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of Ontario



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 19 October 2023

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 19 octobre 2023

*Report continued from volume A.*

1700

MEMBER'S CONDUCT

Continuation of the debate on the amendment to the amendment to the motion regarding the censure of the member for Hamilton Centre.

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

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** I just want to start off by saying that it is so infuriating and disappointing that we even have to have this debate in this place. I recognize that we, in this House, will often have different opinions on a variety of topics. And, Speaker, that's important for a healthy democracy, for our society, to debate those ideas. But this should not be one of those times.

Having said that, now that we are here, it's necessary to note that the comments made and the actions taken, and not taken, by the member from Hamilton Centre have brought complete and utter shame not only on her, not only on her party, but on this entire Parliament.

In the early morning hours on October 7 while we here in Ontario were sound asleep with comfort and safety, our friends in Israel faced a barrage of entirely unprovoked and completely unwarranted terrorist acts conducted by Hamas, which has been listed as a terrorist organization by Canada since 2002. As we now are hearing, more than 1,400 Israeli souls have been killed and more than 200 people have been kidnapped and taken to Gaza by Hamas terrorists, with public evidence showing signs of torture, and thousands more are injured. They murdered the elderly. They beheaded children and raped Israeli women for no other reason than the fact that they were Jewish or friends of the Jewish people.

We've seen the images. We've seen the videos. The complete and utter savagery of Hamas is a stark reminder that we must always—and I say always, Speaker—root out anti-Semitism at its core. It is absolutely unacceptable to suggest that there is any justification for this terrorism—doing so undermines the very existence of humanity. Those kinds of claims have no place in this House or, I would argue, in a peaceful world at all. These are abhorrent, heinous and revolting realities that we are seeing unfold in Israel conducted by a shameless and, honestly, Speaker, horrible terrorist organization.

Not only did the member from Hamilton Centre look to equivocate and justify these attacks; she attended a rally alongside Holocaust deniers, supported Hamas and celebrated the so-called “heroism” of these terrorists and their actions.

As much as I would like an apology, I think the member has shown through her actions that her statements do not simply reflect a misunderstanding of the situation or a lack of awareness. She knew full well what she was doing, Speaker, and she still refuses to show remorse.

Hamas has been listed as a terrorist organization by Canada for more than 20 years now. They're a group that is committed to the eradication of Jewish people and the country of Israel, and I will remind members in this House that Israel is currently the only democratic nation in the Middle East where Jews, Muslims, Christians and people of all faiths live peacefully together. It is the only place in the Middle East where a same-sex couple can get married and not fear persecution. It doesn't matter who you love, Speaker; Israel is the only place that stands for freedom and democracy.

They have shown their willingness to use Palestinian civilians as human shields—this is how Hamas operates—while oppressing their neighbours and demonstrating with pride their abhorrent moral blindness and complete disregard for human decency. Hamas did not fight for freedom, they did not fight for the innocent and they did not fight for peace. They fight for the complete annihilation of the Jewish people and will proudly and brutally murder anyone of any religion or ethnicity that stands in their way. Speaker, we have heard their rallying cry, “From River to the Sea.” They are calling for the genocide of the Jewish people.

This should not be a debate. There should have to be no discussion to determine that the vile and despicable actions of Hamas should be condemned in the highest possible form by each and every member of this House. But one member, Speaker, the member from Hamilton Centre, necessitates this debate today. She is supposed to be in this place to represent the people of Hamilton Centre, as we all are. I know we all pride ourselves on being here to represent our constituencies and the people we talk to every day, but I would suggest that her constituents who attend Anshe Sholom Temple in Hamilton may not feel represented, nor would those who attend Adas Israel Synagogue or Beth Jacob Synagogue; both are also in Hamilton, as you know well, Speaker.

I'd like to ask the member if she has met with the Jewish communities in her riding. Even in Perth–Wellington, we have a thriving, growing Jewish community, which I am proud of. We have diversity in our rural communities. And I would just hope the member from Hamilton Centre would realize she represents everyone in this place. I wonder if she had heard their concerns, Speaker: If she was aware of the harmful anti-Semitism they may face

regularly in their communities, or if she knows how traumatized they are by her statements.

I'm sure others in this place have received messages from people of Jewish faith over the past week. I received one from an individual I went to university with and they thanked me for simply sharing a "Stand with Israel" infographic on my social media. And they said it was so powerful as someone who is—I am not Jewish, Speaker—that someone who is not of the Jewish faith was showing their public support for the people of Israel. They are scared for their children, Speaker—to send them to school, to take them to the park—because they are Jewish. In the 21st century in Canada, of all countries, this should not be the case for anyone, but especially for our Jewish friends and neighbours.

1710

But, Speaker, unfortunately these are not new actions for the member from Hamilton Centre. The sad reality is that she's been engaged in anti-Semitic behaviour and activities long before this election that she was recently elected in. During the by-election in which the member was elected, the Hamilton Jewish Federation recognized that she had caused pain to the Jewish community, and the group's president, Howard Eisenberg, said that her impact must be acknowledged and addressed.

Similar to the pattern we're seeing right now, unfortunately, it has not been addressed, not by the NDP, not by their leader, and not by the member in question. Time and time again, Jewish organizations and communities have offered to provide their support and further anti-Semitism education to the NDP, which the party has presumably refused. And given the morally blind and clueless activities, to be frank, that the member for Hamilton Centre has engaged in, this is apparent.

On October 7, 2023, more Jewish people were killed than on any day since the Holocaust. Speaker, as some in this place know, I had an opportunity to live for a short time in Europe. I didn't have the opportunity to go to Auschwitz, but I went to another former concentration camp called Mauthausen in Austria. This is one of the darkest concentration camps outside of Auschwitz, Speaker. The Nazis made Jewish people and those they classified as undesirable work day and night and then kept them up all night. I saw the gas chambers and the pure hatred they had for this persecuted group of people.

You know, Speaker, we say it in this place often, especially as we approach Remembrance Day. We say "never again," but that's more than a statement. "Never again" is an action. It's a commitment to ensuring that the sadistic and inhumane attempts to eradicate the entire Jewish race should never happen again. It means standing up for Jewish communities, against anti-Semitism.

During my time as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, I was honoured to play a role in the development of Ontario's Holocaust education curriculum, which was developed in partnership with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs as well as other Jewish organizations in Ontario. It's clear that some of us would have benefited greatly from having that education when they were in school. Speaker, I'm talking about the member

from Hamilton Centre and, for that matter as well, I'm talking about anyone else who chooses to defend her statements. Those views further the view of hate, of discrimination, and they have absolutely no place in this House, a place of democracy. And they should have no place in Canada or in this world, Speaker.

The leader of the NDP has made it clear, to this point in time, that she is happy and willing to tolerate the heinous and despicable words and actions of that member in her caucus. She is still in her caucus, Speaker. I know that leader noted in her condemnation of the attacks on social media—which I was glad to see, but actions speak louder than words, and the fact that the member from Hamilton Centre continues to be welcomed in the NDP caucus shows an incredible lack of leadership and, frankly, a kind of inaction which traumatizes our Jewish communities across Ontario and, I would note, for those especially in Hamilton Centre.

Speaker, the member doesn't even have the courage to face us and to face the people of Ontario. She has now had more than a week to apologize and to take her hurtful messages down, and, except for a crass and half-hearted elaboration of her views, she has said nothing. She has said nothing, Speaker, and doubled down; she has pinned her disgusting message at the top of her X profile. She has had more than enough time to take this message down and to apologize. And if she were truly sorry for the hurt and harm that she has caused, she would be here to apologize in this House. Speaker, I don't know why she's hiding, refusing to face her colleagues and to face Ontarians. But this is a decision of her own volition. It's a shameful and embarrassing reinforcement of her discriminatory and heinous views. And if this is an instruction from her leader, this is nothing short of cowardice on both of their parts.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Further debate? I recognize the member for Richmond—pardon?

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Markham—Unionville.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Markham—Unionville. I apologize.

**Mr. Billy Pang:** Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to address the House today on motion number 39.

In Hebrew, the word "shalom" carries a profound and universal meaning: peace. Similarly, in Chinese culture, the phrase "ping on" embodies the ideals of peace and security. It's not just a mere wish, but a fundamental shared aspiration etched into the hearts of people around the world. It represents a vision where society flourishes without fear, where individuals can pursue their dreams unburdened by the shadow of conflict. As we gather here today, let us hold in our thoughts and prayers the safety of all innocent people, Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Speaker, the world bore witness to a horrifying event in the early morning hours of October 7 when the terrorist organization Hamas invaded Israel. During the invasion into Israel, Hamas terrorists slaughtered innocent civilians, including babies, children and seniors. More than 1,400 people were killed in Israel, and thousands were injured.

Merely three days later, on October 10, the member for Hamilton Centre chose to use her social media platform to share a statement on her MPP letterhead featuring her name, title and Ontario's coat of arms. Instead of denouncing and condemning the terrorist atrocities, the member for Hamilton Centre chose to defend and justify the Hamas attack by making an anti-Semitic claim that the mere existence of the state of Israel is rooted in racism. The member's statement is not only irresponsible but also filled with hate. The member's statement would be unacceptable at any time, but associating them with an unprovoked act of terrorism is entirely intolerable.

Speaker, fundamental to our system of government is the ability of Parliament to maintain institutional respect and dignity so that it can fulfill its constitutional duty. Members can have different, even unpopular views, and they may sometimes set aside their personal pride for the greater good. However, one thing we can never compromise is the public respect for the institution itself. As a member of provincial Parliament, we must maintain the trust of the people we represent, and unless the member for Hamilton Centre offers a genuine apology and retracts her hurtful statement, then she should be banned from speaking in this chamber.

1720

Speaker, we should not be supporting a ruthless terrorist organization. We should not tolerate hate. We should condemn Hamas. On October 7, more innocent Jewish men, women, children and infants were killed than on any day since the Holocaust. Tragically, the member from Hamilton Centre took it upon herself to place blame on the victims and their grieving families and friends. She felt justified in spreading her belief that the victims and the surviving friends and families were, in fact, somehow responsible for their own tragic fate.

This is not behaviour we should tolerate from a member of provincial Parliament. The member from Hamilton Centre is using the platform of being an MPP to spew hate. Her statement is filled with misinformation that would do nothing to create peace. Her statement only serves to foster hatred within Canada's Jewish community. In short, her words are divisive and should not be condoned.

Speaker, there's no excuse, no justification for the horror we have seen. This is terrorism in its darkest form. The Hamas attacks are not just another conflict on the other side of the world. The impact is being felt throughout the country, including here in Ontario. It is with deep sorrow that we acknowledge the loss of six Canadians, all young people in their twenties and thirties, with two others still missing. Netta Epstein, Shir Georgy, Ben Mizrachi, Alexandre Look, Adi Vital-Kaploun, Tiferet Lapidot: young people who have lost their lives, innocent victims caught in the crossfire, killed by Hamas in a conflict not of their making. There are no words to convey how terrible it is. The depth of sorrow and grief is immeasurable, and no words can truly alleviate the pain that these families are enduring. I want to offer my heartfelt condolences to the families. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

The plight of over 200 captives still held in Gaza is a grave concern that cannot be ignored. The situation is wholly un-

acceptable and we condemn the taking of innocent civilians as hostages for any reason, let alone for the purpose of blackmail.

Hamas has also been employing the tactics of using Palestinians as human shields, a strategy that exemplifies terrorism in its darkest form. We must condemn these despicable acts of terrorism as this demonstrates a complete disregard for human life. We call upon Hamas to immediately release these captives unharmed. We call upon Hamas to ensure their safe return to their families, and we call upon Hamas to immediately cease the killing of innocent people.

Canadians are known for their values of peace, tolerance and respect, and we believe that no one in our province should be targeted because of their faith or background. These values are woven into the very fabric of our society, reflecting our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment where individuals of all backgrounds can flourish.

Our government recognizes the critical need to uphold these principles and protect our community, and we are taking robust action to combat hate. We have allocated \$25 million in funding to end anti-Semitism, to end Islamophobia, and we are taking action to end all hate crimes. We are determined to create a province where every individual regardless of their faith, ethnicity or background can live without fear of persecution or discrimination.

I also have a deeply personal connection to this crisis. My sponsored child through a humanitarian organization, eight-year-old T. Mohammad, resides in Gaza. This past week has been particularly challenging for my family as we have been trying tirelessly to reach her. Our primary concern is ensuring that she is safe and that her family is secure amidst the chaos and uncertainty that prevails in Gaza. We remain hopeful and eagerly await for good news in the near future. Let us pray for the good of all humanity.

Hamas's actions, marked by violence, terror and an utter disregard for human life, are reprehensible. We stand united in our firm rejection of this terrorist group. We stand firm in the support of Israel's rights to peace and security. We pray for the safety and well-being of all innocent people caught in the crossfire. Hamas, its actions and its dedication to terror show no regards for human life—Israeli or Palestinian.

We find ourselves deeply troubled by the actions of the member from Hamilton Centre. Her expression of anti-Semitism and her promotion of hate is a method of grave concern. We found ourselves at a critical juncture where the actions of the member from Hamilton Centre demand our immediate attention and response. It is our duty to denounce such behaviour. It's our duty to uphold the principle of peace and tolerance that Canada is founded upon. The member for Hamilton Centre must admit her wrongdoing. She must take full responsibility for the harm she has caused and the impact her words have made. Freedom of speech should never equate to freedom from the consequence of one's words and actions. This is a matter of upholding the principle of decency and respect.

The Leader of the Opposition must do what is right, and that is to make the right decision. She must renounce the

promotion of hate, and she must be held accountable for her actions.

It is time for the member from Hamilton Centre to acknowledge her mistake and to apologize. The actions of the member from Hamilton Centre cannot be allowed to continue, as they are entirely inappropriate. We should not recognize the member of Hamilton Centre in this House until she takes the necessary steps to rectify her actions. She must retract and delete her hateful statements on social media. She must offer a genuine apology right here in the chamber.

In the interest of upholding the integrity of this institution, I urge all members to support the censure of the member of Hamilton Centre.

Speaker, now more than ever, we yearn for lasting peace and freedom for everyone in the region. In this challenging time, it's our shared responsibility to prevent this conflict from further escalation. It's our duty to advocate for peace and dialogue.

1730

Speaker, as I mentioned, the word “shalom” has the power to transcend boundaries. To those who are impact by this terrorist attack, with my utmost sincerity:

Shalom, my friends,  
 Shalom my friends,  
 Shalom, shalom!  
 God's peace be with you,  
 God's peace be with you.  
 Shalom, shalom!

Thank you, Speaker.

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

**Mr. David Smith:** Today, after being here from last elected Parliament, I think it's one of the first times I've had to deal with such a situation and felt that we all should know the proverbial phrase that charity begins at home, and we should be guided by our moral compass in the things we do.

I am from a visible minority, as you all know. The House does have rules and, therefore, we must try to follow them as closely as possible. When I came here, I was well received. As you know, we are 124 of us that looks over 15.3 million or 15.4 million in Ontario, so I feel honoured to be a part of that group, to serve my constituency of Scarborough Centre, and I'm sure all members are pleased in every way to serve their own communities.

Today, I stand before you, Madam Speaker, and the rest of the chamber with a heavy heart to unequivocally condemn the recent attack carried out by Hamas, an act of violence that has, once again, brought suffering and pain to innocent Israeli civilians. Such actions are not only deplorable, but also stark violations of principles of humanity and the pursuit of peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. According to the Human Rights Watch-verified video from October 7, 2023, the attack by Hamas-led gunmen show incidents of deliberate killing and evil which should be investigated as war crimes.

The border dividing Israel and Gaza was broken by highly armed men, early on October 7, 2023, allowing them to infiltrate southern Israel. Israeli sources estimate that 1,400 people were killed. Many of them were civilians, including children, seniors, women, and a number of men. In order to pinpoint the exact time and location of the occurrences, Human Rights Watch-validated the video by confirming the location time stamp and date stamp on films and comparing them to satellite open-source images and shadows.

A few minutes' walk south of the venue of the Supernova music festival, seven gunmen can be seen kicking a shirtless guy in front of a bomb shelter adjacent to the Re'im Junction bus stop in one authenticated video filmed at 7:55 a.m. “Guys, inside, inside here,” one of the shooters yells in Arabic. They appear to debate for a moment before another shooter throws something into the bunker. A man in civilian attire sprints outside. He attempts to run, but the shooters shout, aim and shoot at him from behind. An explosion occurs inside the bunker while they were firing. When the video finishes, it's not apparent if either guy lived. On October 9, CNN went to the shelter and reported that blood was all over the place.

A second incident I'd like to highlight: Authenticated video shows a guy in civilian attire bleeding on the ground in front of Kibbutz Mefalsim, roughly 24 kilometres from the Re'im bus stop, in security camera footage at 8:43 a.m. One of the shooters tosses something towards the nearby building as a group of gunmen gather in front of it. Within 15 seconds, there are explosions inside the building, and as the other shooters watch, one of the assailant brings out a victim, shoots them at close range and beats them with the butt of his weapon.

A third incident: An authenticated video shows a dusty parking lot near the Supernova event grounds, which was captured on dash cam at 9:23 a.m. Smoke is blowing in the distance. A shooter opens fire on a wounded man wearing regular clothes who is crouching next to a car before leading him away from the camera. Behind the car is another man, who looks up for a moment, moves his leg, then lies still. He appears to be unarmed. He is shot at close range by a shooter who approaches him and points a firearm at his head. The collision caused his body to jerk before going limp.

I could go on and on with more incidents. But the most important thing is to wonder why a member of the provincial Parliament of the province of Ontario, after seeing such evil, will make the expression of blame for the Israeli state for the brutal evil of Hamas against the Israeli people.

Fathers should not have to bury their sons or daughters. And most importantly, the death of children, women, babies and the elderly aches my heart. No lives—neither Israeli nor Palestinian—should be lost. But the attack orchestrated by Hamas has caused immense suffering and loss to life among both Israeli and Palestinians.

1740

It is imperative that we remember that the majority of people on both sides of this conflict desire peace, security and a better future for themselves and their children. This



notion is supported by Rabbi Brous in conversation with Imam Herbert. These two leaders from both communities are coming together to build ties.

Rabbi Brous says, “I see the pastor’s task as offering some kind of moral clarity, which in this case means both repeating again and again that there is no justification for crimes against humanity ... And I also need to remind my community that Palestinians are suffering terribly also now and will continue to in the days ahead. And so just as we” Israeli “ask the world to see our pain and stand with us in our sorrow, it’s our moral and spiritual obligation to do the same, to expand our lens of care and concern to also encompass the Palestinian people.”

In the above explanation, the Israeli rabbi, along with the imam, clearly condemn Hamas. Hamas is a terrorist organization and must not and cannot be supported in any direct or indirect way and, God forbid, not in any way supported by any member of this House. How then does a member of Ontario’s Legislative Assembly for Hamilton Centre have the resolve to make such statements and remarks for which she is supported by her party’s NDP leader and colleagues?

Violence, terrorism, and hate crimes have no place in our government on any path towards peace and economic building of our province of Ontario. Violence and terrorism only serve to deepen divisions and perpetuate a cycle of suffering. We must be firm and resolute to collectively reject and condemn absolutely such tactics as used by Hamas.

I am deeply irritated to think that a member of the Legislature of the province of Ontario will continue to hold such sentiments and then pin it on her social media page. Where is the place for such sentiments in this Legislature? Therefore, in one voice with our government, I resound that this House unanimously express its disapproval and disappointment of and distance itself from the member for Hamilton Centre’s continued unethical behaviour, particularly her use of social media to make statements that are not in the best interests of this House and discriminatory about the existence of the State of Israel and its defense against Hamas terrorists, that the member cease from engaging in any subsequent behaviour that is improper.

I strongly support the censuring of this member and await for this member to present herself to the House and try to express the reasons for what she has said and what she continues to do. I think this could have been dealt with in a much more expeditious manner if she would have only presented herself, withdrawn her statements and allowed for peace in this House.

I’ve seen us here as a family, and it bothers me when we can’t get certain things like this completed as quickly as possible so we can get on with the work of the people we represent in the province of Ontario. This is quite a distraction. It’s a serious matter and it’s a sensitive matter, but at the same time it must be dealt with to ensure that this behaviour does not continue. I hope there’s a speedy resolution, and we can put this to rest so we can get on with the work that we’re here to serve.

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

**Hon. Graydon Smith:** I must say that I’m amazed to be here today to speak of this motion, and I use the word “amazed” in all the worst ways, because we, for all our lives, have been raised by parents, guardians, teachers and society to know what evil looks like. And yet here we are because when, on October 7, we witnessed the manifestation of that evil, the personification of that evil and hate in a series of heinous acts against the State and people of Israel, not long after a statement came from the member from Hamilton Centre that not only didn’t call out hate and terrorism but excused it away. This, Speaker, cannot be justified, nor left to exist without a significant rebuke from the members of this House.

According to UN standards and Canadian law and any objective standard based on human decency, Hamas is a terrorist organization and the events that happened on Saturday, October 7, were a brutal attack on innocent people. Many news outlets have reported that Hamas terrorists who infiltrated Israel were carrying manuals with instructions on how to kidnap and torture people. This was a planned attack with the purpose to cruelly kill and torture their captives.

This was not a battle. Quite simply, this was an attack on Jews. This was terrorism; this was wrong. We have seen it, chillingly, before. Terrorists indiscriminately murdered innocent women, children, seniors, men, and thousands were wounded. Many Israelis are missing and still unaccounted for, with an untold number taken hostage. The situation in Israel cannot be overstated. This is an unprovoked, unprecedented attack on the very existence of Israel based on an anti-Semitic ideology with the singular focus of erasing the world’s only Jewish state from the map.

As of yesterday, six Canadians have been identified amongst the many who have been killed because of this attack, and currently over 1,400 Israeli people, mostly civilians, are dead. Following the attack, many Ontario citizens expressed their grief and their fear. They have family and friends in Israel. They have family and religious roots in Israel. Many watched in horror as they saw children and the elderly being taken, beaten and slaughtered.

Yet, only three days later, on October 10, the member for Hamilton Centre took to social media and posted an image of a statement on her MPP letterhead bearing her name, her title and Ontario’s coat of arms. Rather than condemning the terrorist atrocities as most of the Western world has already done, the member chose to justify the Hamas attack on the basis of an anti-Semitic allegation that the mere existence of the state of Israel is wrong.

As the Premier said on Tuesday, these attacks are not just another conflict on the other side of the world. This is an attack that, because of the history of the Holocaust, is more chilling, more upsetting, more unbelievable. Events like the Holocaust cannot be repeated while we stand by. Anti-Semitism, if allowed to go unchecked, will allow that to happen. So how—how, Speaker—can we not censure a

member who espoused anti-Semitic sentiments on the letterhead of her office bearing the coat of arms of this province?  
**1750**

Collectively, we are better than that. Surely, individually, this member is better than that. The member's own leader recognized the blatant inappropriateness of that on the very same day the statement was posted and quickly called upon the member to apologize and retract it. For unknown reasons, the member took more than 24 hours to post a half-hearted apology buried in the comments section of her own post. At present, the member has still not deleted the original statement, which has been seen millions of times. At a time when Ontarians and the world were grieving, the member from Hamilton Centre chose to post on social media justifying this unprovoked attack. She chose to use harsh phrases claiming that Israel's generations-long occupation of Palestine was nothing other than settler colonialism.

While we're here today to talk about the member from Hamilton Centre and the egregious statement she made justifying Hamas and the actions that can only be described as terrorism and hate-driven, I want to take time to talk about someone else, to remind this House that there are people out there that we can all look up to, to promote her story over those that would espouse hate towards Jewish people.

I first met Eva Olsson when I was invited to celebrate her 90th birthday, when I was the mayor of Bracebridge. I didn't know her well. In fact, I didn't know her at all. But meeting her was transformative for me as I learned her story more. She was the first Holocaust survivor I'd ever met; I didn't know any others. Over my years as mayor, I'd see her from time to time in between the hundreds of annual visits she would take and make around the country and the world telling her story—an incredible story, a story full of tragedy, a story sadly not unique to her but to so many, yet a story full of hope and promise that the undeniable rising of the human spirit out of horrific circumstances can indeed happen.

Eva was a girl, a Hungarian Jew in the wrong place at the wrong time, and her family was sent to Auschwitz. Upon entry, it was the last time she would see her mother. It was the last time she would see many family members; four siblings were also killed. But she was made to be a labourer in the camp, and fortunately for her, liberation came, saving her and many others at Bergen-Belsen, where she had been moved to.

After the war, Eva went to Sweden and married, and in 1951, she and her husband came to Canada to start a life in this country. They had a beautiful family and were able to live freely after the horror she had endured and survived.

She didn't share her story for a very long time. But when she was in her seventies, one of her grandchildren asked her to share. So she visited a local school and then, over the next two decades-plus, has made literally thousands of visits—to towns big and small, schools, community groups, even the United Nations—with a message of hope and how destructive hate can be. Her story as a survivor

is an incredible and powerful story, but what is even more powerful is her willingness to, later in life, share that important story with so many; that hate is intolerable, but it can be overcome. Only recently did she retire from doing this in person and, in a mere number of days, Eva will celebrate her 99th birthday. She is a treasure not only for my community, but for this country and for people around the world.

Three years ago, when I was still mayor, I was proud to give Eva what's known as the mayor's special award. It's an award to give to people who have made the community, and beyond in this case, a better place. It was a small way to highlight her incredible work, her incredible story and the difference that she made in the lives of so many by sharing that story. That award was, as it turns out, a bit of a forerunner to something maybe a little more prestigious, because in 2021 she received the Order of Canada. In 2008, she was previously awarded the Order of Ontario—richly deserved, again, for telling her story, for the work she has done, for the love, the hope, the message.

Speaker, I tell her story again in the context of what we are dealing with today: words and actions by a member of this House that simply have no place in the dialogue we share here and outside of here every day. Whether it is spoken on this floor, whether it is posted on social media or whether it is meant for an audience large or small, we must hold ourselves to a higher standard. We must recognize when hate is occurring, and we must recognize that hate was expressed towards the State of Israel and Jewish people, endorsed by this member. We must recognize that anti-Semitic actions taken by Hamas are unacceptable. We must recognize terrorism when it occurs and call it out, and support those who have been the victims of terrorism in the most heinous and hideous ways. We must support them and show that we remember what happened, that we learn from what happened, that we support a world free of terrorism and hate, that we support the Eva Olssons of the world, support the Jewish people, and support Israel during a time of crisis and horror.

The statement by the member from Hamilton Centre sadly and regrettably not only supports and excuses those who committed terrorist acts but also attempts to undo the work of Eva Olsson and many others that have worked so hard to make our province, our country, our world and humanity better. We can't allow statements such as this to go unchecked and without consequence.

This summer, I had a chance to visit a wonderful place in my riding. It's called Camp Ramah, a summer camp for Jewish kids. I had an amazing time there seeing all there was to do: smiles on faces, the full camp experience, that joy because of the experiences that they were able to participate in. It was a place of pure happiness. On October 7, I couldn't help but think of those smiling faces on those children I saw that day and then apply what happened in such outrageous fashion to what was going on in Israel: the deaths of children, babies, the decimation of families. I couldn't shake that image. I cannot shake that image.

Speaker, this is an incredibly powerful debate, but at this time, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** The Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry has moved the adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion, say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. This is a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1758 to 1828.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Mr. Smith, Parry Sound–Muskoka, has moved the adjournment of the debate.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise and remain standing to be counted by the Clerks.

All those opposed to the motion, please rise and remain standing to be counted by the Clerks.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day):** The ayes are 0; the nays are 24.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** I declare the motion lost.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### AGRICULTURAL LABOUR POLICY

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** Speaker, I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs should continue to support employers of international agricultural workers and employees by providing informational resources on benefits available to all workers in Ontario, to demonstrate Ontario's commitment to the growth and sustainability of the food production and processing sectors and to ensure Ontario remains a destination of choice to those workers who enter Canada through any recognized federal or provincial program.

1830

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Mr. Jones, Chatham-Kent–Leamington, has moved private member's notice of motion number 64. Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** Colleagues, it's a pleasure for me to rise today in the House to advocate for those in many of our communities and who often go unnoticed. These are the thousands of men and women who toil in our fields, orchards and greenhouses alongside our residents—working hard to produce the food we eat, contributing to our economy and strengthening our stable, precious food supply chain.

This year marks the 57th anniversary of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program in Canada, created back in 1966 to solve a very Canadian problem: filling the critical labour gap in agriculture. At the same time, farmers from across the country were experiencing difficulty filling jobs with locals—jobs that were by nature seasonal, physical, primarily outdoors and in the elements. Farmers were also competing with the genesis of the Canadian Auto Pact and

unprecedented growth in the manufacturing sector, which attracted workers to move from the rural areas into the cities for exciting new opportunities in our factories.

Appreciating the need to support Canadian agriculture, the federal government entered into a bilateral agreement with the government of Jamaica. This effort established a formal framework to welcome foreign nationals to travel from abroad to work alongside Canadian farmers to produce our most critical resource: food.

This migration also increased demands for a wide range of businesses—office, administration and service sector jobs in our rapidly growing cities—further exacerbating the shortage of agricultural workers on our farms. As such, the SAWP program, as it became known, expanded the list of eligible countries to include Mexico and many of the Caribbean islands.

Since its inception, the SAWP program allowed participants from eligible countries to work in agriculture for up to eight months, between January 1 and December 15. These dates coincided with the demands of the Canadian growing season and the harvest season, while respecting the host country's desire to reunite workers with their families during some of our and their most important cultural and religious celebrations of the year.

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program was established in 1973. That allowed Canadian employers across a number of sectors, including agriculture, to hire foreign nationals to fill shortages in Canada's labour for a two-year period, and that could be renewed once the worker had returned home and reapplied.

Each year, Ontario's fruit and vegetable growers alone employ over 20,000 seasonal temporary foreign workers through both programs—20,000. This mutually beneficial arrangement supports our farmers and the thousands of people who come to Canada for economic opportunity that they could not realize in their home countries, effectively raising their standard of living and their quality of lives from the very first working season here. These unique labour systems offer stable, safe, well-paying employment opportunities for many who would not otherwise have had any opportunity in their home country.

As the SAWP program developed, the relationship between its participants and our communities in Ontario deepened. What started as an economic exchange led to a genuine multigenerational relationship between Canadians and the many thousands of our neighbours from countries across our hemisphere.

Canadian farms, especially those in Ontario, provide meaningful work that supports not only the workers themselves but also their extended families back home. International agricultural workers and their families now had the ability to achieve a new level of financial independence in their homelands, while their home countries benefited from increased economic certainty through workers' wages, savings and their discretionary spending at home. For the first time in many of their lives, workers were building houses, purchasing vehicles, establishing small farming plots in their home countries and sending their children to post-secondary education.

The exponential benefits of these labour programs, both at home and abroad, were immediate, and they maintain a strong, positive trajectory. What is less quantifiable, though equally important, is the deeper cultural understanding and appreciation of ideas, experiences, food and language that we both have. This cultural exchange benefits Canadians as hosts and worker participants who become immersed in our diverse culture while gaining a better understanding of our way of life and our democracy—the democracy that makes Canada and Ontario great.

Growing up in a multicultural community, immersed in one of Ontario's most prolific agriculture-producing-and-processing regions, I never really appreciated the history or the tremendous positive impact that international agricultural workers had on all our communities.

Coupled with the hard work, dedication and entrepreneurship of Ontario's farming families, access to these specialized labour programs enabled Ontario agriculture to flourish.

Many of Ontario's farms, especially in my riding of Chatham-Kent–Leamington, were established by families who themselves were recent immigrants to Canada. Our field farms, orchards, vineyards and greenhouses were able to expand, modernize, innovate and succeed in becoming global leaders producing a wide range of safe, nutritious food. The results have been nothing short of astonishing. In total, Ontario's farmers, food processors and every partner in the food value chain generates \$47 billion to the provincial gross domestic product and employs over one in 10 people here.

In the fall of 2022, our government released the Grow Ontario Strategy that outlined three key priorities: strengthen agri-food supply chain stability, increase agri-food technology and adoption, and attract and grow Ontario's agri-food talent. These priorities were coupled with aggressive targets in the consumption, production, manufacturing and exports of Ontario-grown and Ontario-prepared food.

The value proposition here is a simple one. As lawmakers, we have an important choice, because once again, we're at an historic crossroads. To remain a global leader in the stable production of a wide range of safe, high-quality foods, Ontario must make bold investments in technology, innovation, skills development, infrastructure and highways to ensure products can be grown, processed and moved effectively to their markets. Concurrently, we need to attract, train and retain Ontario's next generation of agriculture workers while safeguarding the guest worker programs that have supported Ontario's agriculture for nearly six decades. To achieve the latter, I am proposing here that we demonstrate unified leadership and protect these resources through this motion and preserve our place as the leading destination of choice for all workers seeking a safe, rewarding experience where they can have the chance to prosper.

Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs can take a leading role in maintaining this competitive labour advantage by attracting and supporting all international agriculture workers through free, online, up-to-date resources on topics that include worker rights and obligations; access

to health care; optional programs for life, illness and disability insurance; mental and emotional health supports; and information, most importantly, on road, pedestrian, bicycle and water safety. These resources will send a clear message that international workers are welcome, valued and respected. Some of Ontario's leading stakeholder groups have provided strong supports for this very initiative, including the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association and the Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers.

It's the people behind food production, both local and from abroad, who are Ontario's agriculture success story.

As a young man, I worked alongside many workers from Mexico, Guatemala and the Caribbean in our local farms, pack houses and greenhouses. These wonderful people had a lasting, profound and positive impact on me. I was inspired by their personal sacrifices to create better lives for themselves and their families by working for prolonged periods of time away from their homes.

**1840**

Many years later, as a provincial police officer, I frequently interacted with international agriculture workers, but rarely did they run afoul of the law. The determination, spirit and dedication I experienced is both a testament to the workers and their hosts. When occasions arose that required some sort of emergency response, it was usually the result of a swimming mishap or a traffic accident. I worked closely with my OPP officers to work closely with our workers to build trusting, meaningful relationships with all guest workers and create a better understanding.

Although there are some consular services and outreach services available, there actually exists no single authority or even a portal to access comprehensive, trusted, accurate and fulsome information for their unique needs. We have an opportunity—it's unique—to influence a positive outcome to ensure Ontario remains a destination of choice for workers along a wide skills continuum. This effort will serve as a beacon of welcome and respect to workers from around the world by providing critical information that welcomes, informs and keeps our workers safe.

Finally, this motion, if adopted, has the potential to ensure that Ontario remains the leader and maintains its competitive advantage by enhancing the experiences and the lives of our guest workers. The power of timely, relevant and culturally appropriate information from a trusted one-stop source has the potential to have positive, dramatic and long-lasting effects for our food production and those who produce food and travel from great distances, putting their lives on hold to come to Ontario's farms.

Colleagues, thank you for your consideration. I appreciate your support.

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

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's an honour to be able to speak to this motion brought forward by the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington.

First, I'd like to read the motion into the record too: "That, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs should continue to support employers of international agricultural workers and em-

ployees by providing informational resources on benefits available to all workers in Ontario, to demonstrate Ontario's commitment to the growth and sustainability of the food production and processing sectors and to ensure Ontario remains a destination of choice to those workers who enter Canada through any recognized federal or provincial program."

The motion, as put into the order paper, we fully support. Temporary foreign workers in the SAWP program and other programs provide a vital, vital part of the workforce for agriculture and food processing. They have for years.

It got a bit of a bad rap. I'm sure the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington was fully aware, as long as he's lived there, of the role that temporary foreign workers play in agriculture, but the vast majority of Ontarians had no idea. The first they heard of temporary foreign workers was in COVID, and the first thing they heard was bad news. Once you hear something like—there were some problems, and it was—and I've told this to all the agriculture groups as well: If the first thing you hear is bad, you've got a lot of work to do to bring it back. I'd say a failure from agriculture as a whole is that, before COVID, you didn't see one ad with a temporary foreign worker with the apple or with the steak; it was always—and I'm a farmer—it was always mom-and-pop farmer. You never saw the temporary foreign worker. Now you do.

I'd really like to thank you for bringing this forward so we can actually talk about it, the good and the bad. We need temporary foreign workers. The thing that a lot of people don't understand and the thing that's really important is that we recognize the role, but recognize some of the unique and—I'm looking for the word—precarious position they face, is they are tied to their employer. So not only do they have to be aware of their rights, but their employer has virtually complete control of their future in the province.

I have farms with temporary foreign workers in my riding as well, and the ones I know have had the same workers come back for years. It's almost familial; a good, familial relationship, but not for everyone, and that's why it's so important, being aware of your rights. But if making someone else aware that something is going wrong, and you're tied to your employer—it's a real issue, because you can go complain or you can go make somebody aware, but they're in control. There are actually cases—and people have been fined—where the employer even takes their travel documents. That's wrong. And I give credit to the government: They have moved to stop that. The current government has recognized that, and I commend it. I give credit where credit is due. But you have to realize that that's—you really are controlled.

Now, some of the descriptions that have been used to describe that relationship, I reject them, but we have to be very, very careful that when that relationship exists it's not abused, ever.

The government has done 2,100 inspections. In 2,100, which is pretty hefty, 117 employers were out of compliance, 94 were fined, 23 received warnings and six employers were banned from participating in the program for five years. Now, if you're a temporary foreign worker working

for one of those, you've got issues, right? And no system— if the world was perfect, we wouldn't all be sitting here, so I'm not bashing the program, not at all. This we need. We need the program. We need to make it better, stronger.

One other common misconception about temporary foreign workers is that they're not skilled. That's also a very big misconception, because when I tour greenhouses, when I talk to some of the dairy farmers I know, they're not unskilled; they're very skilled. It's a common misconception.

A criticism and, I would say, a valid criticism, and I hear it mostly not as much from the farm workers—because not all temporary foreign workers want to be permanent residents. Many want to go back to their country of origin and build things in their country of origin. I agree with the member. But some would like a pathway to permanent residency. Some employers as well, particularly the ones I talk to in meat processing plants and stuff, would like that they could have a path. That's not necessarily a provincial issue, but it's something that we would be happy to work together on, to have a path us for when someone in the Temporary Foreign Worker Program works in a processing facility or somewhere where there is steady employment, where there's a lack of workers, and if they want to build a life for their family in this country, in this province, they would have a clear path to do so. That's very important, and that would also maintain and attract people. And I'm sure the member is aware; when you talk to people, particularly in the meat processing sector, they will tell you that.

#### 1850

We want to have the ability for those workers to get permanent residency status. It's really important. I can't stress that enough. I can't stress enough how important all the temporary foreign worker programs are, how important it is to not only maintain them but make them stronger, and make sure that we do our utmost, because all the programs are only as good as the one bad apple in the barrel. Because we're not dealing with apples; we're dealing with people, people with families. We're dealing with people, especially—and I have to go back to that—people whose destiny while they're in this province is controlled by the contract with a single employer. I challenge anybody here: Who has never had that one bad boss? Or that one time—and I go for personal experience; I was that one bad employee who didn't get along with my boss, and I found another job because I could. But they can't.

I would like to commend the member for bringing this forward. We have a great relationship. We don't agree on everything, but, particularly from his area, he has always known how important they were. I've always known because I'm in agriculture. But most Ontarians didn't have a clue.

We all know, especially in the political business, people are only interested in the bad stories and, once in while, a feel-good story. But they usually are looking for the holes, and that's a good thing, especially when you're dealing with people, because we want all workers, whether they're permanent residents or temporary residents, to be treated

with respect, with dignity. And the vast majority of them are, but we have to be very cognizant that, when we hear something, we follow up—as long as we do that.

We need temporary foreign workers. They need a route to become permanent residents, if they so desire. That's very important if you want to maintain people coming to this country, people who work, who are willing to work, who want to do that skilled work. Because often, people think, "Oh, they're working in a field. That's not skilled." Believe me, that's skilled. Knowing when to prune, when to pick, that is skilled labour. I challenge that most of us wouldn't know how to do it. They are skilled labourers, skilled workers. We need them. We need to make them not just part of our system but part of our province, and this is a step forward for that.

I'd like to commend the member for bringing it forward, and we fully support it.

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

**Mr. Nolan Quinn:** The agri-food sector in Ontario has been and always will be an important and essential piece of our thriving economy. The agriculture sector is also the largest industry in my riding of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry, and there are a number of farm families in my riding who rely on international ag workers to ensure the success of their farming operation.

I will be honest, and the member opposite stated it: I wasn't fully aware that there were that many foreign agricultural workers in my riding until I spoke to my executive assistant, who's in the ag field. I now appreciate the impact it has on my riding as well. I always knew southwest Ontario had a lot of foreign workers for the ag community, but I didn't realize how much of it is in my riding as well.

Ontario is home to more than half of Canada's class 1 farmland and over 48,000 farms that produce over 200 different commodities. The agri-food sector contributes \$47 billion to Ontario's GDP, which equals 6.4% of the province's total GDP. This is why it is crucial that we maintain and grow this sector to ensure a safe and high-quality food supply and to ensure our highly skilled agricultural producers have the tools and workforce to do so.

International agricultural workers are an essential and vital component to our agri-food sector. Throughout Ontario, migrant workers fill critical roles within the agri-food sector. Without foreign workers, many of these roles would be left vacant, which would undoubtedly put farm producers in a critical position and negatively affect their families and their mental health. Not only do migrant workers fill these roles, they also bring forth a different set of skills and expertise from which the sector as a whole benefits, helping improve our own practices.

As previously mentioned, Ontario's agri-food sector is an extremely important part of our economy. As a result, international agricultural workers have become an integral and essential part of our economy. We, as a government, recognize this fact and protect our temporary foreign workers. This is why our government has made over \$68 million in total investments for the health and safety of

international agricultural workers, including \$46 million to the Enhanced Agri-Food Workplace Protection Program to help address worker health and safety issues and \$22 million for the Agri-tech Innovation Program to enhance worker safety and support the adoption of innovations and technology.

Additional supports for the sector include:

- \$746,000 in funding for the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association to develop and distribute various COVID-19 resources to workers in multiple languages, including cultural liaison supports to international agri-food workers as they arrived at the airport;

- \$224,000 in funding for the Workplace Safety and Prevention Services to support the development of COVID-19 safety plans at small agri-food businesses;

- another \$220,000 in funding to the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers to support research into available mental health services and supports specific to the cultural needs of international agri-food workers; and

- over \$200,000 in targeted, culturally specific mental health supports for international agricultural workers.

Our government is also providing international agricultural workers with essential information about OHIP coverage, Ontario's health care system and community resources. This essential information is available in numerous languages and is given to foreign workers upon arrival at the airport welcome centre.

It is vital that our international agricultural workers are kept safe, have adequate supports and are properly informed when it comes to their rights in Canada. Our government will continue to protect our international agricultural workers in order to ensure their safety and the safety and success of farm producers not only in my riding but across all of Ontario.

I thank the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington for bringing this important bill forward.

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

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I have two daughters. They are marvellous dancers, and when you have marvellous dancer daughters like I do, you put them in dance studios. They belonged to a marvellous dance studio. It was called the Catz Meow, and it was run by a marvellous dance teacher by the name of Catherine Cristofaro.

It came to pass that these dance studios go on dance competitions, and Jackie and I took our daughters, our dancer daughters, to South Carolina. While we were in South Carolina, Jackie's responsibility was to stay with our dancer daughters, and my responsibility was to go grocery shopping. So I found the nearest grocery store, and I was in the produce aisle, and what do you think I found in the produce aisle in South Carolina? I found Mucci Pac cucumbers from Kingsville, Ontario, in the grocery store in the produce aisle in South Carolina. Now, you might ask, why on earth would people in South Carolina buy cucumbers all the way from Kingsville, Ontario? And I respond by saying, "Why wouldn't they? They're the best cucumbers in the world." So congratulations to Mucci Pac and all the other green-

house growers who produce absolutely the best food in the world.

### 1900

I want to move on by talking about some of the things that the gentleman farmer from Timiskaming–Cochrane talked about. He talked about some work that was done by Employment and Social Development Canada. This organization did over 2,100 inspections of various workplaces that were worked at by international agricultural workers, and they found that 94% of these employers were in compliance with their obligations. Only a tiny 6% were out of compliance. That is a remarkable record. I don't know if there's another sector where 94% of all the employees are in compliance. I would dare say this might be the best record in Ontario and Canada, so congratulations again.

The gentleman farmer from Timiskaming–Cochrane also said that the treatment of the workers was so good that many of them come back year after year, in fact decade after decade and generation after generation, and that is true. That is true, because in my area, which is Essex county, on the second concession you'll find my constituency office, and on the third concession you'll find Jack's Organics. Jack's Organics employs many international agricultural workers, just like other places in Essex county and in Chatham-Kent–Leamington. You can talk to them, and I do.

My Spanish isn't that good, and most of them speak Spanish, but it's good enough to be able to speak to people and ask them where you're from. "Tell me about your family. Tell me about your work. How many years have you worked here?" And they tell us, "I've worked here five years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, 25 years." They get promoted to positions of responsibility. They become people who actually assist in running the operations of the agricultural businesses, and they are an integral part of everything that happens. And then their children come. It becomes a family affair, and it's a generational success. It's a spectacular generational success. Maybe we should start musing about the possibility of finding a pathway that would help the way the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane suggested.

So there's so much good information to do here, and I want to congratulate my colleague from Chatham-Kent–Leamington for bringing this motion, because even though there's 94% compliance, and even though that's fantastic, there is 6% non-compliance. As I say, there are always a few bad apples in the barrel. We've got to deal with those bad apples, and part of this motion is seeking to deal with the bad apples—or prevent the bad apples, if I may say it more accurately.

Now, my colleague the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington is not only my neighbour right here in the House; he's also my neighbour in southwestern Ontario. His riding is right next to my riding. We have so much in common, these two ridings, in the agricultural business and various other ways: the marine business; we are both on Lake Erie. And you know, it's not easy to find good neighbours in the world, so I'm grateful that I have a great

neighbour like the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington.

Let me tell you a little bit more about him. He wasn't always a member of provincial Parliament. Before he became a member of provincial Parliament, he was an OPP officer. He was a police officer, and he had a very professional and successful career as an officer in the province of Ontario. You can ask anybody around. You can ask the other police. You can ask the defence attorneys. You can ask the crown prosecutors. They all say the same thing about my colleague here: He had a spectacular career—a well-respected man in his profession. And then he went into the agricultural business and got involved with the greenhouse vegetable growers. He has a spectacular network of individuals he has gotten to know over the years. They are an incredible group of people and are incredibly entrepreneurial. You should see what they can do. They're exporting cucumbers all the way to South Carolina. That's just one example of the fantastic work they do. My colleague then had an excellent and professional and successful career in that business. And now he represents his riding, Chatham-Kent–Leamington, in this House as a member of provincial Parliament. I appreciate what he does. I know his constituents in his riding appreciate what he does.

And let me tell you, Chatham-Kent–Leamington, you could not have given me a better neighbour and a better representative.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** Back to the member for a two-minute reply.

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** I want to thank the member from Essex for his amazing work, and I want to thank him for his grateful and thoughtful remarks. He has actually almost moved me to tears. He's an exceptional storyteller. I want to thank my friend from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry for staying here late in the evening to speak to this important motion, and my friend from across the aisle from Timiskaming–Cochrane, who is a gentleman farmer and a gentleman in this House and outside of it.

I want to share a couple of stories really quick as I sum up my thoughts. I've heard stories over the years, as a young kid on a farm, as a provincial police officer, and as a business executive working for greenhouses. The stories of gratitude I heard were meaningful, they were powerful, and they were life-changing, because they were life-changing to the people telling these stories.

One story: Recently, we celebrated a vineyard worker on Pelee Island who celebrated 30 years of continuous service from Mexico to Pelee Island to one important winery. Just as we were about to take our picture—we were all lined up and everything—he stopped everything and said, "Actually, I want to correct the record. I would have been coming 34 consecutive years, but I had to miss a couple of years to witness the birth of my children or else my wife would have never forgiven me." So he was actually coming to Canada for 34 years, but 30 of those years were consecutive.

Another story was, when I was a police officer, we had actually asked for the assistance of a senior worker—just

as the member from Essex said, there are promotions, there's seniority. They offer assistance. So this senior worker was helping referee a little bit of a scrum—a football match, a soccer match. He shared that he sent two of his daughters to UCLA, as a 30-year worker in tomatoes, and then he asked if I knew what UCLA was, and of course I did.

So these are the stories I've shared, these are the stories I've learned, and these are the stories that inspired me to be here and to promote this motion.

Thank you, colleagues. I appreciate your time and your consideration.

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** The time provided for private members' public business has now expired.

Mr. Jones, Chatham-Kent-Leamington, has moved private member's notice of motion number 64. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Donna Skelly):** All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until Monday, October 23 at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1908.*



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, 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	
<b>Arnott, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington—Halton Hills	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Babikian, Aris (PC)	Scarborough—Agincourt	
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia—Lambton	
<b>Barnes, Patrice (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Bethlenfalvy, Hon. / L'hon. Peter (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Calandra, Hon. / L'hon. Paul (PC)</b>	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
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Raymond Sung Joon (PC)</b>	Scarborough North / Scarborough- Nord	Minister for Seniors and Accessibility / Ministre des Services aux aînés et de l'Accessibilité
<b>Cho, Hon. / L'hon. Stan (PC)</b>	Willowdale	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	
<b>Collard, Lucille (LIB)</b>	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Crawford, Stephen (PC)	Oakville	
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Dixon, Jess (PC)	Kitchener South—Hespeler / Kitchener-Sud—Hespeler	
Dowie, Andrew (PC)	Windsor—Tecumseh	
<b>Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
<b>Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)</b>	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
<b>Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)</b>	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
<b>Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)</b>	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	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
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)</b>	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (PC)	Carleton	
<b>Gill, Hon. / L'hon. Parm (PC)</b>	Milton	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
Harris, Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	
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 (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)</b>	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée 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
<b>Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)</b>	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
<b>Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon Andrea (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)</b>	King—Vaughan	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
<b>Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)</b>	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
<b>McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>	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	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
<b>Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)</b>	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
<b>Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)</b>	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
<b>Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)</b>	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
Quinn, Nolan (PC)	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
Rasheed, Kaleed (IND)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
<b>Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Skelly, Donna (PC)</b>	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	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)</b>	Parry Sound—Muskoka	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Todd (PC)</b>	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
<b>Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)</b>	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
<b>Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)</b>	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée déléguée aux Petites Entreprises
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
<b>Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon Vijay (PC)</b>	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Transportation / Ministre associé des Transports
<b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b>	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué au dossier de la Santé mentale et de la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle

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