CHEO, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario; McMaster Children's Hospital; London Health Sciences Centre Children's Hospital; Hospital for Sick Children; and the Kingston Health Sciences Centre.

This government has invested almost \$1 billion in the surgical recovery funding. We will continue to make the investments necessary and spare no expense to make sure that the people of this province, and especially our children, continue to have access to the quality care that they know and expect.

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

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** Speaker, Deondra's mother, Chanel, and her grandmother Sylvia are in the gallery today. I invite the member to meet with them after question period.

Both Mom and Grandma don't sleep. They stay up all night watching Deondra to make sure she doesn't suffocate to death. They are panicked and exhausted.

This is the experience of so many families across Ontario, and yet this government underspends on health care.

Speaker, every day Deondra waits for surgery is another day she risks losing her life; it's another day the family is put in stress and anxiety.

Will the Premier ensure that every public operating room in this province stays open and is fully staffed so kids like Deondra can get the surgery they urgently need and not have to wait and roll the dice?

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** Thank you again to the member opposite for the question.

Obviously, this government has pulled out all the stops and is in the midst of the largest health human resources recruitment and training-retention initiative in Ontario's history. We've made record investments, as the Premier noted earlier—60,000 new nurses here in Ontario, and 8,000 new doctors, including 1,800 family physicians. We are going to continue to make those investments. That's part of the reason we brought forward Bill 60.

We're also, in our Your Health plan, expanding family health teams. We've got a \$30-million investment in that.

We're doing everything we can to make sure that Ontarians get the kind of care that they know and deserve.

#### VETERANS

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** My question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

Veterans have always held an important and special place in my heart. They defend the rights and freedoms that we often take for granted.

In conversations with members from my Legion, we speak about the responsibilities of the Royal Canadian

Legion and Veterans Affairs Canada and the needs of veterans.

Could the minister please share a program that we have put in place by our government that supports our veterans?

**Hon. Michael Parsa:** I want to thank the great member from Ajax for the great work that she does in her riding.

Thank you very much for the important question.

I know the debt that we owe to veterans for the sacrifices they have made to our country, and that they continue to make to make sure that we live in a better place.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario is the only province in Canada with a financial assistance program created specifically for veterans. The Soldiers' Aid Commission provides financial assistance for veterans and their families of up to \$2,000 per household for the following items: health-related items like hearing aids, glasses, prescriptions and dental needs; services like home repairs, moving costs or furniture; specialized equipment like assistive devices, wheelchair and prosthetics; personal items; and employment-related supports like work clothes, workboots, short-term courses to improve employment opportunities.

I will have more to say in the supplementary.

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

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** Thank you to the minister for the response. I am happy our province is putting in place additional programs and supports for our veterans.

When we think of veterans, many of us instinctively think about our older generations, those who served in the world wars and the Korean War.

However, the reality is that there are many young veterans who served Canada in more recent conflicts, such as the Afghanistan war. It is vital that programs and supports adapt to meet their modern supply needs for their families.

Can the minister please elaborate on how the Soldiers' Aid Commission is responding to younger generations of veterans?

**Hon. Michael Parsa:** Speaker, we need to continue to support our veterans, including the young cohorts. That's why our government passed a new law in 2020 to expand the Soldiers' Aid Commission program to include all Ontario veterans and their families, regardless of where and when they served. This was the first meaningful change in their mandate after years of being ignored by the previous government, which saw the commission's financial assistance constrained to a very limited group of former servicemen and servicewomen. I'm pleased to add that to support this expanded mandate, the commission's funding has been increased by about 600%, to \$1.55 million each year. And last year, we invested \$529,000 through the True Patriot Love Foundation to deliver a broad range of mental health supports to veterans returning to civilian life.

Mr. Speaker, we must never forget the bravery and sacrifice of our veterans.

I thank each and every person who serves us in uniform.

## ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-ABLEISM ACTIVITIES

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** This question is to the Minister of Education. Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board trustee Sabreina Dahab this week successfully passed a motion to redraft 2022-23 suspension and expulsion data to show desegregated categories such as gender and race by June 2023, because she knows what it will show: that kids in schools who are the most impacted by discretionary suspensions and expulsions are Black, racialized, Indigenous and disabled students.

We have the data to support that suspensions and expulsions don't work. They perpetuate the school-to-prison pipeline.

In 2020, the minister announced a ban on discretionary suspensions for children in kindergarten to grade 3. Is the minister willing to extend this ban to include all elementary school students?

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** Mr. Speaker, we are very cognizant of the disproportionality impacting racialized and Indigenous students in Ontario. It's the basis for why we essentially eliminated the ability of principals and educators to suspend children in kindergarten and grades 1, 2 and 3. There's got to be a better way by which we can ensure these young people are focused and stay in school, integrated in their classrooms, than to suspend them at that young age.

Mr. Speaker, we also saw the data that informed the decision of this government to destream the entire grade 9 curriculum, on the basis that we want to give young people equal opportunity and a pathway to success by removing the barriers that impede their progress.

We know there's more to do in the context of fighting racism, discrimination and barriers in school. I look forward to working with the community to build further initiatives we can undertake in this province to ensure every young person graduates, achieves and gets a good job in this province.

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

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Mr. Speaker, school boards in Peel, Ottawa and Toronto have all spoken up about the data which proves that suspensions and expulsions disproportionately impact Black, racialized and disabled students because they are far more likely to be treated punitively than their peers. In 2021, a school board in Dallas became the first large urban school board in North America to ban discretionary disciplinary suspensions for this reason.

The data is clear: Discretionary suspensions are a tool that feeds racism, anti-Black racism and ableism in our school system.

Will the Minister of Education answer Trustee Dahab's question and extend your ban on discretionary suspensions for kids in elementary school to go beyond grade 3?

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** Mr. Speaker, the research is abundantly clear about how we can ensure racialized children can succeed in the classroom. Let's ensure that

those kids are able to see their educators reflect the communities in which they work.

When the NDP and Liberals had an opportunity to work with the government to eradicate regulation 274, a regressive regulation that denies principals the ability to hire a highly talented racialized educator in a community with many racialized kids, they opposed that effort.

If members opposite wanted to advance the cause of anti-racism, you would have supported the government destreaming the curriculum; you would have supported the government when, for the first time in the history of Canada, we actually overtook and supervised a board on the basis of anti-Black racism.

We have taken action in this area; unfortunately, we've done so without the support of the NDP and the Liberals in this province.

#### WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** My question is for the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

The development of technology in recent years has driven a push for more technical training in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields, also known as STEM.

**1130**

However, the numbers of women employed in technology careers, as well as in trades-related occupations, are well below their male counterparts. This is troubling, especially with the overwhelming labour shortages in many sectors across our province.

It is essential that all students are exposed to technological education, to learn critical skills so they can succeed in a good-paying job.

Can the associate minister please explain how our government is empowering students, especially young women, to prepare them for the jobs of tomorrow?

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** Thank you to the member from Newmarket–Aurora, a great member in that community.

I am proud that our government is taking action to ensure that students across the province have the tools and skills they need to build prosperity for their generation in Ontario. Our Minister of Education has worked diligently to ensure that this becomes a reality.

I was honoured to participate in the announcement with the Minister of Education that our government will be revising the grade 9/10 curriculum and implementing the requirement for students to take at least one technological course. This is great for all students, but especially for girls, who will now have even more exposure to the highly rewarding fields in STEM. This is reassuring news for me, as a public servant and a mother—that we are taking the right measures to prepare young women to pursue fulfilling careers in the skilled trades and STEM. This supports the creation of thousands of jobs that are being triggered by—

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the associate minister for that response. It is encouraging that all students will have an opportunity to explore options for career pathways in technology and trades-related occupations through hands-on experiences and technical skills learned in the classroom.

Our government must implement solutions now that will help address Ontario's significant labour shortages.

It is projected that by 2026 approximately one in five job openings in Ontario will be in skilled trades-related fields. With more than 100,000 unfilled skilled trades jobs right now, it is critical that our government does all that we can to attract more young women to pursue fulfilling, good-paying careers in the trades.

Can the minister please elaborate on how technological education will help prepare young women to pursue careers in sectors that are vital to our economy?

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** Thank you, again, to the member.

Young women deserve a life of opportunity and one that will help them become successful leaders in any industry they choose. Part of navigating that success is exposing young women to non-traditional careers early in their education.

Our government's commitment to equip students with the skills they need in STEM will prepare them for careers for the future.

Young women who traditionally may have been discouraged from entering the trades will now develop skills and knowledge that will help them understand and contribute to the technological advances in the changing workplace and world.

The recent changes in the graduation requirement are another step our government is taking to increase women's participation in the workforce and empower them to succeed in sectors that are vital to our economy. We have taken these steps because we know that when women succeed, Ontario succeeds.

#### SERVICES EN FRANÇAIS

**M. Guy Bourgoïn:** Ma question est pour la ministre des Affaires francophones.

Bien que nous sommes ravis que l'offre active soit en vigueur depuis le 1<sup>er</sup> avril, il va sans doute y avoir une période d'adaptation. Il y a également plusieurs enjeux envers cette loi. La province fait face à une pénurie de main-d'oeuvre. C'est difficile à croire—et même pratiquement impossible—que toutes les agences assujetties à la loi vont avoir le personnel formé à offrir les services bilingues.

Alors, madame la Ministre, comment est-ce que votre ministère va faire pour assurer des travailleurs parfaitement bilingues dans tous les endroits désignés? De plus, quels indicateurs de performance est-ce que le ministère va utiliser pour tirer un juste portrait et quelles

seront les répercussions pour ceux qui ne seront pas conformes à cette loi?

**L'hon. Caroline Mulroney:** Je remercie le député pour sa question. Je suis très fière que notre gouvernement soit le premier qui ait pu—et ait su—moderniser la Loi sur les services en français dans la province de l'Ontario pour la première fois en 35 ans. Depuis le début de l'histoire de la Loi sur les services en français, notre gouvernement a su écouter les intervenants franco-ontariens sur l'importance de ce travail.

Je suis très heureuse aussi que le 1<sup>er</sup> avril, la réglementation sur l'offre active, qui est vraiment la pierre angulaire de la modernisation de la loi, soit entrée en vigueur. Les mesures qui sont attachées à l'offre active—les neuf mesures—sont essentielles pour assurer que les francophones en Ontario reçoivent des services de qualité dès le premier contact avec des organismes gouvernementaux.

Mais je suis d'accord avec le député de l'opposition : il y a beaucoup de travail à assurer une formation de main-d'œuvre bilingue pour livrer ces services en français, et je peux en parler en plus dans la question supplémentaire.

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

**M. Guy Bourgouin:** Merci pour la réponse, madame la Ministre.

Notre langue française est toujours en déclin, et selon les données récentes de Statistique Canada, c'est le pire qu'on a vu depuis 40 ans. La vitalité de la langue française dépend de plusieurs facteurs, entre autres l'immigration francophone; nos institutions postsecondaires, comme l'Université de Sudbury; et les organismes francophones tels que l'ACFO, les radios communautaires et les centres culturels.

Madame la Ministre, quelles mesures ou stratégies est-ce que le ministère planifie de prendre pour assurer la continuité et l'épanouissement de nos institutions et organismes et mettre une fin à ce déclin de la francophonie ontarienne?

**L'hon. Caroline Mulroney:** Je remercie le député pour sa question, et je souligne que le déclin du bilinguisme, qu'on a vu à travers les données récentes de Statistique Canada, relève d'une chute du français qui représente un phénomène national, comme il le sait très bien.

En Ontario, notre gouvernement a pris des mesures concrètes pour s'adresser aux besoins de la communauté francophone et aux défis auxquels font face les francophones de l'Ontario. Notamment, nous avons modernisé la Loi sur les services en français. Nous avons mis sur pied la première université pour et par les francophones ici à Toronto, la création et l'ouverture de l'UOF. Nous avons aussi donné l'indépendance à l'Université de Hearst.

Mais avec le travail que nous avons fait sur la modernisation de la Loi sur les services en français, nous avons aussi introduit une stratégie globale pour nous adresser exactement aux craintes que soulève le député. Nous avons simplifié le processus de désignation pour

aider les communautés francophones à appuyer les organismes francophones et bilingues dans leur communauté.

Monsieur le Président, il n'y a aucun gouvernement dans l'histoire de l'Ontario qui a fait autant—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Merci beaucoup. The next question.

#### DIVERSE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**M. Andrew Dowie:** C'est toujours un délire de pouvoir parler en français. J'ai bien aimé cet échange.

My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

Our province is home to people from all across the world who are proud to call Ontario their home. While our province has much to offer, we recognize that diverse workers and entrepreneurs face unique challenges when it comes to finding jobs, starting businesses and accessing opportunities. I've met with many of them at my constituency office—particularly, hard-working local business owners who are just trying to make a go of it.

Our government is working diligently to address systemic challenges here in Ontario while investing in diverse talent and communities to support job creation and economic growth.

Can the minister please explain how our government is supporting diverse entrepreneurs who are looking to start a business here in Ontario?

**Hon. Michael D. Ford:** I would like to thank the incredibly hard-working member from Windsor–Tecumseh for the question.

Speaker, as the member alluded to, a diverse Ontario is critical to the economic success of our province. Diverse communities help enrich our cultural fabric and build our province into the amazing place it is through their talent, hard work, passion, fresh ideas and perspectives.

As part of our government's ambitious plan to build a strong economy for today and tomorrow, we are investing an additional \$15 million into Black, Indigenous and other diverse aspiring entrepreneurs in Ontario to start and scale their businesses. This funding will help them overcome barriers by providing them with coaching, training and start-up funding to get their businesses off the ground and set up for long-term success. As Ontario continues to lead our nation in job growth, this will continue to help create jobs and opportunities for families, strengthen communities across the province, and build a stronger Ontario for all.

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

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** Thank you to the minister for that response. This is all good news for the people of Ontario.

Since day one, our government, under the leadership of the Premier, has been committed to eliminating barriers to economic success for all Ontarians and acknowledging the unique contributions of diverse communities.

Throughout my home region of Windsor–Essex, we have not only seen a rich history of people of African

descent, but we are also seeing many active community organizations and projects dedicated to preserving this vital history and building a bright future ahead. The Black community, as well as other diverse communities and their businesses, are truly crucial to the growth and success of Windsor and the surrounding areas.

Can the minister please elaborate on the supports that are available for diverse communities across Ontario?

**Hon. Michael D. Ford:** Again, I would like to thank the member for the great question.

Speaker, our government is opening doors and creating opportunities for Ontario's diverse communities. This year alone, we'll be investing more than \$35 million into the Black Youth Action Plan and RAISE grant to help thousands of Black youth and diverse entrepreneurs succeed and reach their full potential.

I know that my colleagues from across government are doing this work, as well. Whether it's improving outcomes for children leaving the child welfare system, under the leadership of the new Minister of Children, Community and Social Services; or investing in graduation, coaching and tutoring supports to help Black students succeed in and beyond the classroom, under the leadership of the Minister of Education; or providing under-represented groups with the skills and training they need to find good-paying jobs, under the leadership of the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, our government is leaving no stone unturned to ensure Ontarians from all walks of life have every opportunity to succeed.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock on a point of order.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to thank my page, Helen Elizabeth Keys-Brasier from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, for her amazing service to this Legislature, and I'd like to introduce her mom, Shelley Brasier, and her sister Lillian Keys-Brasier.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the government House leader under standing order 59.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Let me just, first of all, thank all of the members for what was another very productive week, on behalf of the people of the province of Ontario, and wish all of those who are celebrating over the weekend a very happy and safe holiday.

To the leaders of the opposition: We have not yet finalized the order of business for the week after the constituency week. So I know the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition will look forward to spending some time with me as we organize the business over the next few days.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Before I adjourn the House for the morning, I want to introduce some very special guests who are here in the Speaker's gallery: my friends from the Wellington–Halton Hills provincial constituency office, Judy Brownrigg, Karen Thomas and Janice Howie. They didn't tell me they were coming down, so I'm not sure who's looking after the office today. But I think they're here to celebrate Tartan Day.

This House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1144 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael D. Ford:** I'll be brief, but I have two introductions today.

First off, I think the Premier did this in the middle of question period, but I'd like to formally welcome my cousin, Stephanie Ford, my uncle's daughter, to the House. She'll be with me throughout the day.

As well as a school in my riding—the students from York Memorial Collegiate Institute will be here momentarily touring the Legislative Assembly. I'd like to welcome them to their House.

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I don't see them yet in the galleries, but I know they're here in the building. I'd like to welcome Commander Richard Hillier and Lieutenant Commander Chris Elliott of HMCS Hunter, which is based out of Windsor. I'm delighted to welcome them to Queen's Park today.

#### INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

##### HELPING HOMEBUYERS, PROTECTING TENANTS ACT, 2023

##### LOI DE 2023 VISANT À AIDER LES ACHETEURS ET À PROTÉGER LES LOCATAIRES

Mr. Clark moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 97, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to housing and development / Projet de loi 97, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne le logement et l'aménagement.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'll invite the minister to briefly explain his bill if he wishes to do so.

**Hon. Steve Clark:** The proposed Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act would amend the Planning Act, the City of Toronto Act, the Residential Tenancies Act, the Municipal Act and other legislation.



The proposed changes continue to build on the actions we've taken to ensure we reach our goal of building 1.5 million homes by 2031.

The bill and proposed regulations would, if passed, encourage more housing by supporting a new provincial policy statement, make life easier for renters and freeze government fees.

In partnership with municipalities, our proposed changes would support Ontarians by helping to increase housing supply across our province.

## PETITIONS

### ARTS AND CULTURAL FUNDING

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** I have a petition entitled, "Invest in Ontario's Arts and Culture Sector."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the arts and culture sector contributes \$28.7 billion to Ontario's GDP and creates over 300,000 jobs;

"Whereas the Ontario Arts Council budget has not been increased at Ontario's rate of inflation, exacerbating the income precarity of artists and cultural workers, some of whom are earning less than \$25,000 per year, and still less for those from equity-deserving groups;

"Whereas the income precarity worsened during the pandemic through issues of regulatory unfairness in the arts and culture sector, disproportionately impacting the performing arts sector and OAC-determined priority groups, including BIPOC, Indigenous, women, people with disabilities, and LGBTQIA2S+ artists and cultural workers;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to sustain the Ontario Arts Council budget of \$65 million in the 2023 provincial budget and adequately invest in the arts and culture sector, including supports for equity-deserving groups, small, medium and grassroots collectives in our communities, and individual artists to ensure their personal and economic survival."

I wholeheartedly support this petition. I will add my name and send it with Mikael to the table.

### LAND USE PLANNING

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** This petition is entitled: "Protect the Greenbelt: Repeal Bill 23."

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Bill 23 will remove protected land from the greenbelt, allowing wealthy developers to profit by bulldozing over 7,000 acres of farmland;

"Whereas green spaces and farmland are what we rely on to grow food, support natural habitats, prevent flooding, and mitigate future climate disasters;

"Whereas Ontario loses 319.6 acres of farmland daily to development;

"Whereas the government's Housing Affordability Task Force found there are plenty of places to build homes

without destroying the greenbelt, showcasing that Bill 23 was never about housing but about making the rich richer;

"Whereas the power of conservation authorities will be taken away, weakening environmental protections, and preventing future development;

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

I fully support this petition. I want to thank the people from Cambridge, Waterloo and Kitchener for providing the signatures.

### EDUCATION FUNDING

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** I will be happy to present this petition.

"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 of Ontario 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 back to the table with page Evelyn. Thank you.

### MISSING PERSONS

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's my pleasure to read into the Hansard for the first time, on behalf of the MPP from Hamilton Mountain, her petition on the vulnerable persons alert.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there is a gap in our current emergency alert system that needs to be addressed;

“Whereas a vulnerable persons alert would help ensure the safety of our loved ones in a situation where time is critical;

“Whereas several municipal councils, including, Brighton, Midland, Bonfield township, Cobourg and Mississauga and several others, have passed resolutions calling for a new emergency alert to protect our loved ones;

“Whereas over 90,000 people have signed an online petition calling for a ‘Draven Alert’ and over 6,000 people have signed an online petition calling for ‘Love’s Law’, for vulnerable people who go missing;

“Whereas this new alert would be an additional tool in the tool box for police forces to use to locate missing, vulnerable people locally and regionally;

“Whereas this bill is a common-sense proposal and non-partisan in nature, to help missing vulnerable persons find their way safely home;

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

“Support and pass Bill 74, Missing Persons Amendment Act, 2023.”

I fully support this petition, will sign it and give it to page Shah.

1310

#### ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** I’m really honoured to be reading a petition titled, “Support Gender-Affirming Health Care,” by MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam.

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

“Whereas everyone deserves access to health care, and they shouldn’t have to fight for it, shouldn’t have to wait for it, and should never receive less care or support because of who they are;

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

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

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Oh, I fully support it and am signing it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** We knew. Petitions?

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas anti-2SLGBTQI+ hate crimes and harassment are increasing across Ontario;

“Whereas drag artists have been specifically targeted for intimidation by anti-2SLGBTQI+ extremists;

“Whereas drag performance is a liberating and empowering art form that allows diverse communities to see themselves represented and celebrated;

“Whereas drag artists, small businesses, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities deserve to feel safe everywhere in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to pass the Keeping 2SLGBTQI+ Communities Safe Act so that 2SLGBTQI+ safety zones can deter bigoted harassment and an advisory committee can be struck to protect 2SLGBTQI+ communities from hate crimes.”

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

#### ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

**Ms. Doly Begum:** Speaker, I have a petition here to “Develop an Ontario Dementia Strategy,” and I’m very pleased to read it to the House.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas it currently takes on average 18 months for people in Ontario to get an official dementia diagnosis, with some patients often waiting years to complete diagnostic testing;

“Whereas more than half of patients suspected of having dementia in Ontario never get a full diagnosis; research confirms that early diagnosis saves lives and reduces care-partner stress;

“Whereas a PET scan test approved in Ontario in 2017 which can be key to detecting Alzheimer’s early, is still not covered under OHIP in 2022;

“Whereas the Ontario government must work together with the federal government to prepare for the approval and rollout of future disease-modifying therapies and research;

“Whereas the Alzheimer Society projects that one million Canadians will be caregivers for people with dementia, with families providing approximately 1.4 billion hours of care per year by 2050;

“Whereas research findings show that Ontario will spend \$27.8 billion between 2023 and 2043 on alternate-level-of-care (ALC) and long-term-care (LTC) costs associated with people living with dementia;

“Whereas the government must follow through with its commitment to ensure Ontario’s health care system has the capacity to meet the current and future needs of people living with dementia and their care partners;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, call on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to develop, commit and fund a comprehensive Ontario dementia strategy.”

Speaker, I fully support this petition, will affix my signature to it and give it to page Ryan to take it to the Clerks.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### LESS RED TAPE, STRONGER ECONOMY ACT, 2023

#### LOI DE 2023 VISANT À RÉDUIRE LES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES POUR UNE ÉCONOMIE PLUS FORTE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 6, 2023, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to enact two Acts, amend various Acts and revoke various regulations / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à édicter deux lois, à modifier diverses lois et à abroger divers règlements.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** When we last debated this bill, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry had made his presentation. We'll now move to questions to the member with respect to his remarks.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I listened intently to the remarks from the member from Stormont–Dundas–West Glengarry—close?—and it was interesting that he has a restaurant background. Since we no longer operate a dairy farm, my wife is a server in a restaurant, and I've learned from her experience, listening to what happens every day, that I think running a restaurant might be a tougher job than running a dairy farm. I appreciate your experience.

Could you be a bit more specific—and you would know the restaurant business very well—about how Bill 91 would specifically address things that you face running a restaurant?

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Thank you to the member opposite. I don't know if it is harder than running a dairy farm; I have some friends who run a dairy farm. I'm able to rely on my staff, whereas, on a dairy farm, quite often it's the family members who are getting up every day of the year. We are closed three days a year, so I can appreciate that dairy farms never close.

Moving all the paperwork onto digital, I think that will save time, money and resources. I'm still the one who likes to mail out cheques. Stamps are not getting any cheaper; the envelopes aren't as well. Again, I'm not necessarily the most tech-savvy person—I will not pretend to be—but my managers are helping me with that. Ultimately, integrating technology into systems in the business and workplace I think will ultimately help owners be more efficient with their use of time.

Again, as a dairy farmer, you know it's a balance between family time and work time. I think I've got to get with the 21st century and start moving online in some of my forms. I know WSIB has just moved online as well, which, even for myself, I'm very appreciative of.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Markham–Thornhill.

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** I'd like to thank my colleague from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for your passionate presentation and also you talking from your experience, your small business background and your in-depth knowledge about small businesses and red tape-ism

and how red tape-ism is impacting small businesses in Ontario. This bill is very critical. It's coming at a critical juncture to change the name of the game.

Mr. Speaker, through you to my colleague, could you explain, from a small business perspective, how this bill will impact our small businesses?

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Thank you to the member opposite. I appreciate that. Obviously we're both PAs in the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, so I've gotten to know him really well.

I don't need to explain it to this House, but ultimately, there have been supply chain shortages; there have been staffing shortages. So if small-business owners are able to focus a little bit more on the front lines of their business, ultimately they are going to succeed more, and when small businesses and businesses in general succeed, our province does succeed and the people who live here succeed as well.

Most small-business owners I've been speaking to over the last three years since the pandemic has started have been stressed and anxious about what's coming next or what supply chain shortage we're going into or the inflationary pressures that small businesses are under. Any time a small-business owner can do things more efficiently—again, other than myself bringing things online, most are very happy to be able to bring these types of services online. It's just a more efficient use of their time

If small-business owners can utilize their time in a more efficient way, the staff will succeed as well, because, ultimately, myself being a human resource grad, we're able to put more effort into training our staff and ensuring they're ready for what is presented to them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Next question?

**Ms. Doly Begum:** I want to thank the member for his speech. I know he spoke about his own business, and one of the things we faced during the pandemic was a lot of small businesses struggling. You just mentioned about the difficulty with technology that a lot of people have.

My question is, would you agree that we have to make sure that we cater to or we are very careful about making it accessible to those who may not have everything electronic? A lot of people actually didn't qualify for grants that were available to small businesses because they didn't have that documentation or couldn't meet the deadline to put in everything electronically and therefore qualify for a grant. What are your thoughts on that?

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Thank you to the member opposite. Accessibility is obviously a priority. Since I've owned my restaurant, and even prior to that, we do fill out the AODA reports to show where we are moving our business towards. Yes, I fully support being more accessible. I know websites now need to be more accessible.

### 1320

I am one of those businesses that didn't qualify for those grants because my sales weren't necessarily down; they were flat or slightly up. So I can appreciate that not every business was given the same resources to be able to

become more accessible, but it is a priority of this government and our province to be as accessible as possible, even on websites and online features as well.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Yesterday, we heard from the Attorney General with regard to some of the changes that are being made from a creditor relief perspective. So my question to the member is, when it comes to updating the Creditors' Relief Act, which is to include electronic formats, what changes are being made and why?

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Thank you to the member, my colleague from the opposite side. With regard to the Creditors' Relief Act, it limits the delivery of enforcement documents to mail and in-person service. With the pandemic, we've modernized a lot of things. We were all on Zoom and Teams quite often, so it's good to know that it doesn't need to be in mail and in person. If approved, the changes would permit the sheriff's office to serve these documents by email.

We all have email—or the majority of Canadians and Ontarians do—so to allow that process to happen and be more efficient with it—because sometimes addresses aren't correct. We had an instance in my office, and we were trying to find the person who came in, and the police did not have the correct address on file. So to be able to serve those documents by email is—as much as I'm sometimes against technology, it's about time that we're going to update those, if this is passed.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Thanks to the member for his speech on Bill 91 this morning. I want to say that schedule 4 in particular in this piece of legislation makes a series of COVID-era temporary legislative amendments permanent. However, the government chose not to make the three paid sick days permanent even after going through COVID and realizing the impact of paid sick days interrupted the transmission of COVID, especially in the restaurant and tourism sector.

So can the member speak to why this government decided that paid sick days were not going to be part of this legislative change when, under schedule 4, the door was open there for you to do so?

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Thank you to the member opposite for that. As I've been chatting, and part of my speech this morning—businesses have been under a severe amount of pressure since the pandemic started. It's been a challenge to keep those doors open.

Myself, I do offer the sick days to some employees—my management, specifically. But the one thing that was interesting about the paid sick days, and this is a concrete example, is the 10 paid sick days were actually used by the end of the first month that they were offered. So for the 11 extra months out of the year, they didn't necessarily factor in that they should carry those forward. So in the end, those 10 days were—I'm not going to say abused, but they were utilized too fast. They ultimately weren't using them for their sick days moving forward.

But it has now turned into an endemic, and ultimately, the pandemic will carry on moving forward. We were the only jurisdiction in Canada to offer the two guaranteed sick days—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Three.

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** Three, sorry; apologies. Thank you. I appreciate that.

But ultimately, there are a lot of pressures on small business with the inflation and supply chains and the staffing challenges. We were trying not to put too much pressure onto the small businesses. We need the businesses to be able to succeed for the employees to be employed and ultimately for our economy to succeed as well.

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

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** It's always a great honour to rise on behalf of the good people of Hamilton, and today to speak to Bill 91.

Before I begin to address this bill that the government is calling the red tape reduction bill, I think we need to look at this bill in context of what is happening in Ontario. We hear daily in the House the struggles of people in Ontario to pay the rent, to pay their hydro bill, to feed their children, and there is nothing in this huge bill that will address that—absolutely nothing.

You can take my word for it, if you like: The people are not concerned about red tape. It's not the thing that's foremost on their mind. Or you can look at this Angus Reid Institute poll that just came out very recently. It gives the people of Ontario an opportunity to say what is on their mind. It also is an opportunity for the government to listen. They're in an echo chamber. They don't seem to listen, so take this poll seriously when, overwhelmingly, the vast majority of the people of Ontario say the cost of living, health care and housing affordability are the top three concerns for the people of the province of Ontario. There is absolutely nothing in this—what do we call it—doorstop of a red tape bill that is going to immediately address and relieve the concerns that people have.

In fact, the same poll shows that even among Conservative voters—people who voted Conservative—69% believe the government has done a bad job on the cost of living; 65% think you've done a bad job on health care and 70% think you have done a bad job on housing affordability. Those are your own voters who say you need to do better when it comes to the things that are most urgent for the people of Ontario.

We know, despite the bluster of the municipal affairs and housing minister, that housing stats in this province are going down, not up. We have heard time and time again from the minister that we need to build on the greenbelt, that we need to expand urban boundaries and that we need to build on agricultural land. But the government's own task force said we have enough land within existing boundaries to build homes that people can afford.

Recently, the Ontario planners council—planners from across the province—have said absolutely, we can meet the housing targets set by this government within existing

land. So the million-dollar question is why did the government open up the greenbelt? Who were they listening to and who is this going to benefit? Because it's quite clear it's not going to benefit people who are struggling to find a place to live in this province.

When it comes to health care, where do we start with the state of health care in the province of Ontario? I know that we have heard about the countless emergency rooms that have closed permanently or been closed for a significant period of time. This is the primary place people go when they have a crisis, an emergency, and they're often being turned away. It's just unthinkable that in this province you could go to emergency and find the doors closed when you have a critical, perhaps life-threatening, emergency.

I know that I have brought a bill forward to stop code zeroes. I know that in municipalities across the province people are experiencing what are called code zeroes or code black, level zeroes. Essentially, what this means is there are times—sometimes an extended period of time—when you can call for an ambulance—perhaps you're calling for an ambulance because your ER is closed—and there is not one available to take you to an ER. It's shocking.

I talked to an ambulance communication officer when I put forward my bill that the government supported—we're still waiting to see some action on it—and a woman that worked as an ambulance communication officer explained the plight that she is in during a code zero event. She had a mother call who had a choking baby on the line. She had another call that came in. She had to put the mother with the choking baby on hold to deal with a cardiac situation. She had to deliver what is called—I didn't know this is what it is called—operator-assisted CPR.

These are the dire choices Ontarians face. This professional had to choose between a baby that was choking and someone having a cardiac arrest. No one should have to make these choices.

The time that we're spending in this House should address these concerns, but they're not in this bill. This bill is six times larger than the budget and it is quite possible it helps even fewer people than the budget did, which, as we said, failed to meet the moment and was described in an editorial that said if it "were a Christmas present, it would be a three-pack of white socks." I think that speaks to this government's being so out of touch, so tone-deaf to what people are feeling in this province right now.

I just want to say, when it comes to the concerns in Hamilton, it's really shocking to me that I have to read this in the House, but the city of Hamilton has declared three separate states of emergency to get the province's attention on what is urgent for them. A councillor moved forward three separate states of emergency, one for homelessness, one for mental health and the other for opioid addiction, because municipalities are struggling to address this crisis and this government seems to completely have earmuffs on, not seeming to understand what's happening in the real world.

### 1330

I can imagine you're getting these calls to your constituency office; we are. I don't know whether you live in a magical part of Ontario where you're not getting these calls, or maybe you think the magic of red tape will resolve some of these problems, but I can tell you it's not working.

The Niagara region council also declared a state of emergency for the same reason, trying to get the province to understand the concerns and the dire state of emergency that we're in.

And you know, I would just say, when it comes to homelessness, which is absolutely a crisis not just in Toronto, not in Hamilton but in every community in Ontario—in rural communities. I have never heard of this. This is a problem. We walk down Bay Street here in Toronto and people are sleeping in sleeping bags on the street. It's shocking to me, in Hamilton, to see people in tents, in parks, with no place else to go. and the way that they're treated and the way that they are criminalized is something that should be a top priority for this government, but it doesn't seem to be.

I just will say it's not just me, again, because I imagine that you don't want to hear it from me, but I have a letter here that was written to the Premier. It says, "Dear Premier Ford,

"Homelessness is a crisis in every part of Ontario. The homelessness crisis is harming people and families and communities. It is undermining the social fabric and economic prospects of our province. It imposes unnecessary costs on our health care and justice systems, and on our institutions, community agencies and government. It limits opportunity for economic participation. It reveals a lack of progress on reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It is putting Ontario's broader prosperity at risk."

And I will just let you know that this is signed by, among other people, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs. These are the first responders that are seeing this crisis and took it upon themselves to write what I would call a pretty extraordinary letter directly to the Premier, saying we are in crisis in this province.

In the city of Hamilton, we have 1,500 homeless people, as best as we can count—1,500 people who have no place to live—but we have 500 shelter beds. If these numbers are correct, when it comes to how many homeless people there are, and it may be greater than that, we already only have one third of these people who can be housed. This is something that just seems to be acceptable or seems to be, "turn the page." We seem to be not addressing this crisis, which really is a humanitarian crisis. There is no other way to describe allowing people to live and die on the streets of our communities and not making it the top priority—the top priority—in this budget. Pardon me, in this bill. It didn't make it in the budget either, by the way, but certainly in this bill.

Municipalities have been left holding the empty bag that you have delivered them. They will be left holding the

hole in their revenue when it comes to all of the development charges that you've waived in the province. This magical thinking, that you can give developers—waive fees, waive the kinds of charges that build our communities, that build municipalities, and that money is going to be made up from where, a trickle-down theory? I don't know if that's what you are referring to. But the fact is that municipalities are saying, all across Ontario, that there's going to be something like \$5 billion that municipalities will no longer have to provide these front-line services that are needed: front-line services to keep our paramedics on the street, to keep homeless shelters open, to keep mental health crisis centres open.

I cannot believe that I'm looking at this giant bill, Bill 91, with quite a few schedules, and none of it addresses the critical emergencies in the province of Ontario.

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

**Ms. Laura Smith:** Thank you to the member opposite for her presentation. I listened thoughtfully to what was said, but I'm also aware of the fact that—she talked about limiting economic participation. We have a number of thriving businesses in Thornhill. We have a number of small businesses. Small businesses are the backbone of Ontario. Sometimes they are crippled by things that get in the way of doing their jobs. To that point, in 2017, Ontario businesses were paying \$33,000 in annual compliance fees. That's \$4,000 more than any other province, and the largest regulatory burden in Canada.

Clearly we have to understand that red tape is a significant barrier to our economic competitiveness. So why does the opposition continuously vote against this kind of red tape reduction measure, when all the benefits they would have for the people of Ontario, including the—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Back to the member for a response.

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Just because I said I didn't like it doesn't mean I said I won't vote for it. Let's be clear, I didn't—don't put words in my mouth.

But I will also say that in this province, for small businesses, we have the highest insurance rates in the province, so small businesses struggle under the burden of insurance. During COVID—do you want to talk about red tape? I had so many small businesses, which I understand are the backbone of our communities—I understand that they represent over 90% of the businesses and over 90% of the jobs in my community of Hamilton. I understand that. But my phone was ringing off the hook with small businesses that were trying to keep the doors open, trying to stay alive and keep their employees in place, but couldn't get through the red tape of your COVID supports that you were trying to provide them.

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

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** I want to commend my colleague from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas for speaking out on Bill 91 and really highlighting what really isn't in the bill and what we're going through in the province of Ontario, where our hospitals are at their knees and the cost of living, like hydro and food—food banks

have tripled in lineups. People are sleeping on concrete beds throughout our province. You've highlighted that houses are way too expensive, and this government continues to bulldoze over our greenbelt.

I'm not sure why they're calling it cutting red tape in Bill 91. With almost 30 sections to it, it's a huge omnibus bill. As I said, the honourable member here in the official opposition has highlighted what this Conservative government continues to ignore.

Can you highlight a little bit more what is not in this Bill 91's almost 30 sections? And what is more important to the official opposition than cutting through this?

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Thank you to the member for St. Catharines for that great question, because we're spending all of our time here this afternoon in this privileged House talking about a red tape reduction bill that will do nothing—nothing—to bring immediate relief to the people we are speaking to in our communities.

We hear about mothers, families, who can't afford formula to feed their babies. This is what we should be talking about, not about this bill. And while I imagine in here, there are probably some things that will indeed reduce regulations, possibly, is this what we as legislators expected to do when we came to this House, to look at this kind of legislation, when our communities are expecting so much more from us than this?

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas. I know the member spoke a lot about some of the challenges in Hamilton. I appreciate you talking about those. I'm a Hamiltonian myself—born there; high school there. I know the problems of Hamilton.

But in this bill—speaking of this bill, Bill 91—through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, we are looking at updating the Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008. The new developmental services funding approach is based on the government working to develop a new, evidence-based funding approach that will determine funding for adult support based on a person's assessment needs.

I'd like to ask the member, can you support this change in this Bill 91?

**1340**

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Thank you to the member for the question. I knew there was a reason we got along when I sat over there. People from the Hammer kind of hang together sometimes.

Thank you for the question. People in this province living with disabilities need our help—absolutely, they need every bit of help they can get—but do you know what? They're living in poverty. You have ODSP rates that are below, below, below the poverty line.

We also had a bill the other day that MPP Begum brought forward, for example, to make sure that transit is accessible. There's a small thing you could have done—actually not small; a very real and tangible thing you could

have done—to improve the lives of people who are living with disabilities.

It's one schedule in a giant bill, but there's so much more to do before we come even close to the kind of equity we need when it comes to people living with disabilities in our community.

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

**Ms. Doly Begum:** I want to thank the member from Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas for her passionate speech. I know she cares for her community very much, and I think Hamiltonians are very proud to have you represent them.

One of the things I've been very keen on asking about for this bill specifically is small businesses, because we know that during the pandemic, our government could have done a much better job supporting them. You mentioned insurance for small businesses. One of the things was the fact that a lot of businesses did not qualify for grants, because there was a lot of red tape. And for a bill that is about red tape reduction, I don't see a lot of reduction of red tape when it comes to small businesses having the ability to qualify for supports they truly need and deserve as contributors to this province. What are your thoughts?

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Thank you to the member from Scarborough Southwest. It's exactly correct: Small businesses are struggling. They continue to struggle, and again, there is nothing in here that will directly impact their ability to keep people employed and make a living.

I just want to show you an example of who this government is listening to. I just want to show that in schedule 27, it opens up the Pension Benefits Act, and basically the only thing they do in there is to say that people can or cannot receive their forms electronically. But we have an Auditor General's report that says, "Pension plan members may be unaware about the risk that they might not receive their fully targeted pension benefits, and improvements in sector oversight..." So we're failing in sector oversights to protect people, especially pensioners, and we have done nothing in the bill. There's nothing that directly supports small businesses, and there's nothing here to support small investors, pension plan owners.

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

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I want to thank the member opposite for the presentation this afternoon. I know Hamilton, like Windsor, is very much an industrial city and has been part of recessions and boom-and-bust cycles. I certainly remember the boom and bust from the last recession; coincidentally, it was the same time as we had our previous government which had crippling deficits, crushing debt, a systematic dismantling of the manufacturing sector and, quite frankly, unaffordable electricity costs.

The changes that are being proposed in this bill—some of them have to do with electricity—will ultimately ensure that ratepayers are not subject to additional costs that are

not directly related to their usage of electricity or gas. Does the member plan on correcting the record about lack of affordability in this bill—because I think it's there—by supporting this bill to keep penalties off of rates?

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Affordability is key, number one on people's minds. Even your voters have said that you are doing a bad job addressing affordability in this province. I'm glad you brought up the issue of energy bills, because that is a huge bill. That is crippling people in this province.

Your government came to power because they were going to fix the hydro mess. They blamed everything about hydro bills on the previous government. I could agree with that, but you've been in power for five years. You promised to reduce the cost of electricity. It hasn't happened. People need to know. Ratepayers are paying high—they haven't got the reduction—but taxpayers are still supporting this system to the tune of \$7 billion—

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

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I'm quite pleased to rise in favour of Bill 91, the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act.

I think I heard the comment earlier, "Is this what we come to government to do?" I'd say, in my case, yes. My previous career as an engineer for a municipality meant that I dealt with regulations all the time and their impact on the public that we served with unnecessary costs imposed, unnecessary delays. It kept things from getting done.

I spent nearly 20 years being the regulator. There were rules and they needed to be applied, and I did my job faithfully. Actually, it came back to haunt me at our pre-budget consultations a few weeks ago when one of our local property owners actually raised an issue he had brought directly to me when I was Windsor's drainage superintendent. He cited it as an example of unnecessary red tape. The situation was that he had a piped municipal drain that crossed his property just at the corner; it wasn't much. But he had an economic development opportunity that he wanted to leverage quite quickly. He had an engineer with him who demonstrated a suitable fix and a way to accommodate the piped drain and the land development proposal. And I told him no. He was incredulous.

The reason I told him no was the Drainage Act required that downstream properties affected by the change had to be notified and have the opportunity to participate in the dialogue as to whether this was a good idea or not. While the turnaround on this wouldn't really have been the worst among government standards, it was lengthy enough that the opportunity to land any investment by this property owner could be lost. Speaker, the irony of it is that at that point in time, our government had already engaged in consultations for amendments to the Drainage Act that, once passed, would have given me the discretion to say yes.

So I saw the benefits of previous red tape reduction efforts by this government. Absolutely, there were cases that I witnessed first-hand where they would have made a difference. There are countless stories like this that I can tell.

But it's important to recognize that regulations exist for a reason. You have to trust your regulators and their authority and their judgment. Giving a certain amount of discretion means that we don't have to just make work to make work and add cost to an initiative where it truly isn't necessary. If something is reasonable, please let your regulators make that judgment call and not necessarily have it written down that there is a mandate to do specific things.

Personally, having been responsible for holding up and adding costs to projects repeatedly for intangible benefits to the common good, it truly is a privilege to see bills like this one that try to get rid of unnecessary work and expense in the delivery of vital services for the people of Ontario.

Our government's red tape reduction efforts follow seven key principles:

(1) Less onerous compliance requirements should apply to small businesses rather than to larger businesses solely.

(2) Recognized national and international standards should be adopted.

(3) Digital services that are accessible to regulated entities should be provided.

(4) Regulated entities that demonstrate excellent compliance should be recognized.

(5) Unnecessary reporting should be reduced, and steps should be taken to avoid requiring regulated entities to provide the same information to government repeatedly. That's something I saw time and time again: giving the same information across the board to various agencies who were looking at exactly the same thing.

(6) An instrument should focus on the user by communicating clearly, providing for reasonable response timelines and creating a single point of contact.

(7) An instrument should specify the desired result that regulated entities must meet rather than the means by which the result must be achieved.

Speaker, this bill contains 42 separate and distinct measures. I know that they will reduce frustration, save money and help make things work better. Knowing that my time is short today—I think I've just about five minutes left—I'd like to focus on two particular refreshing approaches that this bill has brought forward.

Number one: For people of my generation multitasking is everything. There's so much going on and not enough time to do it all. We have known a world with card catalogues, libraries and encyclopedias with 20-something volumes. But then we came of age with the keyword search, and so the digital modernization components of this bill reflect today's world. We are a digital-first society, and we need to get there.

I signed up for epost over 20 years ago. I think it was actually 2000. I was going through my old files and saw my application to Canada Post. Epost was just shut down last year, but it was the first electronic billing records system, and now it's actually beyond its usefulness; people have moved on to other ways.

**1350**

I continue to get RSP cards, investments, pension prospectuses, which, over the course of time, I'm probably going to lose at some point. Having electronic filings helps

me immensely, because they're archived; I have an opportunity to access them. And this bill contemplates that, just like the rest of the world, it doesn't have to be printed just because the government likes it. There is a better way.

Also, part of this is clarifying, especially for the occupational health and safety and labour-related matters: An email is considered a written record. That is a long-awaited realization that modern practices by employees and employers is indeed to conduct business electronically. Our legislation needs to catch up, and we are there.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed us our long-conceived notions for legally compliant meetings where people travelled in person for long distances just for the meeting could very well be ended. I don't want to decry the value of meeting in person; we're here today. I live four hours away, so I travel—just as many of you do—long distances to be here in person. But not all meetings warrant an in-person visit every single time, especially when it's a short period of time. A two-hour meeting—yes, I've done that, charging mileage, hotel and per diem for a very brief meeting. Now, with the advent of virtual meetings, not only do I not pass those costs on to my employer, I also don't lose a productive day of work, and I can get my work done. This bill makes corporate virtual processes permanent in Ontario.

The other part of the bill I wanted to cite had to do with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation. Speaking again from first-hand experience, the MTO corridor permits do apply to a number of proposals, including one I did involving a low-impact, environmentally friendly parking lot. It was an infiltration trench. It didn't have anything to do with the King's highway; it wasn't adjacent to the highway, but it was within the corridor as defined, and so that meant I had to get an MTO permit. It was a regulation whose reach was far and wide. Understanding that some developments do have an impact on the King's highway—take, for example, a Costco or a Tim Hortons, where people are turning left and people behind are going to have to hit on the brakes, waiting for that left-hand turn to happen—probably not something we want direct access to, especially on a controlled-access highway like Highway 3 back home.

Our government is reinforcing the opportunity now to undertake pre-consultation and better triage these applications to the MTO. And I want to say that MTO was great in my case; they facilitated the permit process as quickly as they could. And now with pre-consultation, more opportunities to reduce the time frame for those rules will exist. The workload decreases, because the increased engagement and awareness of developers and municipalities and the inclusion of specific language in MTO and municipal affairs and housing policy documents and processes is part of this bill, and I want to commend this approach to MTO corridor management.

I will also highlight, as part of the corridor management, the broadband implications. There's a lot underground in a municipal right-of-way. Most of them are about 66 feet wide—larger arterial roads were about 100



feet—and there's only so much room down there. One thing I've seen in my neighbourhood has been the installation of broadband by multiple companies. When I was a municipal councillor, a lot of my constituents were upset that there was actually two choices for broadband because of all the construction disruption. But unfortunately, there's only a limited amount of room.

A lot of communities don't have broadband, and they need it. Rural communities need broadband in order to stay viable, and our government is improving guideline 3.0 that clears up the processes and timelines for MTO corridor permits, and this initiative will definitely expedite projects of significance like the expansion of broadband services to Ontarians, so—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** We are out of time for debate. We're moving to questions.

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** Thank you to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh for your thoughts on this bill today. I want to refer back to your role. As you said, you were a regulator. Regulators play an important role in this province, particularly when it comes to protecting pensions that people have worked all their lives for, and when it comes to protecting investors, particularly small investors that have their life savings invested.

The Auditor General's recent report—it's actually from 2022, a value-for-money audit—talked about pension plan members who may be unaware of the risk that “they may not receive their full targeted pension benefits,” and improvements in sector oversight were needed to protect investors. She also went on to say that over the “past three fiscal years, about 718 pension plans submitted a total of” 1,000 “required filings late,” but they were not charged.

Rather than going after that, in this bill you just make it so that pensioners don't have the—they have the obligation to say they want to receive their—

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Response?

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I know many seniors now who are on pensions. They're not just using a computer for Hoyle's book of games and solitaire; they're actually doing their business online. Every person needs access to electronic files these days, and this is one of many measures in the bill that makes lives better for Ontarians and gives them access to information in the manner that they need it.

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

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I want to thank our member for providing that valuable information. He talked about multi-tasking and reflecting on today's world, and he actually reflected on his own perspective, when he moved to a digital platform so many years ago, and our own government's ability to pivot to a temporary flexible manner in which corporations can conduct meetings. Could he talk a little bit about that issue and the flexibility that's required to maintain the virtual process?

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** Do you know what? This one hits home. I've got a gentleman in my riding who emails and writes to me constantly. He's having an issue with his condo board and their interactions with him and his ability

to participate in the board meetings. So part of this bill actually opens the possibility of virtual meetings and allows them by decision. It gives the different organizations the flexibility to hold meetings and conduct votes virtually rather than in person so that that governance piece can be strongly adhered to and transparency can be improved so that those who may not be able to be physically present can still participate in the business that affects them. So I'm just grateful that this is part of the bill today.

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

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** To the member across, thank you so much for your presentation. I wholeheartedly agree with you that we have to be able to force and move and compel businesses to innovate, especially in the new digital economy. I'm a huge believer around modernization, especially around making it more efficient and reducing any type of red tape, as we like to call it in this House.

But the conversations I've had with small business owners and small-to-medium enterprise, including with the representatives with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, are that the biggest concerns right now with small business owners and business owners in particular is the debt that they're carrying because of the COVID pandemic. That's probably their number one concern that's not being addressed in this bill. They're carrying about \$139 billion of debt. Over 76% of those businesses are going to have to take a lot of their one year to pay that debt. How does the government plan to address that specific business concern that's coming so prominently from the community?

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I thank the member for their question. Absolutely, the debt, both personal and government, that has been accumulated is very worrisome, because that debt is getting paid for by future generations. That's something that keeps me up at night. They're going to have a pandemic or some sort of issue down the road that they're going to deal with, but they're still paying off our costs. So that's very much top of mind.

What our government has done through this bill and through other bills in the past has been the reduction of business costs. So far, there's been historic progress, saving businesses nearly \$700 million per year in net annual regulatory compliance costs, so that's \$120 million more than the 2022 burden reduction report. There have been 450 actions so far to reduce red tape for businesses and individuals without compromising public health, safety or the environment.

1400

Thank you for the question.

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

**Mr. Rick Byers:** I very much appreciated listening to the member from Windsor–Tecumseh and his remarks, and reflecting on the fact that he used to be, as I think I heard him say, a drainage superintendent in Windsor. That's a very practical position, and, frankly, someone we

really need in this building, and perhaps even in this Legislature sometimes.

I was interested in the comprehensiveness of this bill—energy, colleges and universities, mining, natural resources, infrastructure, transportation, so many ministries impacted directly. I wonder if the member can further reflect on, from his past experience in a very practical role, other practical benefits he sees from this bill going forward.

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I appreciate the question from the member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound. I didn't have enough time to mention it, but it actually is a nice full-circle moment. Back when I was in engineering school, in solid waste management, we had a class detailing the Blue Box Program and the issue with the refillable bottles and how troublesome that was, and that was in the early 2000s. Now, as part of the regulations affiliated with this bill, the government of Ontario is actually addressing them, getting rid of these regulations that were no longer relevant. They weren't relevant in 1999.

I just brought up the article that was cited. I believe it was in the environmental science management journal, and I'll quote—actually, another interesting part is the author of that report was Dev Tyagi, who I used to report to at work. He was in Toronto at the time and he eventually made it to Windsor.

That's one other example of a practical implication that I have seen, in the Blue Box Program, and I'm looking forward to seeing many more of the options in this bill implemented for municipalities and corporations and persons to come.

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

**Ms. Doly Begum:** I also want to thank the member for his contribution to the debate as well. Actually, I want to follow up on the question that my colleague on this side of the House from Toronto Centre asked; I know that the member from Windsor–Tecumseh may not have had enough time to answer.

We have a lot of businesses that are in debt right now across this province, and because of the red tape created by your government, unfortunately a lot of these businesses did not qualify, or even after qualifying, did not receive the funds that they truly needed to just stay afloat.

What would you do to change that, and how come there is nothing in this bill to support those?

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** Thank you to the member from Scarborough Southwest. I would have to reiterate that the measures of this bill are helping on the debt front, because, by removing costs imposed onto businesses, they don't cumulate as much debt. That's just a consequence of reducing red tape on businesses.

Yes, we went through a pandemic, and, yes, you have to set limits as to what programs can do and cannot do, but this is a permanent, ongoing cost savings for all kinds of organizations, and that's why this is worth implementing because, going forward, it reduces those costs, and that means that property owners, business owners, Ontarians do not have to lie awake at night thinking, "How am I

going to address this?" Their costs are coming down thanks to the measures in this bill.

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

**Mr. Deepak Anand:** I just want to again say what I said earlier this morning: This government is making sure that we are reducing the cost to the business; by reducing the cost to the business, we're making sure that businesses are competitive, and that's why we are seeing the investment.

My question to the member is very simple: The title says, "Less Red Tape, Stronger Ontario Act." What is the significance of this title to the member?

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** Well, I would say that Less Red Tape, Stronger Ontario means better services, help for Ontario businesses to grow and to save Ontarians time. It means that we will have a stronger economy and an ability to earn even more for our households, our families, and make sure that our family life is as wonderful as it could possibly be in the province of Ontario.

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

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** It's an honour to rise in the House today to speak on behalf of the constituents from Toronto Centre.

The bill that we're debating is entitled Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act. It's an omnibus bill. It has got hundreds of pages and 37 schedules, and was just recently dropped in the House. We're all scrambling to read it, understand it and offer some hopefully meaningful reflections on how this bill can—perhaps right now it does not—support the needs of all Ontarians.

I want to offer you a few reflections. The government is really fantastic at creating bills that are very lengthy in nature—sometimes they're truncated—but the titles are always very fascinating, because if you don't read the rest of the body of the bill or any of the schedules, you actually think it's doing some really outstanding things. But, unfortunately, the title reaches much higher than the content of the bill, as we have seen in the past.

I have some mixed feelings about the bill, largely because the title is very ambitious, but the content, the substance, the meat of it, is fairly weak. So yes, there are some housecleaning matters which have to be done, and some of it is about streamlining the application around paper transfer and moving it to the digital side, which I think is absolutely fantastic. We should be doing it. There's no reason why we should not pursue that. However, that's not what I would call groundbreaking, and it certainly doesn't meet the needs of what Ontarians are asking for today.

And so, the bill does feel like it's out of touch. It feels like, once again, it's not meeting the moment and the needs of Ontarians, and Ontarians are very clear about what they're looking for. They're looking for some financial relief from the punishing financial environment that they're under right now: stagnated wages, much higher costs of just about everything with respect to the cost of living.

I did raise, in earlier questions—I shared some information from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. They have been specifically concerned about making sure that all parliamentarians at this House—and every other order of government—understand what their small business owners are struggling with. They are being ground into the pavement with astronomical debt, and the simple mathematical formula is that they had a lot fewer customers coming in, and at the same time, the cost of service delivery was getting higher. And yes, there are supply chain issues, but right now they are dealing with grappling debt and the soaring interest rates that are just beating them down every single day, and they're not getting help from this government.

Now, omnibus bills can hide things, and there are a few things that I believe this bill has sort of put aside, hoping that we can gloss over it, but I'm not going to, and I will bring that up in a few minutes.

But I wanted to speak, Madam Speaker, about my community in Toronto Centre. I happen to represent the Church-Wellesley Village. It is a very dynamic business environment. We also happen to be the largest lesbian and gay community in Canada, and one of the biggest ones in North America. There's really nothing in this bill that helps that community meet the needs that they need to have addressed today with respect to soaring commercial rates and the challenges that we're seeing on our streets. Oftentimes what we're seeing is a lack of safety for our community.

Now, red tape can mean a lot of things to a lot of people, but for my community, we need to be free from hatred and bigotry. We need to know that our businesses can open their doors without a group of protestors trying to shut them down and intimidate them. Right now, we're seeing this happen in so many businesses across Ontario, as I noted yesterday. I want to share with you that cutting red tape for the trans and queer community means that they are going to be able to open their businesses and operate freely. In particular, the drag artists that are under attack right now in Ontario, the audiences that support them and the businesses, the venues that host those events are under attack.

Speaker, I have received a deluge of hate these past few days, specifically because I dared stand up for our communities—and your communities, because it's happening right across Ontario. I dared to stand up to intimidation, to hateful speech, to death threats and harassment, all because I want to defend the rights of LGBT people in Ontario.

**1410**

I have a message for those who are trying to shut us down, to try to push us back into the closet: We're only going to get louder. We're only going to get prouder. We're only going to get more visible. We're only going to get more fabulous. We're only going to throw out a lot more glitter. We're only going to get queerer.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I would remind the member her comments should reflect the bill that is before us today to debate.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you, Speaker. This is specifically why I'm bringing this up, because my community is not getting the support that it needs in order for them to safely operate their business and to carry out their craft.

We're not going back into the closet. We're not going anywhere. As a matter of fact, we're going to continue to stand and fight for the rights of our business owners and our cultural entrepreneurs and workers to make sure that they can actually freely, freely deliver their service. We're all going to be richer for it, because love will always trump hate.

This bill does not meet the moment, as I have expressed. It's so important for us to recognize that low-income Ontarians are not helped at all. Not one cent—no, one nickel; pennies are gone. They're not helped one nickel in this bill. ODSP and Ontario Works recipients are facing some of the biggest deterrents in accessing employment, and what we hear from the government is that they should go get a job. Unfortunately, some individuals cannot get a job. There's nothing in this bill that actually builds back stronger and better for that group of people, and I think that we need to be able to address that, because ODSP recipients oftentimes receive a marginal rate increase of up to 75%, which is not enough at all, and we need to be able to address that.

We have heard now this morning about the astronomical line-up and demand on food banks. One in four children in Ontario is using a food bank. Children aren't poor; their parents are poor, and oftentimes their single-parent-led households are poor. Food banks in the GTHA have seen their usage quadruple from 65,000 users a month to 270,000 users a month. They can't find baby formula anywhere. And how is this bill going to support them?

So yes, absolutely, cut the red tape that you need. We should all embrace that. But does this bill build back a stronger Ontario, a stronger economy for all? It certainly does not.

There are other things about this bill, Speaker, that I want to be able to highlight, and I mentioned it before. This bill specifically talks in schedule 11 about the repealing of the Auditor General's oversight of the Children's Lawyer. It's not clear who asked for this. As far as I can tell, the Auditor General actually is a top-notch accountability officer. Their job is to make sure that the people's money is going to be well spent and that services are going to be delivered properly. Why was this oversight repealed? Nobody can explain it to me; I haven't heard it in any speeches. It wasn't explained in any of the presentations I've heard so far. And why doesn't the Children's Lawyer—the Children's Lawyer, who defends the rights of children in Ontario—have the right to have an accountability officer review the spending of that office? And what mechanisms are in place to ensure that transparency? That's not clear in the bill as well.

What we also have, Speaker, is a bill that speaks specifically to the Private Career Colleges Act. Now this is actually a really interesting piece, Speaker, because if you blink, you'll miss it. The word “private career

college”—the amendment is suggesting that we’re going to delete the word “private,” because it may stigmatize the college itself, and that may be the reason why this word is being removed. Well, I’m very sorry, Speaker; that’s not good enough. Just because someone doesn’t like the fact that it’s calling on the act to reflect who is affected, which, in this case, is private colleges—I see no reason why that word is to be removed.

The other thing, Speaker, is schedule 30, Protecting Farmers from Non-Payment Act. It takes up one third of the bill—one third. What we know is that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture didn’t receive any updates about this bill, nor were they consulted. So who is this government speaking to and who specifically are those changes for?

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Time for questions.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** Thank you to the member opposite for her submissions. I know that the member opposite represents the riding of Toronto Centre, and I know lots of people who live in the riding of Toronto Centre, lots of people there who run businesses and own businesses.

I wanted to ask the member opposite if she didn’t think that there are a lot of great things in our red tape reduction package this year, the Less Red Tape, Stronger Economy Act, that will help the businesses in the member’s riding and those constituents who I’m sure want her to represent them today.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you very much to the member across. Thank you for your question. Like all bills that the government puts forward, they’re not all bad. The content is not all awful. It’s just not that exciting to have a title that aspires to build back a stronger Ontario and yet have so little content in there to get us there. The businesses in Toronto Centre are struggling, just like businesses across Ontario, because they have to build back better, but the resources and supports are not there in this bill for them from the government. Hopefully, we can work on that.

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

**Ms. Sarah Jama:** Thank you to the member for your contributions today. My question is this: This government pretends to be preoccupied with reducing red tape, building a stronger economy, but the truth is we have so many Indigenous people who are living without clean water.

If we were going to build a stronger economy, why is it, do you think, that racialized people, Indigenous people and the concerns of queer people are not properly reflected in bills like this? What do you think we need to be adding?

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you very much to the new member from Hamilton Centre for her question. I think that it’s important for us to take a look at bills like this as well as all government bills, especially the budget. It is actually the apex of every single policy tool. If it’s not reflected in the budget or in these types of bills, specific monetary investments into the very basic things that Ontarians need to be healthy, to be vibrant, to be included

in society, they’re just not going to get there. That starts with basic needs of housing, water, as well as education and health care. That should be funded fully.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the member for Toronto Centre for her presentation. I’m sure the member for Toronto Centre would agree that modernizing agency governance and clarifying rules for Ontario’s public appointees is an important thing that we do. What this Bill 91 is proposing is changing clarification rules for public appointees to align agencies and government best practices. What we want to do is ensure that we’re making it easier and more attractive to serve on their boards. This is specific to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

Based on the member’s presentation, I would have to assume she would be fully supportive of this proposal for Bill 91.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you so much for that very helpful question. I want to be clear: I will fully support any measure in the bill that actually will strengthen the economy, that will actually streamline operations, especially for our near-government agencies. That’s important. I think what I’m trying to convey to members of the House is that, overall, this is a housekeeping bill, but it’s not an aspirational bill to warrant such a title. Certainly, there aren’t investments in the bill that will actually meet the needs of Ontarians, including business owners where they are at today.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Bill 91 addresses red tape and regulations. In listening to the member, I was really focused on the priorities of the government, what areas you chose to bring in regulations. Because right now, the province of Ontario is making sure that ODSP clients have to weigh in every month to a MyBenefits app or to their worker to confirm that they’re still in Ontario. This seems onerous. It doesn’t seem necessary. You know what? It seems like red tape.

What does the member say to the government when they’re picking and choosing which areas to reduce red tape in or to actually just double down on regulatory burdens?

1420

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you so much to the member from Waterloo for her question. That’s a really important issue that you raise. There are so many different areas where Ontarians are facing regulatory burdens, including the ODSP recipients. We know that social assistance recipients really need to see that basic rate increased—doubled, I would argue—and then index it to the rate of inflation.

I would argue that the ODSP and Ontario Works recipients are unduly punished with regulation. They are unduly punished every single month to just resubmit and requalify for what is a basic Ontario service that they do deserve and that they already have qualified once to meet, but they have to go back every month to do it. If you want to reduce red tape, reduce the red tape for them.

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

**Hon. Michael D. Ford:** Thank you very much to my colleague across the aisle for her presentation to the House. You particularly made mention about the 2SLGBTQI+ community here in Ontario and how this doesn't support them. Madam Speaker, I'd like to submit to the member opposite that this is our 10th red tape reduction bill, and new job numbers are out today where Ontario is leading the country in job growth and economic growth. I would ask that in those particularly 21,000 job numbers, do you not see how that does help our 2SLGBTQI+ community and racialized Ontarians?

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you very much to the minister across for the question to my very good friend there. What I'm trying to say, and I hope I can say it as eloquently as I can, is that this bill doesn't meet the needs of all Ontarians, meaning that there are some Ontarians who are not going to be benefitting from just a digitized economy. There are those who are trying to get into their establishment and they cannot because there is a wall of hatred and protest that's stopping them from going in there.

There are Ontarians right now who are trying desperately to hold on to the employment contracts and the contracts that they have with different venues because they can't get to work safely or they're being stalked or being doxxed. That is something that is specifically affecting the LGBT community, plus the audiences, plus the businesses that are hosting them. They are not even specifically LGBT, all of them. Some of them are Kelseys and Boston Pizzas. They would like to book the drag performers. They can't do it because there isn't any protection for them in Ontario right now.

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

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I'd like to thank my colleague from Toronto Centre for their presentation. This bill includes measures from the pandemic time that are going to be continued. One of the things the official opposition would like to see is the continuation of the paid sick days program. In fact, we think that every worker in this province should have at least 10 paid sick days. I was wondering if the member could comment on why it is so important that workers have access to paid sick days.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you so much to the member for the question. It's actually another timely question, because right now, as we're talking about building back better, there are certain populations that are still being left behind. As far as I know, there is still a COVID pandemic and all its variants are still floating about. We have not come out of this, especially now that we have the norovirus as well as avian flu. There are still reasons why we need to extend paid sick days so that people can actually stay home when they're sick and not carry about any other infectious viruses to the general population, not to mention that when the government wants to extend programs they introduced during COVID which I think were good—not all of them were bad; some of them were

very good. Another one that could be extended is the Physician and Hospital Services for Uninsured Persons Program. That should be extended as well.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** We have time for one quick question. Further questions?

**Mr. Rick Byers:** It's a very quick question. To the member opposite: I'm just reading through the Financial Accountability Office report for labour stats in the last couple of years, and Ontario's economy posted the largest job gain in the history of the province over the last two years, and that's continuing now. It's based on all groups and genders. We're continuing that with this bill, Madam Speaker. I wanted to ask the member: Does not this tangible support of job growth in Ontario support the work we're doing and look forward to continuing with this bill?

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** For a 15-second response, back to the member.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** We're the largest, most populous province of Ontario; of course those numbers are going to reflect that. But we need to be able to drill down to get to real solutions for Ontarians.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** We're out of time for questions and answers.

Further debate. Further debate?

Mr. Gill has moved second reading of Bill 91, An Act to enact two Acts, amend various Acts and revoke various regulations.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? In my opinion, the ayes have it.

I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Shall the bill be ordered for third reading? I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** Referred to Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Okay. So be it.

## YOUR HEALTH ACT, 2023

### LOI DE 2023

### CONCERNANT VOTRE SANTÉ

Ms. Williams, on behalf of Ms. Jones, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to amend and enact various Acts with respect to the health system / Projet de loi 60, Loi visant à modifier et à édicter diverses lois en ce qui concerne le système de santé.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Debate?

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** It is always a privilege to rise in this place and to represent the good people of Brampton Centre. I would like to state that I will be sharing my time with two parliamentary assistants to the Minister of Health: the member for Eglinton–Lawrence and the member for Newmarket–Aurora. Thank you, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Newmarket–Aurora.

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** It's my pleasure to rise in the Legislature today to speak to Bill 60 as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health. I would like to note that I will be sharing my time today with the member for Eglinton–Lawrence, my fellow parliamentary assistant.

Madame la Présidente, la principale promesse que nous faisons à chaque personne en Ontario est la suivante : vous serez aiguillé vers les soins dont vous avez besoin au moment où vous en avez besoin, qu'il s'agisse d'une visite imprévue à la salle d'urgence à 3 h du matin avec votre enfant ou bien d'un bilan régulier chez votre médecin de famille; que votre mère vieillissante ait besoin de plus de soutien pour continuer à vivre dans la maison familiale qu'elle aime, ou que vous ayez besoin d'une chirurgie de la cataracte pour régler un problème qui vous ennuie depuis des années; que vous viviez dans une grande ville, ou bien dans une petite ville, ou bien un lieu éloigné dans le Nord.

Votre santé : Plan pour des soins interconnectés et commodes place les gens au coeur du processus, en ajoutant et en élargissant les services de santé près de leur domicile.

Nous adoptons des mesures pour renforcer tous les aspects des soins de santé, particulièrement aux endroits où vous y accédez le plus souvent—dans les salles d'urgence des hôpitaux, dans les installations en milieu communautaire comme les pharmacies et les cabinets médicaux, dans les foyers de soins de longue durée et grâce aux soins prodigués, à votre domicile.

**1430**

Nous savons que nous ne pouvons pas y arriver seuls. C'est pourquoi nous embauchons et formons davantage de médecins, de personnel infirmier, de préposés aux services de soutien à la personne et plus encore afin de nous aider à concrétiser cette promesse.

Ce plan à long terme est axé autour de trois piliers : premier, les bons soins au bon endroit; deuxième, un accès plus rapide aux soins; et troisième, d'engager davantage de travailleurs de santé. En nous concentrant à améliorer les expériences en matière de soins de santé de la population ontarienne et à faire croître notre main-d'oeuvre de la santé, nous améliorerons la qualité de la prestation des soins de santé dans l'ensemble de la province pour les années à venir.

Certains de ces changements surviendront immédiatement alors que nous prenons des mesures pour régler les problèmes urgents. D'autres changements nécessiteront du temps. Ils seront déployés progressivement au cours des mois et des années à venir alors que nous formons et diplômons de nouveaux travailleurs de la santé et construisons de nouveaux hôpitaux, centres chirurgicaux et de diagnostics en milieu communautaire et foyers de soins de longue durée, et prodiguons des soins à l'aide de nouvelles façons innovantes.

Mais au fil du temps, vous verrez et ressentirez de véritables améliorations dans les soins que vous recevez, alors que nous érigons un meilleur système de santé pour

l'avenir. Vous aurez plus de renseignements et de meilleurs outils pour prendre les bonnes décisions concernant votre santé.

Vous serez en mesure de prendre des rendez-vous en ligne ou de participer à un rendez-vous de façon virtuelle. Il deviendra plus rapide et plus facile pour vous d'obtenir les services de santé dont vous avez besoin dans votre collectivité ou à domicile, peu importe où vous vivez.

Vous serez confrontés à des temps d'attente plus courts pour des services clés—comme les chirurgies, les soins d'urgence et les soutiens en matière de santé mentale et de dépendances.

Vos travailleurs de la santé seront outillés pour travailler ensemble comme équipe pour vous, facilitant votre orientation dans le système de santé à chaque étape de votre vie.

Se fondant sur les meilleures preuves disponibles et sur les réussites obtenues dans d'autres collectivités publiques, l'Ontario agit pour vous aiguiller vers les soins au moment et à l'endroit où vous en avez besoin. Il s'agit de rendre les soins de santé plus commodes. Il s'agit de vous aiguiller vers les soins dont vous avez besoin. Il s'agit de vous et de votre santé.

Madam Speaker, our core promise to every person in Ontario is this: You will be connected to the health care you need, when you need it, whether it's an unplanned 3 o'clock in the morning trip to the emergency department with your child or a routine checkup with your family doctor; whether your aging mother needs more support to keep living in the family home she loves, or if you need a cataract surgery to fix a problem that's been bothering you for years; whether you live in a big city, small town or in a remote spot in the north.

Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care puts people at its heart by adding and expanding health care services closer to home. We are taking action to strengthen all aspects of health care, particularly where you access it most frequently: in hospital emergency rooms, in community settings like pharmacies and doctors' offices, in long-term-care homes and through care delivered right in your own home.

Speaker, we know we can't do it alone. That's why we're hiring and training more doctors, nurses and personal support workers to help us deliver on that promise. This long-term plan is built on three pillars: first, the right care in the right place; second, faster access to care; and, third, hiring more health care workers. By focusing on improving the health care experiences of Ontarians and growing our health care workforce, we will improve the quality of health care delivery across the province for years to come.

Some of these changes will happen immediately as we take action to address some pressing issues. Other changes will take some time. They will be phased in over the months and years ahead as we educate and graduate new health care workers; build new hospitals, community surgical and diagnostic centres, and long-term-care homes; and deliver care in new and innovative ways.

But over time, you will see and feel the real improvements in the care you receive as we build a better health

care system for the future. You will have more information and better tools to make the right decisions about your health. You will be able to book more appointments online or take an appointment virtually. It will become faster and easier for you to connect to the health care services you need in your community or at home, no matter where you live. You will experience shorter wait times for key services like surgeries, emergency care and supports for mental health and addictions. Your health care workers will be set up to work together as a team for you, making it easier for you to navigate at every stage of your life.

Following the best evidence available and successes of other jurisdictions, Ontario is taking action to connect you to care when and where you need it. It's about making health care more convenient. It's about connecting you to the care you need. Speaker, it's about you and your health.

It has been over a month since we released *Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care*, and we are already seeing results in our health care system across the province. Already, we've seen emergency department wait times coming down, and we've started to shorten wait times for key surgeries. Nearly 100,000 people have connected to convenient care at the pharmacy for a common ailment.

Through the *Your Health* plan, our government is taking action to strengthen all aspects of health care, particularly where people access it more frequently, and Bill 60, the *Your Health Act, 2023*, supports our efforts to do so. The *Your Health* plan, which is supported by this bill, builds on the significant progress our government has made over the last several years. Since 2018, we have increased health care funding in our province by \$14 billion.

We have expanded Ontario's health workforce with more doctors, nurses and personal support workers. In fact, since 2018, we've grown our health care workforce by 60,000 new nurses and 8,000 new physicians. We've added more than 3,500 hospital beds across Ontario, including acute, post-acute and critical care beds. We're building new hospitals in every region of the province, getting shovels in the ground for 50 new major hospital development projects.

**1440**

Since 2021, we've provided funding to support operations of 49 new MRI machines.

We're adding nearly 60,000 new and upgraded long-term-care beds and investing nearly \$5 billion over four years to hire more than 27,000 long-term-care staff, including nurses and personal support workers, and increasing the amount of direct care residents receive.

We continue to make it easier and faster for individuals of all ages to connect to mental health and addictions supports by building on our *Roadmap to Wellness*.

We have made it more convenient to book or take a health care appointment by launching virtual care options and adding more online appointment booking tools.

Our government is better connecting health care organizations and providers in our communities through Ontario health teams.

Through Bill 60, our first objective is taking steps to help those who want to work in Ontario. There are many health care workers from across the country and across the world who want to work right here in Ontario, and we are making innovative changes to make it easier and faster for them to begin working and providing care to people in Ontario.

With the legislation's new as-of-right rules, Ontario will become the first province in Canada to allow health care workers who are registered in other provinces and territories to immediately start providing care without having to first register with one of Ontario's health regulatory colleges.

If passed, Bill 60 would result in amendments to certain health profession acts, which would allow out-of-province registered health professionals to practise immediately in Ontario while waiting for their registration with their respective Ontario health regulatory college—because I think we can all agree here that a doctor from BC shouldn't face bureaucratic delays to be able to practise in Ontario. This change will help health care workers overcome excessive red tape, something that we've just been talking about, that makes it difficult for them to practise in Ontario.

We will also help hospitals and other health organizations temporarily increase staffing when they need to fill vacancies or manage periods of high patient volume, such as during a flu surge. Participants will need to be in good standing with their home regulatory college and have a job offer at a health care facility, like a hospital or a long-term-care home, in Ontario to be eligible. This will allow nurses, paramedics, therapists and other health care professionals to work outside of their regular responsibilities or settings as long as they have the knowledge, skill and judgment to do so. That's the kind of innovative solutions that will help bring reinforcements to the front lines of our health care system.

We are also continuing to make it easier for internationally trained health care professionals to use their expertise here in Ontario. We are working closely with regulatory colleges to make it easier and faster for qualified health care professionals to work here as well, without facing unnecessary barriers and costs, including requiring colleges to comply with time limits to make registration decisions. These proposed changes are another way we are looking to reduce administrative barriers and help to allow qualified professionals to work in Ontario quickly and efficiently.

Another way we are supporting this is by expanding the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant. We know that there are unique health care challenges in small, rural and remote communities and that recruiting and retaining health care workers in these regions requires a dedicated approach. Last spring, we launched the Ontario Learn and Stay Grant to help these communities build their own health workforces. This program covers the costs of tuition, books and other direct educational costs for post-secondary students who enrol in high-priority programs in more than a dozen growing and underserved communities and commit to work in those communities when they graduate. This year,

we are expanding the program beginning in spring 2023, targeting approximately 2,500 eligible post-secondary students who enrol in high-priority programs like nursing, paramedic, and medical laboratory technology or medical laboratory science.

Another aspect of Bill 60 I'd like to highlight is repealing the Independent Health Facilities Act and replacing it with new legislation, the Integrated Community Health Services Centres Act, 2023, to better reflect the settings where care is taking place across the province. The health care landscape has changed significantly since the enactment of the Independent Health Facilities Act in 1990. There is a need for a legislative framework that better responds to current surgical demands in a manner that is integrated within the broader health system, that prioritizes safety and patient needs and better reflects the modern health system landscape and priorities. This proposed change would support the expansion of surgical, procedural and diagnostic services in the community, which is another important part of our plan for convenient and connected care.

We are reducing wait times by increasing access to surgeries and procedures such as MRIs and CT scans, cataract surgeries, orthopedics, colonoscopies and endoscopies. For over 30 years, community surgical and diagnostic centres have been partners with Ontario's health care system. Like hospitals, community surgical and diagnostic centres are held accountable to the highest quality standards—the standards Ontarians deserve and expect across the health care system.

In committee, Dr. Agarwal commented, "I'll say that the Ontario Association of Radiologists strongly support the current Bill 60 that's being proposed and we applaud the government for its innovative approach to solving a very complex problem," in reference to expanding integrated community health services centres to address the MRI and CT backlog.

To further support integration, quality and funding accountability, oversight of community surgical centres will transition to Ontario Health. This improved integration into the broader health care system will allow Ontario Health to continue to track available community surgical capacity, assess regional needs and respond more quickly across the province and within regions where patient need exists.

We're also expanding oversight and patient protections when it comes to your health. Integrated community health services centres will now have to post any uninsured charges both online and in person. Every community surgical and diagnostic centre must have a process for receiving and responding to patient complaints. Patients cannot be denied access to treatment if they don't purchase uninsured services. We're also expanding the oversight of the Patient Ombudsman to include integrated community health services centres. These safeguards are in place to ensure that no extra charges occur for OHIP-funded procedures.

**1450**

By further leveraging the support of community surgical and diagnostic centres, we will eliminate surgical

backlogs and reduce wait times. We know that lengthy wait times for surgeries are one of the biggest challenges you and your family are facing in Ontario. While Ontario leads the country in the number of people who receive the surgery they need for hip and knee replacements, we still aren't meeting the right benchmarks. We need to do more.

As a first step, we are tackling the existing backlog for cataract surgeries, which has one of the longest waits for procedures in the province. Four existing community-based centres, located in Windsor, Kitchener-Waterloo and Ottawa, have been identified as successful applicants to a recent call for applications. These centres will be able to support an additional 14,000 publicly funded cataract surgeries every year. These additional volumes make up to 25% of the province's current cataract wait-list, which will help significantly reduce the number of people waiting outside appropriate wait-times for this surgery.

We are also investing more than \$18 million in existing centres to cover care for thousands of patients, including more than 49,000 hours of MRI and CT, 4,800 cataract surgeries, 900 other ophthalmic surgeries, 1,000 minimally invasive gynecological surgeries and 2,845 plastic surgeries. And I would like to emphasize that this is all publicly funded: The costs of receiving these insured services in community surgical and diagnostic centres is covered by an Ontario health card, never by your credit card.

As the government significantly expands the number of surgeries being done through community surgical and diagnostic centres, it will do so with measures in place to protect the stability of staffing at public hospitals, including requiring new facilities to provide detailed staffing plans as part of their application and requiring a number of physicians at these centres to have active privileges at their local hospital. Further, Ontario Health will ensure that these centres are included in regional health system planning.

Funding agreements with new community surgical and diagnostic centres will require these facilities to work with local public hospitals to ensure health system integration and linkages, including connection and reporting into the province's wait times information system and participation in regional central intakes, where available. Community surgical and diagnostic centres will also coordinate with local public hospitals to accept patients that are being referred, ensuring people get the surgery they need as quickly as possible.

In addition to shortening wait-times, providing these publicly funded services through community surgical and diagnostic centres will allow for hospitals to focus their efforts and resources on the more complex and high-risk surgeries. This is another way our government is making it easier for people to connect to care and access publicly funded services in more locations. Because we all know, the sooner you have access to the care you need, the better the outcomes.

Long wait times take a toll on people's physical and mental health, creating more anxiety and stress. We have all seen our loved ones struggle because the wait for the



knee or cataract surgery is way too many months long. Delays and complications in care only add to the toll of dealing with health issues. For health care to help, it needs to happen in a timely manner. And that is the primary reason we are investing to expand surgeries across the province, so that you and your family can have faster access to care.

The final aspect of Bill 60 is to enhance privacy obligations related to certain health administrative data through proposed amendments to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. These proposed amendments will benefit patients by supporting improvements to the health care system through linking de-identified data while enhancing privacy protection, transparency and accountability for entities that collect, use and disclose government data. The Information and Privacy Commissioner, which provides oversight to ensure compliance with the proper handling of data, has collaborated in the development of the proposed approach.

But we know that none of this would be possible without the dedication of our world-class health human resources here in Ontario. Ontario has one of the most dedicated and highly trained health workforces in the world. They step up, day in and day out, to keep you and our communities across this province safe and healthy. We've made significant progress recently to increase the number of health workers available to provide you care and support. Together, we've come so far. Over 60,000 new nurses and nearly 8,000 new doctors have registered to work in Ontario. In fact, last year was a record-breaking year for new nurses in Ontario, with over 12,000 new nurses registered and ready to work, and another 30,000 nurses studying at a college or university, providing a pipeline of talent and reinforcements.

But we know we need to do far more, and we are doing more. Hiring more health care professionals is the most effective step to ensure you and your family are able to see a health care provider where and when you need to. Well-trained and well-supported doctors, nurses, personal support workers and more are the people you rely on when you need care. This year, we're training more health professionals than ever before, with 455 new spots for physicians in training, 52 new physician assistant training spots, 150 new nurse practitioner spots, 1,500 additional nursing spots and 24,000 personal support workers in training by the end of 2023.

And we're investing to reduce fees for nurses who are ready and available to resume or begin practising in Ontario for retired and internationally educated nurses; \$15 million will temporarily cover the cost of examination, application and registration fees for internationally trained and retired nurses, saving them up to \$1,500 each. This will help up to 5,000 internationally educated nurses and up to 3,000 retired nurses begin working sooner to strengthen our front lines.

Part of the investment will also be used to develop a centralized site for all internationally educated health professionals to streamline their access to supports such as education, registration and employment in their profession

or an alternative career. This initiative will make it easier for internationally trained health professionals to navigate the system and get the support they need on their path to getting licensed to practise in Ontario.

To continue to support our health system, we will scale up the Enhanced Extern Program and Supervised Practice Experience Partnership program for an additional year. Since January 2022, more than 2,000 internationally educated nurses have been enrolled through the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership program, and over 1,300 of them are already fully registered. We are providing additional funding to hire over 3,100 internationally educated nurses to work under the supervision of regulated health professionals in order to give them an opportunity to meet the experience requirements and language proficiency requirements they need to become fully licensed to work in Ontario.

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New funding will be extended to the home and community care sector to extend the reach of the program this year. This investment also expands the Enhanced Extern Program for an additional year.

Last year, this program helped hire up to 5,000 qualified nursing, medical, respiratory therapy, paramedic, physiotherapy, occupational therapy students and internationally educated nurses to work in hospitals across this great province.

Increased funding for both the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership and Enhanced Extern Program will also allow hospitals to continue to hire more preceptors, mentors and coordinators to work with students and internationally educated nurses.

With that, Madam Speaker, I will turn things over to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence to say a little more about Bill 60 and what we heard at the committee on social policy.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Eglinton–Lawrence.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to Bill 60, and I'd like to thank my fellow parliamentary assistant, the member for Newmarket–Aurora, for leading off the debate and for a great speech, which I think went over a lot of the important ground on Bill 60.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Social Policy, I'm here to confirm that the committee heard from over 40 presenters who provided their feedback on Bill 60 over the course of three days of public hearings. We heard from Dr. John Yip, president and CEO of SE Health, who said, "Based on SE Health's knowledge of the national landscape, I'm here to say that Bill 60 is a good start in eliminating Ontario's surgical backlogs. We are pleased to see this government introduce significant changes to our system that will better serve Ontarians within a publicly funded system. Overall, this bill sets up a good framework to create a system of surgical care that is patient-centred and promotes patient choice."

The president of the Ontario Medical Association, Dr. Rose Zacharias said, "We support Bill 60 and its feature

to move lower acuity surgeries and procedures out of hospitals. This is an important step in reducing wait times....

“I think what we want to emphasize is that every medical necessary service would be covered by OHIP and no one would be paying out of pocket to jump first in line.”

And Dr. Agarwal, a radiologist who currently runs a clinic with other radiologists, shared with the committee this: “I come to you today in support of Bill 60 as it applies to diagnostic imaging and moving CT and MRI” scans “from our public hospitals into outpatient centres. I believe that this proposal, if implemented correctly, will decrease our wait-lists, increase access to these important medical examinations, and alleviate the bottleneck that has been crippling our health care system.

“Just a little bit of background: MRI and CT scans, when they’re ordered by your physicians, should be completed within 28 days. What we see in Ontario is that these scans are completed between three months and 12 months later.” That’s what Dr. Agarwal said.

And Speaker, that is exactly why our government is supporting moving forward with Bill 60 so we can clear the backlog and ensure that patients in Ontario are getting the care they need when they need it.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our government has invested almost a billion dollars—\$880 million specifically—in surgical recovery funding for our hospitals to increase surgical hours and address procedures that were delayed as a result of COVID-19, and \$300 million of that almost a billion dollars was invested this year.

As a next step, our government is making it faster and easier for people to access the surgeries and the procedures they need by better integrating and using community surgical and diagnostic centres to increase capacity and complete more publicly funded services.

Increasing community capacity will target patients who have been waiting the longest amount of time for treatment and expand available options to receive safe, quality care. This means that there will be shorter wait times for common but vital surgeries such as cataracts and hip and knee replacements, and you can expect shorter wait times for diagnostic services such as MRI and CT scans.

This is important: In committee, Dr. Agarwal shared that “Everyone knows someone who’s waiting for diagnostic imaging. This is a fact. It’s a sad fact in Ontario and in Canada, but it is a fact. If we are able to diagnose diseases earlier, patients will do better. It’s not just their outcomes, but we’re going to save the system money and we’re going to decrease patient anxiety.

“I used to do a lot of breast imaging, and I would tell you, the amount of anxiety that exists when you read a mammogram and you call someone—we read mammograms, and say we’re suspicious of something. The way that breast imaging is set up is that we have to be ultra careful, so the majority of the time, when we’re calling women back, it’s for something that’s benign, but women don’t know that.

“I’ve seen this in my own family members. I’ve seen this in my relatives. I’ve seen this in my patients. There’s

a lot of anxiety, and now if you’re waiting a week, two weeks, for your next test, that’s a terrible two weeks. We just don’t need to have that. We’re one of the richest countries in the world, and we can do better.” So said Dr. Agarwal, and we agree.

That’s exactly why we’re moving ahead with this legislation to improve access to MRI and CT across the province.

In addition to shortening wait times, providing these publicly funded services through community surgical and diagnostic centres will allow hospitals to focus their efforts and resources on more complex and high-risk surgeries.

Dr. Andy Smith, CEO of Sunnybrook Health Sciences, was at the committee and shared, “With regard to surgery and imaging capacity: We need to improve access to surgical care, now.

“One approach that is enabled in Your Health Act is support to partner with community surgical centres, which I’ll call CSCs. We are encouraged by this opportunity because of the successes we have observed already to this point with CSCs.

“We have had success in delivering cataract surgery at Kensington Eye Institute and endoscopy services at many community centres for many years. Additionally, we have developed coordinated partnerships with community diagnostic centres to support patients with faster testing for cardiac diagnoses, for example.

“Most recently, we have had success with delivering increased volumes of specialized ear surgery for patients who can’t hear properly. Our team at Sunnybrook is world-class resourced for state-of-the-art surgery to restore hearing. But, as the pandemic receded, we found ourselves with a greater than two-year wait-list and inability to get surgery done fast enough at Sunnybrook because of the multiple competing demands for operating room resources.

“Think of this situation from a patient perspective. Imagine a frail older person living alone with minimal family support. Imagine now that they cannot hear. That robs the person of the ability to listen to CBC on the radio or to watch a favourite TV show. Deafness erodes quality of life unbearably.

“The care team that such people need is available. We needed to find ways to expand access immediately, if not sooner. Together with superb physician leadership, we developed a partnership with a community surgical centre, engaged government support and have been able to develop a sustained approach to getting care to the people and shrinking that wait-list.” That was the CEO of Sunnybrook, Andy Smith.

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Speaker, the Ontario Medical Association agreed, saying “If we were to roll it all up, we’re really quite aligned, principally, with what the government is intending to do on behalf of our families, our neighbours and our communities to improve access to procedures that they ought not to be waiting six months, 12 months or two years, in some cases” for. That’s exactly what we’re doing

by investing more than \$18 million in existing centres to cover care for thousands of patients, including more than 49,000 hours of MRI and CT scans, 4,800 cataract surgeries, 900 other ophthalmic surgeries, 1,000 minimally invasive gynecological surgeries and 2,845 plastic surgeries.

Surgical wait times and wait-lists have returned to pre-pandemic levels but more needs to be done. As our government has said before, when it comes to your health, the status quo is no longer acceptable. Our government is taking bold action to eliminate surgical backlogs and reduce wait times for publicly funded surgeries and procedures. And as always, services will continue to be conducted at no cost to the patient with their Ontario health card.

Another important initiative we're tackling is the existing backlog for cataract surgeries, which has one of the longest waits for procedures in Ontario. In February, we issued four new licences to health centres in Windsor, Kitchener-Waterloo and Ottawa to support an additional 14,000 publicly funded cataract surgeries annually. These additional volumes make up to 25% of the province's current cataract wait-list, which will help significantly reduce the surgical backlog.

Beyond all the work that our government is doing to address the surgical backlog, we're also building up our health care system for the future. One of the key investments we're making to achieve this is expanding access to primary care. When people have health care available in their own communities and in ways that are convenient for them, they're more likely to seek and receive the treatment they need when they need it and stay healthier. Delivering convenient care to people in their communities will help keep Ontario healthier by ensuring illnesses are diagnosed earlier, starting treatment as soon as possible and keeping emergency room wait times down for when you and your family need urgent care.

Ontario leads the country in the number of people who benefit from a long-term and stable relationship with a family doctor or primary care provider. Over 90% of Ontarians have a regular health care provider. But we can do more, and we will do more. That's why we're increasing training opportunities at the same time as expanding team models of primary care across the province of Ontario. Work is already under way to train the next generation of doctors, nurses, personal support workers and other health professionals in this province. We're expanding training spots to more health professionals in Ontario every year with 455 new spots for physicians in training, 52 new spots for physician assistant training spots, 150 new nurse practitioner spots, 1,500 additional nursing spots and 24,000 personal support workers in training by the end of 2023.

As Dr. Smith, CEO of Sunnybrook, agreed, "With health human resources, we have terrific health care professionals and teams" here "in Ontario. But their numbers are diminished, and they are tired as we advance through the post-pandemic period. This challenge must be faced with energy, resolve and innovation. Recruitment, retention and expanded training opportunities are an important

part of the solution. There has been a real can-do attitude about this in recent months and years, and together with government, looking at lots of different aspects to enhance collaboration. All of the solutions are essential. No one (solution) is going to get us to where we need to be." And that's the quote from the CEO of Sunnybrook, Dr. Andy Smith.

Speaker, by adding new health human resources to Ontario's workforce, more team-based care will be made available to Ontarians.

When family physicians work in a team model alongside other family physicians, nurses, dietitians, social workers, pharmacists and other health care providers and professionals to deliver programs and services, you get better continuity of care and more access to after-hours care which may be more convenient for you.

We are increasing the number of spots for physicians to join a team model of care through the expansion of existing family health organizations and allowing new ones to form. This will add up to 1,200 physicians in this model over the next two years, starting with an additional 720 spots for physicians interested in joining the family health organization model in 2022-23 and 480 spots for those interested in joining in 2023-24.

I just want to take a moment to say, Madam Speaker, that I had the opportunity to visit the North York Family Health Team recently and had a great tour of their facility, talked to the doctors there, and they're very excited about the future and about having more doctors join this model and other health providers join this model. It's partly in our Your Health plan with this announcement of expanded family health teams and family health organizations, but also we have Ontario health teams, which we've been working on since very early on when we were elected, and those Ontario health teams are now—54 of them covering 99% of the province, and the next stage in their development is integration of primary care.

I was talking with the doctors at the North York Family Health Team, and one of them is very actively involved in integrating primary care into their Ontario health team. And of course it's easier to integrate the family health teams and the family health organizations, because they're already organized in team-based models, but we want to get all of the primary care practitioners into these team models to work together in their Ontario health team so they'll be able to work as a more integrated, coordinated team.

Team models of primary care have demonstrated how bringing health care providers together as one team can improve the patient experience in how people access care. They're required to provide comprehensive primary care services, extend evening and weekend hours of practice and provide more weekend coverage so you can access a family physician when you need one—and it's a great model.

Ontario's population is expected to increase by almost 15% over the next 10 years, Madam Speaker. The population of seniors in Ontario aged 75 and older is expected to increase by 49.3%, from 1.2 million to 1.8 million, over the same 10-year period. By contrast, Ontario's 65-plus

seniors population will increase from 2.5 million in 2019 to 4.6 million by 2046. So the population over 65 in Ontario will make up 23% of all Ontarians by 2046. With this and all of the immigrants that we're bringing into Ontario, we know that we need to continue to grow our health care workforce to meet the needs of our growing population.

These are all very important aspects of our development in health care. I think we also mentioned, as part of our plan for convenient and connected care, that we're working on centralized wait-list management, and the government is investing in digital tools to enhance coordination of surgical services between hospitals to enable better patient flow through the implementation of a centralized wait-list management program which is being rolled out province-wide for the first time in Ontario's history. This is really important to make our surgical and diagnostic clinics coordinated and integrated with our hospitals, but it's also really important to make sure that the care is there when we need it, and it can be referred as needed. So I'm very excited about that investment.

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We're investing \$30 million into centralized wait-list management, and investments in this are providing funding for regionally led projects across the province that support more equitable distribution of surgical cases and reductions in patient wait times, as well as investments for the development of the technical infrastructure at Ontario Health which is required to support centralized wait-list management at the provincial level. That's another important part of what the government is doing to make sure that we have a connected system.

All of these initiatives—Ontario health teams, family health teams, family health organizations—the expansions of all of those are going to help make our system function better and help people stay well and stay out of hospital as much as possible, making sure a hospital is available when they need it without a huge amount of waiting in the emergency rooms. We want to make sure people can get in and get the care they need when they get there.

In closing, I wanted to share another quote from the committee, from the evidence of Mr. David Graham, who is the president and CEO of the Scarborough Health Network. From his evidence at the committee, let me just share this quote with the Legislature today: “For those of you who may not know, SHN has three hospitals across Scarborough serving an identified catchment area of over 830,000 individuals. In a typical day, we treat 500 patients in our three emergency departments, 800 participants and patients in our in-patient units and 1,300 patients in our outpatient clinics. We perform over 900 diagnostic imaging tests and 140 surgeries.

“We also have one of the largest orthopedic and eye programs in the region. SHN's eye program is designated as a regional centre of excellence and consists of 10 full-time ophthalmologists covering pediatric, retina, glaucoma, corneal and cataract procedures. In 2022, the eye program finished 5,700 quality-based procedures, plus an additional 1,000 cases on the provincial waiting list, totalling 6,600 cases in 2022. We are extremely proud of our

surgical programs and the work they are doing to not only lower the wait times in Scarborough, but across the region.

“However, we know that any wait is” too long “for someone who requires surgery. Every surgery is an urgent surgery when you or your loved one is the one waiting. I welcome the opportunity to work with our government, Ministry of Health and Ontario Health partners to integrate community surgical centres and diagnostic centres into the broader publicly funded and publicly administered health system and establish new partnerships between SHN and community-based surgical clinics to help ensure equitable and accessible publicly funded surgical care for patients.”

That is the quote from David Graham, who is the president and CEO of the Scarborough Health Network. He said that at his presentation at committee.

Speaker, this plan, and our significant investments in our health care system, will incorporate lessons learned from COVID-19 and ensure that we are prepared and equipped to meet the health care needs of Ontarians for years to come. All of the investments we're making are critical. No one solution, as Dr. Andy Smith said, is going to solve the problem. We need to work on all fronts to make sure that we are providing care to people when and where they need it.

We're excited to work with our partners, and I've read to you a number of quotations from those partners of what can be done to fix the system and how people are looking forward to being able to treat people and give them access to the treatments they need—the diagnostic imaging, the scans, the surgeries—as quickly as possible. And we're really excited to move forward with this next step.

If we pass Bill 60, we believe that we're going to be able to improve patient access to care and make it much more timely for people. After all, we think that is extremely important, as Dr. Agarwal said in the quotes that I read earlier. The anxiety of waiting for the results of your test, the anxiety of waiting for treatment when you're sick is not good for anybody. We want to make sure people get the care they need as quickly as possible—good, quality care through our publicly funded health care system.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I feel like I've just gone through a very painful commercial, because what the government is saying happened in committee is quite different, Madam Speaker—and I have it here in Hansard. Those delegations warned that the legislation “could fatally undermine the public health care system.” That's a quote. Despite the PC government's characterizations that we're fearmongering, in fact proponents of the legislation told the committee the issues raised are legitimate and called on the government to be careful and take steps to avoid or mitigate them.

Even John Yip, who the member quoted, said, “We are aware of the concerns that the bill may widen the health care access gap. We share this concern.”

The radiologists said that investor-driven companies to own for-profit surgical clinics is a bad idea—from Hansard. Then he went on to say, “If you have non-physician owners, they're going to poach health care workers from

the hospital, because their interest is not” in the hospital or the health care system.

We moved amendments to make Bill 60 fairer. Why is this government so determined to undermine public health care in the province of Ontario?

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** I was at committee, and I heard all of the testimony. A number of things raised by witnesses, some of the ones you mentioned—and by the way, every quote I mentioned is actually in Hansard as well, and people heard what those quotes are. A number of the things you mentioned are things that the government is aware of, and the government is taking steps to make sure we are protecting health care workforces in hospitals. We’re working with, as all of the quotes said, health care providers, we’re working with doctors, we’re working with the centralized wait-list management, and we’re working with the new surgical centres and the hospital administrators to make sure that the health care workforce is properly provided and to make sure there is no poaching.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Natalia Kusendova-Bashta:** Ma question est pour la députée de Newmarket–Aurora.

Madam Speaker, I was pleased to recently visit Hawkesbury and District General Hospital together with the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health. Hawkesbury General Hospital is such a great example of a provider that provides services in French. From the moment that patients enter the hospital, we see the signage in the French language and the idea of an active offer is fully implemented there.

I was also pleased to see the government support the expansion and renovation of this hospital with millions of dollars of infrastructure funding in 2022. We were able to visit this beautiful new hospital. I wanted to ask the parliamentary assistant if she can comment on why it’s important that we continue supporting hospital infrastructure projects, but specifically the ones that are servicing our francophone community?

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the member from Mississauga Centre for the question. Yes, we visited Hawkesbury, and I have to say it was an amazing hospital. Yes, they just underwent all these renovations. Our francophone community in this area actually represents over 60% of people who only speak French, so it is critical that we have those health care services and the health care professionals who can speak en français and provide that service to our francophone community.

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In addition, I have to say that this hospital is looking for further expansion, and we are looking to support them in their endeavours to support their community members tout en français.

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

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** There is absolutely no doubt that this bill is the beginning of throwing open the door to private, for-profit investor-owned corporations into our public

health care system. This is the beginning; let’s make no mistake. And we already have evidence from the Auditor General that these private, for-profit health care facilities are not regulated. There’s no oversight. In fact, the Auditor General said, “More specifically, there’s a higher risk that privately owned organizations may prioritize profits by charging patients for add-ons, and those charges would not be adequately monitored and scrutinized by the ministry.”

So my question to you is—you say that you can guarantee people won’t be overcharged, you can guarantee that they won’t be put to the bottom of a wait-list because of not agreeing to sign up for the add-ons by these private clinics, but you have absolutely no government mechanism to oversee them. What do you say to the Auditor General’s questions about this lack of oversight that you’ve done nothing to address?

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Back to the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for a response.

**Mrs. Robin Martin:** Thank you very much for the question from the member for Hamilton West–Ancaster–Dundas. In fact, I would think the members opposite would be supporting Bill 60, because for 30 years in this province, we’ve had something like 900 independent health facilities, and what Bill 60 does is integrate those 900 independent health facilities—which, by the way, have been renewed licences for 30 years under every government of every political stripe in this province. But this piece of legislation actually integrates those formerly—after we pass Bill 60, hopefully—independent health facilities into integrated surgical community centres, which will be integrated with our health care system.

But what are we doing to make sure people are not having to worry about oversight, etc.? We’re making people post uninsured charges online and in person so a discussion can happen ahead of time; a process for responding to complaints; patients can’t be denied treatment if they don’t purchase uninsured services; and the Patient Ombudsman—

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

**Mr. Logan Kanapathi:** Thank you to my colleagues the PAs from Newmarket–Aurora and Eglinton–Lawrence for that wonderful presentation. Our government has for the first time opened the door for foreign-trained nurses and foreign-trained doctors. It was a firewall for the last decades and decades, and we lost so much human intellectual capital and talent which left the province for south of the border for so many decades, including my sister. She was a foreign-trained doctor. She couldn’t get into the system; five years full-time studying, came to U of T, this building, and she couldn’t get into the system 21 years ago. So she left the country and she went to America, along with hundreds and hundreds of doctors who have left.

For the first time, our government is opening the door for foreign-trained credentials, and I have to thank and commend the minister, our Premier and the PAs.

Can the members tell this House, what is the government doing to expand our health care human resources and

ensure health care workers aren't moving out of the province and out of the hospitals?

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Back to the member from Newmarket–Aurora.

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the member for Markham–Thornhill for his question. Madam Speaker, our government has launched the largest health care recruiting and training initiative in this province's history. As I spoke about in my speech, we are building on the over 12,000 new nurses that have registered in this province since last year, and our government is also investing in a range of other initiatives. That also includes the "learn and stay" grant, which has been hugely successful, and that's why we have expanded it to not just nurses but to paramedics as well as medical technologists and medical sciences. So all in all, what I'd say to the member for Thornhill—on top of that, our government announced that we are breaking down registration barriers so that more health care professionals can come and work in this great province.

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

**Ms. Doly Begum:** This is probably going to be a first time for me here, but I want to take a moment to actually thank the government for finally listening to one part of this bill that I agree with, which is recognizing international professionals, internationally trained health care workers.

We're not all there yet with this bill, and I know there are other portions, other bills that have been brought forward, but I remember coming to this House in 2018, for the first time, and bringing this up and then bringing my private member's bill. To finally see the government take on pieces that I have recommended, pieces that the Ontario NDP has recommended be put in legislation, makes a lot of difference to a lot of Ontarians who are internationally trained who can contribute to our health care system.

So I want to thank the government for doing that, but I think we have a long way to go to make sure that we're recruiting them properly and retaining them, because that process has been undermined and this bill does not do justice to that. I hope that the government will listen and actually allow for that to happen as well. I'd be happy to hear from any of the members.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Unfortunately, there really is no time for a response.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Do we have unanimous consent to see the clock at 6 p.m.? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report continues in volume B.*







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<b>Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
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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	
<b>Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)</b>	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
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)</b>	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)</b>	Willowdale	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
<b>Clark, Hon. / L'hon. Steve (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Collard, Lucille (LIB)</b>	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	
<b>Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)</b>	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
<b>Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)</b>	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	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	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
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)</b>	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	
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	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)</b>	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	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
<b>Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)</b>	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lindo, Laura Mae (NDP)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
<b>Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)</b>	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)	Kiwiwinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	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	
<b>McNaughton, Hon. / L'hon. Monte (PC)</b>	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
<b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>	York—Simcoe	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
<b>Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Rasheed, Hon. / L'hon. Kaleed (PC)</b>	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
<b>Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Skelly, Donna (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)</b>	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)</b>	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
<b>Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)</b>	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
<b>Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)</b>	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associée du Logement
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	
<b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b>	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	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
<b>Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)</b>	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	