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Mercredi
29 novembre 2023

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Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 29 November 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 29 novembre 2023

The House met at 0900.

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

Prayers.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: Point of order, Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Point of order: President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Caroline Mulroney: I have messages from the Honourable Edith Dumont, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by her own hand.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the services of the province for the year ending March 31, 2024, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. It's signed in her own hand: Toronto, November 23, 2023, by the Lieutenant Governor.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECTION FROM COERCED DEBTS
INCURRED IN RELATION TO HUMAN
TRAFFICKING ACT, 2023

LOI DE 2023 SUR LA PROTECTION
CONTRE LES DETTES CONTRACTÉES
SOUS LA CONTRAINTE
DANS UN CONTEXTE DE TRAITE
DE PERSONNES

Ms. Scott moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 41, An Act to amend the Consumer Reporting Act and the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017 with respect to certain debts incurred in relation to human trafficking / *Projet de loi 41, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les renseignements concernant le consommateur et la Loi de 2017 sur la prévention de la traite de personnes et les recours en la matière à l'égard de certaines dettes contractées dans un contexte de traite de personnes.*

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: It is my pleasure to speak on the third reading of Bill 41, An Act to amend the Consumer Reporting Act and the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017 with respect to certain debts incurred in relation to human trafficking, along with my

fellow co-sponsors, the MPP from Ottawa–Vanier, the MPP from Spadina–Fort York and the MPP from Guelph.

Human trafficking is a horrific crime that shatters the lives of victims and has rippling consequences for survivors and their loved ones. Sex trafficking is not a foreign crime; it is here in our neighbourhoods, cities and rural communities. From what we can glean in Canada, 93% were Canadian and 60% of Canada's human sex trafficking occurs in the province of Ontario, with the majority happening along Highway 401. However, unfortunately, victims are all across the province: in rural communities and northern communities as well as big cities.

It is a crime that targets the most vulnerable among us. In statistics from a few years ago, 95% of the sex-trafficked persons are women, teenagers and marginalized groups; 45% are between the ages of 18 to 24; 24% of the victims police reported were aged 17 and younger; and, Mr. Speaker, sadly to say, some as young as 10 and 11 years old. And they are getting younger.

They are often lured and groomed by people posing as boyfriends and are forced to hand over money associated with their exploitation. Various tactics and strategies are used to lure the victims, sometimes within five minutes or less from a park, a university campus or even a grocery store, and some from our elementary schoolyards—a horrific scenario to envision, yet a dark reality that needs to be addressed. Violence, threats of violence and debt bondage are often used as a means of control to force victims to perform sexual services.

Mr. Speaker, this government has not been idle in its commitment to protect Ontarians from this heinous crime. The Attorney General; Solicitor General; and ministers for labour; finance; health; children, community and social services; tourism, culture and sport; colleges and universities; and education have been active partners in advocacy and procuring vital funding and resources for survivors. And the work continues.

As many of my colleagues in the Legislature know, I have been working on raising awareness and prevention of human trafficking—human sex trafficking, especially—for a very long time. That's why I'm happy to see such a large interest by members in the Legislature across all political aisles, and especially the new members who have joined the Legislature.

We are here today to take another step towards helping victims who have gone through traumatic experiences and horrible crimes to become survivors and to rebuild their lives. Bill 41 seeks to make sure that once a survivor escapes their abuser, they are not revictimized and ob-

stacles in reclaiming their lives are overcome—which is what this bill aims to do.

Financial burdens associated with escaping their abusers affect every aspect of a survivor's healing journey. The debts incurred by the abuser in the survivor's name prevent them from getting an apartment, being approved for a loan, or even procuring a vehicle or an education. In some instances, victims feel safer to return to their trafficker rather than navigate the financial bureaucracy in erasing their fraudulent debt and beginning their new lives. This is a horrible thing to say.

I want to tell you a story told by Carly Kalish, executive director of Victim Services Toronto, who is a specialist in human trafficking and trauma-informed care. They had a young woman call their crisis line in the middle of the night. She told them that she was being forcibly confined in an apartment by her boyfriend. She wasn't allowed to go out on her own or be in contact with any friends or family, and she was forced and exploited in the sex trade. Finally, one night, when he was sleeping, she gathered the courage to break the door and ran barefoot to the nearest Tim Hortons. Once she was there, she googled "Help 24 hours a day" and called for help. Victim Services Toronto sent her a cab that minute to Tims and Ubered her to the office. They set her up with safe accommodation, but she was so emotionally exhausted that she simply slept on their couch.

In the morning, she was confused. She had trouble remembering her own name and disclosed that she was pregnant. She could not decide whether to go back to her trafficker or start to rebuild her own life. This is the question all survivors ask themselves. One of the big concerns for this person was obviously her lack of resources. She had no home, no money, and every time she had considered leaving her trafficker in the past, he threatened her and told her that she would be in extreme debt without him. It turns out that he had used her name to open a credit card and to also apply for a car loan, such that she would be responsible for all the debt if she ever tried to leave him. This is a common story Victim Services Toronto hears daily. We know her name is Jessica, and she is a proud mother to a healthy baby girl now.

But the question of whether a victim of human trafficking is well-resourced enough to leave their trafficker is never one that a victim should ever have to face.

In November 2022, Victim Services Toronto acquired an organization called Project Recover, created by Richard Dunwoody—and we thank him for that. It is dedicated to supporting survivors of human trafficking by working with Canadian creditors, banks, telecom companies, car rental companies and property managers to remove fraudulent and coercive debt in the victim's name. The program aims to ensure that survivors are not revictimized in the process of rebuilding their lives. The current challenge is that not all creditors and property managers are equally inclined to take the action necessary to cancel the debt owing in the name of the victim. Even if they are willing—and many are willing once they are made aware of the situation—it takes a long time and a lot of effort to

ensure that credit bureaus remove the fraudulent debt that drags down the creditworthiness of the survivors. The process of cancelling fraudulent debt must be streamlined so that it's easy for creditors while also collaborating with advocacy agencies who are well-versed in the trauma effects of human trafficking and financial advocacy in banks, which is why this bill is so important and we are here today.

0910

It is a continuation of the work we have already done to protect survivors of human trafficking in Ontario. Through this legislation, we are committing our focus on the fight against human trafficking by creating a path forward where coerced debts for survivors can be relieved. As the multi-party co-sponsors for this bill already know, this legislation spans multiple ministries; and we have consulted experts, hearing testimonies from advocates and, of course, the brave survivors themselves who came forward to share their stories. This is not a partisan piece of legislation. We all agree that survivors should not have to finance the debt incurred while they were trafficked.

I want to thank several people and bodies for their assistance and devotion in seeing this bill come to life. I want to give a special thank you to the member from Ottawa–Vanier for her introduction of this bill, for working across all party lines to make this bill a reality. I want to thank the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services; the Ministry of the Attorney General; and the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery. I've said the bill was complicated, and it was complicated. But I also want to thank the Canadian Bankers Association; Nick Colosimo was in many times to help us. I also want to thank: from Equifax, Julie Kuzmic; Clarke Cross from TransUnion; and the support of the Canadian Credit Union Association—their support, their guidance, their dedication and their passion. Collectively we all want to try to make this path better for survivors to move on with their lives. And, as I said, a special thank you to all the parties that were involved and the dedication of the many ministries.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's been a pleasure to be here for third reading of this bill, and I now hand it over to the other co-sponsors to speak.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate?

M^{me} Lucille Collard: It's a real pleasure to be here this morning. I've got a special treat. My daughter Stephanie has joined us this morning just to give her support, so thank you, Stephanie. I know I'm going to get an earful about that after I leave this place, but anyway.

This morning I'm really filled with hope, optimism and gratefulness as I rise to participate in the debate on Bill 41, which is an extremely important bill that, if passed, would provide much-needed relief to survivors of human trafficking. I want to start by thanking the government for following through on bringing this piece of proposed legislation to this next stage. This is part of the gratefulness I feel this morning. Seeing this proposed legislation reach third reading is truly special for me, as I started

working on this more than two years ago—in fact, not very long after I was first elected.

It was Richard Dunwoody who connected with me in the spring of 2021 to let me know of the financial help he's been providing to survivors of human trafficking through his Project Recover. He then arranged for a meeting with a survivor in my own riding. And I have to say, after that meeting I was compelled of the need to try and do something. Since then, Richard has never stopped pushing for a solution, bringing examples after examples of injustices toward so many survivors. We definitely owe him the initiation of the work on this bill.

I tabled the first version of this bill back in 2022; that was in March 2022. The bill died on the order paper when the election was called, but I was determined to bring it back if I was re-elected. Before re-tabling, I started to imagine that maybe I could find someone in each party to support it. And it happened; not overnight, but it happened. It doesn't happen often in this House to have this kind of collaboration. So I want to sincerely thank my colleagues who agreed to sponsor this bill and have worked really hard to get it to this point. So, thank you to the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, the member for Spadina–Fort York and the member for Guelph for all the work you have done to build support for this bill on both sides of the aisle. This bill is a testament to the way that working together can lead to practical solutions that can truly make life better for Ontarians. It would be great to see more of that in this House.

Feedback from experts, victims, survivors, agencies, police services and financial institutions like Equifax, TransUnion, credit unions and the Canadian Bankers Association was essential to creating strong legislation. So, I want to thank all the stakeholders who have supported Bill 41 throughout this process and who took the time to provide some detailed recommendations on how to improve the legislation.

The committee stage is an important part of the legislative process, as you know, and it's an excellent opportunity for us, as elected officials, to listen to the concerns of stakeholders across the province and use the feedback to improve legislation. I, personally, found it very powerful to listen to the various testimonies and perspectives on Bill 41 that were shared in committee, during public hearings. I want to thank everyone who took the time to make a presentation to us, especially the survivors who have accepted, once again, to tell their compelling stories.

While there was some disagreement on the details of the implementation of the bill, what was extremely clear was that everyone—no exception—supported the legislation. Everyone agreed that survivors of human trafficking should not be held responsible for debts that were incurred in their name while they were being trafficked. At the end of the day, that is what this bill accomplishes. It provides a legislative framework that will protect survivors from coerced debts and allow them to move on with their lives.

Speaker, what those public hearings highlighted was the need to get the legislation passed and implemented as

quickly as possible. Survivors need our support today. This bill was amended in committee to make it come into force on an unspecified day in the future to be determined by the government. While I recognize the practical challenges that come with the implementing a piece of legislation—and as the member for Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock clearly indicated—there is a lot of work required and several ministries involved, but I also know that survivors need the help now so that they can move on with their lives.

If Bill 41 is passed today, I strongly urge this government to move as quickly as they can to get this bill implemented and bring it into force. Survivors of human trafficking want to put their past behind them and build a better future for themselves, but they are often hindered in that pursuit by bad credit ratings and coerced debts. By implementing the measures in Bill 41, we can help these survivors get out from under the burden of financial debt that was placed on them by their traffickers and empower them to move forward. Bill 41 will allow survivors of human trafficking to get a credit card, student loans, mortgages, and other lines of credit that many of us take for granted. Bill 41 will protect survivors from debts they did not incur and help them get the credit they need to build a better future for themselves.

0920

However, while the measures in Bill 41 are important, we cannot stop there. Human trafficking in Ontario is still far too common, and we must act now to protect our young people. I can't help thinking of my three daughters. They were all in school just recently, one of whom is still there. That's why training and education is a huge part of the solution to this. We need to ensure that kids in high school are aware of the dangers and can recognize the situations that often lead to trafficking. This particular fact was actually highlighted by survivors who came to committee, highlighting the importance of providing education as to how young kids fall into the trap. Many of these dangerous situations and relationships occur online. Both kids and their parents or caregivers must be aware of the tactics that are employed by traffickers and be able to recognize them.

About a year ago, I met with Dr. Charlene Doak-Gebauer, who has worked extensively on the issue of digital supervision. She has produced a documentary highlighting the dangers that teenagers can come across online and the need for adult supervision.

That's why I tabled another bill: It's Bill 133, the Kids' Online Safety and Privacy Month Act, 2023. The community has a responsibility to protect children from these risks through education and supervision. We need to empower our teenagers to recognize dangerous situations and avoid them. We must also ensure that there are support mechanisms in place so that young people know where to turn if they need help or someone to talk to.

Bill 41 is an important step forward in better supporting survivors of human trafficking, but it cannot be the end. We must also take measures to keep young people safe and prevent human trafficking from occurring in the first

place. I encourage the government to continue to take action on this important file.

Thank you once again to everyone who has supported this bill and helped us get to where we are today. I want to give a special shout-out to Ty Bradley and David Nightingale on my team who provided me with incredible support as we worked through all the necessary steps in these past years. I hope that, together, we can get this bill passed today and provide survivors of human trafficking with this much-needed relief.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate?

M. Chris Glover: Je commence en français. La traite des personnes est l'un des crimes qui connaît la plus forte croissance dans le monde, et au Canada, l'Ontario en est la capitale. C'est une infraction criminelle grave selon le Code criminel du Canada. Elle consiste à recruter, à transporter ou à héberger une personne, ou à en contrôler les déplacements en utilisant la force, la contrainte physique ou psychologique, ou la tromperie. Les trafiquants endettent souvent leurs victimes, et ceci doit changer. Le projet de loi va protéger les victimes de traite des personnes contre toutes ces dettes.

I want to thank all of the members in the House and all of the members of the committee. In particular, I want to thank the member from Ottawa–Vanier, the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock and the member from Guelph for co-sponsoring this legislation. This is a really important piece of legislation.

I first came across this issue when I met Richard Dunwoody. He had started a program called Project Comfort which was providing supports to people in shelters in our riding in Spadina–Fort York. He bought a large barbecue, and he was organizing barbecues. He organized clothing drives and other things for people in the shelters. When he was there, one of the things he came across was that many of the people in the shelters were survivors of human trafficking. The reason they couldn't move out of the shelters was because while they were being trafficked, their traffickers had put imposed debts on their names.

Some of them had been kidnapped while they were students; they had bad OSAP debts. Sometimes, the traffickers applied for OSAP loans in the victim's name. Sometimes, the trafficker would have the victim driving a vehicle without proper insurance, without proper papers, and that person would get pulled over and fined. And then that fine was on the victim's name, even when they were able to get away from the trafficker. So these debts follow the people, and because of them, the survivors, even when they escaped, had bad credit ratings; and because of those credit ratings, they weren't able to rent accommodation.

And when they received, for example, payments for example for Ontario Works or ODSP, some of them were actually clawed back. Some of them were clawed back by the government to pay for these bad OSAP debts or to pay for these fines. So they were stuck.

So, Richard Dunwoody—and I've got to give credit to him because the reason that we're all here today and that

this legislation has come so far is because of his incredible advocacy—started another project, called Project Recover, to support survivors and try to expunge these fraudulent debts that were incurred in the survivors' names.

This legislation has gone through a couple of different versions. The first one: I brought forward a motion in 2020 to have the government expunge fraudulent debts and government fines. Then MPP Collard from Ottawa–Vanier brought forward the first version of this legislation in 2021, and now we're in the second version of this legislation. I've got to give credit to the member from Ottawa–Vanier. She was able to get all-party support for this legislation, and this is—in the five years that I've been serving—only the second piece of legislation that I can think of off the top of my head where we've got all-party support. This is the kind of thing that I would like to see a lot more in this legislature, where everybody's coming together.

When we were in committee, there was no question that this legislation was going to get through. Everybody in the committee from all parties was supportive of this legislation. There were questions about how it's going to be implemented, and there are still questions about making sure that when this is implemented survivors are not revictimized by having to retell their story over and over again.

And to the people in the government services who will be developing the implementation plan, please keep that in my mind. We've got it in Hansard now, but it's also in the minutes from the committee meetings. It's an important piece of legislation because it frees the survivors of human trafficking from those debts so that they can get on with their lives.

I want to thank all of the members. I've thanked the members who have brought this forward, but I also want to thank the Canadian Bankers Association, and I want to thank in particular the survivors through several press conferences through the last three years who have come forward and told their stories so that we could understand what was happening and could understand why this legislation was so essential. Can we give a round of applause? And we have a survivor here today.

Applause.

Mr. Chris Glover: I also want to talk about some of the successes, like some of the things that can happen because this legislation is being passed and some of the successes that Project Recover accomplished, even before this legislation. So, in the last few years, Project Recover has helped more than 500 survivors to expunge \$3.5 million in coerced debts. They've provided housing for students. Richard Dunwoody is very proud of the success that these survivors have accomplished. He sent me one time—and I think he sent it to all of us—the report card from one of the survivors who had her coerced debt expunged, and she had a 99% average. Another one is running her own business now. So this is the kind of success that this kind of legislation can unleash.

It's not for everyone. For the most part Project Recover has been quite successful, because most financial institu-

tions in this province are willing to expunge those debts when they realize that they were fraudulently incurred or that it was part of human trafficking. There are some that are a bit resistant, and this legislation is to deal with that resistance so that nobody who's a survivor of human trafficking has to deal with those debts.

I would just say, in closing, this is an important step and I want to thank the member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock for her continued advocacy for survivors of human trafficking and to bring an end to human trafficking. There's other things that we need to do as well. We need to restore the victim compensation program, because survivors need some money to get started. When they escape their trafficker, they need money to get started and to rebuild their lives. It's not just survivors of human trafficking, it's all victims of violent crime who need that compensation to be restored.

0930

We need Ontario Works and ODSP rates to be increased. Many of the survivors that Richard Dunwoody met in the shelters were living on Ontario Works. The shelter allowance for Ontario Works is \$390 a month. That's another reason why they were stuck in the shelters and not able to move out. You cannot rent anything, anywhere in Ontario, to live in for \$390 a month. So, Ontario Works and ODSP rates need to increase. He said that 87% of the survivors that he met initially were on Ontario Works and ODSP. Those rates have to be increased.

The other thing that Richard has asked us is that we need to make sure that staff in banks, in hotels and in government agencies are trained to recognize the signs of someone being trafficked. He gave an example of a woman who was a victim, who was taken into a bank and asked to sign a credit card loan. When she resisted, the trafficker actually twisted her arm and forced her to sign. We need to make sure that banks, government agencies, and hotel staff recognize the signs that someone is being trafficked so that they can alert the police and the authorities, and that we may be able to get that person out of that situation. This is an important step.

Again, thank you to everybody for bringing it to this point, but there are many other steps that we also need to take to bring an end to human trafficking in Ontario.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Schreiner: It's an honour today to rise to speak to Bill 41. It's an even deeper honour to be one of the co-sponsors of this bill. I want to thank my colleague from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, my colleague from Spadina–Fort York, and I'm most thankful to my colleague from Ottawa–Vanier for taking the lead on bringing this legislation forward.

If passed, Bill 41 would be the second bill in Ontario's history to be sponsored by all four political parties here in the Legislature. This bill is especially important, Speaker, because it will make a huge concrete, practical difference in the lives of survivors of human trafficking.

I want to, as my colleagues have mentioned, give a shout-out to Richard Dunwoody, who first brought to my

attention the issue and the financial challenges that survivors of human trafficking face. I want to thank everybody who has provided input on this bill, provided feedback on this bill and has worked hard throughout the process of this bill; getting it to the place it is this morning. I know the details of this bill—we've had some long conversations about it, some conversations in committee about how it would be implemented, but I want to say that what has been unequivocally clear to me throughout all those conversations is the unanimous support for this bill and what this bill intends to accomplish.

If passed, Bill 41 will provide great relief to the survivors of human trafficking from incurred fraudulent debt and, in doing so, allow them to move one step closer to reclaiming their freedom and their lives as survivors of human trafficking. Speaker, 65% of police-reported human trafficking cases in Canada in the last decade were right here in Ontario, with 95% of those cases affecting women, teenagers and marginalized groups in our society. In most of these cases, survivors were unaware of the accumulating fraudulent debt that they were accumulating because of their trafficking situation.

If you think about it—think about the trauma, think about what it has done to your life, and think about the courage it takes to survive and remove yourself from human trafficking. And then think about how you must feel when you realize that the debt that has nothing to do with you but is fraudulently in your name is preventing you from getting a student loan or applying for a car loan, applying for a mortgage, possibly renting an apartment, securing a credit card. So many of the things and the financial tools and instruments that so many people just take for granted as part of everyday life—imagine that being denied to you. That's what's so important about this bill.

But I will say, in my conversations with survivors of human trafficking, there's even a deeper importance to this bill. I had one survivor tell me that every time she heard the phone ring, it retriggered her trauma. Most of the times when that phone rang, it was a debt collector trying to collect the debt that her trafficker incurred in her name. She said to me, “Yes, I want my financial life back. I want the independence and freedom that brings. But what I want as much or more than that is just for the phone to stop ringing, so I don't have to relive that trauma each and every time I hear it.”

When we talk about what we can do and what a difference this bill is going to make in somebody's life, I think of those stories. I think of those stories, Speaker. This bill will open doors of financial opportunity that will allow survivors to move forward.

I want to say to my colleagues on all sides of the House that by coming together today and—I'm hoping—unanimously voting in support of this bill, we are enabling survivors to move past a dark chapter of their life.

I want to echo my colleague from Spadina–Fort York's comments about some of the other things we can do, because we know that while this is a vital step, there are more steps to take. Today, Ontario interval and transitional housing supporters are here as part of the Wrapped in Courage Campaign. We know that a number of survivors

of human trafficking end up in shelters, and those shelters are underfunded. Those shelters need support. We need support for victim compensation. We need to ensure we address the housing affordability crisis so those survivors have a safe, affordable home to go to.

Speaker, I'm proud of the work that we've all done together across party lines to bring this bill forward. It's a positive step. It's a step I believe we can all be proud of. Once again, I want to thank my colleague from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock, not only for your advocacy on this bill but for your advocacy on human trafficking. My colleague from Spadina–Fort York, thank you for standing up and bringing Richard Dunwoody's vision to reality through this bill. And my colleague from Ottawa–Vanier, thank you for having the insight to say, "You know what? Let's bring all parties together to sponsor this bill, to not make it just in my name, but to make it in the name of all four parties." Because I think it is so important, Speaker, to send a direct message to the survivors of human trafficking that this is a bill, and you as a survivor—we see you, we hear you, we're going to act for you and we're going to do it in a way that brings everybody in this Legislature together, to say that all Ontarians have your back. And we're going to give you the tools to have financial freedom.

Thank you, Speaker, and thank you all for your participation in today's debate.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

Ms. Scott has moved third reading of Bill 41, An Act to amend the Consumer Reporting Act and the Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking Act, 2017 with respect to certain debts incurred in relation to human trafficking. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carries? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion. Congratulations.

Third reading agreed to.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): Orders of the day?

Mr. Trevor Jones: No further business.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes): There being no further business, this House stands recessed until 1015.

The House recessed from 0940 to 1015.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

GURPURAB

Mr. Amarjot Sandhu: On Monday, November 27, members of the Sikh community celebrated Gurpurab, the 554th birth anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism.

Gurpurab is a holy and religious holiday for members of the Sikh community, including myself. This most sacred day in the Sikh calendar is traditionally observed by attending gurdwaras and participating in "seva," self-

lessly serving others without expectation of recognition or reward.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji travelled on foot with a mission of uniting the world through love and kindness. His teachings and lessons contributed to the creation of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, which is the central holy religious scripture in Sikhism. The three core teachings in Sikhi are Naam Japna, remembering God at all times; Kirat Karni, earning an honest living; and Vand Chakna, sharing your earnings with the less fortunate.

Speaker, I would like to emphasize Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji's selfless and compassionate nature, always preaching for kindness and unity. Gurpurab serves as a commemoration of his life, accomplishments and, notably, his enduring legacy.

HEART AND STROKE FOUNDATION

M^{me} France Gélinas: Heart and Stroke is at Queen's Park today. Since I was elected, we have worked together many times to call on the government to introduce health promotion and disease prevention initiatives.

I am happy to report that thanks to their support, we have taken many steps forward. Ontario has banned flavoured cigarillos; they were marketed to youth to get them addicted to nicotine. Restaurants now put calorie labelling on their menus to help people make healthier choices.

In 2019, Heart and Stroke joined me in support of a bill to create an automatic external defibrillator registry that 911 operators could use to direct callers in the event of a cardiac arrest. Although it became law three years ago, it is still not implemented, but I am hopeful.

Heart and Stroke is here today because there's so much more that needs to be done. Ontario needs to be informed, educated, and raise awareness about heart and brain health. We need to accelerate critical research to improve outcomes for people living with heart disease and stroke. And we need to support people in their health journey and recovery.

Heart and Stroke does all of this with their advocacy for public policies, for healthier environments, for improved access to support services and for a strong and equitable health care system. Thank you, Heart and Stroke, for all you do and for all that your volunteers do. Ontario is healthier because of your hard work. Thank you. Merci.

SENIOR CITIZENS' HOUSING

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: I would like to thank the Associate Minister of Housing, Minister Flack, for his visit in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell last week. We had the opportunity to participate in the inaugurations of two new senior citizens' housing projects in St-Albert and Van-kleek Hill. Our government did provide close to \$3 million to help create affordable housing units in the united counties of Prescott and Russell to support our seniors.

The new building at the Résidence Lajoie in St-Albert consists of a two-storey building with 26 units, six of

which are fully accessible. Residents have access to fitness equipment, a shared recreational space and a meeting room. The new three-storey building at the Vankleek Hill Senior Citizens Manor includes 30 housing units. The building is also energy-efficient and designed to meet VisitAbility standards with accessibility features such as wide doors and everything.

It was nice to meet with the new tenants that had moved only a few days prior to our visit. We were able to reiterate on our commitment to helping more Ontarians find a home they can afford and that meets their needs. I would like to thank the board members from both non-profit organizations. They have some opportunities from different governments for funding, but it takes their implication, through these volunteers on the boards, to do the work and make it happen.

1020

Me and the minister stopped by the St-Albert cheese factory to get some cheese curds and also stopped by Beau's beer and Dunrobin Distilleries in Vankleek Hill to shop for Christmas presents. It was a great day.

FOOD BANKS

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Ontarians are relying more on food banks than ever before, yet the Premier says Ontario is 1,000 times better now than when he took office in 2018. Speaker, make that make sense.

Feed Ontario released its 2023 Who's Hungry report on Monday. It shared concerning statistics about the reality for hundreds of thousands of Ontarians. Food banks are struggling to keep up with the continued rapid rise in demand. Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, over 800,00 people accessed a food bank in Ontario, visiting nearly 5.9 million times; this is an increase of 38%, and 36% over the previous year, and the largest single-year increases ever recorded by Ontario's food bank network. In Windsor, pre-pandemic, they were serving about 300; now it's about 1,500. The report states that two in five visitors had never visited a food bank before, an increase of 41% over the previous year. Workers are turning to food banks in greater numbers, with more than one in six visitors now citing employment as their primary source of income. Social assistance remains a significant driver of food bank use, with recipients of OW and ODSP increasing by 17% over last year. The majority of food banks are worried about meeting the need in their community, with 69% of food banks concerned about having enough food and 53% indicating that they were worried that they do not have enough funding to adequately sustain service.

Speaker, poverty is a policy choice; it's this Conservative government's choice. Ontarians deserve better.

GEORGE COHON

Ms. Laura Smith: Last weekend, our country and, really, the world lost a remarkable individual. Mr. George Cohon, founder of McDonald's Canada, passed away at the age of 86. And I wanted to honour his memory in the House today and acknowledge his incredible legacy and impact on our province and country.

Although George was born in Chicago, he believed completely in Canada's distinct identity. He made sure that he used Canadian suppliers, and included the red maple leaf logo in the Canadian arches in McDonald's.

In 1977, he created McHappy Day. And in 1981, he brought the first Ronald McDonald House to Canada. Today, there are 16 houses across the industry helping over 26,000 families a year and giving them a place to stay while their children face health issues in hospitals.

He has been honoured with so many distinctions for his philanthropy, including the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario.

In 1982, Toronto's Santa Claus Parade almost came to an end, and George stepped up and he saved and he preserved it—and usually, he dressed up as a clown and he joined in on the fun.

When he was asked about his biggest accomplishment, George said this: “Getting involved with McDonald's allowed me to do for other people. And that's the charities—the Ronald McDonald Houses; the McHappy Day. The pride I have ... not only to sell hamburgers ... but to be a good member in communities around the world—to help society.”

For George, it was always about community over self. May his legacy live on.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Mr. Chris Glover: Today, the members in the Legislature are wearing purple scarves in honour of the Wrapped in Courage campaign. And today, we have many agencies that support female victims of violence and that are also fighting for an end of violence against women. This Wrapped in Courage campaign was organized by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses. They note that it takes an entire community to bring an end to gender-based violence, and they're asking everyone to support survivors of gender-based violence and become part of Ontario-wide efforts to bring an end to this violence. They're in the House today, and I met some of them before this, just a few minutes ago.

That they're in the House today is very auspicious, because this morning we had the third reading of Bill 41, which is a bill to bring an end to coerced debts for survivors of human trafficking. This bill was passed by all parties. It's an all-party bill, and we're looking forward to the implementation so that survivors who are encumbered by debts from their trafficking, by their traffickers, will have those debts expunged so that they can get on with their lives.

I want to thank all of the agencies who are here for the Wrapped in Courage campaign for all of the work that you do to provide supports to women who are victims of abuse, and also to survivors of human trafficking. Thank you for being here.

We're looking all looking forward to the day—November 25, we will note that it's International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. It's a day that we should all recognize and all commit ourselves to do our part to bring an end to gender-based violence.

SANTA CLAUS PARADES IN RENFREW– NIPISSING–PEMBROKE

Mr. John Yakabuski: It's Christmas parade season, and all across the valley, communities are getting together to do something that everybody loves.

In my riding, each and every parade is a special experience that speaks in a very visual way about the people, the organizations, the businesses, and their expressions of community spirit. This past weekend, I was able to attend parades in both Cobden and Pembroke.

The Cobden parade is a daytime parade that brings out people from all around the area and sends out the message that Christmas is near. As the first parade of the season, that is most appropriate. I even had the opportunity to entertain the crowd with my rendition of the Burl Ives classic, Have a Holly Jolly Christmas.

The Pembroke parade is an evening event, and this year's edition was truly spectacular. Over 100 floats took part in the parade, witnessed by the biggest crowd I've ever seen. The floats and the work that goes into them is something to appreciate. My hat goes off to all those who work so hard to make these parades so very special.

What really is the most wonderful part of the Christmas/Santa Claus parades is the joy and excitement shown by the children as they anxiously await the arrival of the jolly old elf.

As I move along the route, exchanging greetings with so many people, it is the reactions of the children that leave the most lasting impression. The joy of children; isn't that what it's all about?

I look forward to experiencing more of it this weekend.

KANATA SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: It was a pleasure to join everyone at the Kanata Santa Claus Parade this past Saturday. I can't wait for all our other communities to join in the fun. Constance Bay on Saturday the 2nd, and the villages of Carp and Fitzroy Harbour on Saturday the 9th. I want to thank all of the volunteers that make these parades happen.

This time of year is a special opportunity for us to come together to celebrate the spirit of generosity and to appreciate the blessings we have, as a community. Whatever tradition you celebrate, may this season bring you love, joy, reflection and time with your loved ones.

In Kanata–Carleton, our loving communities are our strength. As we gather with friends and families, let us also remember those who may be facing challenges and extend a hand of kindness and support. I would encourage everyone to give to their local food bank. May the festive lights brighten your homes, and the laughter of loved ones warm your heart.

As your representative in the Ontario provincial Parliament, I am grateful for the privilege to serve the people of Kanata–Carleton. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very happy holiday season. May love, joy, and peace be the gifts we give each other. Lord knows the world could use more of that.

TOM RUSSELL

Mr. Steve Clark: I want to pay tribute today to the recipient of the Brockville and District Chamber of Commerce, 2023 Award of Excellence for Citizen of the Year, in my riding, my friend, Mr. Tom Russell.

As a community volunteer, Tom has played instrumental roles in fundraising campaigns that have secured millions of dollars in support of many, many worthy causes. In his professional capacity as the long-serving executive director of the Thousand Islands Community Futures Development Corp., he has played a critical role in supporting hundreds of small businesses with tens of millions of dollars in financial assistance and countless hours of professional advice, helping to create thousands of jobs along the way.

Tom has worked closely with a variety of stakeholders to author or co-author numerous funding applications, which have collectively generated additional millions of dollars in support for community projects. His extensive volunteer and professional roles have Tom sit or chair on many influential boards and committees over the years in my riding.

1030

Tom was born and raised in Brockville and has been with his lovely wife, Kimberley, for 34 years. Tom Russell is one of those special people who has dedicated his life to public service. My riding really owes him a debt of gratitude. Congratulations, my friend. Your parents, Ron and Emma, would have been so very proud of your accomplishments. Congratulations.

SHOP IN DURHAM WEEK

Mr. Lorne Coe: Durham Tourism, in partnership with the Durham Economic Task Force, are encouraging the community to shop local this holiday season during the shop in Durham celebration. This celebration highlights the region's vibrant and diverse business community, serving as a reminder to support local businesses during the season of gift-giving and beyond. The region's eight local area municipalities are home to a wide variety of small businesses with unique finds for all of your gift-giving needs, from home decor and artisan markets to fashion boutiques and vintage clothing stores.

By shopping locally, residents help to play a part in creating local jobs and strengthening the region's economy and helping to strengthen our small business community as well. Speaker, when you spend your dollars locally, you're helping local business owners continue to do the work they love: providing unique experiences, services and products to the community.

WEARING OF PINS

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

Mrs. Robin Martin: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you seek it, I think you'll find we have unanimous consent for members to wear the Heart and Stroke pins today.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Eglinton–Lawrence is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear the Heart and Stroke pins in the Legislature today. Agreed? Agreed.

WEARING OF SCARVES

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Member for Marham–Thornhill.

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow members to wear purple scarves in recognition of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses Wrapped in Courage campaign to end violence against women.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member is seeking unanimous consent of the House to allow members to wear the purple scarves today. Agreed? Agreed.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): In the Speaker's gallery this morning are members of the leadership council and staff from the Anishinabek Nation. We have with us today Grand Council Chief Reg Niganobe, Southeast Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief James Marsden, Northern Superior Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief Melvin Hardy, Southwest Regional Deputy Grand Council Chief Chris Plain, Chief Kimberly Bressette from the Southwest Region and Chief Marcus Hardy from the Northern Superior region.

Also, they are joined by staff Laura Mayer, Nikki van Oirschot, Marla Monague and Arianna Fitchett.

Welcome to Queen's Park today. We are delighted to have you here.

Applause.

Hon. Greg Rickford: Speaker, it's Grand Council Chief Reg Niganobe's birthday today. Happy birthday, Reg.

M^{me} France Gélinas: This morning, I met with Kristine Galvan, Melany Palacios, Jasmine Bates, Navjot Singh, Shanell Roye, Azi Afousi, Kimberly Almeida and Delaney. They are from the College Student Alliance and IGNITE student association.

I also had the privilege of meeting with Simi Olufowobi and Zarreen Brown, who are president and vice-president at the Laurentian University student association.

And of course, today is heart and stroke day, and I'm happy to welcome Liz Scanlon, April Sabit and Anne Lago. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: I'm pleased to introduce board members from the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses: Melanie Ducharme from Pavilion Women's Centre in Haileybury; Jessie Rodger from Anova in London; Jyoti Singh from Nellie's Shelter in Toronto; Erin Baydak from Chrysalis House in Ottawa; Tessa Mcfadzean from Good Shepherd centres; Sly Castaldi from Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis;

Jennifer Chamberlin from New Starts for Women, Red Lake; Carla Neto from Women's Habitat of Etobicoke; as well as OAITH members Marlene Ham, Amber Wardell, Lauren Hancock and Sherece Taffe. Welcome to the House.

MPP Jamie West: I'm pleased to introduce members of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance. We have Vivian Chiem from Wilfred Laurier, Julian Mollot-Hill from Queen's University, Angelique Dack from Ontario Tech U and Zarreen Brown and Simi Olufowobi from Laurentian University. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I would like to welcome Greg Bostajian, honorary consul of Lebanon in Toronto, and Manal Saaidoun, head of the consular department. I would like to invite all the members for the Lebanese flag raising in front of the Parliament after 12:15, marking the Lebanese Independence Day and the Lebanese Heritage Month. They will be cutting cake in my office, 262.

Mr. Andrew Dowie: I'd like to wish a sincere welcome to so many from Windsor and Essex county. From the Windsor Professional Firefighters Association, Kris Matton, Jeff Goldthorpe and Shay Currie; from the Windsor-Essex County Association of Realtors, Maggie Chen, Mark Lalovich, Elica Berry and Krista Gionet. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Miss Monique Taylor: Today is the Ontario Professional Firefighters lobby day. I had the privilege of meeting with Rob D'Amico from Local 288 this morning. I'd also like to welcome all of the members from Hamilton who are here for the OAITH Wrapped in Courage day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It is an honour to welcome the northern representative of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, Jennifer Chamberlin, and the executive director of the New Starts for Women in Red Lake. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Christine Hogarth: It is my honour to introduce some fine ladies who work at Women's Habitat in Etobicoke: Carla Neto, executive director; Lina Almanzan, who is director of philanthropy; Alicia Whyte, who is manager of programs and client services; and Sheila Baroro, who is manager of finance. Thank you, ladies, for the work you do in our community every day.

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: It is my pleasure to welcome Windsor Professional Firefighters: Kris Matton, Shay Currie and Jeff Goldthorpe. I look forward to meeting with them later in my office. I want to welcome them to Queen's Park.

Mr. Will Bouma: I'd like to welcome Josh Van Horne from the Brantford Professional Firefighters Association; Elise deBlicke's grade 6 class from Hope Reformed Christian School; and Natasha Dobler from Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services of Brantford. Great to have you all in the people's House.

MPP Jill Andrew: November, as you know, marks Woman Abuse Prevention Month. Today, we were greeted by the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses with their Wrapped in Courage awareness and advocacy campaign.

I would like to thank OAITH executive director Marlene Ham for your incredible work along with your team: Amber Wardell, learning and development coordinator of OAITH; Lauren Hancock, policy and research coordinator of OAITH; Sherece Taffe, digital office support of OAITH; OAITH board members who are here today: Melanie Ducharme, executive director of Pavilion Women's Centre; Jessie Rodger, executive director of Anova: A Future Without Violence; Jyoti Singh, executive director of Nellie's Shelter; Erin Baydak, team manager of Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre; Tessa Mcfadzean, director of Good Shepherd Women's Services; Sly Castaldi, executive director of Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis; Jennifer Chamberlin, executive director of the Red Lake Emergency Women's Shelter; Carla Neto, executive director of Women's Habitat; as well as some other organizations that were here today: Yasmine Youssef, executive director of Nisa Foundation; Daniela Giulietti, director of public affairs of YWCA Hamilton; Alicia Whyte, manager of programs and client services of Women's Habitat; and finally, the fantastic team from Aura Freedom International.

1040

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

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: I am pleased to introduce Greg Horton, president, and Bob McCutcheon, secretary treasurer of the Ontario Professional Firefighters Association. We are honoured to have you here today at Queen's Park.

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: I had the privilege to be able to meet with Ontario Professional Firefighters Association: the president, Ryan Madill from St. Catharines, and their treasurer Liam McGrath from St. Catharines Firefighters Association as well.

I also want to thank all the members and agencies that are here from Niagara region. I want to give a shout-out to Marlene Ham and for their hard work with the Wrapped in Courage campaign to end violence against women.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I'd like to introduce Donna Harvey, who is from the riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, but more important, she's here today to watch her granddaughter Chloe Hassberger serve as page captain in the Legislature.

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am also glad to welcome the Ontario professional firefighters, and from my area of Oshawa, Local 465 President Pete Dyson and Brad Whittle are joining me. I also understand I'll be meeting with the Clarington folks: Michale Kalita, Dan Worrall and Tyler Muir. And while I'm standing, I am also pleased to welcome the folks from OREA that I'll be meeting with today: Vickey Sweeney, Chris Vale and Michael Watson. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Natalie Pierre: Good morning. I'd like to welcome Laurie Hepburn, executive director of Halton Women's Place; Sonia and Kirk Robinson, advocates for Keira's Law; and Dan VanderLelie, president, Burlington

Professional Firefighters Association. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome Tim Lea, secretary of the Niagara Falls Professional Firefighters Association. I'm also looking forward our meeting at 2:30. But really, I want to welcome all the firefighters and thank you for everything you do every day keeping us safe.

Ms. Patrice Barnes: I'd like to welcome Dan Bonnar and Clive Deonarine today from my riding here with the firefighters' association. I also want to give a special shout-out to his mom, Sepelene, who will probably be watching today. Welcome to the House.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I'd like to welcome again members of the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance who are here for the second day—talk about gluttons for punishment. So I'd like to welcome Abby Samuels, Carleigh Charlton, Simi Olufowobi, Riley Ambrose, Katie Traynor, Sam Brown, Victoria Mills, Alyssa Hall and Jazzlyn Abbott. Welcome to your House.

And I would also like to welcome Dennis Brescacin who has come here from Thunder Bay to represent the Ontario firefighters. Thank you for being here, I look forward to meeting with you.

Hon. Doug Downey: I would like to introduce, of course, page captain Chloe Hassberger, who's grandmother was already introduced by the member for Kawartha-Haliburton-Brock. Her other grandmother, Bev Hassberger is here as well, along with her mother, Carrie Hassberger.

And I want to welcome the various firefighters, Eric Webster and their contingent, who we met with this morning.

Ms. Sandy Shaw: I want to welcome all the representatives from the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses on their Wrapped in Courage campaign day. I particularly want to welcome some wonderful women from Hamilton and Brantford. Let's start with Erin Griver from Inasmuch House; Natasha Dobler, Nova Vita; the fantastic Daniela Giulietti from the YWCA; Tessa Mcfadzean, Good Shepherd Women's Centre; and the women from Interval House. You do fantastic work keeping our women safe. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Kevin Holland: I'd like to welcome Wes Case and Karen Hill to the House today. They're here on behalf of the Ontario Real Estate Association.

As well, I would also like to welcome Dennis Brescacin from the Thunder Bay fire service. I want to thank all the firefighters here in the House today for your service.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I also want to welcome the outstanding student leaders who are here this morning from the College Student Alliance and the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance. They held a breakfast reception this morning and I know many MPPs are excited about the opportunity to meet with them.

In addition, I want to welcome the fierce and tireless advocates from OAITH who are here today, and special shout-out to two Londoners: Emily Poirier is the VP finance for OUSA and also the VP external affairs for the Western USC. She's here today. And of course, Jessie

Rodger, who is the executive director of Anova, a gender-based violence shelter and sexual assault centre in London. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Robin Martin: As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, it's my honour to introduce Maggie Fox, Brady Carballo-Hambleton, Lesley James and Orli Joseph who are also here from Heart and Stroke today. They're holding their advocacy day, and I invite everyone to come to the meeting this evening to talk to them.

MPP Jill Andrew: I, too, am having a meeting today with the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association—members Steven D'Aloisio and John Blair. Thank you very much to all the firefighters in the House. You all run in when most of us would run out. Thank you for keeping us safe.

I'd also like to thank the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance student leaders Alyssa Hall from Brock U; Anthony Coulter from Trent U; Jazzlyn Abbott, McMaster U; Maria Farooq from Western U; and Victoria Mills from Queen's University. I'm looking forward to chatting with you all later today.

Mr. Billy Pang: It's my honour to introduce Lorris Herenda, chief executive officer of the Yellow Brick House, where they have shelters protecting vulnerable women throughout Ontario, including one in my riding.

Ms. Bhutila Karpoche: I'd like to give a very warm welcome to members of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, and a special welcome to the firefighters from the Toronto Professional Fire Fighters' Association that I met with this morning: James Wenger, John Blair and John MacLachlan.

Hon. Nina Tangri: It is my privilege to introduce members of the Council of Canadian Innovators who are visiting Queen's Park today for a number of roundtables. The Council of Canadian Innovators is a member-based organization reshaping how governments across Canada think about innovation policy and supporting homegrown entrepreneurs to drive our growing economy.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome members from the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance: Emily Poirier, Sam Brown, Rory Norris and Megan Spenler.

I'd also like to welcome OAITH board members Melanie Ducharme; Jessie Rodger from Anova in London; Jyoti Singh; Erin Baydak; Tessa McFadzean; Sly Castaldi; Jennifer Chamberlin; Carla Neto; as well as OAITH staff Marlene Ham, Amber Wardell, Lauren Hancock and Sherece Taffe.

I'd also like to welcome member from the London St. Thomas Association of Realtors, Chad Lovell and Jack Lane, as well as the London Professional Fire Fighters Association. That's a lot.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I'd like to welcome two great women here today: Yasmine Youssef, executive director of the Nisa Foundation; and Shiba Anjum, also a program director for the Nisa Foundation. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Mr. Chris Glover: I'd like to welcome to the House Chris Seecharran, who's the new president of the Spadina—Fort York riding association.

I also want to welcome the Toronto Professional Fire Fighters' Association and all their members, and some members of the Wrapped in Courage campaign who I met just a short time ago: Toronto city councillor Lily Cheng from Ward 18, Willowdale; Lina Almanzan from Women's Habitat; Sheila Baroro, Women's Habitat; Carla Neto, executive director of Women's Habitat; Alicia White and Danielle Warren from Aura Freedom; and Tashin Rodoshi, also from Aura Freedom; and Deepa Mattoo from the Barbra Schlifer Clinic. Welcome to the Legislature.

M^{me} Dawn Gallagher Murphy: I would like to welcome two amazing firefighters from my riding from the Central York Professional Firefighters Association: Jason Beuving and Mike Petrova. Welcome to Queen's Park.

1050

Hon. David Piccini: I, too, would like to welcome the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association who are here today. I've so enjoyed working with you. I enjoyed speaking with you yesterday.

I also would like to welcome some incredible constituents I have the honour of serving: JimBob Marsden, who's here with Anishinabek Nation; Nancy Johnston, executive director of Cornerstone in Cobourg; and Dan Worrall who's here with the firefighters. Thank you for being here at Queen's Park.

Mr. Brian Riddell: I would like to acknowledge the Cambridge firefighter representatives that I'll be meeting with later today. Thank you for your support and for what you do.

Hon. Michael A. Tibollo: I think I may be the last one standing this morning, so I appreciate that. I want to thank this morning, for having met with me, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance—we had a great discussion about mental health in universities—Abby Samuels, Katie Traynor, Carleigh Charlton, Simi Olufowobi and Riley Ambrose. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): That may have been the longest five minutes in the history of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. I recognize that. Had there been a single objection to us continuing, I would have moved on, but members on both sides of the House wanted to introduce their guests. I'm glad that we were able to do that. Thank you for your patience.

It is now time for oral questions. I recognize the leader of His Majesty's loyal opposition.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Ms. Marit Stiles: This question is for the Premier. After five years of Conservative rule, life is more expen-

sive then ever for ordinary people. From big cities to small towns, more and more people are depending on food banks to get by, even while they work full-time. This week, we learned that food bank use has increased by 36% in Ontario over the last year alone. That's about 5.9 million visits. In the Niagara region alone, food bank use has increased by a staggering 56% driven mostly by people visiting for the first time.

Speaker, while people struggle under the weight of this cost-of-living crisis, why is the Premier's top priority the construction of a luxury spa in downtown Toronto?

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

Hon. Kinga Surma: Look at this again: The Leader of the Opposition, that's all she can talk about. But what I want to talk about is the fact that the Ontario Science Centre business case is being made public today. What I want to talk about is the new deal, the historic deal that the Premier and the mayor of the city of Toronto had struck, providing the city with more operational funding, with more support for TTC trains and streetcars, for the homeless, for one-fare service integration, improving the quality of life for the people, the hard-working people of the city of Toronto. And Mr. Speaker I want to talk about the vision for Ontario Place which includes far more than what she obsesses over.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: I hope the Premier answers this next question. I don't think the Premier understands maybe the gravity of what Ontarians are experiencing. Folks in communities like Minden and Chesley and Almonte are watching their nearest emergency rooms close due to underfunding and understaffing, while this government forks over millions of dollars—tax dollars—to help a private company from Austria set up shop on Toronto's waterfront for 95 years. It doesn't make sense. And if it wasn't enough, now they are changing the rules entirely to exempt the Ontario Place project from impact assessments and public accountability.

So, Speaker, I'd like to hear from the Premier: What is so special about this luxury spa that the government is literally changing the law to make it happen?

Hon. Kinga Surma: Let's talk about some of the accomplishments that we've had in the last couple of days, like the new deal that was struck with the city of Toronto to provide more funding for the homeless and more funding for our shelters. As we approach the winter this is becoming even more important. Let's talk about service and fare integration to make travel for transit riders more affordable between the GTA and the city of Toronto. Let's talk about all of the housing initiatives that now the city of Toronto and the province will be working on together to make sure that we address the housing crisis together.

Mr. Speaker, we are bringing Ontario Place back to life because we want it to be a place that families can enjoy and the city of Toronto is supportive of bringing the science centre, building a brand new facility with 10,000 more square feet of exhibition space.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it's almost as if they don't want to answer the question. We get it: The Premier sees his elite waterfront spa as, I don't know, his legacy project, but his real legacy will end up being a housing crisis that has only worsened under his watch.

Rents are skyrocketing and we are nowhere near the one and a half million homes that we're going to need. We've got a minister of housing who brought together stakeholders and municipalities this week only to refuse their request for help.

Speaker, it's time for the Premier to get real. Why is he dragging his feet on building the housing that people need while fast-tracking a luxury spa that no one wants?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: Mr. Speaker, all I can say is wow, okay? Wow. When it takes the most popular NDP leader in this country, the mayor, that we can cut a deal with, why can't we cut the same deal with the NDP with their leadership? Because there is no leadership over there, Mr. Speaker.

Talk about housing: We had the greatest housing starts in 2021-22 that we have seen in over 30 years. We've put legislation after legislation forward that that leader, along with the cohorts over there, voted against. They voted against making sure that we have affordable, attainable housing for people who need it. We made sure that we had legislation that's going to be easier for local municipalities to get permits out, to get people building.

But guess what, Mr. Speaker? She voted against it. She votes against everything we move forward on; votes against building new hospitals, new roads, new infrastructure that these homes need to get built. But, again, the NDP is about no, no—

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Thank you. Moving on to the next question.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, it was good to see the Premier stand in his place and answer that question. Let's go back to the Premier, shall we?

Let's go through what's really in Bill 154. The Conservatives are giving themselves unprecedented powers to bypass laws to force through this luxury spa development on behalf of a private company. This bill would also block lawsuits against the government for misrepresentations or misconduct and would block legal remedies for—and I'm going to quote here, Speaker—"misfeasance, bad faith, trust or fiduciary obligation."

Why is the Premier giving his government the power to commit misfeasance and breach of trust with this Ontario Place scheme?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Infrastructure.

Hon. Kinga Surma: Mr. Speaker, let me talk about the real legacy of this Premier and this government: helping keep people safe on the TTC; historically speaking, building the most transit in the province of Ontario; and then not only just building the transit but also making sure that the city of Toronto has the funds it needs to operate it, again to help transit users.

Mr. Speaker, what the Premier did over the last couple of days is make sure that the city of Toronto, the largest city in Canada, is now financially secure and has financial sustainability for years to come.

And the new deal did include the city's support for a brand new science centre facility. The old science centre is 54 years old. We want to make sure there's a new science centre for generations of children to enjoy.

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

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, let me put this another way. This government is so concerned they're breaking the laws that they are rewriting them.

The appearance of abuse of power is so bad under this government that the current minister of housing is reviewing more than half of the MZO decisions made by his predecessor, and the Auditor General is investigating. And now the Conservatives are giving the Minister of Infrastructure the power to issue ministers' zoning orders.

Back to the Premier.: When this government is already under multiple investigations for its abuse of planning authority, including a criminal investigation by the RCMP, why would the Premier give MZO powers to the Minister of Infrastructure?

Interjections.

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

The Premier.

Hon. Doug Ford: My answer is, why wouldn't we? Why wouldn't we give Infrastructure Ontario those authorities? One of the world-class organizations that delivers projects worldwide is recognized as on time and on budget on everything they do. If you want something to get done, give it to Infrastructure Ontario. They have a world-class reputation—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

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Hon. Doug Ford: You know, again, Mr. Speaker, the opposition, all they want to do—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The opposition will come to order. The Premier has a right to answer these questions. You're asking questions; he's got the floor.

Premier?

Hon. Doug Ford: Through you, Mr. Speaker: All the opposition wants to do is say no to absolutely everything but complain that there's no housing. But they vote against housing. They complain there's no roads and infrastructure, but they vote against \$184 billion we're spending on infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, we're leading North American job creation, economic development. We're leading North America when it comes to creating new opportunities for families to get a job—

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

The final supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: Let's dig a little deeper into this special deal that this Premier seems to be so obsessed with, because there seems to be repeated preferential treatment for Therme: no fairness monitor for procurement, no scoring criteria for bids, and a half a billion public dollars to give Therme a parking garage, even though the government told other bidders they wouldn't pay for it. And even that wasn't enough: Now, they're letting Therme bypass all the environmental and heritage laws.

My question to the Premier is: Why is the Premier so determined to give preferential treatment to this one private luxury spa operator?

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

Hon. Kinga Surma: Again, Mr. Speaker, this is all the opposition member cares about, but, Mr. Speaker, let me just remind the opposition member that we are legislators. It is our role to bring in new laws. It is our role to amend legislation before the House to make sure that we are addressing issues in our society.

We had a very competitive procurement in 2019. We had third-party evaluators involved in that process. Mr. Speaker, the Liberals led their own procurement back in 2016 and, let me guess, Therme was a successful proponent—actually, their top proponent, as it was for us as well.

But, Mr. Speaker, we are bringing Ontario Place back to life. What the opposition wants is: They want that island to continue to fall into disrepair. They want the island to continue to flood. They want the island not to be enjoyed by Ontarians and the 15 million people that live here, and that is just simply not acceptable to government.

MUNICIPAL FUNDING

Ms. Jessica Bell: My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Earlier this week, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing hosted a housing round table with municipalities. Municipalities told the minister very clearly that they were ready to cut red tape to get more housing built, but they needed more funding for growth-related infrastructure.

They asked the minister to allocate funding under the Building Faster Fund, based on housing permits, which they can control, rather than housing starts, which developers control. Why did the minister say no to these municipalities?

Hon. Paul Calandra: The challenge is that I actually did not have a round table with municipalities this week on housing. I had a housing forum that included municipalities, not-for-profits, that included home builders, that included representatives from modular building. It was a round table—it was actually a forum with 300 people from

across the province of Ontario who are focused on building homes, Mr. Speaker. That was what it was all about, not just the municipal sector.

We had a lot of very productive meetings, and they were focused on one thing. They said the same thing to us: “Help us get shovels in the ground by removing red tape. Remove obstacles.” And we heard time and time and time again that the federal government has to step up to the plate and help us with infrastructure, to enable housing to be built faster across the province of Ontario. So, that is what we’re up to, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately—it was an open forum—the NDP did not send anybody to participate in that forum. I would have thought the critic for the NDP would have been there, maybe the Leader of the Opposition, but they didn’t show up. But that is consistent. They haven’t showed up since they’ve been in this place, Mr. Speaker.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

The supplementary question.

Ms. Jessica Bell: Thank you, Minister. I don’t believe I got an invitation.

My question is back to the minister. Earlier this year, the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario pointed out there were hundreds of thousands of development-ready homes in Ontario that were approved for construction but remained unbuilt. No matter how fast a municipality issues a housing permit to a developer, they cannot force the developer to build.

This is my question to you, Minister: Why is this minister withholding infrastructure funding from municipalities for something they cannot control?

Interjections.

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

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Paul Calandra: Speaker, look, I wore a sweater vest today because I thought I would bring it down and bring the more gentle Paul Calandra forward, but clearly it’s not working with the opposition.

Let me unpack it for the member opposite: It was a public forum. Anybody could have applied to it, but in order to do that, you’ve actually got to read the public pages, and apparently the member didn’t do that.

With respect to infrastructure, in about—I don’t know—45 minutes the member opposite is going to have the ability to vote for infrastructure for our municipalities to get shovels in the ground faster. I’m hoping that the member opposite will vote for that, Mr. Speaker. We’re bringing forward a use-it-or-lose-it policy so those developers, those home builders that don’t get shovels in the ground after doing all of the work with their municipal partners will lose that allocation.

But here’s the big thing: The member opposite could call 1-613-JAGMEET and bring down the federal government if they don’t redirect that \$15 billion worth of spending to put housing-enabled infrastructure in the ground. That’s what we need, Mr. Speaker.

LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR

Mr. Anthony Leardi: My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. Under the previous Liberal government that was supported by the NDP, investment was fleeing the province of Ontario. By contrast, since taking office, this government has welcomed record levels of investment from across our economy in an array of industries. Global companies in auto, advanced manufacturing and the tech sectors have been coming to Ontario to set up shop, and we’ve also seen unprecedented levels of investment from life sciences companies. Yet the opposition expects us to do nothing when the federal government continues to hike the carbon tax on Ontario businesses and workers.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is supporting investments in the life sciences sector?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Ontario is Canada’s largest life sciences sector, and we have a storied reputation around the world. Ontario is where insulin was discovered. We developed the first cardiac pacemaker right here in Ontario, and we detected the gene that cracked cystic fibrosis. That’s what the 70,000 men and women who work in life sciences do.

In the last three years, we have attracted \$3 billion in new life science business. That’s because we lowered taxes and reduced red tape in Ontario. We have 1,900 firms generating \$11 billion in annual exports. All of that is because we lowered the cost of doing business in Ontario by \$8 billion every single year. You don’t achieve those heights by raising taxes.

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

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that answer. It’s exciting to hear that Ontario has been able to secure billions of dollars in job-creating investments in the life sciences sector.

But even as we do that, we continue to hear from the opposition members in this House, and they defend and they even brag about the federal carbon tax. They say how much good the federal carbon tax can do. They don’t understand that raising taxes on businesses and people hinders innovation and growth and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government and its pro-business strategy, low-cost approach is helping our life sciences sector and the Ontario economy?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Well, the member from Essex is absolutely right. Only yesterday the member from Waterloo said, “People are not concerned with a carbon tax.” Well, I can tell you, the 700,000 men and women who went to work at a new job since we were elected are concerned with a carbon tax: 70,000 of those people work in the life sciences sector and, thankfully, we introduced Taking Life Sciences to the Next Level, a new document, a new strategy. We’ve introduced a new Life Sciences Council. We have a new life sciences fund—\$15 million; \$3 million of it was invested recently to help six life

sciences companies develop made-in-Ontario medical innovations.

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Speaker, we plan to grow that 70,000 to 85,000 people and they too will care about a carbon tax. This growth only happens because we keep our taxes low.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: *Remarks in Anishiniimowin.* Good morning. My question is to the Premier.

Speaker, the ongoing systemic gaps in both the federally and provincially funded education systems have resulted in systemic discrimination for First Nations children. The Chiefs of Ontario launched two reports on these gaps in K-to-12 schools across Ontario. The evidence in the reports confirms the need to increase supports for First Nations learners in the provincial system. I ask: What is Ontario doing to address the inequities for First Nation learners?

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

Hon. Stephen Lecce: I do appreciate the member opposite's question. We are committed to the success of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students. It's why we've increased funding for Indigenous education. This year is a really important year because in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, they asked the government of Ontario to close the gap to ensure every child is learning residential school history. We've now done that this year. We're proud to have done so. I did it with the Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

In addition, we signed a reciprocal education agreement to allow Indigenous students on- and off-reserve in order to access the schools of their choice without having to face the red tape and often months or years of delay to get into our schools. We more than doubled the Indigenous graduation coach program. I appreciate there's more to do, and we're going to continue to work across the government to ensure the success of these kids—they graduate, they achieve their potential, they get good jobs—and that we're able to remove the barriers that have held them back historically in this country.

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

Mr. Sol Mamakwa: Speaker, the biggest room in the world is the room for improvement, and we need to do better in education. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission put forward a vision that First Nations and all levels of government would work together, with sufficient funding to close educational gaps within a generation. Eight years after the TRC called for changes that would lead to the gaps being closed, there is almost no progress to show. Will this government listen to these reports and commit to removing systemic barriers for First Nation learners?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Minister of Northern Development and Minister of Indigenous Affairs.

Hon. Greg Rickford: It won't surprise the member opposite that I'm a little bit more optimistic. I've worked very closely with the Minister of Education. In fact, the Chiefs of Ontario's Moving Forward: Strengthening Relationships for Future Generations Annual Report 2022-2023 says on page 21, "There's been important work to expand Indigenous learning opportunities throughout the Ontario school system, including more responsive curriculum and new programs as well as renewed efforts to engage families and communities."

Now, that's coming from the Chiefs of Ontario's annual report, Mr. Speaker, and it's being backed up by significant investments through the Indigenous Education Grant that serves two important functions: it supports Indigenous student achievements and well-being as well as creating new areas and new opportunities for knowledge for all classrooms and all children to learn about the important contributions of Indigenous history and Indigenous culture. The Priorities and Partnerships Fund focuses squarely on performance of Indigenous students and their well-being. Mr. Speaker, we're closing that gap.

TAXATION

IMPOSITION

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Solicitor General. It's no secret that Ontarians are fed up with the unnecessary and useless carbon tax. It is a regressive and harmful tax that hurts everyone, including the important public services that keep our communities safe and well.

While we have heard about the negative impact that the carbon tax is having on rising costs for families and businesses, it is very concerning that firefighters in communities across Ontario are also being impacted. The carbon tax is driving up fuel and gasoline costs for everyone in our province. It is not right, and it is unacceptable that response vehicles used by firefighters should be negatively impacted by this federally imposed carbon tax.

Can the Solicitor General please explain the negative effects of the carbon tax on our front-line firefighters across Ontario?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: The member from Brantford—Brant is right. He's also a volunteer firefighter—and I want to say thank you—as was the member for Sarnia—Lambton, and others.

What the independent Liberal members don't seem to get—and they're downplaying the tax; they did it, in recent days, when we spoke about the cost of policing—is that every time you fill up a fire truck, any vehicle that's used in firefighting, you are paying the carbon tax. When you are buying equipment and other resources that you need to keep Ontario safe, you are paying the carbon tax on those costs. The Ontario firefighters are being penalized for this carbon tax on the cost of fuel, on procurement and on operations. It's totally unacceptable. Whether it's about public safety and policing or firefighting, it's unacceptable.

Our message to the federal—

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

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you to the Solicitor General for that response. The carbon tax is negatively impacting the institutions that help keep the province's communities safe, including fire departments in communities across Ontario. It is not right that the negative impact of the carbon tax is adding more pressure to the already challenging work of firefighters. The federal government's carbon tax is draining resources that should be better spent on fire prevention and protecting our communities.

It is vital that we provide our brave and courageous firefighters with the tools and the resources that they need to protect our communities, instead of paying for additional fuel costs because of the carbon tax. Can the Solicitor General please elaborate on how our government supports our front-line firefighters instead of punishing them through the regressive carbon tax?

Hon. Michael S. Kerzner: Again, thank you to the member opposite. As I've said previously, and even in last night's debate, there were comments from the independent Liberals to suggest that, for public safety, there's no added cost in the carbon tax. We know that's ridiculous, because they have to fill up the vehicles every day. What I want to say, especially because we have representatives and the leadership from the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association—we have members from all over Ontario, including my friend Dennis from Thunder Bay; especially in the north, gas is expensive—it means on every litre of gas that's filled in a fire truck, there's carbon tax. It's completely unacceptable. But we will always have the backs of the firefighters every day.

Je suis fier de soutenir nos pompiers et tous ceux qui assurent la sécurité de l'Ontario.

HEALTH CARE

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: My question is to the Minister of Health.

I've received over a thousand stories highlighting barriers to accessing contraception. Today, I bring these voices to our debate on Ontario's motion.

Zara, 27, has to choose between contraception and rent. Nadiya's—also 27—unintended pregnancy forced her job resignation due to unaffordable child care.

It is about gender equity, empowerment and affordability. As BC and Manitoba show, universal contraception offers affordability, gender equity, and health cost benefits.

Will the minister commit to starting public consultations on this critical issue to improve Ontario's health outcomes?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: I certainly appreciate the member's advocacy, but I also want to remind people of what we have already done in the province of Ontario. Already in the province of Ontario, we have access to contraceptives for anyone under the age of 25. We have it for individuals

who are challenged financially, to access through the Ontario Trillium drug benefit program.

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These programs are put in place and have been part of our Ontario health system because we understand that we need to ensure that there is equitable access, and we need to make sure that it is targeted in a way to protect the individuals who need it most, which is why with those two programs alone, we cover 40% of the population.

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

Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens: Back to the minister: Minister, if you believe that the current policy for publicly funded contraception up to the age of 24 is effective, should that rationale not extend to those beyond the age of 24? Women's fertility spans approximately 30 years, not nine, necessitating broader access.

Research shows a net health system cost saving of \$5 per resident, underscoring the efficiency of preventive over surgical health care. The selective approach of OHIP+ risks perpetuating inequities. Given the cost neutrality, gender equity implications and bipartisan potential, will you recognize the benefits of pursuing universal contraception access, following the example set out by other provinces in Canada?

Hon. Sylvia Jones: So again, I will remind the member opposite that it is in fact under the age of 25. Forty per cent of the population is covered. Those two programs alone are already in place in the province of Ontario.

Can we look at other opportunities to improve the system? Absolutely. That is why we are doing so many of the health system pieces that we have in place. But I also want to highlight the excellent work that the Minister of Education has been able to do in securing \$10-a-day daycare for the province of Ontario.

This is not an issue that we are looking at only in one ministry. We are making sure that women empowerment—individual access is critically important, but we're doing it in a whole-of-government approach, not one-offs.

COST OF LIVING

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, we're in an affordability crisis, yet the fall economic statement doesn't use the word "affordability" once.

During the 2018 election, Conservatives promised to cut income tax by 20% for the middle class. That promise was never kept. The Minister of Energy even claimed last month on affordability that "our province has done everything we can." He's forgotten past promises. It seems the promise they have remembered is the one donors reminded them about: opening the greenbelt and gifting \$8.3 billion of public value.

Tax form ON428 still has the 9.15% tax rate—promise not kept. How can Ontarians trust this government to tackle affordability when they can't even keep or remember a basic election promise?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Oakville and parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Perhaps, Speaker, you could give me—I know it's usually a minute to respond. I'd like about 10 minutes, because there's so much I could talk about in terms of what we've done for affordability that the opposition Liberals and New Democrats have voted against.

In the fall economic statement, which we'll be voting on today, we've extended the gas tax for another six months to lower costs for consumers and to lower costs for businesses. Will the opposition support us? Will you support us in lobbying the federal government to stop the punitive carbon tax? Have you done it in the past?

Our government has been focused on affordability, whether it's the carbon tax, whether it's cutting tuition for students who are in an affordability crisis themselves or whether it's the LIFT tax credit, which lowers the tax rate for the lowest-income individuals in this province. We have stood on the side of families and individuals in this province. Where is the opposition?

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

Supplementary question.

Mr. Ted Hsu: Speaker, nothing can hide the cold hard fact that people want action, but there are zero new measures to provide families with immediate pocketbook relief in the fall economic statement. People are tired of a government that doesn't address their struggles, and they're tired of a government under criminal investigation by the RCMP—so tired, they elected two new Liberal MPPs in by-elections this summer.

Can this government be trusted to tackle affordability when they wouldn't take the opportunities to provide families with immediate pocketbook relief in their fall economic statement?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Again, Speaker, I request a few extra minutes to be able to give a response, because there's so much we've done. The opposition, again, has voted against all the initiatives we've taken on affordability.

Let me just go through some of the other things that we've done as a province. We've removed the licence plate stickers for all drivers across the province, helping businesses and consumers. As the Minister of Economic Development has referred to, we've taken away \$8 billion in costs for businesses in this province. Where are those cost savings going to go? They're going to go to the people of Ontario. We've also lowered the cost of transportation in this province. Whether you're taking the GO train or public buses in the GTA, we've lowered that. Did the opposition support us on that front? Absolutely not.

So, again, we continue to move ahead, get investments in this province, bring affordability to the extent that we can, and we'll continue doing that. I hope the opposition will support us with the fall economic statement.

TAXATION

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Indigenous Affairs and Northern Development. Because

of the federal carbon tax, life has never been so unaffordable. Northerners are already feeling the pressure at the gas pumps, where fuel costs are significantly higher than in the rest of the province. While Ontarians are struggling because of rising costs, the independent Liberals and the opposition NDP members continue to agree that the carbon tax should nearly quadruple, raising the price of everything even higher.

The carbon tax adversely affects our businesses and negatively impacts our economy and Ontario workers. Speaker, can the minister please explain how the carbon tax negatively impacts individuals and families in northern Ontario and in Indigenous communities?

Hon. Greg Rickford: I'll tell you what: Our American friends just celebrated Thanksgiving, and that hits home for us out in Kenora—Rainy River. Just across from Fort Frances is International Falls, Minnesota. As friends and families criss-crossed the border, here's what they found: Gas is \$3.24 a gallon in International Falls. That works out to about \$1.14 a litre. Back in Fort Frances, about 150 metres away, gas is \$1.70 a litre.

Now, let's pivot to what's on the table for dinner. Turkeys: In 2015, a turkey was \$1.50 a pound. In 2023, it's north of \$2.50 a pound. That's a 67% increase.

Mr. Speaker, when you tax a farmer who grows the food, when you tax a trucker who brings it all the way out to northwestern Ontario, a 22-hour drive from Toronto, and those who buy the—

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

The supplementary?

Mr. Will Bouma: I appreciate the minister's response. It's difficult to witness the federal government place this punitive tax burden on northern communities when they are fully aware of how detrimental this tax is to affordability and cost of living. Unlike other areas in our province, northern Ontario faces distinctive challenges when related to fuel costs that should be considered before implementing such a presumptuous tax. It is disappointing to see how the opposition consistently underplays the repercussions of the carbon tax on rural, remote and northern communities.

Speaker, can the minister please provide further details on the adverse effects that the carbon tax is inflicting on the residents, communities and businesses throughout the north?

Hon. Greg Rickford: Mr. Speaker, I think we have to have a serious discussion when a loaf of Wonder bread in Sachigo Lake is some \$6.29 a loaf. It's time for us to account for that cost. It arrived in that isolated community with some subsidies for gasoline that the province of Ontario asked for, for transportation of goods. The federal government—successive ones, the one I was involved with and the recent one—participates in a food subsidy program, yet that loaf of bread is still over \$6. Why is that, Mr. Speaker? It's because the person who bakes the bread pays the carbon tax. The person who packages it or the company that packages it pays the carbon tax. There's a carbon tax on the cost to ship it. There's a carbon tax once

it arrives in the community. And then you get a \$6 loaf of bread.

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Now, Mr. Speaker, it's time, once and for all, for the NDP to join the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and send a clear message to the coalition in the federal government to scrap this tax, plain and simple. It's as easy as slicing bread.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Miss Monique Taylor: My question is for the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services. Over 60,000 children are on a wait-list to receive access to core autism services in Ontario. My office receives many calls and emails from families who have been waiting for years for answers to their questions, questions like: "Did our application get approved? How do I know where we are on the wait-list? When will my child receive services?"

Speaker, yesterday our offices received an email from your ministry liaison asking us that we refrain from contacting AccessOAP on behalf of our constituents, citing process and protocol, telling us we're not allowed to help. Minister, why is AccessOAP denying our offices' advocacy and making it harder for families to get answers?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To the parliamentary assistant, the member for Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: Our government is implementing a new Ontario Autism Program. In the new program, families will have access to an expanded set of core services including applied behaviour analysis, speech language pathology, occupational therapy and mental health services. This is the first time that families will be able to access mental health supports through the OAP.

Families also have access to a range of services like:

—the foundational family services, which we launched in 2020 to help families support their child's learning and development at home;

—early intervention services to help young children access services at critical points in their development;

—an early entry to school program, which will help prepare children who are starting kindergarten or grade 1 for the first time; and

—urgent response services for children and youth who have immediate urgent needs.

Speaker, we're meeting benchmarks and making progress every day as we continue to implement a needs-based OAP that supports children and youth with autism and their families.

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

Miss Monique Taylor: Somebody obviously hit record and repeat on that response.

Speaker, families from across the province are reaching out to all of our offices, including government members. First we're told AccessOAP needed their own consent forms only to receive useless answers like, "We can't tell you where you are on the list, when you'll receive a call or

even when you'll get a case worker." Now we are being shut out altogether. Speaker, families are desperate and this is completely unacceptable.

Minister, why are you allowing this third-party organization, that we fund, to block answers and to make sure that things are even harder for families?

Interjections.

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

The parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: Speaker, all families registered in the OAP have access to foundational family services and urgent response services when required, as well as care-giver-mediated early years programs and an entry to school program for young children.

Children and youth with autism may also be eligible for programs such as healthy child development programs, including the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program; the Infant and Child Development Program; the Preschool Speech and Language Program; rehabilitation services delivered by children's treatment centre; special needs resource teachers in child care settings; the Special Services at Home program; the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program; out of home respite; and the enhanced respite for medically fragile and/or technology dependent children program.

Families who received an initial interim one-time funding payment may also be eligible to receive a second payment of either \$5,500 or \$22,000 based on their child's age as of April 1.

TAXATION

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: We have an affordability crisis in Ontario.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Order.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: When this government—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Stop the clock. The member for Kanata–Carleton has a question. She has the floor. She needs to be able to ask her question. I would ask the members to permit her to do so.

Start the clock. The member for Kanata–Carleton.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We have an affordability crisis here in Ontario. When this government was elected, they promised a 20% tax cut for the middle class. This government has been dragging its feet for six years. So what's their priority? It's certainly not the middle class. It's not our most vulnerable. It's not Ontarians on ODSP or at food banks, or those on surgical or autism services wait-lists.

But what do we have? We have an \$8.3-billion greenbelt giveaway, now subject to an RCMP criminal investigation. We have a \$650-million Therme spa parking lot, now under Auditor General investigation. Somehow there's always enough for handouts to developer friends, but for Ontario families, the cupboards

are bare. We have grocery chains and the fossil fuel industry gouging Ontarians.

Speaker, a question for the Premier: Will he keep his campaign promise and cut middle-class taxes?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To respond, the parliamentary assistant, the member for Oakville.

Mr. Stephen Crawford: I must admit, it's a little surprising hearing that question from that member from Kanata-Carleton, who, in this House in the last few weeks, has said the carbon tax is good for consumers.

The carbon tax puts the cost of everything up—everything: getting to the Legislature, driving your kids to soccer, food, businesses, public transportation.

This is a government that has been committed to working on affordability since we took office in 2018. I don't even know where to start with all the programs we've put in place and the cost reductions we've done. Let me remind the member of just a few of those things that we've done—and I'll certainly talk to more of them in the supplementary.

We put through the LIFT tax credit, which was the largest low-income tax credit in the history of Canada, helping those individuals in the lowest-income tax brackets reduce their taxes.

I'll have more to say in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Supplementary.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I guess I'm not going to get my question answered.

The provincial government does have the most applicable tools to help the people of Ontario. If they wanted to, they could bring back rent control; they could raise ODSP; they could raise the Ontario Child Benefit. It's not good enough to write letters if one has the power to actually ease people's distress. Mr. Speaker, Ontarians are still waiting. They're lining up at food banks. They're struggling.

Apparently, the voters were wrong to take this government at its word; we know it, the RCMP knows it, and now Ontario knows it.

Will the Premier and his provincial government actually use some of the tools that they have available to them to help the people of Ontario and cut middle-class taxes?

Mr. Stephen Crawford: Speaker, I don't know where the member opposite has been for the last little while, but we've been using those tools.

The member opposite mentioned ODSP. Just last year, we brought through legislation which moved it up by 5%, and then indexed it to inflation, to 6.5%. That's the largest increase in ODSP's history. Did the member opposite and the team over there support us on that legislation? No, they did not.

But that's not all. We've done a lot for affordability. We increased the minimum wage this year—the largest-ever increase in recent history—to \$16.55 per hour. We've also brought about and extended the tuition tax credit for university students. We put through a 10% cut in tuition a few years ago, and we've extended that freeze for four

years, putting tuition among the lowest and the most affordable, in the province of Ontario.

I hope the members opposite will join us, get some sense and support the fall economic statement.

TAXATION

Mr. Dave Smith: My question is for the Associate Minister of Small Business.

We've heard both within this chamber and, obviously, from our constituents that the carbon tax is causing an increase in expenses for all Ontarians. This is especially true for businesses in northern Ontario, which face significantly more challenges related to the higher cost of goods and travel because of this regressive tax. The sad reality is that these additional expenses are ultimately passed on to the consumers. It's truly astonishing to witness northern members from the opposition parties defending this tax despite its detrimental effects.

1140

Speaker, can the associate minister please elaborate on the carbon tax's negative impact on businesses in northern Ontario?

Hon. Nina Tangri: I really do appreciate the member from Peterborough-Kawartha for raising such an important question.

Speaker, businesses in the north are burdened with increased costs for transporting their products, which ultimately leads to higher prices for all consumers. Moreover, the carbon tax affects various sectors, including manufacturing, mining and forestry, which are critical to the economic growth of northern Ontario. These industries often rely on energy-intensive operations, and the carbon tax adds an additional financial strain on their businesses. These small, northern businesses provide meaningful employment to their communities and put food on the table for many families.

Speaker, you would think that the NDP and Liberals would all be for reducing the cost of doing business and unleashing local economies close to their ridings. But, instead, they would rather sit on their hands and on the sidelines while a costly coalition puts more strain on northern Ontario.

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

Mr. Dave Smith: Thank you to the associate minister for that response. The previous Liberal government, with the support of the NDP, not only failed to support the north, but they also resorted to insults and name-calling it, referring to it as "no man's land," which is probably why they have no one represented in northern Ontario now.

Unfortunately, that attitude of disrespect has not changed. Since then, they've supported the federal carbon tax that impacts every aspect of daily life, including groceries, gas and home heating fuel. And I find it rather ironic members of the NDP have asked for a way to reduce the cost of gasoline in northern Ontario. Remove the carbon tax. This regressive tax has severe and negative

consequences for businesses and families, particularly those residing in northern communities.

Speaker, can the associate minister please elaborate on the impacts of the carbon tax on small businesses across the north?

Hon. Nina Tangri: I really do appreciate the member's question and share their concerns about the impact of the carbon tax on small businesses in northern Ontario, particularly in industries like manufacturing, mining and forestry.

Thanks to this Premier, the Minister of Mines, this Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Minister of Northern Development, northern Ontario businesses have been given the support they need to thrive. This is despite Ottawa's best efforts to increase the price of doing business in the north.

Speaker, the carbon tax is being felt in small businesses in the manufacturing and mining sector, where businesses rely on energy-intensive processes to produce goods. And for forestry and logging businesses, the carbon tax adds to their operational costs, making it even more challenging for these businesses to sustain their operations and contribute to the regional economy.

Speaker, this government has been clear from day one: We call on the federal government to do what's right for our businesses, our economy and our communities. Scrap the tax now.

HIGHWAY SAFETY

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: Au premier ministre: Yesterday, the Minister of Transportation said Ontario has the safest highways in Canada. Speaker, it's hard to grasp the meaning of that sentence when a Facebook group called "Hwy 11/17 kills people" exists. Just visit that page: hundreds of daily photos of drifted trucks and accidents, and videos of drivers passing on double solid yellow lines—both commercial and personal vehicles.

My question to the Premier: Will the government bring forward Chad's Law and make passing double yellow lines illegal and penalized in Ontario?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply for the government, the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: I will reiterate that Ontario does have the safest roads in North America, and our government intends to keep it that way, Mr. Speaker. In fact, any time we have brought any measures in this House—through the budget, through the fall economic statement—to invest in road safety, to invest in highways like Highway 11, Highway 17, expanding highways, that member has voted against those measures every single time. We are opening up new rest areas on these highways, and that member voted against increasing safety and building more rest areas across the north.

We will continue to work with law enforcement and advocates in road safety to ensure that we continue to have the safest roads in North America.

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

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: The minister needs to come on Highways 11 and 17—even worse when it's winter. Maybe he'll realize what we're living day to day.

Speaker, Mark Andrews, a retired OPP traffic inspector, said himself that the current legislation related to unsafe passing is a reactionary offence.

If my proposal becomes law, the OPP's ability to educate drivers and enforce unsafe passing will be greatly enhanced. Again, to the Premier: Can you commit to passing Chad's Law now?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: It's already illegal in Ontario for any driver to dangerously pass any vehicle. Ontario's laws already provide the ability for police officers to enforce offences, where appropriate, when someone is driving dangerously.

We will continue to work with law enforcement and police officers across this province, as we have been, as we continue to have the safest roads in North America, and we will continue to invest in road safety.

I ask the member opposite, when we are making these investments in Highway 11 and Highway 17, when we increase investments for road safety in this province, that he support this government in those measures every single time.

When we are investing in the north, when we are investing in making those highways safer, increasing capacity on those highways, the NDP and the Liberals have voted no to each and every one of those investments.

We are going to continue to keep Ontario's roads and highways safe.

TAXATION

Mr. Trevor Jones: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. I'm hearing more and more from my constituents in rural communities that their day-to-day expenses have become increasingly unaffordable since the carbon tax was introduced. The sad reality is, individuals, families and businesses in rural communities are feeling more pressure from the negative impacts of the carbon tax.

Unfortunately, the independent Liberals and opposition NDP continue to ignore the serious consequences the carbon tax is having on real people—people from communities like Comber, Merlin, Highgate, Wheatley, Ridgetown. Can the minister please explain how our government supports rural communities during these challenging economic times?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Hastings-Lennox and Addington and parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you to the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington for the question. It's an important question, as the members opposite have continued to throw rural communities under the bus.

The previous Ontario Liberals refused to keep hydro bills down and instead allowed hydro bills to consistently rise, to the point where rural Ontarians were having to

choose between heating their homes and feeding their families.

I want to address the people of rural Ontario. To them I say, don't worry. Our government is saying yes to rural Ontario. We are keeping energy costs down. We are cutting the gas tax. We are supporting our manufacturing industry. And, yes, we are fighting the carbon tax with everything we have. Our government will continue to build and support rural communities across Ontario.

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

Mr. Trevor Jones: My thanks to the parliamentary assistant for that genuine response.

The previous Liberal government neglected rural communities for 15 years, and their disrespect for rural Ontario continues to this day. It's astonishing that the independent Liberals and opposition NDP continue to support the federal carbon tax and make fun of it, even when they're well aware that it's causing financial hardship for our families and friends. With the cost of everything increasing because of the carbon tax, people are paying more for transportation, groceries, and home heating, of course.

Can the parliamentary assistant please elaborate on how our government is making life truly more affordable for people in rural Ontario?

Mr. Ric Bresee: Again to the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington: I appreciate your understanding of what your rural residents are going through. It is clear from the carbon tax that the Liberals simply don't want anything to be built in Ontario. And it's really no surprise, since for 15 years under their watch, they refused to connect rural communities to broadband networks; they closed 600 schools, mostly in rural Ontario; and they refused to act when the cost of child care increased by over 400%.

But Speaker, we are doing something about that. We've lowered the gas tax by 10 cents on every litre, and we are ensuring that resources can move across the province so that houses, roads and transit lines will be built. We are building Ontario at a rate that the Liberals simply could never have imagined.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Ms. Sandy Shaw: November is Women Abuse Prevention Month, and today our galleries are filled with advocates from the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses. They're raising the same question again and again as violence against women has reached epidemic levels. We've asked your government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic, like almost 70 municipalities have done, but you refuse.

Last year in Hamilton, police received 13,000 calls for intimate partner violence and almost 5,000 women and their children were turned away from shelter beds because they weren't available—again, an epidemic of violence against women and your government refuses to increase their core funding, which has been frozen for over 15 years.

So it's nice to see all of the government wearing their purple scarves, but we need to see more than that performative action. We need to see this government declare intimate partner violence and gender-based violence as an epidemic, and we need to see core funding increase after 15 years of frozen core funding.

These women are doing important work to keep our women safe. Will we ever see your government truly support women in this province: yes or no?

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): To reply, the member for Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry and parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Nolan Quinn: No woman should ever be subjected to violence, and through legislation and investments, our priority will always be to provide support to those impacted by violence, to prevent it before it happens, while ensuring that perpetrators responsible for the horrible crime of intimate partner violence are held accountable through the justice system.

When it comes to violence against women and children, we are focused on actions that deliver concrete and tangible results. That's why we passed laws like Keira's Law, some of which were the first of their kind in Canada, to make it harder to victimize women. That's why we invest significantly in both violence prevention and support to victims of violence—support programs like emergency shelters, counselling, 24-hour crisis lines, safety planning and transitional housing supports to help women escape abusive situations.

We've been working with our federal government on the gender-based violence national action plan, and we welcome municipalities to join us and end this horrible crime. Every woman has the right to live—

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

DEFERRED VOTES

BUILDING A STRONG ONTARIO TOGETHER ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2023 LOI DE 2023 VISANT À BÂTIR UN ONTARIO FORT ENSEMBLE (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

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

Bill 146, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes / Projet de loi 146, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

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

The division bells rang from 1153 to 1158.

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

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): I'm in no hurry. None whatsoever.

On November 28, 2023, Mr. Bethlenfalvy moved third reading of Bill 146, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

On November 28, 2023, Mr. Dowie moved that the question be now put.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rae, Matthew
Babikian, Aris	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Barnes, Patrice	Harris, Mike	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Hogarth, Christine	Sabawy, Sheref
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Holland, Kevin	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Byers, Rick	Jones, Trevor	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kanapathi, Logan	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	MacLeod, Lisa	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	Martin, Robin	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	McCarthy, Todd J.	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Pang, Billy	Tibollo, Michael A.
Flack, Rob	Piccini, David	Wai, Daisy
Ford, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Williams, Charmaine A.
Ford, Michael D.	Quinn, Nolan	Yakabuski, John

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy
Bell, Jessica	Harden, Joel	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Hazell, Andrea	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Collard, Lucille	Karpoche, Bhutla	Taylor, Monique
Fraser, John	Kernaghan, Terence	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Vaugeois, Lise
Gates, Wayne	McCrimmon, Karen	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Wong-Tam, Kristyn

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 66; the nays are 30.

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

Mr. Bethlenfalvy has moved third reading of Bill 146, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard some noes.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Interjections: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): Same vote? I heard a no.

The division bells rang from 1202 to 1207.

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

On November 28, 2023, Mr. Bethlenfalvy moved third reading of Bill 146, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various statutes.

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

Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Rae, Matthew
Babikian, Aris	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Barnes, Patrice	Harris, Mike	Romano, Ross
Bouma, Will	Hogarth, Christine	Sabawy, Sheref
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Holland, Kevin	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Sylvia	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Byers, Rick	Jones, Trevor	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Saunderson, Brian
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kanapathi, Logan	Scott, Laurie
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Skelly, Donna
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	MacLeod, Lisa	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	Martin, Robin	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	McCarthy, Todd J.	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Mulroney, Caroline	Thompson, Lisa M.
Fedeli, Victor	Pang, Billy	Tibollo, Michael A.
Flack, Rob	Piccini, David	Wai, Daisy
Ford, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Williams, Charmaine A.
Ford, Michael D.	Quinn, Nolan	Yakabuski, John

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

Nays

Andrew, Jill	Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harden, Joel	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Hazell, Andrea	Shaw, Sandy
Blais, Stephen	Hsu, Ted	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Bowman, Stephanie	Karpoche, Bhutla	Stiles, Marit
Collard, Lucille	Kernaghan, Terence	Taylor, Monique
Fraser, John	Mamakwa, Sol	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Vaugeois, Lise
Gates, Wayne	McCrimmon, Karen	West, Jamie
Gélinas, France	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Glover, Chris	Rakocevic, Tom	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 66; the nays are 32.

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

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott): The member for Brampton East has informed me he has a point of order.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: I just wanted to take a quick second and introduce some friends that came straight from Billy Bishop airport today: Ripudaman Dhillon; Manu Dutta; Joseph Neil Boucher—he's a former

dean at the University of Moncton; and the former Minister of Transportation of New Brunswick, Claude Williams. Welcome to the Legislature today.

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

The House recessed from 1211 to 1300.

Report continues in volume B.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt

Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott

Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,

Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Anand, Deepak (PC)	Mississauga—Malton	
Andrew, Jill (NDP)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London—Fanshawe	
Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
Barnes, Patrice (PC)	Ajax	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Begum, Doly (NDP)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Bell, Jessica (NDP)	University—Rosedale	
Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)	Pickering—Uxbridge	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Blais, Stephen (LIB)	Orléans	
Bouma, Will (PC)	Brantford—Brant	
Bourgouin, Guy (NDP)	Mushkegowuk—James Bay / Mushkegowuk—Baie James	
Bowman, Stephanie (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	
Brady, Bobbi Ann (IND)	Haldimand—Norfolk	
Bresee, Ric (PC)	Hastings—Lennox and Addington	
Burch, Jeff (NDP)	Niagara Centre / Niagara-Centre	
Byers, Rick (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)	Markham—Stouffville	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement Minister of Legislative Affairs / Ministre des Affaires législatives
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)	Willowdale	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds—Grenville—Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes / Leeds— Grenville—Thousand Islands et Rideau Lakes	
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby	
Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiles et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)	Milton	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
Holland, Kevin (PC)	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jama, Sarah (IND)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
Jones, Trevor (PC)	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Ke, Vincent (IND)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kemaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe du gouvernement
Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia (PC)	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	Durham	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	
McGregor, Graham (PC)	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
Quinn, Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (IND)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	Kenora—Rainy River	Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord Minister of Indigenous Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)	Bay of Quinte / Baie de Quinte	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Vaugois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
West, Jamie (NDP)	Sudbury	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
Vacant	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Vacant	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	