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of Ontario



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Mercredi  
10 avril 2024

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Clerk: Trevor Day

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 10 April 2024

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 10 avril 2024

*Report continued from volume A.*  
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AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH  
INSTITUTE OF ONTARIO AMENDMENT  
ACT, 2024

LOI DE 2024 MODIFIANT LA LOI  
SUR L'INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE  
AGRICOLE DE L'ONTARIO

Continuation of debate on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 155, An Act to amend the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act / Projet de loi 155, Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Institut de recherche agricole de l'Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** We're going to move on to further debate.

**Hon. Caroline Mulroney:** I'll be sharing my time with the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to speak about Bill 155, the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Amendment Act, 2024. As the representative for the people of York-Simcoe, a riding that is home to the Holland Marsh, locally known as Ontario's salad bowl, I am proud to support these long overdue and essential updates to the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act and to deliver on our government's commitment to support local farmers.

I'd like to thank my colleague the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs for her leadership and the hard work that has brought us to this debate on this important piece of legislation.

I myself was involved in modernizing an act that hadn't been updated since the 1980s, and I know how much work goes into it. So I know that the minister was engaged in extensive consultations with stakeholders, from the ARIO board members to Indigenous communities and industry leaders. It's just so much work, so I really want to compliment her and the ministry on the work that they did to ensure that these amendments will support the work that Ontario's farmers and agricultural researchers do in the field to feed our families, our communities, Canadians and beyond.

Speaker, our government was elected with a clear mandate: to put the people and the workers of this province first, and that includes the more than 800,000 Ontarians who are employed through the agri-food supply chain in our province.

In my riding of York-Simcoe, the Holland Marsh includes 125 farms which produce \$105 million in direct value from crops, with an additional \$80 million in added value after harvesting, through storing, packing and processing activities.

We know that right now people are struggling with rising prices, an increased cost of living and the high cost of fuel. It's increasingly expensive for Ontarians to feed their families, to keep a roof over their heads and to get to work. Ontario's farmers are not immune to these rising costs.

Speaker, if you travelled to Bradford, you would see dozens and dozens of farms in the Holland Marsh, in York-Simcoe. The farmers in this area work hard to grow crops that feed people across the province. With a rapidly growing population, it is crucial that our government stand by the agri-food industry, from the local producer to the processor and everyone in between.

Now, there's so much that our government has done to make life more affordable that I am very proud of. Since our government was first elected in 2018, we've cut taxes, we've reduced red tape and we've brought hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs back to Ontario. Our government has saved Ontario's agri-food sector over \$3.2 billion just by cutting red tape. Through Bill 139, Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act, 2023, we're expecting up to \$4 million of additional savings.

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Ontario's farmers count on government investments to support the growth and sustainability of the agri-food sector, and they can continue to count on that commitment through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. The SCAP will help enable the goals outlined in the province's Grow Ontario Strategy, which include increasing the production of food by 30% over the next 10 years, growing agri-food exports by 8% annually, and to build and maintain world-class research infrastructure.

Now, this partnership will position Ontario's sector for continued success as a world leader in environmentally, economically and socially sustainable agriculture. Ontario will continue to build on successes achieved in the Canadian agricultural partnership and, again, offer funding programs to support farmers, processors and sector organizations.

Madam Speaker, our government has also renewed the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance agreement and will be investing more than \$343 million over five years to support agri-food research and innovation.

Now, this work is supported by a network of 14 research centres located across the province. One of them

is an important centre located right in my riding. It's visible from the 400 as you're making your way up to Bradford just before Canal Road, and for over 60 years the Muck Crops Research Station has produced research in the Holland Marsh that has resulted in the reduction of cost for growers, ensured environmental safety and has enabled farmers to make informed decisions.

Researchers working at the Muck Crops Research Station produce research that is vital to vegetable producers in the Holland Marsh but also beyond. Their work focuses on a wide variety of vegetable crops, including those grown outside of the region, with an emphasis on discovery research in crop protection and production.

The facilities at the station include a plant pathology lab, greenhouses with ebb-and-flow benches, a computer-monitored environment, cold storage facilities, and multiple sites for field research. It's really an amazing place, Madam Speaker. I've had the opportunity to visit many, times, and I'm always amazed by the research and innovation that's occurring there.

Modern farming practices employ the use of automation, technology and research at every step in the process. And as the representative for one of Canada's most important agricultural hubs, the growers of York-Simcoe have made significant investments in technology to protect the safety of the local water supply and to increase yields while also reducing the environmental impact of their work.

The farmers in the Holland Marsh, home to soils well suited to the production of root crops, proudly provide a consistent, year-round supply of fresh produce, amounting to about five pounds of carrots and onions for every Canadian.

By modernizing the ARIO Act, we can be confident that our research efforts can expand and will continue to guide us to the right information, further supporting the industry.

Madam Speaker, while I've highlighted how this bill will help support the agricultural industry in my riding, this is just one example of how important research and innovation are in supporting Ontario's agriculture and food industry across the province. Put simply, our government understands that enhancing research and innovation is key to driving the agriculture and food industry forward in Ontario. Adopting new technology and embarking upon new research is critical so that Ontario can maintain its position as a world leader in this field and maintain the industry as a driver of economic growth for the future.

As part of this commitment, we're working to strengthen the agriculture and food industry by modernizing the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act. These proposed changes will also help position the industry to stay on the cutting edge of new technologies and practices that will increase the competitiveness of Ontario in the global market.

Ontario is committed to driving research and innovation that strengthens our agri-food industry. Our government is working in partnership with the federal government to invest \$16.5 million through the Sustainable

Canadian Agricultural Partnership to support agri-food research and innovation to help Ontario develop new cutting-edge technologies, practices and solutions that will strengthen the sector to be more competitive. This investment ensures that our farmers and all those across the agri-food sector have the latest tools and technology that will allow us to continue as world leaders in agri-food innovation now and for years to come.

Madam Speaker, I want to conclude my time by saying that I appreciated the opportunity rise today and speak to the proposed amendments to the ARIO Act. I know that they will be welcomed by the farmers in the Holland Marsh who have been looking for more support from our government just on this area. Farmers are innovators, and I get to see it every day in my riding, the great work that they're doing.

But the work that we're doing here is going to help them go even further. So I'm thrilled to be able to stand to speak to this. As my colleagues and I have outlined, these proposed changes are part of our broader efforts to support success for the industry, and to streamline and simplify processes for those doing business in Ontario.

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

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** It's my honour to rise today to speak to the third reading of Bill 155, the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Amendment Act, 2023. I want to begin by thanking our Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs for the opportunity to serve as her parliamentary assistant for nearly two years. The work we've accomplished together to grow Ontario's agriculture and food industry will be an important launch pad, as I embark on my new role as parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

The importance of the agri-food industry to our communities and to our economy cannot be understated. Agri-business remains one of the most resilient components for our economy and contributes well over \$48 billion to Ontario's GDP, supporting 800,000 jobs. Of note, agriculture and agri-businesses grew during the pandemic, and they continue on that upward trajectory.

I'd also like to congratulate my friends and colleagues, my neighbour from the riding of Essex as well as the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston, both accomplished and seasoned professionals. Congratulations on your appointments to this important portfolio. I know you'll have plenty of experience and insight to contribute. I know their experience and their unique insights will continue to support the goals of growing Ontario's agriculture and food industry to meet the goals of our government's Grow Ontario Strategy to strengthen the agri-food sector, ensure an efficient, reliable and responsive food supply, and address ongoing vulnerabilities through new innovations.

I'd like to first acknowledge what the ARIO is and the important role it serves. ARIO was created back in 1962 by the ARIO Act. The act was created for the purpose of

promoting research to improve the agriculture industry on a continuum.

Our government is committed to advancing agriculture and research innovation to ensure continued progress in this sector and related sectors. We need to be able to commercially adopt emerging technology and research to maintain our position as a world leader in agriculture and food production.

The context of today's agriculture and food sectors in Ontario offers a world of possibilities, but the time the act was first conceived was far different than today. The food industry has matured. It has become more specialized and complex, with incredible progress made in automation, robotics, biotechnology, artificial intelligence and innovative technologies.

Given how much change has taken place in the world in the years since the act was established, it's certainly the most opportune time to adjust that, to pivot and to be able to seize upon this research and innovation. This is why legislation is so important to meeting this goal.

The emphasis on innovation is so foundational to the ARIO that this government is proposing changes to the very name to highlight Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario.

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The amendments being proposed involve updating the definition of "research" from what it was initially many years ago. In the current act, the definition of "research" describes "agriculture, veterinary medicine and household science." It seems funny that household science was a pivotal component of this research, but in the 1960s this definition was purely adequate. Today, the range of agriculture and food-related research initiatives occurring in Ontario is complex, sophisticated and different. In fact, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is continually evolving its research programming, recognizing the changing nature of research priorities and practices.

Our government has developed key priorities to reflect a broad set of industry needs, with the potential to lead to new discoveries and innovations to benefit this sector and sectors beyond it. We understand that formal and informal stakeholder engagement opportunities are the key to identifying what the research priorities and needs are. We deeply respect these insights and work diligently to put them into action. That's why, prior to tabling this legislation, our government undertook a rigorous process of consultation with a broad series of stakeholders and board members to gain their insights into current and future needs. Our team was proud to help lead it and hosted three initial round table consultations from November 2022 until January 2023 with over 75 stakeholders to collect input on modernization.

Following these engagements, we posted a discussion paper on the regulatory registry for 30 days in the spring of 2023 to collect further input on proposed changes to this important act. The discussion paper was also sent directly to agri-food stakeholders, academic institutions, industry partners and Indigenous communities, including First

Nations communities and associations, as well as the Métis Nation of Ontario, for very important comment.

As a result, our government proposed an updated mandate for the ARIO Act that now includes consultation with academic and research experts, producers, processors, industry and relevant organizations to determine the future needs of our industry. We're committed to being flexible during these engagements to ensure that unanticipated research, such as emerging plant or animal diseases, can be captured on an as-needed basis.

Today, areas of research are incredibly diverse and include food safety, animal health and welfare, plant health and protection, soil health and many other areas to help grow Ontario. These research areas of focus are clearly far more sophisticated and further-ranging than they were when the act was first conceived in 1962.

In light of this expansion of research that benefits industry, the proposed changes to the act will help align our industry with the world as it is today. These proposed changes to modernize the act will help us keep growing Ontario together and support the government's commitments expressed in the Grow Ontario Strategy. This is why this bill has my full support and I'm proud to hear it has support throughout this House.

I can't tell you how interesting and difficult it was to pivot from a career in public service and policing to an executive in agriculture. One of the very first obstacles I had to overcome was a global virus that began to attack tomato plants and emerged in Ontario in 2019, one year after I began my career in agriculture. This act and the innovation it's embedded in how we now see the research and how that leads to industry and commercialization is exactly what we needed back then.

I'm so proud to have my signature on it for the future of this act and the future of growing in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Questions?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I have a question for the speaker who just spoke about his time serving as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, and who probably knows all sorts of things that I can't even imagine about farming and agriculture.

But I do know a little bit about innovation and have had an opportunity, actually, as a member of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus that looks at Great Lakes health and the watershed around the Great Lakes, and having been to a few demonstration farms where they're implementing innovative practices to help with nutrient management and retain more of the nutrients in the soil, whether that's timing and when it's put on the field or how it runs off and is filtered before it gets into the lakes, etc. So my question is, what are some Ontario examples of farm innovations that we could all maybe learn to be proud of?

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** I appreciate the question. Technology and innovation is something that I embraced right away. I embrace those complexities. I learned it from growing up on a small farm that resembles much like the Holland Marsh ones do: a muck farm, root vegetables.

Even back then in the early 1980s—I'm dating myself—we talked about fertilizers. They're expensive, but their use in the runoff is critical. So applying fertilizers and applying enhancers at the right time in the right amount, the right brand, of course, for the right technique and right crop, is critical. So proper fertilizing practices we rely on to build a sustainable well range of crops—and applying that proper fertilizer at the right time, right place, right location, the right amount and the right brand is critical. I think that's the example that my friend was seeking.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Further questions? I recognize the member from Kitchener Conestoga.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** How about that Speaker; I thought you were going over there. To the member from Chatham-Kent–Leamington, you touched a little bit on that tomato virus that affected, quite frankly, large portions of the world over the last decade. And I think when we look at research facilities and the work that they do helping develop remedies against pestilence is a large portion of that.

So I wondered if maybe you wanted to elaborate a little bit more on what you saw, obviously in the industry that you were representing, and how you think advancing research in regard to agriculture in the province can help prevent those types of things from happening in the future.

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** That's a brilliant question, because back in 2019, when Ontario first saw the tomato brown rugose fruit virus, we didn't know what it was. Its origins were somewhere in the Middle East, and we didn't know what it would do to the food supply. But what it does is attack our food supply. It makes plants that should be green, healthy and vibrant turn yellow and brown. It makes the fruit turn yellow, spotty brown. And critically, it decreases the amount of yield. Farms have no resistance; there is no cure.

But we asked our researchers how could we possibly pivot? What research body do we have? We had none. So we had to develop it on the fly. And we re-sought advice from Vineland, and they were one of the first pioneers to actually literally rip out experiments and stop projects in progress to help us pivot and find a remedy for this. And they worked with seed companies throughout the world to find this, and we're just now, in 2024, overcoming this multimillion-dollar loss and this threat to our food supply.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Further questions? I recognize the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** To the member from—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Chatham-Kent–Leamington.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Chatham-Kent–Leamington. He's very knowledgeable on the agricultural sector. I would just like to have his views on the importance of having tissue culture facilities in the province as opposed to having to import tissue stock, seed stock from other jurisdictions, and if having to import seed stock does jeopardize our long-term future of being leaders in various fruit crop and vegetable crops.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Response.

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** Thank you to the member opposite. We have many good conversations, even though he can't ever recall my riding, but we do have a lot of good conversations.

It's an aspirational goal of mine; I've talked to the member opposite about this. One of my goals to be in this place is to strengthen food security, food supply. And that's not just by growing things. We grow great things in Ontario. We export great things in Ontario. It's my aspirational goal to actually export technology, to develop technology, to develop know-how and export knowledge, know-how; have the world come to us for answers, and our fresh fruit and vegetables; have them come to us for knowledge. So we develop here in Ontario and export to the world, to make the world a better place.

**1700**

It's one small answer, but it's one very big reason why I'm here. Thank you for the question.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** I'd like to thank the member from Chatham-Kent for his speech and for sharing his experiences as well. In the title of this proposed bill, there's a word substitution from "institute" to "innovation."

I'm wondering if the member can elaborate as to why that change and what's the significance of that change in this bill?

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** Thank you to my friend opposite. The word "innovation" is critical. That's how we get ahead. I learned a very important lesson when I was invited to be a guest in that member's riding of Newmarket–Aurora and I met the legendary Frank Stronach. Frank Stronach is an innovator—a living legend in innovation. I didn't say very much, but I listened a lot as he wove in a story of his corporate interests, and now, in his twilight years looking back, he's all about innovation, all about food security, all about organics, all about feeding children, living better, living cleaner and living longer. God bless him, I believe he's 91 years old, and sharp and brilliant. He taught me a story about innovation. He actually has a wonderful organic demonstration greenhouse in my member opposite's riding where he's doing just that: He's growing knowledge while he's growing fresh organic fruits and vegetables.

Innovation is key, and Frank Stronach will tell you that.

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

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm inspired by the Leamington and tomato connection. I had family who lived in Leamington, and my aunt used to talk about when the bell rang and the factory workers would walk into the Heinz tomato factory and they would be wearing white clothes, and then when the bell would ring at the end of the day and they would come out, they would have tomato stains on their pink garb.

My colleague from London North Centre, his mother was tomato queen in Leamington—Carol Penner—many moons ago.



We remember in this Legislature that the former member from Essex and probably the current from Essex both appreciate the French's ketchup and Heinz ketchup debate and discussion across the province. I know that this Legislature was proud to have Ontario tomatoes and Ontario ketchup in this space.

I'm going to bring it back to the bill: Would the member like to highlight anything more about tomato innovation in his neck of the woods? Certainly that was a story that got, at least, provincial attention, but the importance of growing food in our communities and people's connection, and in that case a very emotional ketchup connection, to why we have to support that?

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** I thank the member from Oshawa for that question. My grandfather was an electrician at Heinz. Heinz is an institution that the community is built around. Heinz is innovation; Heinz ketchup is innovation.

In 2014, when the Heinz company decided to move operations and transition away, I was in the Pikangikum First Nation and I was devastated, because I thought, "How is that community ever going to come back from this?" A brilliant group of former Heinz workers and executives banded together and established a new company that still received those inputs from southwestern Ontario fields—fresh tomatoes to process paste and juice and ketchup and sauces and baby food and dog food and salsa you can buy at Costco, right in Leamington.

Any made-in-Ontario success story—Heinz is one; That transition to Highbury Canco remains one. I'm so happy that they remain a pillar of our community and an important employer in my community.

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

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm glad to be able to take my place in this Legislature and discuss the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Amendment Act, which is, I will say, a non-contentious bill. This is our second opportunity to discuss agriculture and innovation in this space.

A little bit of intro for folks about what this bill is seeking to accomplish: It's the ARIO Act modernization that is at the heart of it. I'll read from the briefing from the ministry:

"Created in 1962, the ARIO is a board-governed agency of the province accountable to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs....

"Owning real property and enabling applied agri-food research is enshrined in the ARIO Act; however, the definitions around the types of agri-food research the ARIO supports is outdated and could be more relevant to the modern agri-food research environment that the agency is supporting today across academia and industry."

All that to say that there are some pretty important changes in terms of modernizing this act, but not necessarily substantive.

"The act currently limits the areas of research to 'agriculture, veterinary medicine and household science.' This focus is too narrow and does not clearly address the current research and innovation initiatives occurring in the agri-food sector in Ontario."

This debate has been a lot of members telling stories about innovations in their ridings and the importance of getting ahead of challenges like food waste, and of listening to farmers and working with researchers to make important connections. Whether that's about increasing food yield, whether that's about dealing with climate change, all of these pieces have to fit and could fit better.

In the province, I think there are 14 research centres. This is an act that will be amending the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act. One of the changes in the act is, instead of using the word "institute," it's going to be "Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario"—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Order.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Sorry, Speaker. I used to be an elementary educator, and I get distracted by the gum-chewing, the note-passing and the yammering.

**Mr. Dave Smith:** Do you need a yardstick?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** No.

Speaker, I'm going to do my best to focus.

There are a number of research centres in the province. The real-world field tests conducted at these research centres promote agri-food discoveries, validate laboratory findings, stimulate further research and provide valuable information for Ontario's agri-food sector. These research centres, owned by the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, are operated and managed by the University of Guelph through the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

We heard from our agriculture, food and rural affairs critic, for a couple of hours now in total, about this bill—really, they are top-level changes, but imagining the potential of research and innovation in the agri-food industry is limitless.

Speaker, I wanted to give you a little bit of my history and interest. I am actually not someone standing in this Legislature with a political science degree. I was going to be a doctor, for a very short period of time in my own mind, and then it turned out, in university, that it was very clear that I was not going to become a doctor. I did defect into a general biology degree and had the opportunity to do some field research—the feeding habits of starfish was one that I did on the east coast. I spent part of the summer in the rainforests of South Vietnam, actually, doing a survey of tadpoles and frogs with researchers from the University of Mississippi at the time—an interesting life that I had before. It turns out, I was pretty good at drawing, so I would sketch the mouth parts of tadpoles in Vietnam. That's a little something fun for the folks at home to know. I do have a real interest in science, in potential, in innovation, and how it connects to our real lives.

In terms of fish research and aquaculture, when I did my undergrad at Queen's University, I had the opportunity to do a little bit of study at Lake Opinicon, which is where the Queen's University Biological Station is. For over 70 years, they've been doing ecological research there on evolution, conservation and whatnot. I dabbled, but I appreciated the work that researchers were doing there.

So, imagining the work that happens in, I believe—is it Alma? I'm looking; hold on.

**Mr. Mike Harris:** Alma, yes.

1710

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Yes. Alma is doing work on aquaculture. It's a fish research centre, and it's among the 14 research centres we've been talking about here in this Legislature. But in Alma, they have 10 buildings, 365 fish-rearing units for production and research of a full range of fish, from eggs to brood stock. And they have been doing research that folks across the province have no idea about, but it makes a difference to how we eat, to how we interact with our waterways. It's interesting to know what is across our communities in spaces that most of us aren't aware of.

I will say that my father has a little hobby farm. I won't actually say where he lives because I'm pretty sure—well, anyway. I'm sure what he's doing is perfectly—it's perfectly legal; there's no question there. But I think that the building inspectors, when he was trying to get the permits to build his aquaponics greenhouse—it was maybe the first time that the building inspector had seen plans for this particular greenhouse. He's got catfish in the bottom. He's got tanks growing various plants, a fig tree for one of the things in there. He's learned a lot about self-pollinating plants. He learned it the hard way; he had to pollinate by hand his first year—all of these things.

My father is not a research centre. Maybe he could share some of his findings with folks who actually know—who had a couple more years to learn. But there are ways that we connect with interesting, innovative ideas personally, but of course, provincially.

I had mentioned earlier that I'm part of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Legislative Caucus. I've had the opportunity, as we're talking about Great Lakes, the Great Lakes' health and the Great Lakes' future—we have had the opportunity to work with farmers and visit demonstration farms in all of our watersheds and have talked about the importance of building trusting relationships and showing evidence-based approaches and working with farmers to both build the trust but also that it is a two-way street, that research has to be informed by what is happening on a farm if farmers are going to implement some of these processes to reduce runoff of the nutrients that they so carefully are trying to manage.

Fertilizer is not cheap, and it's not something you just want to wash into the river. You want to apply it at a time that you get the most yield, but also that you have the least amount of runoff. And when folks live in communities and they're concerned about algae blooms and whatnot, we definitely know that that nutrient management piece, which is a part of the research and innovation but also the agricultural umbrella—we have a lot of work to do to bring these conversations together and move forward.

For example, when we're talking about research and innovation, I wonder what is coming from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs with some of the new science that we're learning about, like PFAS. Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or short-chain synthetic chemicals, are something I have been learning about as

part of the Great Lakes legislative caucus work. Those are big words, but they're really small forever chemicals that get into our soil in a million different ways. They get into our bodies in a million different ways. And they never go away.

The research is growing, and then governments like ours are going to have to catch up and figure out what to do with that information. Because what we're seeing in the States, for example, is that every farm that tests for PFAS—just about every farm that I'm aware of that has tested for PFAS and PFOA have found it. And what is happening in the States is some of those farms are being told that they are no longer allowed to produce food, they're no longer allowed to grow.

What farmer is going to test their soil if they know that if they get bad news, they can't use that soil anymore? So what is the government going to do with that information? How do we pull in the research, how do we pull that in to support farmers and make sure that all Ontarians have arable land, have soil that can indeed be used for growing food? Certainly, in Ontario, we've been having conversations around how many acres of farmland are evaporating—"evaporating" sounds like a passive process—are being destroyed and are no longer going to be able to be used for food production.

Then, also, we need to be connecting with the research folks and listening to them, especially around PFAS and PFOA. If people are like, "What is she talking about?" look that one up. It's a growing body of problematic evidence for us across North America.

One more thing that I wanted to highlight—because one of these research centres is in Winchester. In Winchester, they have the Ontario Crops Research Centre. I raise this because I was raised in Winchester. I was born at the hospital in Winchester. I lived in Chesterville and Winchester and am a product of that rural community. We moved away from there actually to not that far from the Holland Marsh. But I remember Ault Foods in that area, which was the first cheese factory in Dundas county in 1891. I remember going there and getting big containers of margarine, which I feel like I must be misremembering because margarine is not a dairy product and Ault Foods certainly were dairy giants. But I still remember going there. It was margarine, but they were in containers that—they were either white or fluorescent orange. We weren't allowed to have the fluorescent orange stuff because I had had an allergic reaction to Strawberry Shortcake cereal as a child, and my mother would not allow us to have any artificial colours.

When I talked to the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane, he remembers as well that, in Quebec, it was actually illegal to have margarine be the same colour as butter. So they actually had to dye it and make it either this white or this fluorescent orange. For the kids sitting here, I know. Crazy, right?

But anyway, there are things like that that I remember. I don't know that that was an innovation at the time, but we have watched the agricultural sector and the food sector grow and change through the years. I'm glad to be

able to stand here and kind of story tell today, because this is not a contentious bill, not even a little bit. But because it's here, and we have the chance to talk about some of these things, I'm glad to.

I will wrap it up and leave it there, and if anyone has any amazing questions to ask me, we'll see what happens.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Questions?

**Mr. Dave Smith:** I was listening to the speech, but I missed part of it. So if I could get you to explain a little bit more about the research that you did on amphibians and tadpoles and so on when you were back in university, because ironically, that's the type of research that my daughter did as well when she was in university.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I will tell you that in university, I was an enthusiastic participant in some aspects of university life, but I wasn't a big attender. The field studies allowed me to not have to attend lectures. So I chose one that fit; it happened to be in Vietnam. So I went on a field study to Vietnam. It was a two-week course in the Nam Cat Tien rainforest.

All of my colleagues were studying insects. I realized really quickly that I was not going to be successful in that, and so I worked with a professor—his name was Ronn Altig—who had worked on the anuran key for North America, actually, but from Mississippi. He was there studying tadpoles and frogs and basically doing a survey of what was there after the defoliation from Agent Orange in the war. So I spent a lot of the time with a microscope and little tadpoles in formalin, drawing their mouthparts, of all things. But yes, I was collecting tadpoles in the rainforest for a summer. Who knew?

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Question?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario is important, and we support it. That said, we have the next chapter of the greenbelt scandal happening in Wilmot township; greenbelt 2.0, I call it. If this can happen to us, then it can happen to any farming community across Ontario.

1720

This government has enabling legislation before the House, the "get it done wrong" act, which fast-tracks expropriation of farmland like the 770 acres of prime agricultural land in Wilmot. Developers caught wind of the rezoning from farmland to industrial and are offering to purchase the land cheap. So is the region, who are bound by an NDA at the request of the province.

What do you make of the loss of 319 acres of farmland that this institute will never get the chance to study?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Obviously, the member has been spending a lot of time in the House bringing voice to this issue alongside the farmers. I think it's an important reminder to all of that we have to work with farmers. If they are sounding the alarm, then the government is on the wrong side of that conversation. We cannot afford to be losing farmland that has value for food production.

Certainly, in this specific case, I know some of the concerning elements that the members has raised are that

we don't know the details because of the NDAs that have been signed. We're seeing that that is a worrying trend in how this government does business in multiple areas. But at the end of the day, we should be doing our best to protect farmland, to work with farmers and, I think, in this specific situation, to return to those farmers and have honest and open conversations about what comes next.

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I want to offer to the member a quote from Dr. Shayan Sharif, the associate vice-president of research at the University of Guelph. He said the following: "The modernized act will ensure ARIO can continue to grow Ontario by supporting world-class research and innovation that meets the needs of the modern agri-food industry, and the University of Guelph is there to be counted on as a long-term partner and advocate. We have had a long-standing relationship with OMAFRA"—that's the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs—"and ARIO that has stood the test of time. Our commitment to Ontario's agri-good sector is rooted in history, but focused on the future."

I offer the member that quote, and I invite her to comment on it with the remaining time.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It is refreshing to stand here and talk about a bill that all of us support because the work has been done to get it to this point, with everyone rowing in the same direction—or, rather, everyone growing in the same direction.

When you have academic institutions and the farming community as well as the research folks all on side with these changes, then that's a good-news story. And I hope that the government is heartened by praise and that they will work harder to bring forward more pieces of legislation where everyone is on the same page because it's good, solid, well-researched legislation.

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

**Mr. Joel Harden:** I want to congratulate my friend for that speech. She brings a lot of expertise into the House. She mentioned her training as an elementary educator. I'm always shocked at the amount of research and sticky notes and preparation that goes into this member's speeches.

But I want to ask you, just given what you said—I'm familiar with the fact that in other parts of the world students are taught in school to know a lot more about the food that's grown in their communities. If ARIO is actually going to start to do some research, could there not be a good case for doing more collaborative research with elementary and secondary school educators, even kindergarten and preschool educators, so children begin to understand the kinds of foods and the kinds of products that are grown in their communities so they one day will teach that to their children?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I love education; I really do. And any opportunity to help people better understand and interact with their world is the right thing. Whether kids learn about where their food is grown, how it comes to them, if something ripens on a truck versus ripens on a tree, the nutrition changes there—all of that is of interest.

We had talked earlier in the debate about food waste and ways that we could do better. I think when we're talking about education of not just our children, but of our neighbours, I think that it is incumbent upon any government to go back to the public service announcements that we remember from our childhood—maybe I'm dating myself—to talk about ways to do better.

I remember when the compost bin was new. I remember when the recycling bin was new. We learned how to use it. We learned why to use it.

So if there are innovative things that are coming from the research community, I think, broadly, education is needed, but there's a real opportunity here to share some of it.

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

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** The member from Oshawa talked about how important it is to get legislation right and to do your due diligence and to bring people into the conversation—to consult before, not after. This leaves us with better legislation, with better laws.

There are a number of people right here in the House today who have been participating for years now in advocating around intimate partner violence. And we do have the Renfrew county report, which has 86 recommendations; 68 of those, the province can be responsible for and should be responsible for—

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** I'm just going to remind the member that we're talking about agriculture.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Can you talk about the importance of process in creating legislation?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm going to tie these things together, and I very much appreciate having a full house of folks from Ontario here to participate in the process.

To your question about process: This bill has been an example of folks working together, and that's important. As you mentioned, this afternoon will be a debate based on the Renfrew county inquest and the recommendations, and interesting in that is that Renfrew county is a rural part of the world with very specific—how the world works in rural Ontario is different than how it works in downtown Toronto. Recommendations came from that inquest that were very particular to a rural community.

So I think as we're going to leave this debate eventually—not yet; don't worry, Speaker—I do think that involving communities, their expertise, whether that's research and science or farm; whether that's agency and organization workers, we have to draw from the expertise of those people who are offering it and are qualified to give it. We can't just make things up on our own.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** A little stretch on the roundup, but okay.

Further debate?

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** The bill we are debating today was prepared by consulting with the farmers and those involved with food production who were part of the process from the beginning. So this is a bill we are very

happy to support. It's a good model of how to develop legislation that the government won't have to rescind a few months from now.

The bill itself is mostly a case of modernizing language and cleaning a few things up, because it's quite an old—the original bill comes from 1962. At the time, it created the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, and the name is being changed to Agricultural Research Innovation Ontario, which allows them to keep the same acronym, ARIO. So that's kind of a happy change.

I'm also really happy that this bill affirms that the 14 research stations owned and operated by the province will continue to be funded. These research stations are provincial assets and serve the needs of farmers throughout the entire province. These 14 research stations are able to focus on the unique growing, marketing and transportation conditions in each region. Some stations focus on crops; some on animals; some on both. But each station has its own geographical location and then geographical considerations.

In the case of the Lakehead University Agricultural Research Station, seed trials, for example, take place over two-to-three-year-long periods, long enough to ascertain whether a particular strain of a seed will grow in our northern climate; what fertilizers work best and are most climate-friendly; whether crop yields can be increased; whether certain strains are more resistant to local pests and so on.

Our station in Thunder Bay is run by Dr. Tarlok Singh Sahota, who has been working and living in Thunder Bay for many years. I had seen his name many times in the news over the years, but I finally had the chance to meet Dr. Singh Sahota in November at the opening of the new Sikh gurdwara. This was a celebration, actually, of the growing community of Sikhs who are now living in Thunder Bay. It was a lovely opportunity to finally meet him. Now, I didn't have much of a chance to talk to him about his work that day, so I'm looking forward to the tours that take place in August and that will showcase the work of the station. I'm really interested to have that opportunity.

**1730**

Now, if you know about the ruggedness of the shoreline of Lake Superior or the great rock edifice known as Sleeping Giant, you might not realize what an incredible number and variety of farms are in our region. You can see some of this variety if you go to the Thunder Bay Country Market and other local markets that take place throughout the region. But even then, you wouldn't see the full array of products produced by our local farmers, because some of it goes straight to processors. Milk, for example, goes to a processor then it goes out to market, but we don't necessarily see, because it becomes compiled—I don't think that's quite the right word, but all the milk gets mixed together and then it gets sent out.

We've got dairy farms, beef, pigs, veal, all kinds of seed crops, greenery, green crops and horse farms. The horses

actually wind up at the Woodbine Racetrack—lots and lots of things going on, so it's very, very interesting.

I might have cut this out, but I think I have time: If you look at our region, there's the Slate River Valley, which is quite fertile, but then, there is also the Nor'Wester Mountains here and here. So there's just that area, but there are a few areas in Kakabeka Falls, in Murillo and actually out toward the Sleeping Giant, Hurkett, Dorion and Pass Lake on Sleeping Giant, which is just this enormous rock edifice. So actually, I have been quite surprised to realize how much farming is taking place out there.

Now I want to move to some very serious issues affecting farmers throughout northwestern and northeastern Ontario. But before I do that, I actually want to do a shout-out to Bill Groenheide, who represents the Ontario Federation of Agriculture for a huge swath of northern Ontario, and I wanted to mention his granddaughter Avery. I met Avery at the science fair in Thunder Bay a week ago where she and her best friend were explaining their amazing science experiment—things I knew nothing about. It was so much fun. And Avery was telling me proudly about her opa's farm, called Tarrymore Farms, owned by the Groenheide family. It was just one of those things; when you're living in Thunder Bay, suddenly you discover that there's no degree of separation. Somebody I met on a professional level is the grandfather of the young woman I met at the science fair, who I must say is incredibly bright.

And yes, I was inspired actually and a little bit in awe of the experiments I saw young people sharing at the science fair. We are in good shape for great discoveries in the future. Now, all we need is for this government to rectify their underfunding of post-secondary institutions so that research can be conducted in all branches of knowledge at the highest level. So there's great work happening in the elementary schools. Let's make it possible for that work to continue also in post-secondary education.

Now, I want to come to this problem shared across northern Ontario and that's the dangers on the highways that put everyone and everything at risk. Peggy Brekveld, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture past president—she's well known to many people in this House—presented at the pre-budget hearings in Thunder Bay. A great deal of her presentation focused on the risks of transporting food products and animals on Highway 11/17.

There are risks that come from constant highway closures, delays which can result in produce spoiling or animals being put under enormous stress. Now, our member from Timiskaming–Cochrane spoke about that a little bit earlier today. You can't just have animals sit for two days on a highway that has been closed. It's causing harm to those animals, and there are laws against that. But if the highway is closed, what are you going to do? So it's certainly a problem that is interfering with the ability of people and farmers to manage what they're doing and for those products to actually get to market.

Sometimes these closures are about weather conditions, but far more often, they are about trucking accidents on these highways that are also our main streets.

On April 2, there was a seven-truck pileup—I believe it was just outside of Kenora—and on the same day, there was a four-truck pileup near Longlac. I believe what happened is, in the Longlac case, the first truck jackknifed. The road was covered in snow. All the other trucks piled right into the first one, because they travel in trains; they travel close together so that they're drafting. It's an attempt to save gas and time, but it's not safe, as we can see.

I wish this was the exception—the number of accidents—and not simply an escalation of what we witness every day on these highways, but it is not an exception.

We are getting some important improvements to parts of our main thoroughfares. The twinning of sections of Highway 11 is proceeding, and we have a brand new, state-of-the-art inspection station in Shuniah. The great thing about this inspection station is that it is almost impossible for drivers to avoid. Whether they are coming down from Highway 17 or coming along Highway 11, this station could potentially catch just about everybody travelling east. For those travelling west, there's a large pullout that can be staffed by the OPP. So it's all looking really good. I was there for the opening. It's state-of-the-art; it's wonderful.

But here we come to the crunch: Ministry staff told me that they really wanted to have this station operating full-time, but we also know that the wage package is not enough to attract and keep workers. So we do have another instance where—\$32 million, I think, was spent on the capital cost to build the station, but the workers themselves are being shortchanged. It reminds me of the situation for conservation officers, for wildland firefighters—that the wages and benefits don't match the responsibilities of the job.

I would like to read parts of a letter now sent to Minister Sarkaria this week that expresses what everyone living in the region knows but that keeps being ignored by this government. The letter was written by Truckers for Safer Highways, one of the groups that we have worked with a lot:

“We were initially encouraged by the reports of the new inspection station and scale in the township of Shuniah, Ontario. It appeared to be a promising tool for the MTO enforcement team to enhance the safety standards of vehicles and drivers traversing northern Ontario. However, our optimism has been met with disappointment.

“Since its official inauguration, my colleagues and I have seldom witnessed the operation of this new facility by enforcement officers, regardless of the time of day. For this investment to yield the intended results, the location must be operational for extended periods, ideally up to 16 hours a day. The lack of consistent operation at this station emboldens drivers to take unsafe risks, jeopardizing public safety with disregard for regulations concerning equipment safety, licensing, documentation, and freight weight management.

“Additionally, we request a comprehensive update on the progress of new and refurbished rest areas across Ontario. Efforts to expand rest areas in the northern regions have been insufficient. Adequate parking spaces are essential for drivers to obtain proper rest, yet the shortage persists, exacerbating fatigue-related risks on our highways.”

I think I’ve spoken before in this House about the fact that there are long, long stretches with no passing lanes and no shoulders, so when a truck pulls over, it rolls over. It’s amazing how often that happens, and it’s really tragic.

“Truckers for Safer Highways has consistently communicated our concerns regarding highway safety, particularly regarding the training of new drivers and the enforcement of existing regulations.

“Regrettably, the influx of inadequately trained drivers has contributed to an alarming rate of truck-related collisions.

“Despite our attempts to engage with your office on these matters, responses have been either generic or non-existent. This lack of meaningful dialogue suggests a disinterest in the first-hand experiences and observations of those who navigate our highways daily, witnessing the consequences of unsafe driving practices first-hand.”

1740

I have heard the same thing from commercial drivers based in Thunder Bay who regularly update my office on how often, or not often, the inspection station is open. I want to tell you about a photograph that was sent to my office last week with the pedals of a commercial truck, one taped green for go and one taped red for the brakes. Now, how did we get this picture in the first place? The driver had to ask another professional driver working for a reputable company to go into his truck and back it up because he didn’t know how to do it.

These new drivers are being put on the road without the training and without the knowledge to be safe. It’s not fair to them, and it’s certainly not fair to other highway users.

So, look after the training of drivers, staff the inspection stations, and you will be working also for the safety of farmers, their products and everyone else who uses these roads which happen to also be the Trans-Canada Highway.

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

Seeing none, Mr. Leardi has moved third reading of Bill 155, An Act to amend the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say “aye.”

All those opposed, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until the next instance of deferred votes.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Orders of the day? I recognize the member from Chatham-Kent-Leamington.

**Mr. Trevor Jones:** Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to now see the clock at 6.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Mr. Jones is seeking unanimous consent to see the clock at 6. Is it the pleasure of the House? Agreed? Agreed.

#### VISITOR

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** I will just recognize a point of order by the member for Toronto Centre.

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** Thank you very much, Speaker. It’s an honour to rise today. I want to specifically welcome my wife, Farrah Khan, who has been going through 11 months of cancer treatment. This is a very rare outing for her, so thank you, sweetheart, for being here today.

*Applause.*

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

##### INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC ACT, 2024

##### LOI DE 2024 SUR L’ÉPIDÉMIE DE VIOLENCE ENTRE PARTENAIRES INTIMES

Mrs. Gretzky moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 173, An Act respecting intimate partner violence /  
Projet de loi 173, Loi concernant la violence entre  
partenaires intimes.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation. I recognize the member.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It’s always an honour to rise in the Legislature but, today, I rise with both the greatest honour and sadness as we debate Bill 173, the Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act, 2024, which I have co-sponsored with my colleagues from Toronto Centre, London West and Toronto–St. Paul’s. But frankly, Speaker, it’s everybody in the NDP caucus who has put their heart and soul and their effort into seeing this bill get called before this House for debate today, so I want to thank all of my colleagues for the incredible outreach that you have done.

I also want to thank—take a look around the galleries here, all around us—every single survivor, every family member of a victim, every advocate and service provider in the room. This day would not have happened without you, and I cannot thank you enough. I cannot express how grateful I am for the incredible work that you do every single day to end the violence.

I also want to take an opportunity because they don’t get enough credit for the work they do—they are the unsung heroes behind the scenes, we all have them, in every caucus, it doesn’t matter which party you’re from—I want to take the opportunity to thank all the staff, whether

that is the folks on our central team, whether that is the staff from the MPPs' offices or the constituency offices, they have done an awful lot of work.

To my EA, Farah, who is off today, celebrating Eid with her family—I want to thank you all because this day would not have happened without the effort from that entire team, and, again, they are often the unsung heroes and they do not get enough credit for the work that they do for us every day.

Speaker, the bill, if passed, would enact the first recommendation of the Renfrew county coroner's inquest into the murders of Carol Culleton, Nathalie Warmerdam, and Anastasia Kuzyk, and have the government finally declare intimate partner violence an epidemic in Ontario.

Now, I know this topic is heavy and difficult to hear and, frankly, it's difficult to talk about for many here in the galleries at Queen's Park, and it's difficult for the folks that are watching from home. I want to thank everyone that has shared their stories, their knowledge and their suggestions during the development of Bill 173, and for the outpouring of support leading up to and including the debate today.

Speaker, we have people here from the deep south—as I call my region, Windsor-Essex county—right through to northern Ontario, from east to west. And I know some of my colleagues that are going to speak are going to recognize some of the folks that are here. But I just wanted to point that out, how important this bill is to people, how important the declaration is to people around this province that they have travelled from near and far to be here today for this debate.

Speaker, at the beginning of my remarks, I said I rise with great honour and sadness to speak today, and I want to explain why: honour, because I have been given the privilege to represent to people of Windsor West, to use that privilege in this Legislature to speak on behalf of my constituents but also to raise my voice on behalf of people across Ontario who have been silenced by intimate partner or gender-based violence, for my missing and murdered Indigenous sisters and for my trans sisters, for everyone whose lives are ended as a result of femicide—to share that there are thousands of victims, survivors, their loved ones, community advocates, elected representatives, police services and nearly 100 municipalities across Ontario asking, begging this government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic—and sadness, frankly, Speaker, that we are still debating whether or not intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Ontario. We know that rates of intimate partner violence, or IPV, including femicide rose dramatically in the early months of the pandemic. That has not decreased. It is growing and it is spreading. It is an epidemic.

I want to express my gratitude to Fartumo Kusow from Windsor for joining us here today, and to wish her Eid Mubarak. She travelled from Windsor during Eid because this is such an important topic. Her beautiful daughter Sahra Bulle was allegedly murdered by her husband last year, and that court case is under way. She came here; one of the hearings was yesterday.

I want to thank Erin Lee, the executive director of Lanark County Interval House and Community Support, who has been an instrumental force in getting municipalities all around the province to declare IPV an epidemic; Kirsten Mercer, the lawyer who represented End Violence Against Renfrew County during the coroner's inquest in June 2022; Sami Pritchard and her team from the YWCA Toronto for the incredible work that they are doing, combatting gender-based violence; and all the advocates and service providers like Pamela Cross from Luke's Place; Sylvie Guenther from Hiatus House in Windsor; Lady Laforet from the Welcome Centre for Women and Children, also in Windsor; Nisa Homes, also in Windsor; as well as Chief Mary Duckworth of Caldwell First Nation, who joins us here today, along with council members and Chief Sault from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

All the organizations across this province—I want to thank you all for the life-saving and life-changing work that you do daily with very limited resources that you have.

#### 1750

On Tuesday, June 28, 2022, the jury recommendations from the inquest into the deaths of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam were presented. In total, there were 86 recommendations for change, most of them directed to the provincial government—recommendations about oversight and accountability; system approaches; collaboration and communication; funding; education and training; measures addressing perpetrators of intimate partner violence; intervention; and safety.

The very first recommendation from that inquest was for the provincial government to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic—the very first recommendation—a simple yet incredibly important and impactful step that this Conservative government outright rejected at the time. The federal government acknowledged intimate partner violence as an epidemic in its formal response to a coroner's inquest months after the Ontario government refused to do so.

Speaker, this government was terribly wrong—terribly wrong—to reject or resist that first recommendation, and today, they have an opportunity to do the right thing. This morning, they indicated they're going to. We want to ensure that they follow through, that they don't just vote in favour of Bill 173 today and send it off to committee, never to be called again; that they actually pass the legislation through third reading, make sure it receives royal assent and make it happen. It should happen today, frankly. It should happen today.

Declaring IPV to be an epidemic has both symbolic and practical value. It validates the experiences of countless women, men and gender-diverse people, thousands of whom carry shame about the abuse they've been subjected to; thousands who believe they won't be heard, won't be believed, won't be helped and will suffer alone; thousands who will not see justice, like Cait Alexander, a survivor who is with us today, whose court case was thrown out, and the murderer walks free; thousands who will die from

the violence. It moves IPV out of the shadows and into the public health realm, where it belongs. It shines a light on this significant issue and opens the door to the all-of-government and all-of-society discussions that are needed if we are actually going to eradicate IPV. And it will help save lives.

This Conservative government rejected many of the 86 recommendations. They rejected recommendations 2 and 3, which were to establish an independent intimate partner violence commission and consult to determine its mandate. They rejected recommendation number 4, which called on the creation of the role of a survivor advocate. They rejected recommendation 5 to institute a provincial implementation committee dedicated to ensuring that the recommendations from the inquest are implemented and reported on.

On average, a woman is killed by an intimate partner every six days in Canada—one every six days. With attempted murders included, that stat becomes one almost every other day.

From Windsor, all across Essex county, to Toronto; from Hamilton to Milton and Oshawa; from Niagara, Lanark to Renfrew; from Ottawa to Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins; from Mississauga to Sudbury and Thunder Bay; from Sarnia, Brantford, London to Brampton, just to name a few, nearly 100 municipalities have already taken the step to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic. So the question is, why did the provincial government refuse to do the same? Why are we here today having to debate this? It was semantics. Why are they ignoring the inquest recommendations while justifying their decision with an incredibly narrow-minded approach by saying that IPV was not an infectious or communicable disease?

Speaker, I want to read a quote. I know I don't have much time left in my 12 minutes. I'm certainly not going to get through all my notes, but I want to read a quote from Fartumo Kusow, speaking directly to the government saying that they weren't going to pass it or declare it because it's not an infectious or communicable disease: "The suffering her daughter endured at the hands of an intimate partner left nothing but pain and caused a ripple effect of trauma through her family.

"We have this fever caused by this virus that's invading us, growing and growing—if that's not showing the government intimate partner violence is invasive, pervasive, predictable' and preventable, 'I don't know what else would convince them.

"The trauma is so deep and far-reaching, affecting every generation, from a grandmother to a great-grandchild and staying with us forever."

Speaker, I have a little less than 35 seconds left, and I just want to say to the government that intimate partner violence can impact anybody, can happen to anybody, but it disproportionately impacts women—our missing and murdered Indigenous sisters, racialized women, queer women. We should not have to be here debating whether or not the lives of our sisters are worth one single line, one single declaration.

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

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** I rise in the House today to support Bill 173, An Act respecting intimate partner violence, calling on the government to recognize intimate partner violence as an epidemic in Ontario. I want to start by expressing my gratitude to the government, who actually indicated this morning that they would support this bill. I think it is important and it is appropriate because, to date, 94 municipalities have already done this across the province.

The city of Ottawa declared intimate partner violence an epidemic on International Women's Day in 2023, following the results of an inquest into the murders of three women in the Ottawa Valley by a man with a known history of violence against women. It's time for the province to do the same.

During the pandemic, intimate partner violence rates dramatically increased, as many people had no choice but to stay home with their abusers. Home is not a safe place for everyone. For women experiencing intimate partner violence, the home is the space where physical, psychological and sexual abuse occurs. Abusers take advantage of the lack of scrutiny from outsiders, such as friends and family, in their private lives. Restrictions on movement during the pandemic also shut women off from any avenues of escape and their support networks, making it difficult to report the abuse.

Intimate partner violence also has a significant negative impact on the children of the household, and this needs to be remembered.

One of my constituents fears for her son's safety along with her own. She and her son experienced domestic violence at the hands of her son's father, and she shared with me the many attempts to have his safety taken into consideration by the courts, to no avail. The father still has shared custody of her son. Her case demonstrates how intimate partner violence and domestic violence are systemic problems.

It is frustrating to see that systems that are meant to protect victims of intimate partner violence and domestic violence lack funding, support, and qualified, trained officials. I do hope that if the bill passes, there will be meaningful work to implement solutions to address the systems' deficiencies and the need for appropriate government funding to NGOs that support victims of domestic violence.

Declaring intimate partner violence an epidemic would help us protect those among us who are the most vulnerable in situations of abuse—and I'm talking about children here. It would send a clear message to abusers and victims that we understand the urgency of the problem and that we are set on addressing it.

To use the government's favourite words, I'll say, let's get it done.

**1800**

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



**MPP Jill Andrew:** I'm deeply honoured to have co-sponsored Bill 173, a bill that will declare intimate partner violence an epidemic. I'm standing here today on behalf of every survivor of gender-based violence in this Legislature here today, including myself and members from my home of St. Paul's—too many of you to thank. Thank you for being here. I stand on behalf of every family member and loved one who has had to stand alongside a survivor they love. I stand for those whose loved ones have been murdered through femicide. I stand for survivors who have felt like they are standing alone in our often-unjust justice system, a system where 126 cases were tossed out of court in October 2022 due to stays because of government underfunding and understaffing of the court system.

Speaker, 94 cities, towns, counties and regions have declared intimate partner violence an epidemic, and this morning during question period, the government said they will be supporting our Bill 173. Thank you. They will declare intimate partner violence an epidemic across Ontario. My question is, when? I'm asking this Conservative government today, in front of everyone, especially survivors, please, push this bill past committee, past third reading. Let us grant it royal assent today in the Legislature. This government has a majority government. They can do it; they have done it before.

Intimate partner violence is an epidemic. It's a public health crisis. We are in a crisis. Many women, many with children, want to flee from abusers, but they cannot. Why? Because they cannot access real, deeply affordable housing. They have no access to paid sick days, no work benefits, unliveable wages, so they must rely on their abuser. Some have no addresses. Shelters are full. Transitional and supportive housing funding? Well, that wasn't mentioned in the recent budget, I might add. Intimate partner violence is a feminist issue. It is an issue of truth and reconciliation. It is an anti-racism issue. And it is a labour issue in need of immediate attention.

Sixty-eight of the 86 recommendations from the Renfrew county inquest that came after the horrendous 2015 murders of Carol Culleton, Anastasia Kuzyk and Nathalie Warmerdam fall under provincial jurisdiction. That means it is this government's responsibility to rise to the occasion and implement this call to action. The government has said they want to do research by a committee. The research and the recommendations are on this Premier's desk and have been for almost two years now. We cannot afford to make this partisan. Let's get to work and legislate Bill 173 today so we can implement the recommendations now.

While IPV can happen to anyone, it disproportionately impacts women, including women who are systematically marginalized and who are often unseen, unheard, undervalued and not believed: Indigenous women; Black women; racialized women; trans women and gender-diverse people; women with disabilities; women experiencing homelessness; underhoused women; incarcerated women; immigrant, refugee and non-status women.

Today, the Conservative government has said they will take a first important step to stand with survivors. They will declare intimate partner violence an epidemic. We

need you to go a step further. Do not make survivors wait. Do not re-traumatize them by having them recount what they have already told you for six years now. Grant our Bill 173 royal assent. Make it law. Declare intimate partner violence an epidemic today.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I want to begin with my profound thanks to the front-line workers, the advocates, the family members and, especially, the survivors who are here today. Thank you for your advocacy and support. I'm also grateful to representatives from London's Changing Ways and the London Abused Women's Centre who travelled to Queen's Park for this debate.

Speaker, there is not a person in this room who is unaffected by intimate partner violence: themselves, someone they know, someone they work with, someone in their community. The story that will stay with me forever is that of Stephanie and Ashley Daubs, sisters in London aged 12 and 15, full of life and promise, killed by their father in 2006 in a brutal act of vengeance against his estranged wife, Debby. Ashley's classmate at Clarke Road Secondary School, struggling to understand such an incomprehensible loss, made a video about the two girls to raise awareness of intimate partner violence. It is a gut-wrenching, heartbreaking watch.

Stephanie and Ashley are among the more than 1,000 victims of femicide in Ontario since 1990. Their deaths highlight the pervasiveness of intimate partner violence. It can happen anywhere and to anyone. And while its consequences are greatest for victims and survivors, it causes deep and lasting trauma for the shattered families, friends, co-workers, neighbours and communities.

But IPV is also preventable if we recognize and act on the warning signs identified through 20 years of Domestic Violence Death Review Committee reports, through countless research studies and through the recommendations of the Renfrew coroner's inquest. By declaring intimate partner violence as a public health emergency, we can urgently swing into action to mobilize resources, coordinate systems and services and implement policy and legislative changes necessary to prevent it.

Speaker, two years after the Renfrew coroner's report, we can be the voice for Caitlin Jennings in London, whose father Dan is here today, for Stephanie and Ashley and for all those affected by IPV. No more lost women and children. No more grieving families. We have the political will. Let's use it.

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

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** To begin with, the government will be supporting this bill today. Our government has a zero-tolerance policy for anyone who victimizes another person, and that includes acts of intimate partner violence, domestic violence and human trafficking. That's why, since 2018, we have worked extensively to ensure that women and children who are victims of these horrific crimes have the supports they need to get out of harmful situations and to heal afterwards.

In fact, our government will go a step further beyond supporting this bill today. The government will ask the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to conduct an in-depth study on all aspects with respect to intimate partner violence. We have to do more in terms of responding to this issue. We believe the committee will need to go to all parts of the province and be given the tools and the resources required to come back with recommendations—recommendations that will ensure that we have all the supports in place and that we will lead the nation in terms of how we respond.

We have seen the devastating affects that intimate partner violence can have on a community. In 2015, the community of Renfrew was shaken by the loss of three women at the hands of a partner. And last year, the town of Sault Ste. Marie tragically lost three children and their mother at the hands of the father and husband. And we know there are many cases that don't make the headlines, and we acknowledge the pain and the suffering that these women and children go through silently. These wounds don't close right away. They leave a lasting impression on every single person who knew the family, every single person who shared them in the community.

No matter where you are in Ontario, you deserve to feel safe. I want to encourage everyone who has been a victim or is currently being victimized to reach out to the local police. Help is there for you. Across Ontario, law enforcement has zero tolerance for violence of any kind. Currently, all police services in Ontario have a designated domestic violence coordinator to provide a consistent approach to domestic violence incidents. All police services in Ontario must have policies and procedures in place to manage domestic violence investigations. Further, every recruit coming out of Ontario Police College receives specific training on domestic violence and intimate partner violence. We have gone one step further and made a domestic violence investigation course available so experienced police officers can enhance their training and, since 2018, more than 220 police officers have been specifically trained as domestic violence investigators.

#### 1810

As part of the new Community Safety and Policing Act, which came into force April 1 of this year, we developed the investigations regulation which established prescribed standards relating to the undertaking and management of investigations into missing persons and various criminal offences. The regulation includes violent crime linkage analysis system reports and requirements for reportable investigations, which includes sexual assault where the victim and the person responsible are intimate partners or in a familial relationship. The regulation requires every chief of police to establish and maintain procedures for undertaking investigations, and requires every police service board and the minister to establish policies with respect to the conduct of investigations.

Last year alone, we invested more than \$4 million to support 45 projects across the province through the Victim Support Grant Program. Of the most recent \$267 million Community Safety and Policing Grant cycle, over \$38

million is going specifically to projects that directly support or address victims of domestic violence. And \$15 million has been allocated to First Nations police services for a specialized investigative services to give victims access to support services. All these dollars are already flowing to communities across the province, but the work doesn't stop just there.

Since 2018, this government has invested more than \$247 million in initiatives to end gender-based violence. Recently, we obtained a further \$162 million from the federal government for the implementation of the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence in Ontario. This is a welcome addition to the more than \$1.4 billion our government is projecting to invest in services to address and prevent gender-based violence over the life of the agreement.

Most recently, we announced an investment of \$18.7 million, which will flow to approximately 400 gender-based violence service providers across our province to help them hire more staff, improve services and increase their ability to provide services to women and children. These investments already fund services and supports like emergency shelters, counselling, 24-hour crisis lines, safety planning and transitional housing supports. We also invested an additional \$2.1 million to expand victim and sexual assault services to underserved communities.

We invested \$18.5 million to enhance the Transitional and Housing Support Program to help victims of domestic violence and survivors of human trafficking find and maintain housing, and help break the chains from their attackers.

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

The Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity continue to work with the federal government to get the gender-based violence national action plan up and running. We welcome municipalities to join with us to end this horrible crime.

As a former parliamentary assistant to the Ontario Solicitor General and the MPP for Etobicoke–Lakeshore, I have been passionate about addressing domestic violence and intimate partner violence. I am grateful for a team, led by Carla Neto at Women's Habitat, a shelter for women and children located in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore. It is always incredibly insightful to speak with the people who work directly with the survivors of domestic abuse to hear from them so they can tell us how our government can continue to support their important work.

Our government, under our Premier, is taking action. This is a matter that we approach with the utmost seriousness. Our government supports partnerships between

social services, health care providers, justice partners and community organizations to ensure the highest quality wraparound supports when it comes to assisting survivors of domestic violence.

I also want to highlight that I put forward a motion in this Ontario Legislature in support of implementing Clare's Law, which has already been adopted in other jurisdictions, including Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. My goal in putting forward this motion is to prompt Ontario to further analyze the best approach when handling disclosure of information about potential risk to partners who request this information. This can help protect partners and their children from staying in potentially abusive relationships. My proposal is about giving partners the knowledge they need to make an informed decision. I look forward to additional discussion on this topic through the justice committee process.

Through my colleague from Oakville North–Burlington, we in this House unanimously passed Keira's Law. Due to her work, all provincially appointed judges and justices of the peace are now required to be educated and trained in intimate partner violence and coercive control. In addition to the requirement of education of judges, a progress report is now made annually to the Attorney General.

To quote my colleague from Oakville North–Burlington—to the victims—“We see you. We hear you.”

I would like to note that Manitoba and Nova Scotia have also put forward the same motion, following Ontario's lead, and following that, we hear that BC and New Brunswick are also doing the same—so congratulations to my colleague for being a first for this country.

Intimate partner violence is such an important issue. We must keep talking about it and raise awareness.

And Carla, if you're watching: 10 steps forward.

Sadly, intimate partner violence impacts too many victims, children and families around this province and across the country. We all join together today because we are working in collaboration to make progress on this cause. We can all play a vital role in mitigating, preventing and addressing intimate partner violence. Through partnerships, we make progress.

I thank those of you like Carla and her team at Women's Habitat, and those watching on TV and those joining us today in the House for the work you do across this sector. Everything you do, no matter how small it may seem in the moment, has an impact on the lives of the families involved and contributes to the changes we are making and are trying to make in society. I know your work is not easy. You are amazing people who help Ontarians every day. You are exposed, sometimes daily, to traumatic circumstances. Your resilience and resolve to keeping our community members safe, often supporting and serving those who are most vulnerable, is truly inspiring.

Speaker, in conclusion, our government stands with the victims of all crimes, including intimate partner violence, gender-based violence and human trafficking. As I stated at the beginning of my remarks, we are supporting this bill.

We know that more needs to be done. That's why we will ask the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to conduct a substantive, in-depth study on intimate partner violence to give us a better understanding of what additional supports are needed; to travel across this province and to be given the tools and resources required to come back with recommendations so we can be a leader in this country; to conduct an in-depth, thorough investigation and come up with reports that we can enact as quickly as we possibly can; to look at every aspect of the issue, so we can come with a Team Ontario approach to how we deal with the challenges that are being faced every day in communities across this great province. Should the committee accept this challenge, the government will authorize and provide them with the necessary tools and resources to travel the province, and to go to other jurisdictions as needed. It is clear that more needs to be done. We need greater advice, not only from parliamentarians, but from survivors and subject matter experts.

Madam Speaker, we will continue working to protect the people of this province every single day.

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

**MPP Kristyn Wong-Tam:** It's always an honour to rise and speak in this House on behalf of Toronto Centre.

Speaker, 33 days ago in this House, I tabled the Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act, co-sponsored by my colleagues and with the full support of our leader and our NDP caucus—and after months of refusing to declare intimate partner violence, this morning the government House leader surprised us all very pleasantly by doing an about-face, and now he has declared his support for Bill 173.

Today marks a pivotal moment in our collective fight against the epidemic of gender-based violence. After relentless advocacy by the NDP, in collaboration with all of the advocates in the room, as well as the survivors, the Ontario government is now going to finally acknowledge what many of us have known for years, that violence against women is indeed an epidemic.

**1820**

This recognition is long overdue, but it is a move in the right direction; however, recognition, as we all know, is simply not enough. We must demand transparency, accountable measures and policies that do not further harm survivors.

Intimate partner violence is an epidemic in Ontario. That was clearly demonstrated by the tragic femicide in Renfrew county in 2015. Survivors cannot afford to wait any longer. Lives are at stake, and the consequences of gender-based violence extend far beyond the immediate harm inflicted upon the victims. It affects all communities; it affects our children; and it affects future generations.

How many more listening tours, how many more focus groups, how many more reports and studies will this government inflict upon the survivors and experts to stall real action instead of going right into addressing the recommendations of the Renfrew report? Time and time again, the government has offered little but lip service. They have dismissed the experts. They've ignored the

recommendations. They have failed to be transparent about their plans to address the epidemic of violence against women.

In December, the federal government allocated \$162 million to the Ontario government to address gender-based violence. Where is the transparent breakdown of how this money is to be used? Survivors deserve to know how the government intends to allocate those funds in detail to support them and prevent further violence.

Will any of it even flow to prioritizing the hearing of court cases that involve intimate partner violence or gender-based violence, because the courts are so grossly backlogged? There are survivors in this chamber right now who know that their perpetrators and those abusers are walking free among them because the government has failed them.

The Ontario government has a long history of dismissing gender-based violence. One of their first actions as government was the dissolution of the province's provincial round table on violence against women. Despite the promises of replacing that committee, the VAW round table dismissal was felt and experienced across Ontario by all stakeholders.

The policy architect of the Ontario government gender-based violence action plan is Kirsten Mercer, who's actually in the chamber today. She has told me that this government can do more. We all know we can all do more.

I'm afraid that by simply declaring intimate partner violence, it's not going to be enough. It's a critical first step, but it must not be our last step. I think that we need to speed up all actions as quickly as possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** I recognize the member from Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** On est ici aujourd'hui pour débattre d'un projet de loi du parti néo-démocrate qui va déclarer la violence par des partenaires intimes une épidémie. On aurait dû faire ça il y a très longtemps. C'est un premier pas que l'on doit faire pour les victimes, leurs partenaires, leurs familles et les agences—mais ce n'est qu'une première étape.

La sensibilisation n'est pas suffisante. Il faut parler de prévention. Il faut parler de soutien. Il faut parler de financement du fonds d'indemnisation des victimes. Il faut parler du personnel compétent dans les tribunaux. Il faut mettre en place les recommandations du rapport Renfrew le plus tôt possible.

J'espère que tous les législateurs ici vont voter en faveur du projet de loi. Il faut déclarer la violence commise pas les partenaires une épidémie.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** The member from Windsor West has two minutes to reply.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I appreciate all of my colleagues who were able to speak to the bill. I just want to say this after hearing the government side: Today is not about you taking a victory lap and applauding yourself for work that you have not done—work you have not done. These recommendations were brought forward nearly two years ago—nearly two years ago. While you talk about the work you've done and the investments you've made, from November 26 to June 30 last year, 30 femicides occurred in 30 weeks in this province. There were 52 women killed in 52 weeks. Those are just the ones that were killed. Those are not the kids of this province who managed to survive, only to be failed by a justice system that you are grossly underfunding and she couldn't even get her day in court. We have Hiatus House and other housing and shelter providers who are begging you for money for shelter beds and transitional housing so that when women do leave, they have somewhere to go. And your answer is fundraise?

Speaker, today is an important step, and I want to recognize that for the people in the gallery today and the people at home. We would not have gotten here if it was not for their advocacy, and it's an important first step to have the government finally recognize that intimate partner violence is an epidemic. But it is just the first step. You need to properly fund the supports and services that women and children need in this province so they are not killed at the hands of their partners.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

Mrs. Gretzky has moved second reading of Bill 173, An Act respecting intimate partner violence. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Pursuant to standing order 100(h), the bill is referred to the committee of the whole.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Justice policy, please, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Is the majority in favour of this bill being referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy? Agreed. The bill is now referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy.

All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. on Thursday, April 11.

*The House adjourned at 1828.*

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		Premier / Premier ministre
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Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<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>
Vaugcois, 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	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Vacant	Milton	