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of Ontario



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Jeudi  
12 décembre 2024

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Speaker: Honourable Ted Arnott  
Clerk: Trevor Day

Président : L'honorable Ted Arnott  
Greffier : Trevor Day

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
OF ONTARIO

Thursday 12 December 2024

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE  
DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 12 décembre 2024

*The House met at 0900.*

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

*Prières / Prayers.*

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 78  
AND BILL PR50

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I beg to inform the House that two bills have been removed from the orders and notices paper, in accordance with standing order 55, which provides that “no motion, or amendment, the subject matter of which has been decided upon, can be again proposed during the same session”: Bill 78, An Act to proclaim Group of Seven Day, which is identical to Bill 158, which was given third reading by the House yesterday afternoon; and Bill Pr50, An Act to revive The Oakville Players, which is identical to Bill Pr56, given third reading by the House yesterday morning. Yesterday’s votes on the motions for third reading constitute decisions of the House, rendering Bill 78 and Bill Pr50 out of order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WORKING FOR WORKERS SIX  
ACT, 2024

LOI DE 2024 VISANT À ŒUVRER  
POUR LES TRAVAILLEURS, SIX

Mr. Piccini moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 229, An Act to enact the Skilled Trades Week Act, 2024 and to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters / Projet de loi 229, Loi édictant la Loi de 2024 sur la Semaine des métiers spécialisés et modifiant diverses lois relatives à l’emploi et au travail ainsi qu’à d’autres questions.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Would the minister care to lead off the debate?

**Hon. David Piccini:** Good morning. Merry Christmas. It’s an honour to rise this morning to speak to third reading of our sixth Working for Workers bill. I am always honoured to rise here to speak on behalf of the people I serve, so I first want to just thank them again—the people of Northumberland–Peterborough South—for electing me to this place. It is an honour to serve them.

This sixth Working for Workers bill—I’ve often said it’s like Harry Potter. I’m starting to go through that movie with my wife over Christmas—and we’re onto number 6;

I can’t wait for number 7. It’s just like J.K. Rowling’s trilogy. It keeps getting better and better.

Before I get going, I want to say a profound thank you. I spoke at length in the last reading about the incredible work that the ministry team does—all of the public servants. I also want to acknowledge the incredible ministry office team I get to work with each and every day—high pace. They work exceptionally hard, late nights. I want to thank them. That’s an incredible political staff and team who work very diligently each and every day. It continues to be an honour to work with them, as they challenge me and work with the incredible people across Ontario to continue to strive to do better for workers of this great province.

So thank you to all of you—if any of you are watching. I’m grateful for you.

Before I continue, I also want to thank Premier Ford, who has been leading the way to ensure we support workers. His support for this bill, like in previous Working for Workers acts, really underscores his commitment to workers across Ontario. He knows, and I agree, that when we put workers first, we can ensure the Ontario dream remains alive and well—the best place to live, work and raise a family.

We know that an economy that doesn’t work for workers doesn’t work at all. Someone who really understands that is the parliamentary assistant, the member for Ajax. She has worked incredibly hard on this bill. It’s an honour to work alongside her to serve—just down the highway from her. I appreciate the tireless work and perspective that she brings in our ministry every day. Thank you.

I also want to say that this legislation is a vessel and a culmination of voices all across Ontario, and a vessel that allows many to board, and those who have boarded this vessel—I want to thank the Canadian Cancer Society, Newcomer Women’s Services, the Fire Fighters Association of Ontario, the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association, the firefighter chiefs of Ontario, the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, the road builders’ association, union partners, agencies like the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and Skilled Trades Ontario, and people who have shared their stories. There are so many, Speaker. I could keep going.

It’s stories like Zane, Baden and Scottie Colt—a family through surrogacy, who deserve the same job-protected parental leave as others. We know that there can be no greater joy than growing your family and welcoming a beautiful child into this world. For surrogate parents like them—their voice is reflected in the legislation.

People like Nadia Headley, who shared her story of surviving cancer—Speaker, you could hear a pin drop in the room when she spoke about surviving cancer and getting those dreaded words that nobody wants to hear: “You have cancer.”

Nadia, thank you for sharing your story. Your story is reflected in this legislation.

People like Lavanya, who was targeted by fraudulent immigration consultants—they scammed her out of the Ontario dream.

Natasha Ferguson has had to jerry-rig personal protective equipment and overcome so many obstacles, as a woman of colour leading a business—facing challenges as a business owner, but then faces challenges just on a job site when it comes to personal protective equipment. As my colleague the MPP from Brampton says, “You have to see me to be me.” Natasha is a remarkable role model for so many.

I recall a power line technician who spoke to the meeting of Ministers of Labour about using gloves two sizes too large for her when she was working on a power line.

Of course, the firefighters, who run into danger to protect our community—their voices are reflected in this bill. Chief Cunliffe from Hamilton, Greg Horton, Gavin Jacklyn, Bob McCutcheon—those champions for firefighters, who have been such strong advocates. They just had their lobby day here at Queen’s Park, and I know they spoke to members of all parties about the important work that firefighters do on a daily basis and about how we can serve those who serve us.

This Working for Workers bill builds on previous success. This bill focuses on four main themes: supporting the health and well-being of workers and their families, keeping costs down for workers and businesses, honouring workers, and growing Ontario’s workforce as we tackle our declining productivity as a nation.

Speaker, this is a critical time that we introduce this bill, when we see declining productivity, slipping from sixth to 18th under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD—slipping from the sixth most productive nation to 18th. How did we get here? We got here through a complex web of permits, delays, endless processes, and escalating fees. Everybody is well intentioned, but as we have grown the silos and grown the kingdoms of bureaucracy, we have become a less productive province as a result. But we’re turning this around by elevating the voices of workers, by ensuring that training better reflects the needs of employers and better equips a resilient workforce to respond to ever-changing technology—and to ensure the greatest strength of Ontario, the people, are supported as Ontario moves forward in an increasingly interconnected global economy.

The measures we’ve introduced today will ensure Ontario remains the best place to live, work and raise a family.

**0910**

The group of people I talked about today—I want to start with our front-line heroes, especially our firefighters,

including municipal and wildland firefighters. We have been working on incremental changes. That is why we do these Working for Workers bills multiple times. Previous governments could have done that. They could have articulated the priority of workers by having a vessel to introduce legislation multiple times a year—they didn’t; we did. Through these incremental changes, we have transformed how firefighters are supported in Ontario. We have never seen this sort of transformative work—and I want to thank them for the work that they do.

The legislative changes that I want to zero in on that we are making in this bill are supporting firefighters with Workplace Safety and Insurance Board coverage for colorectal cancer and kidney cancer. For primary-site kidney cancer, we propose to reduce the length of duration of service from 20 to 10 years—and for colorectal cancer, remove the requirement that the diagnosis must be made before the age of 61. Simply put, firefighters are four times more likely to receive a cancer diagnosis because of the occupational exposures, fighting fires on a day-to-day basis. They deserve, and their families deserve, to know they are supported.

This story is best underscored through a local constituent of mine, Ric Ash, who has become a good friend. Ric has served our community, gives back to our community in many ways. When I spoke with him about his experience as a firefighter, at the crux of the issue—for him, it boiled down to wanting to know his family would be supported when he received his cancer diagnosis because of occupational exposures, as a result of being a firefighter.

For too many years, Ontario lagged in Canada; it didn’t lead. Today, we are leading. Today, other provinces are saying to us, as we gather, as provincial labour ministers, “Ontario, slow down.” Premier Ford and I say no. We’re not slowing down, and we’re not apologizing for leading Canada. And we are glad to see other provinces follow our lead.

It is stories like Ric’s; it’s stories like other firefighters—Jeff Briggs, who works for Cobourg fire. Jeff supports Cobourg firefighters but also has extended a hand to volunteer firefighters, to help them with WSIB supports. It’s a brotherhood, a sisterhood that unites firefighters across Northumberland county. They want to know that as they put their lives on the line, they will be supported by a government that cares for them and values their service.

That’s what this government, under Premier Ford’s leadership, is doing through this bill—making sure our firefighters are supported. If passed, these proposals will ensure these heroes and their families are looked after.

I want to move on now to talk a bit about supporting families through employment service leaves. We need to support families during every step of their journey, to make sure they have the time they need to concentrate on what’s important. No one should have to choose between being a worker or a parent. That’s why we’re proposing a new 16-week, job-protected leave for adoptive and surrogacy parents under the Employment Standards Act. This



new leave would align with upcoming federal employment insurance benefits for adoptive and surrogacy parents, like Zane and Baden Colt. We saw Scottie—cutest child I think I've seen in ages, and that includes the incredible children of friends of mine. It's just such a great experience to meet their children and to see the impact that they've had on their lives.

We shouldn't have a two-tier class system when it comes to being parents. Recognizing adoptive and surrogacy parents, giving them the same employment insurance leave provisions as other Ontarians, isn't just the right thing to do; it's the fair thing to do, and it recognizes that no one should have to choose between being a worker or a parent. This bill supports those parents, recognizing that families come in all shapes and sizes and in different ways. So we appreciate their voices—the Colts' voices, who have been reflected in this piece of legislation.

We also want to ensure the well-being of Ontarians who face episodic illnesses, to focus on what's important to them, and that is battling a diagnosis that will forever change their lives, like multiple sclerosis, like Crohn's and ulcerative colitis. That's why we are introducing 27-week job-protected leave, so that people don't need to worry about their jobs when they're battling these episodic conditions. Again, I want to tie this back to the stories. These stories are like yarn woven together—forms this legislation. The stories of the multiple sclerosis advocates I've met and the Crohn's and ulcerative colitis advocates I've met—we all have family members, loved ones, who we've seen battle episodic illnesses. Flare-ups can be cruel and unkind and can shatter one's dignity. They deserve to know that as they deal with those very personal challenges, their job is not also on the line. Ensuring that we protect their job through these provisions means they can focus on getting better and looking after themselves.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. David Piccini:** Thank you. I appreciate that. I'm going to work on getting a round of applause from everyone, hopefully.

I think everyone here recognizes they've known someone with an episodic illness. Focusing on getting better, focusing on their health—I do believe that when you're focusing on getting better, when we reduce illnesses in the workplace, when we reduce leave because of illness, we can ensure a more productive economy, and I want to tie this back to measures in this bill to ensure a more productive workforce.

Next, this leads me to personal protective equipment. This is something that's so important to me, as labour minister. I've always said—and underscored by the words of Jeff Parnell, head of the Power Workers' Union, who I met yesterday. Jeff said, "We just can't produce the power we need leaving 50% of our workforce behind." I smiled, because I've often said that we can't build the things we want to build in this province leaving 50% of the workforce behind. So we've put in place measures that I thought, honestly, were already in place. Ensuring properly fitted personal protective equipment, you'd think, is common sense, but sometimes common sense isn't all that

common when it comes to politics. By ensuring men and women are protected—all body types, especially for women—with properly fitting PPE in all job places, we can help ensure we're building a stronger Ontario.

As I go to the pre-apprenticeship courses with you—think back to your days as a trustee, Speaker. Think to our time at Judith Nyman, and the young women we've seen, whose handshakes—if those handshakes could tell me their destiny and their purpose in life. Boy, was I impressed, and boy, did I have a clarion vision of where they were going in the trades. These are young women who deserve to have all sorts of job offerings. We don't want to close doors to young women before they even open.

We know our job sites are safer than they were decades ago, and continuing to take steps to ensure that means ensuring properly protective equipment—and so we've implemented that in our Occupational Health and Safety Act.

In fact, according to a 2022 report by the Canadian Standards Association—big shout-out to the CSA team, who were at my Empire Club speech. I had a great opportunity to speak with all of them, and I appreciate the work they do to build consensus around standards that keep workers safe in the province of Ontario. Speaker, 50% of women in their survey said that their PPE didn't fit properly; 43% said it's uncomfortable to wear—imagine coveralls with the crotch down to your knees; imagine gloves that don't fit; imagine a hard hat that moves around on your head, falling off—58% said they use PPE that's the wrong size.

**0920**

This is absolutely not acceptable—and that's why we're proposing to further expand the explicit requirement to all sectors by enshrining it in legislation, growing the opportunities for women in the skilled trades, building a stronger Ontario. This is a first-in-Canada measure, and we're proud to do this. But we're not stopping there.

We're ensuring a first in Canada by ensuring that we have the same standards for washrooms on Bay Street—and bringing it to Main Street. I know our labour critic in the New Democratic Party has spoken at length about this. I want to say that as we move through the Working for Workers bills, one through six, to make it better, I have heard the stories that he has heard about properly ensuring running water in washrooms, ensuring that those washrooms, and I don't dispute it—that do exist today on job sites. A worker came up to me on the weekend and said the Johnny on the Spot—and yes, it's nice to have standards and it's nice to ensure it's clean. I think that member and I would agree. Let's not undermine the importance of having those standards—but it's still a Johnny on the Spot. So we have more work to do, and I acknowledge that. But I think this is an important step, a first-in-Canada step. And I think that when we have those standards in place, we can continue to meet—I have a meeting coming up with a new made-in-Ontario solution for portable washrooms. I look forward to continuing to lead Canada in challenging our job sites to do better for

workers. Again, I think when we do this, we ensure a more productive workforce.

These standards on washrooms are an important step. We've heard from tradeswomen, especially, that it ensures a more productive workplace for them. We've built on requirements that have ensured washrooms for women on job sites. This is important, and we've listened to those workers.

Speaker, I want to move on to speak a bit about worker safety. We know that there are bad actors on the job sites, so under the Occupational Health and Safety Act—I want to give a shout-out to the Steelworkers union—we're proposing mandatory minimums for those who don't learn a lesson. When you have a labour inspector on your job site in a proactive inspection—which are up under this government—they take an education-first approach. If you don't learn the first time, you should learn the second time—I've heard cases of sometimes three times. But after that, when we see a disaster, when we see a workplace injury after multiple attempts to rectify the situation, that's when you have to act, and that's when you have to draw a line and say to that employer, "I'm sorry. It's not okay."

Dare we get to a place where there's a workplace fatality—I think we can all agree that one fatality is a fatality too many. There are workplace accidents, but there are also workplace fatalities as a result of negligence on behalf of the employer. When I hear stories of an employer that has not seen one, two, but three fatalities in the span of 22 months, that is so unacceptable. That is wrong in this Ontario that we all call home. That's why we're saying to a judiciary that gives that employer a slap on the wrist, "You have to do better"—and this message is to all the judges. This place sets laws—they enforce it. So we're introducing tough mandatory minimums on employers that do not learn that the protection of their workers and their health and safety is paramount.

Speaker, I also want to thank our Chief Prevention Officer. We've taken steps to expand and clarify the powers of the Chief Prevention Officer, including oversight required on safety training; the ability to formally receive advice from the remarkable work done by our section work—done by our section 21 committees; the ability to collect and access occupational health and safety data, to measure outcomes and inform future prevention strategies. All of this is streamlining the work of our Chief Prevention Officer, to make our workplaces safer, to formalize recommendations from our section 21 committees and to really ensure that the work they do matters. I want to thank Dr. Moody for the work that he does each and every day and for the team who supports Dr. Moody at MLITSD.

Speaker, I have spoken at length on cracking down on immigration scams, so I won't speak about that today.

I want to close by talking about growing Ontario's workforce. We need more workers to realize the 1.5 million homes and the commitment we've made. We know one in three journeypersons are retiring. I just want to zero in on that. These are journeypersons with a remarkable skill set, with knowledge. We all know small

contractors in our community—one-, two- or three-person shops—that incredible knowledge that has been accumulated over 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years in a community. We have to ensure that we are training the next generation of workers through valuable apprenticeships.

We've ensured that not only are we proclaiming April 2 as the in-force date for our skilled trades act—and it will transfer responsibility for certain functions under the act from the minister to Skilled Trades Ontario—but we're going to support them in their mandate.

I want to thank the member for Scarborough for the work he has done for skilled trades and really underscoring the important role that skilled trades play in Ontario.

Under Premier Ford's leadership, we've been working hard to put more money back in the pockets of families and businesses.

Growing Ontario's workforce means removing barriers for young men and women to enter the trades.

I want to talk about the previous government's tax on the trades. Liberals had no problem—a complex Tokyo subway system process to become a skilled tradesman or woman. Not only did they cut doctor spots, nursing spots, but then they made it complex and hard for young men or women to enter the trades. We've slashed those barriers. We've wound down OCOT, which they allowed to become a turf-war agency, where we saw scope of practice fought within an agency of this government. We've removed the \$150 exam fee. We've ended the Liberals' Kathleen Wynne-Bonnie Crombie tax on the trades, and we're saving each apprentice over \$330.

We're putting more money back in apprentices' pockets, and we're distributing money back to employers—safe employers. We're supporting safe employers with safety plans. We're putting more money back into health and safety plans, to help small employers, in particular, ensure a safe workplace. We're removing the costs and the barriers and that web to become a tradesman or tradeswoman by expanding the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program; expanding the number of preapprenticeship programs; ensuring we're investing in union training halls, especially ignored by previous governments; and removing fiscal barriers that make it harder to enter the trades.

To do that, we will build a stronger Ontario. I'm excited for the years ahead. Our best days are yet to come. Under Premier Ford, we're going to support the men and women who are going to make it happen.

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

**MPP Jamie West:** Thank you to the minister for his debate on Working for Workers Six. I pointed out a couple of times that it's the eighth labour bill, but in the spirit of Christmas, I'm not going to go into that this time.

Also, I want to thank everyone here today and everyone who was here last night for passing the Injured Workers Day bill last night. It was very meaningful. We had two guests in the gallery, and it really meant a lot to them, as people who are advocating for injured workers and as injured workers themselves. I know it's going to be important across the community. I was surprised to find

out that Injured Workers Day wasn't an official day. Last year, when I tabled it, it was right before the 40th anniversary—it will be nice, for the 41st, that it be officially recognized here in Ontario.

The minister talked a lot about the presumptive cancer coverage for firefighters. During second reading of the bill, I read a statement from OPSEU, which represents a lot of the wildland firefighters, saying that they felt that it didn't apply to them. I've received literature, and it's back and forth, it isn't 100% clear, but in the spirit of Christmas, let's assume that it is—hopefully it is for all of those members, and I'm sure that if it isn't, we'll be hearing about this loud and clear in the new year. But I feel optimistic that this cancer coverage is going to cover those wildland firefighters, as well, because I know the minister wants to ensure that workers are taken care of and aren't harmed.

**0930**

Briefly, in his remarks, the minister talked about the washrooms. I've advocated for a more permanent structure. I've talked about how porta-potties aren't that exciting for people—they might sound like it if you've never had to use one, but they aren't. I'm very hopeful about his ideas to look at a more permanent solution. Washroom trailers were possible—and I think that's good. It's good to go into the new year with some hope.

I did want to mention that there has been a lot of conversation over the last little while about the importance of having clean, inspected porta-potty washrooms on construction sites. I was at a rally for injured workers earlier this week, and a woman tradesperson from IBEW told me, “This isn't happening on our job sites.” She'll be sharing more information with me, and I'll pass it along to the minister, because I know that it's a platform that has been incrementally discussed in several of these bills—the importance of having these clean washrooms, and washrooms specifically for women. If it's not happening and we want to attract women to the trades field or keep women who are already in the trades field there and feeling like it's valuable, we have to address this. So it's disheartening when I hear from a member from IBEW, the electrical workers, that—it's interesting; as I think of the acronym, it's the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, IBEW, and I'm speaking to a female member of that union. That's how much the shift has come with blue-collar jobs. I come out of mining myself, and I know, in mining—very often, I'll say, “the boys” at work. When I was hired at a smelter with more than 500 people working there, there were four women. The world is changing; it's good that is, and we need to be up with the times.

And I congratulate the minister for having a focus on women's PPE. I think that's important as well.

The minister spoke a lot about the positive things in the bill, and we're very aligned on the positive things. But my frustration with the Working for Workers bills has been that there's typically something really good—think of Christmas. There's a really good gift that you're excited about—I think that the wildland firefighters is a good example of that, or the firefighter compensation—then

there are a couple of things that are fine, they're nice to have, like the stocking presents, and then there's the orange. I talked about this last time—where there are a lot of parts of the bill where legislation already existed or it sounded really good. You're excited, you reach in there and you feel something, and it's the orange. You can't argue against an orange. It turns out to be, “We're doubling the maximum fine,” but when you look at it—well, the maximum fine was never handed out in the past anyway.

During the previous debate, I talked about a lot of the issues that I would like to see in these bills, to address, to tackle, workers, because I feel like, aside from the Christmas gift item, aside from the main ones that you point at—these are definitely good—a lot of these are colouring on the edges. They're going to be helpful to people—except for the unfunded liability for injured workers, which I hope to get into. They will be helpful, but they're not tackling things that the majority of workers are facing today.

Workers are struggling right now with housing. The downfall, I believe, of the Liberal government was the fact that when they sold off Hydro One and the price of electricity began to skyrocket, what you heard very often from workers was that they had to choose between heating and eating. What we're seeing now is, that hasn't changed very much. But now it's about housing; it's about choosing—do you have a safe place to live? Do you have an affordable place to live? Do you have anywhere to live? More and more, workers are struggling with this.

I think that's why every year, for the last seven years, the Feed Ontario report about food banks has told us that the number of workers going to food banks continues to climb. In the last report that we just received—it's in my desk; I can't take it out, because that would be considered a prop—it's saying that one in four workers are going to food banks. A colleague from the Conservative Party said, “Well, you know how people are when things are free. If it's going to be free, they're going to go get it. If you had a little thing in the park and you were giving out free chips, people will show up and try to fill their backpacks with chips.” That is true. But let's not delude ourselves into thinking people that are going to food banks because it's free. There might be a very small part of the population who is doing this, but I think it is minuscule; it's incredibly tiny. The reality is that people are going to food banks because they have no money in their pockets. And it is embarrassing to not see, in a Working for Workers bill—number 6—anything to address this for people. The number keeps climbing every year. It started under the Liberals. It was getting bad under the Liberals, but, honestly, it has gotten worse under the Conservatives.

We're more than half a decade into the Conservative government. I remember, when we ran against the Liberals, our party's slogan was “Change for the Better.” The people of Ontario, as a majority, chose the Conservatives instead of a change for better. I would argue, and I think that the data is showing it, that perhaps they didn't vote for a change for the better—not our party, specifically. But

they hoped that they were going to provide something better, and it has gotten worse and more difficult.

And if you're measuring on a pass/fail, with people working full-time going to food banks, you are failing as government. That's the reality.

I want to get into housing, for example. A bare-minimum need for a worker is safe, affordable housing. It just makes sense. It's the sort of thing, as kids, that we took for granted. Some people lived in an apartment, some people had a condo, some people had a house, some people lived on a farm—all different aspects. As kids, I think we expected that everyone lived somewhere, especially if you had a job—that if you went to work 40 hours a week, you got your food, you got your utilities, you got your housing, and you probably had a couple of bucks left in your pocket that maybe you could put into savings for your kids' future, or take them to the movies, or just have change rolling around. That's not the reality anymore. That's a falsehood that has been given to the people of Ontario. And they are desperate. We are hearing this all the time. I don't know if my colleagues from the other parties—maybe they are not going to the constituency offices or not listening to the messages or emails. But I have to tell you, it's loud and clear. We have been sharing those messages, as New Democrats, with the government. People are struggling.

A phrase I heard last week has been stuck in my head for a while. This is from somebody who makes a decent wage, someone who would be on the sunshine list. They told me, "I feel like I'm treading water. I'm constantly treading water, and every day, I'm slipping farther away from the shore. Sooner or later, I'm not going to be able to make ends meet anymore." That's someone on the sunshine list—more than \$100,000—who feels like they cannot make ends meet, who feels like they are drifting away from the shore.

So imagine minimum wage workers. Imagine workers who aren't on that sunshine list. Imagine workers who make \$50k, \$40k, \$30k. Imagine seniors, who are making \$12,000—\$1,000 a month. Imagine people on OW and ODSP, who are hovering around there—about a thousand bucks a month. They are not even treading water. They are drowning, and their hand is up, and instead of grabbing their hand—high-five from the Conservative government. We need to address this.

Think about what a home means to people. It means a warm bed; it means a hot shower—a place where you can prepare a meal, a place where you can care for your family, a place where you can host your friends. At the very minimum, it means a shelter from the environment. I'm from northern Ontario. I've got to tell you, it was cold today, walking to work. I've got a thick down jacket, and I was wearing sweaters underneath it. It was cold. And we are not providing affordable shelter for people who are working.

Right now, housing is a real barrier. So when we talk about this Working for Workers bill, I'm wondering, in six bills, why aren't we focusing on workers who can't afford to live where they work because it's too expensive to be

nearby? That poses other challenges, because now transportation—if you're in the north, you probably don't have public transit, so that means you need to own a car; or, if you live in the north and you can't afford to live close to where most of the work is, you're limited to where you can work because you can't afford a car, so you've got to rely on who can drop you off or how far you can walk or if you can ride a bike and all these other challenges.

#### 0940

How come this bill and the previous five Working for Workers bills aren't talking about workers who are working two or three jobs to pay the bills? Why aren't they talking about gig workers, who are being exploited by companies that are calling them contractors? After taxes, these rideshare drivers, the people who are picking you up with Lyft and Uber—they're making four bucks an hour. Instead of addressing it, one of these Working for Workers bills enshrined that into law, that that was okay. That's not working for workers; it's working against them.

Why aren't we talking about workers who can't afford to pay their rent or pay their mortgage and eat, and have to go to food banks, or, even more embarrassingly, can't afford child care, so when they go to the food banks, they have to bring their kids? They don't even have the dignity of hiding that from their kids, so their kids can feel like there's a brighter future for them.

What about workers who are unable to come to work because their housing is precarious? What about the workers who get fired from their jobs because they're sleeping rough or they're couch-surfing? They don't have a place to lay their head at night, or they don't have a place to shower, to clean themselves, to brush their teeth—just basic human dignity. What about people who can't find a job because of these things?

The Premier, at one point, talked about the encampments—the encampments that are caused by Conservative government policies. The Premier, at one point, said, "Get off your A, asterisk, asterisk"—because I can't say that word—"and find a job." Most of those workers—they're homeless now because they had a job and couldn't afford it. A lot of those workers were in those good-paying trades jobs and got injured; WSIB failed them. Instead of providing the funding so they could stay on their feet, they denied and refused, and they had to fight back and fight back. And instead of having that money go to them, the Conservative government, for the third time—first under Harris, twice under this Premier—has said, "Oh, there's unfunded liability; let's give it back to the employers." That unfunded liability was created by saying no to workers who are injured. As much as I'm on board with bringing people into good-paying, blue-collar jobs, if we are not taking care of them when they're injured, if we're refusing them and rewarding the employers that are allowing them to be injured—you've lost the thread, and you don't have workers' backs.

It is difficult, if you're living rough, to find a job; it is difficult if you're not able to shower and brush your teeth and shave; it is difficult if you can't afford a haircut. It is difficult to get a job when they ask for your address and

you say, “I live in the park behind Queen’s Park. I live in one of the two tents that exist right now”—or in Sudbury, “Oh, I used to live in Memorial Park, but they removed that encampment. Now I live in the bushes. It’s even less safe, because I’m more vulnerable out there. But at least I’m out of sight and people don’t have to look at me. I guess that’s what’s good for the public.”

Instead of pushing people out of encampments, we should be providing homes.

When the Conservative government was talking about consumption treatment centres and removing the funding for them—we lived that already in Sudbury. We never got a penny from this government for them. We saved lives, based on local donors in the municipality ponying up—which should be a provincial expense. When they talked about removing these—they forgot that these are our brothers and sisters, our parents, our kids; they forgot the family that loves them and left them behind. But we remember them, and we care about them.

The reality is, life is hard. It was getting hard under the Liberals, and that is why they went from majority government to independents—just for anyone watching, that means you don’t have enough members to actually be recognized in here as a party. They still are parties; they’re Liberals and Greens—there are just not enough members elected to be recognized as a party. But going from a majority to independents—people were pretty angry; people felt like their life wasn’t getting better.

The people of Ontario now are looking at the Conservative government and saying, “Well, you were supposed to fix this, but it’s six years, more than half a decade, and it keeps getting worse. Why does it keep getting harder under the Conservatives? How did you find over \$2 billion to build a luxury spa in downtown Toronto? And why are you making my household pay 400 bucks?” Every household in Ontario, 400 bucks—and you can have a luxury spa?

I’ve got to tell you, I come out of mining. Not a lot of guys in the mines are going to a luxury spa in Toronto. In fact, a lot of people where I live are very frustrated, coming to Toronto. They like to see the tourist stuff. They like the people. But quite frankly, they feel like politicians here don’t understand what it’s like to be in the north.

The role of the government is to make people’s life easier, to remove roadblocks. I know the Conservatives understand this because they always talk about these red tape bills and that they need to cut the red tape and make it smoother, but they don’t see it when it comes to workers, and they need to. They should be addressing housing. They should be addressing affordability.

In my riding, there’s an apartment, 20 Cypress, and they have a terrible landlord. This landlord has proactively been trying to kick out the tenants. Literally, he has been freezing them out of the building. Last winter, the tenants in this building had no heat for four months. It was probably longer than that, but the weather was mild so they didn’t notice until November. In November, December, January and February, the tenants at 20 Cypress had no heat at all—none. The landlord was absent. We couldn’t

track him down. We couldn’t find him. He was hiding. He didn’t live in Sudbury. We’re getting a lot more of those—foreign people buying properties. In Sudbury, it used to be that you’d live next door to your landlord. Even the bigger landlords who owned apartment buildings—Zulich, we all know where he lives. We see him all the time at Wolves games and stuff. But we’re getting more and more of these investors from long away, and they don’t see us as community; they see renters as people to be exploited. These tenants, for four months, had no heat. Instead of fixing the problem, the landlord hid from us, from the municipality, from bylaw. Instead of fixing the problem, the landlord started asking the tenants to just move out—“There’s no heat. Why would you stay there? Just get out.” When they wouldn’t move out, he said, “How much money could I give you? I’ll give you cash.” What he wanted to do was freeze them out, or bribe them out, or get them out so he could raise the rent. And it might have worked. When I was in my twenties, where you wanted to live in Sudbury was a difference of 50 bucks—maybe 100 bucks. But because rent is so unaffordable, they had to live in a place with a bad landlord, with no heat in a Sudbury winter.

Guess what’s happening this fall? Last spring, we tracked him down. The municipality, the bylaw, forced him to make the repairs. He said, “Oh, I can’t make the repairs. The ground is frozen. I’ve got to dig up the ground.” He needed an extension. This fall, tenants were calling me, saying, “We still have no heat. He didn’t do the repairs.” Yesterday, a resident’s pipes burst because of the cold, and now she has no heat and she has no water. Did the landlord come rushing in in response? No. Is there anything in the Working for Workers bills or any of the bills the Conservatives have tabled in the short amount of time that we’re sitting here that’s going to help these people? No.

Even starting back to 2018—when the Conservative government was elected, one of the first things they did is, they said, “We’re going to remove rent control on all apartments after 2018—so the sky’s the limit. We’re going to look the other way when it comes to people being rent-evicted, renovicted.” The idea, the concept, makes sense. You’re doing major renovations, fixing your building and ripping everything down; you’ve got to replace all the wiring because it’s 50 years old; you’ve got to displace those workers, and now the building becomes—major renovations—worth more rent. The reality, especially for these large conglomerates that are buying up buildings, is, they evict everybody for major renovations. They keep the place empty for three or four months, and their major renovation is paint and windows. I helped my parents change the windows in their house. We didn’t have to kick them out. We did it in an afternoon. But this is what they’re allowed to do, and the Conservative government looks the other way. They don’t care. I don’t know why they don’t care.

These tenants from Cypress are not the only ones. Last week, in my riding, I heard again from seniors in a seniors’ building, Place Nolin. They haven’t had an elevator since

June. These are seniors with mobility issues in an apartment building with no elevator. God forbid there's ever a fire or emergency, because I don't know how we're going to get them out there. But just think of day-to-day, as a senior. How do you get your groceries and food? How do you get outside when there's no elevator and you have mobility issues? You have to wait for someone to carry you or help you down the stairs, if you even have the energy to do it. But that's okay—they're not held accountable. Seniors go to doctors a lot, if they can find a doctor. Often, they're going to walk-in clinics. But if you have mobility issues and you can't make it down the stairs, good luck.

**0950**

Tenants like these and those at Cypress are feeling left behind by this government, which claims to be working for workers. They want bad landlords—there are some good landlords out there; I'm adamant about it—to be addressed. They want this to be taken care of. The Conservative government passes the buck to the municipalities and ignores them and does this—I call this the Conservative coat of arms. It's everyone's fault but their own. There's no accountability. Because there's no rent control, because of renovictions, because the Conservative government is focused on wealthy, well-connected donors and not on workers and their affordability crisis, they don't have laws and protections for those tenants, and they end up homeless; they end up terrified and trapped in their own house.

I'm not saying that the Working for Workers bills don't have good things in them; they do, and I always compliment them, and I would in this case, but it was time-allocated, so we don't even have the full amount of time—it never went to committee for feedback; it has really been shrunk.

So I'm focusing on, I think, the thing most people would like for Christmas, and that's a place they can afford to live. Colouring around the edges with little improvements is just not enough.

Vanessa is one of the tenants at 20 Cypress, and she has been advocating for months to resolve her housing issues. The landlord owes her money. One of the reasons he owes money—there's a variety of reasons—is that the tenants had to buy little space heaters so they didn't freeze to death. But the landlord is not paying the money back—the Landlord and Tenant Board said he has to, but he's not going to. It's interesting how the Landlord and Tenant Board can evict tenants like that—but when you have a bad landlord who makes the other landlords look bad, they drag their feet and they can't get it done. This landlord is still asking people, “What if I give you some cash? Would you just move out?”—because he wants to make it more expensive. They have tenants with health and safety as a risk. Imagine not having running water, not having heat. They're stressed out, and they're losing sleep. They're terrified they're going to lose their house. They're terrified they're going to come home and some other weird thing is going to happen. They feel like they have no recourse, because there's no rent control, there's no enforcement—

there's no one ensuring the landlord provides his responsibilities.

This landlord—I keep talking about this one, because he's a bad example and the bad actor that I hear about from the Conservatives. He's reoffending on a regular basis, but it's the tenants who get punished.

This isn't new, because every one of my colleagues in the NDP has brought this up time and time again, and it is like waves rushing on rock, because the Conservative government is unmoved and they don't listen. Frankly, I don't think they care about workers—they don't care that they're being kicked out of their houses, and loss. It's a shame.

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

**Mr. John Fraser:** I don't know if I have to, but I'll be splitting my time with the member from Kitchener Centre, and I'll be quick.

The member from Mississauga–Lakeshore reminded me that the Premier's carbon tax, the industrial emitters tax, will be going up on January 1, and I thank him for reminding me of that. But that's not what we're here to debate.

We're here to debate—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Fraser:** Merry Christmas, everybody.

We're here to debate Working for Workers. I think this is Working for Workers Six or seven or eight—I'm not sure—or 6.1.

**Hon. Michael Parsa:** It's six.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Okay. We're going to support this bill.

I want to give you Working for Workers Act Seven—and the reason I say “seven” is because there's a bill that has been before this House which is about WSIB coverage for workers in residential care settings. What that means is, there are workers in this province—personal support workers, developmental service workers and youth workers, people who are working in residential settings. That could be a retirement home. It could be a group home. It could be a day program for developmental services that's housed inside a residential care facility. If that facility—like, a long-term care facility—is owned by the province or funded by the province, you're covered by WSIB. But the PSWs in retirement homes, who are essentially doing the same kind of work, are not covered. What that means is, many of them work two jobs. They might have coverage through a workplace insurance program, but they're not going to be covered in both jobs—they will be if they're under WSIB. Most of these workers are women. Most of them are low-wage. So there's a basic inequity there, where people doing the same work have different coverages.

I don't understand why we haven't done that yet. I've introduced this bill. It's a private member's bill that I introduced back in 2017—I think I'm on my fourth minister, including one of our own. I have put the bill forward five times, and I've debated it three times. That's how important it is. I have had assurances from almost

every labour minister that they're going to do it. I talked to the folks at WSIB when they did the rate review, and they said, "Yes, yes, we're going to do it. We've just got to get through this rate review." Well, by my count, we're going to be eight years in.

I'm just simply asking the Minister of Labour if he will do what he said and what his colleagues have said, and provide WSIB coverage for workers in residential settings—those personal support workers, those developmental service workers and those youth workers who are not covered and are at risk, again, because many of them work more than one job. That's my pitch this morning. That should be Working for Workers Act Seven, so I don't have to introduce it again. The government can introduce it this spring, and we can get it passed.

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

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** I want to thank the constituents of Kitchener Centre. It's an honour to have served them for over a year. I go to work every day, and I come with an open heart and an open mind, ready to listen. The constituents of Kitchener Centre are my boss, and it's my goal to be a voice for them here today.

One thing I remember is a group of new immigrants from Ukraine. They were working at a local business called Dutchie's, and they hadn't been paid. Here are folks who have fled war; they've come to my community, they work in our grocery store to make sure that we have affordable food on our table, but they have been robbed of their wages. The thing that was most alarming was, this wasn't the first time that this bad-acting business owner had robbed people of their wages. In fact, when Waterloo Region Community Legal Services went on a digging spree, they found that the business owner owed hundreds of thousands of dollars in stolen wages and had been charged tens of times, yet he continued operating his business and continued stealing wages. They said that the folks from India didn't feel empowered to speak up, and they didn't want to go forward to make complaints against their boss because they were worried about their immigration status.

Too often, we see wages being robbed from people who maybe don't speak very good English, are new immigrants or are vulnerable in many ways. So I was so proud of these Ukrainian newcomers who came to my office to speak up. They recently had a decision made, and the owner was found guilty again, but he continues operating to this day, going home to his house, to his bed, without paying the price.

**1000**

So when we talk about Working for Workers, I hope that in number 7, this government will find a way to add some teeth. We need a way to hold these bad-acting gougers, I'll say, accountable for wage theft. We have \$60 million in this province of unpaid wages. So when we want to get tough on crime, let's think about people who are struggling to pay their bills, struggling to pay their rent, and ensure that when they go to work, they know that they can get paid. It is really this gouging that is a big problem.

And I thank the member from Sudbury for talking about the gouging that happens in housing. Too often, we see these bad actors not being held accountable.

I call on this government, whether it's a bad-acting immigration consultant—thank you for holding them accountable and putting in some measures—bad-acting employers that are robbing their employees of their wages, or a bad-acting landlord who is harassing people and making their lives difficult. I urge you to add teeth to these tribunals. Add a mechanism to reclaim some of these lost wages and pay for the damages that people experience. The gouging has to stop, and we have to put people's well-being over those profits.

I thank the government for investing in leaves. We see people who need time with their kids. We see people who are sick and want to not lose their jobs. So I'm grateful to the government for that.

I'm grateful for their investment in the trades. We know that this is an area where we have major recruitment and retention issues. So thank you for that.

I would like to also see a recruitment and retention strategy for ECEs. Because of the wage issues that they experience, we don't have enough staff to take care of those babies. When people have their leaves and then they have to go back to work, they're left high and dry. I hear from my constituents often that they're out of luck when it comes time to go back to work, because there are no child care spaces in my riding. We're a child care desert. And they are waiting.

Finally, I'd like to talk about how we can take care of workers' well-being. We need this fairness. A lot of our low- and middle-income workers are feeling abandoned by this government. They're struggling—I think it's 50% of Ontarians are struggling to get by and they live paycheque to paycheque. It's so important that we don't abandon the vast majority of our province, and ensure that everybody has a roof and food. When I go to a door, I am always grateful when people say, "No, I'm good." I say, "Good. You have a roof and food." My job is to serve, so that all the people in Ontario have a roof and food.

In my community, we've had a doubling of homelessness; we've had a doubling of people using the food bank—so that's people without a roof and food, and it breaks my heart. I live close to the most famous encampment in all of Canada. We went to the Supreme Court, and they said, "You cannot evict those people because you have nowhere for them to go." My shelter beds are full; we don't have any space. And November comes at the same time every year. It's cold out there, and I feel for those folks who live near me, who are just trying to survive. We can do better.

In my community, for every affordable home we build, we lose 39 in the private sector, often because of these illegal renovations, illegal demovictions. When I go to the biggest shelter in my riding—we call it the Schwaben Club. It used to be where we celebrated Oktoberfest. Now it's full of seniors and their walkers.

**Hon. Lisa M. Thompson:** I've been there.

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** I know. Me too. I don't remember all of them.

Now it's full of seniors and their walkers and these newcomers who fled Ukraine. My dad goes to the park and he sees a young lady who left her home, back home—she has a master's in psychology, and she's living at the Schwaben Club, because there is nowhere to live in my community. We have a 0% vacancy rate of affordable housing, and that's not okay.

I urge this government not only to build affordable housing—but that takes a long time and a lot of money. The Minister of Agriculture knows how long it takes and how much money it takes. We need to protect the affordable rentals in our community right now.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated December 10, 2024, I'm now required to put the question.

Mr. Piccini has moved third reading of Bill 229, An Act to enact the Skilled Trades Week Act, 2024 and to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

Those in favour, please say "aye"

Those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays 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 House leader.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** No further business.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** There being no further business, we stand recessed until 10:15.

*The House recessed from 1005 to 1015.*

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### TAXATION

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** This is for our friend Percy Hatfield:

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the House,

Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.

The bills were settled—votes had been cast,

In hopes that new laws soon would be passed.

MPPs were nestled, snug in their beds,

With visions of budgets dancing in their heads.

But Queen Bonnie Crombie, with her carbon tax crown,

Cast a dark shadow right over the town.

In her Maserati she sat, with plans far and wide,

To raise up the taxes—letting no one slide.

With whispers of new costs and a green fever dream,

She plotted a future where prices would steam.

With a flick of her hand, she waved through the air,

"More taxes on the people, more burdens to bear!"

Out in the hall, there was such a clatter,

The Premier sprang up to see what was the matter.

The moon over Queen's Park gave a cold eerie glow,  
As the scent of new taxes began to bestow.

But the Premier stood firm, no fear in his gaze,

He'd battled Crombie's taxes through countless long days.

With his helpers in tow, on the Premier's team,

It was clear they'd defeated Bonnie Crombie's tax scheme.

"On, Minister Lecce! On, Minister Smith!

"Get it done, for the people—we'll never submit!"

And they kept taxes low and Ontario strong,

And built a province where all could belong.

Merry Christmas to all—and to all a good night,

For the future of Ontario shines ever so bright.

### HOLIDAY WISHES

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** As we head into the holiday season and imagine a new year, I want to thank the first responders, front-line and utility workers who will be working over the holidays, keeping us safe and supported.

As people are unwrapping gifts and making wishes for loved ones, here is my list for Ontario neighbours:

I hope for affordable and safe, warm housing and rent control, instead of the lowest housing starts since the 1950s. I would give Ontario the NDP Homes Ontario plan.

I hope everyone has enough food and that seniors and families can afford groceries and bills, and that food banks have more than enough.

I hope Santa brings injured workers the fair compensation they are due.

I wish workers could unwrap sick leave, anti-scab legislation and respect this year.

I pray for an end to gender-based violence. But until that happens, I hope intimate partner violence will be declared an epidemic and this government will restore the cut funding, so that women and children fleeing abuse can stay longer than two nights at a hotel, so they can be safe while waiting for shelter space.

I want to stop the Austrian mega spa and spend that \$2.2 billion on health care.

I want an end to hallway medicine, and funding for health care workers and publicly delivered health care.

I wish that families desperately seeking health and addictions support for their loved ones could find it.

In the new year, I want children to have autism services, child care, mental health care, and smaller, better-funded classrooms where they can learn safely.



I hope for a kinder, gentler world where the Premier doesn't divide and diminish those who live in poverty or struggle with addictions.

I wish everyone a happier new year.

And if there is going to be an election, I wish for a New Democratic government in the new year so that more people can face a brighter, better and more hopeful future.

### BLACK QUEENS OF DURHAM HOLIDAY POP-UP MARKET

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** I recently had the pleasure of attending the Black Queens of Durham Christmas market, and it was truly an unforgettable experience. The market was alive with energy—the food was delicious, the music was on point—showcasing an incredible array of Black-owned small businesses. From stunning handmade crafts to unique fashion pieces, to natural skin care and hair care products I could not resist, there was something for everyone. The highlight of the event was undoubtedly Kente Claus, who stole the show with his vibrant style, spreading festive cheer to all.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Asha, Fatima, and the entire team for their hard work and dedication organizing such a fantastic event. Their commitment to showcasing the talent and entrepreneurial spirit of our local Black community in Ajax and across the Durham region is inspiring.

#### 1020

For those who missed this year's market, I highly encourage you to mark it in your calendars for next year.

This event was a wonderful celebration of culture, community and creativity, and I look forward to seeing it as it grows in the years to come.

It's events like these that remind us of the importance of supporting local businesses and embracing the diversity that makes our community so special.

Thank you again to all involved.

I want to take this time, as well, to wish all my colleagues across both of the aisles a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I hope you spend some fantastic time with family and friends.

### HOLIDAY EVENTS IN MUSHKEGOWUK–JAMES BAY ÉVÉNEMENTS DU TEMPS DES FÊTES À MUSHKEGOWUK–BAIE JAMES

**Mr. Guy Bourgouin:** I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone back home in Mushkegowuk–James Bay a very happy holiday season and new year.

J'ai eu le plaisir de participer à quelques beaux événements des Fêtes, comme la Magie de minuit à Hearst et le Festival des lumières à Kapuskasing la fin de semaine passée.

My team and I are excited to welcome everyone to our annual holiday office open houses, in Hearst on December

18, and in Kapuskasing on December 19. We also will be heading up to Moosonee on the 17th.

Dans les prochaines semaines, nous organisons également plusieurs nages publiques gratuites et patinages libres gratuits. Nous espérons vous voir avec vos familles et amis.

Lastly, we know that there will be an increase in highway traffic over the holidays, so please be careful. Drive with caution, and pay attention to weather advisories and road closures. Je m'engage à continuer de lutter pour l'amélioration de la sécurité routière en Ontario, mais soyez prudent pour que tout le monde puisse rentrer chez eux en sécurité.

Je vous souhaite de la santé, du repos et des moments précieux avec vos proches ce temps des Fêtes.

### SENIORS MONTH

#### M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:

'Twas the last day of session, and all through Queen's Park, the members were scurrying before it turned dark.

I was ever so honoured, even proud to be exact, to move third reading of an important bill, to proclaim the month of June as Seniors Month Act.

'Tis an opportunity to recognize older adults, so the members agreed to hold their insults.

For seniors to connect with community, providing us all with stability ... to help prevent isolation, and create adoration for that beloved generation.

Focusing on inclusion and diversity, let's face it, we need to recognize all types of humanity.

Volunteering is what keeps most older folks engaged, now let's get our young people on the same page. They can learn from their elders as knowledge is shared, grandparents and grandchildren naturally paired.

Seniors Month is a win for all generations, and now I will turn to the holiday celebration.

To Newmarket–Aurora, the people who sent me here, I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

### HOMELESSNESS

**Mr. Chris Glover:** For six years, the Conservatives voted against NDP motions to build affordable housing, to bring back rent control, to stop renovations, and to build supportive housing for people with disabilities, mental illness and addictions.

Now, with 234,000 people homeless, 1,400 encampments and 3,600 people a year dying of addictions, they finally realize their policies have created a crisis, so they're promising to take some action in the future, if they win another election. In a twist of logic, the Conservatives are threatening to strip Ontarians of their fundamental freedoms and legal rights under the charter, using the "notwithstanding" clause to address the homelessness crisis that they have created.

This would be the fourth time this Conservative government has stripped Ontarians of our charter rights using the

“notwithstanding” clause. They’ve stripped us of our right to democratic municipal elections by changing the rules of Toronto’s 2018 election. They’ve also stripped us of our right to an impartial judiciary by appointing partisan judges and adjudicators. They’ve stripped us of our right to majority-vote democracy using the strong-mayors bills.

People have come from all over the world to Ontario because of our democracy and charter rights, but our democracy is being stripped away from us. Without charter rights, democratic municipal elections, impartial judges and majority-vote democracy, is Ontario still a democracy?

To all of the members of this House: The solution to homelessness is housing. We should never let this or any other government use the homelessness crisis they have created as an excuse to strip us of our democratic rights.

#### ETOBICOKE LAKESHORE SANTA CLAUS PARADE

**Ms. Christine Hogarth:** Merry Christmas to you, Mr. Speaker. I am truly honoured to stand before you today to celebrate the joy and community spirit of the Lakeshore Santa Claus parade. Every year, this cherished event brings our community together, and this year was no exception. Thousands of residents, young and old, lined the streets to catch a glimpse of the festive floats and, of course, Santa Claus himself. It was heartwarming to see the streets filled with smiles, laughter and holiday cheer. It was my absolute joy to take part in this festive spectacle and to greet the happy crowds who came out to see Santa Claus himself.

What began in 1990 as an initiative to revive a Christmas parade after a 25-year hiatus has since grown into the cornerstone of our holiday traditions. The parade has grown to bring together over 60,000 members of the community every year.

This year, we had another fantastic turnout, with thousands gathering along the streets.

The parade continues to show the dynamic energy of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, reminding us all why this is such a wonderful place to live, work and play.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Long Branch BIA, the Lakeshore BIA, our sponsors, our volunteers and participants who made this event such a success. Your commitment to spreading joy is what makes our community so special.

Here’s to many more years of celebrating the magic of the season. And merry Christmas to all.

#### SOCIAL SERVICES FUNDING

**Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady:** On Sunday night, I was at a Christmas party with families surrounded by loved ones with developmental disabilities. These beautiful, gracious families devote themselves to ensuring their loved ones are looked after.

However, they are tired from trying to get this government’s attention. They have repeatedly called on

this government to address the wait-list of 52,000 adults waiting to access services. The list has gotten longer and longer and has grown 105% in five years.

Chris Beesley, CEO of Community Living Ontario, said, “It should not be at the whim of any government to determine who gets, who doesn’t, and when. The province’s books should not be balanced on the backs of its most vulnerable citizens.... We must do better.”

Systemic change and sustainable funding are vital to whittling down that wait-list.

Agencies in my riding are suffering from the chronic underfunding, leaving them struggling to provide the critical services on which individuals and their families depend to meet basic needs. These services are not luxuries; they are lifelines.

My local child and family services is also at that breaking point. They have done everything to save money and raise money. The complexity of cases the agency is grappling with continues to mount while this government refuses to expand beds and treatment at Syl Apps, Youthdale and Roberts Smart. Many young people experiencing these complex issues are not making it into foster homes, but rather are being housed in hotel rooms. This is unconscionable.

Government is supposed to help in times of need. If there has ever been the need to help some of Ontario’s most vulnerable, the time is now.

Merry Christmas to you all. Cheers to a better 2025.

#### RIDING OF LANARK–FRONTENAC– KINGSTON

**Mr. John Jordan:** As the fall sitting of the House comes to a close today and the holiday season is upon us, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to all of my fellow MPPs and their staff, as well as everyone in my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston.

We’ll be on the move over the holidays. The member for Lambton–Kent–Middlesex, the PA for the Ministry of Rural Affairs, will be visiting Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston this coming Monday to celebrate the rural economic development funding for two of our beautiful and well-travelled trails: the Tay-Havelock Trail in Lanark county and a portion of the K&P Trail in Frontenac county.

These investments from the Ministry of Rural Affairs will significantly improve the trails’ infrastructure, accessibility and safety. We’ll also be making stops in Perth and Beckwith. Funding like this is pivotal in developing strong, resilient communities and making them great places to live, work and do business.

#### 1030

I’m also proud to host a number of free public skates around the riding, beginning December 23 and running through to December 29, in Smiths Falls, Carleton Place, Lanark, Almonte, Godfrey and Perth. So please come down to one of our wonderful community centres for a few laps around the rink.

From my family to yours: Enjoy a holiday season full of gatherings with family and friends, reflection, generosity and kindness.

Merry Christmas and happy new year.

#### MEMBER FOR SAULT STE. MARIE

**Mr. Ross Romano:** To my constituents: In 2004, I came back home to Sault Ste. Marie following three years at the University of Windsor law school.

Heather moved here from her hometown of Markham in 2005, and in 2009, we were married. We wanted to start our family here in Sault Ste. Marie, having both shared an incredible love for our community, but we knew there were serious challenges facing it. For years, I told her about the struggles of the 1990s at Algoma Steel which prompted so many people to leave. Families watched as their children graduated from high school, only to move away in search of opportunities elsewhere.

For decades, our population shrank. In 2011, St. Mary's Pulp and Paper Mill produced their final product. By 2015, Tenaris had essentially shut down operations. OLG jobs were being lost. Our steel mill was once again in credit or protection proceedings for the third time in less than 25 years. The jobs of more than 2,800 active steel workers and the pensions of nearly 9,000 retired steel workers were in jeopardy. Our three boys were very young at the time, and we are worried for their future and for the future of all of Sault Ste. Marie.

I had been asked to carry the PC banner in the upcoming 2018 provincial election, but I just couldn't see myself doing it. One evening, while explaining to Heather all of the reasons why, she said something to me that changed everything: "You've been telling me for years how hard it was growing up here, always afraid that you would eventually be forced to leave this place and that, one day, when we had kids, they would come to know that same feeling. I never understood what you meant, but now I get it, and yes, this will be very hard on us, but we will manage; we always do. And I know you. I know how stubborn you are. You're a dog on a bone. You have to run, and you have to win. You have to go make this place a home that our kids and everyone's kids can stay in."

It was at that moment that our love for our community and our love for our children crystallized into a bold decision: I would run to become the next member of provincial Parliament for Sault Ste. Marie.

Looking back, I know I heard Heather's words as more of a challenge than anything. It would be very hard but not insurmountable. Our boys were two, three and four years old at that time. By 2026, they would be 11, 12 and 13, and we decided that I would need to be back home by that point. So on that evening, we made a commitment to bring meaningful change to our community, to build a stronger Sault Ste. Marie, and we had until 2026 to get it done. And get it done we did.

When I first ran, the city faced countless obstacles. Our youth were still leaving, industries were struggling and there was a general uncertainty about what tomorrow would bring, but we have turned the page.

In less than 10 years, we've seen the rebirth of opportunity. Algoma Steel has security for generations to come while looking toward a cleaner, greener future, with a \$1-billion investment in progress. Tenaris is thriving again, investing in new technologies and employing over 800 people today. Our OLG operations have diversified and grown. We've strengthened key infrastructure, like the widening of Black Road and all of our highway connecting links, bike trails, storm sewers and bridges. We've built new tourist attractions and community centres, like the ACR train station and the twin pad arena at our Northern Community Centre. We've been able to secure substantial investments in mental health and addictions wellness through Northway, the community resource centre, the youth addictions treatment centre and the youth wellness hub. New housing starts and developments are going up. Our downtown and surrounding neighbourhoods are feeling more vibrant. Programs and partnerships are making tangible differences. Algoma University is now an independent university offering masters programs. Sault College now offers degrees in nursing and engineering. Our city's population sign is actually going up, not down.

What was once a community bracing itself against storm clouds of uncertainty has transformed into a place where young people talk about settling down, rather than moving away.

To my constituents, my colleagues and everyone who trusted me with their hopes for the city's future: Thank you. Your support made everything we've accomplished possible. Thank you, all of you, for your trust and patience and your shared belief in our promise. While I will not be seeking re-election, I will not sit on the sidelines. I will continue to be active and engaged in the growth and betterment of our city, contributing in new ways and cheering on those who step forward to represent us in the future, because we're not finished. There is still work to do.

To Heather: Thank you for your faith in me and in this community; it was not misplaced. If you would not have said to me what you said that evening, who knows where we would be today? I owe you a debt of gratitude that words cannot fully capture. I am writing this letter with a full heart and the peace of knowing that I gave it my all and that the dream that we set out to achieve of making Sault Ste. Marie a home to stay for our kids and everyone's kids is now a reality.

And to my boys: I promised you I would be coming back home after the last election and you know we do not break our promises. So to the boys, I say Daddy's coming back home.

Thank you.

*Applause.*

#### HOLIDAY MESSAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thanks, Speaker. I want to thank you for your leadership in this short legislative session. I want to thank you for everything you do in the Legislature.

I want to take this opportunity, as we end the session, to thank the Clerks. I know I've been bugging you a lot lately about wearing the hats for the parades, so I want to thank you for that. Thank you for everything you do, both in the chamber and in committee. You're amazing to support us.

I want to thank the Sergeant-at-Arms and all of the security personnel who are always here, even sometimes when we're not, ensuring that we have a safe place to govern the province of Ontario.

To all the legislative staff, to Hansard, to broadcast and translation, to all the staff, whether they be in the cafe or the cafeteria—all staff of the Legislative Assembly, those who work while we're here in the building and those who are here when we're not—and to our pages, both adult pages and our students: I promised you wouldn't have to go to school until the end of the session, so promise made, promise kept.

And to the Premier and all the members of the government, my colleagues; to the Leader of the Official Opposition and all members of the official opposition; to the independents and everyone who is in our staff here, in our constituency offices: On behalf of the government, I want to express my best wishes and thanks for you making this legislative session the success that it was. Merry Christmas, happy holidays and all the best in 2025.

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Point of order: the member for London North Centre.

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** On behalf of the official opposition, merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, happy holidays, however you celebrate. It's only fitting that the opposition chose the friendly giant to deliver this year's holiday greeting. We have a shared goal and role here, and that's for the betterment of all in this province.

It's important that we recognize all the good, hard-working people who help us achieve this work: the Clerks at the table, who listen, advise and keep us on track; all the people around and behind the scenes who run this chamber, such as Hansard, broadcasting and translation; the security, who keep us safe; the people who clean our offices; property maintenance; the mail room; the folks in the cafeteria and the dining room who feed us, bring us coffee; and the pages, who help this place function.

**1040**

If there are any other workers I've forgotten to mention, such as our constituency teams, our Queen's Park teams and our constituents who put our faith and trust in us to represent them—we represent all workers.

I want to take a moment to thank all of the MPPs, who have served their constituents on both sides of this great House, many of whom are moving on from here. It's been an incredible honour to serve with you all. Your heart, your dedication and your service are an example to us all.

I also want to thank all of our families, the families who are the glue that keep us together, both in our legislative

work and in our heart. They let us serve here, they tolerate our absences and they keep our hearts strong no matter what.

As we return to our families and to our warm homes across this great province, let's not forget those who are sleeping in snowbanks, on ventilation grates, denied a warm bed and the care that all people deserve. Let's remember the reason for the season: goodwill to all. I encourage us all to listen to those people with your ears and with your heart. We serve them. They are us.

Through you, Speaker: merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, a happy new year to all, and to all, God's peace.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Next, I'll recognize, on the same point of order, I think, the member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's that time of year where we leave this community and this family we have here to go back to our communities and our families. I just wanted to say a few words, on behalf of our caucus, of thanks to everyone in this Legislature who keeps the place running, who protect us, who make sure we have healthy food to eat, who record what we say accurately—even though sometimes some of us may have to correct our record, but I'm not going to do that right now, Speaker.

It's a special place, with a lot of special people here, and we're all connected. I always feel very connected when I'm here with everybody. It's a very, very special place.

I want to say, we are a family. It's kind of a dysfunctional family in some ways, with emphasis on the "fun." But we're all connected, because we do share way more in common with each other than we have differences. And some of the differences are big; I don't think they're deal breakers. I don't think they are. Maybe somebody else does, but I don't think they are.

Again, we're very grateful for all of our colleagues, everyone who supports us in here, all the great work that they do. We want to wish you a merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, happy Kwanza, happy new year. Whatever you celebrate, may you have a joyous and blessed time with your family and your community and all the blessings of the season.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Member for Guelph.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I, too, on behalf of the mighty Green team over here in the corner, want to wish everyone a very merry Christmas, happy Hanukkah, happy Kwanza, happy holidays, and all the best in the new year.

You know, each and every day that I walk into this building, I still pinch myself—that the fact that we have the honour and privilege of serving the people of our communities and the people of this province. I want to thank each and every one of my colleagues of all political stripes for your service to the people of Ontario.

I want to offer a heartfelt thanks to the table staff, the pages, security, broadcasting, the food services, the people who keep this building clean, running and functioning each and every day. We couldn't do our jobs without you—including Hansard over here, keeping track of the words that we say.

It's an honour and a privilege to serve the people of this province, and we all collectively, regardless of what your role is in this building, do an outstanding job for the people of this province.

I want to wish you all the best in the new year, health and happiness, and enjoy—because I know these are demanding jobs, on ourselves and on our families, I hope each and every one of you have an opportunity to spend some quality time rejuvenating over the holidays, but most importantly, some quality time with your loved ones, because they deserve your time as well. Thank you, and happy holidays.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce two incredible ladies. They are Kelly Dobbin, who is the registrar and CEO of the College of Midwives of Ontario, as well as Victoria Marshall. Welcome to Queen's Park, ladies. Thank you for being here.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I would like to welcome another school, Michael Power, from my riding to the building, and students Catherine, Michael, Steve, Sanju, Adina, Estela, Marko, Sebastian, Pavle, Matthew, Thomas, Matteo, Kyle, Elena and Victoria, and, of course, their teacher Krista Schneider. I'll be seeing them later, but welcome to the Legislature.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** This being the last day of this session before the holidays, I am very pleased to welcome a special guest: my husband, Jonathan Arnold.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I have the pleasure of being part of the Ontario Legislature Internship Program, so I'd like to introduce members of the House to my legislative intern, Megan Ryan-Lloyd. She has been given the great opportunity to learn a little bit about this place, and I really appreciate her guidance and having her in the office. I look forward to having her in Leeds–Grenville–Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes next week.

**Ms. Sandy Shaw:** This is to my grandson Teddy: You're such a delightful, happy baby. Thank you for all the joy you bring to our family. Happy first birthday.

**Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam:** I would like to welcome my friend, volunteer and community member Mr. Kenney to Queen's Park. Welcome to Ontario's Legislature, Mr. Kenney.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I'd like to welcome and thank my staff Dayna Prest, Nigel Gordijk, Karissa Singh and John Nuttal, who supported the work over the year. Thank you and welcome to your House.

**Mr. Brian Riddell:** I would like to welcome Les Kadar, who has the privilege of being married to the mayor of Cambridge, who is in the press conference right now. Welcome.

**MPP Jamie West:** I believe, in the gallery, my good friend Lisa Arnott is here joining us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Sudbury might have gotten away with that; I wouldn't have. Thank you, nonetheless.

*Laughter.*

**Hon. Trevor Jones:** I'd like to welcome staff and students from Ursuline College Chatham, locally known as "the Pines," and thank director of education Scott Johnson for bringing the students here to our Legislature. Have a great day, everybody.

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I'd like to thank my OLIP intern Sayyidah Jaffer. She has been such a great asset to our team the last number of months. I just want to say, have a happy holiday, and whoever your next placement is, is going to get a really fantastic intern.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I asked my brother Jason Schreiner to tune in today. Today is his birthday and also today would have been my father's 75th birthday. I want to wish them both happy birthdays.

**Mrs. Daisy Wai:** I would like to congratulate our page from Richmond Hill, Laura Yahlou. This is her third time being the page captain and today she is the page captain again. She was also voted to be the valedictorian for this session. Congratulations, Laura. We are all proud of you from Richmond Hill, and I'd also like to invite everybody to congratulate her.

1050

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** I would like to give a big Ontario birthday shout-out to my son Jonathan Fredrick James. Happy birthday, son. I've loved you since I met you.

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** Today I'd like to wish a very, very happy birthday to my nephew Ronan, my niece Irina and, since we're probably not going to sit on the 18th, a very happy birthday to my mom.

### QUESTION PERIOD

#### ONTARIO PLACE

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** As it is the last day of the session, I want to wish all of you and your families happy holidays, and a merry Christmas to those celebrating.

My question is for the Premier. Speaker, the thought of a luxury massage with valet parking is just too much for the members of this government to resist, and they've shown they will do anything to get it. But the destruction and fire sale of Ontario Place to a foreign-owned luxury spa and a taxpayer-built underwater parking garage is embarrassing and out of touch even by this government's own standards.

It's time to come clean: Was this deal designed to fail, so they could build the waterfront casino that the Premier always said he wanted?

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

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I, too, wish everyone and all of the constituents watching a very merry Christmas and happy holiday season.

Mr. Speaker, I will once again reference the minister's advisory panel report from 2012. Recommendation 15:

“To achieve its full potential, Ontario Place must become a more flexible model based on strong private-public partnerships.”

Mr. Speaker, we will be seeing the following revenue: \$1 billion in rent over the lease term and close to \$1 billion worth of maintenance to Ontario Place. What Ontarians are getting is they’re getting a brand new stage that will be operational 365 days of the year. They are getting an upgraded marina, 50 acres of public realm space, a wellness and water park centre that they can attend, especially in the winter, and a brand new science centre. That is what Ontarians are receiving.

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

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** Speaker, the Auditor General of Ontario has called this government’s destruction of Ontario Place unfair, untransparent and unaccountable. This government is building an underground parking lot for rich massage enthusiasts at a cost of \$400 to every Ontario family.

And the cost overruns on our dime have already begun. They’re at \$2.2 billion and counting, and all for a 95-year lease, as if they’ve learned nothing from the giveaway of Highway 407. Will this government finally admit that they’ve turned Ontario Place into their own personal gas plant scandal?

*Interjections.*

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

Minister of Infrastructure.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Mr. Speaker, I certainly wouldn’t compare it to that. Ontarians are receiving \$700 million worth of private sector investment onto the site, as well as over \$2 billion worth of revenue, upkeep and maintenance.

What the NDP want is what the Liberals did: to close Ontario down; have it continuously be flooded and fall into disrepair so that Ontarians don’t have an attraction and a place to go. Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough for this government. We will bring Ontario Place back. It’s under construction, and I can’t wait for families to enjoy it once doors open.

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

**Mr. Tom Rakocevic:** The giveaway of Ontario Place to a foreign spa, the sale of the greenbelt to rich donor insiders, expropriation of farmland, an RCMP investigation, the \$1-billion bailout of the 407, adding \$100 billion to Ontario’s debt, costly lawsuits, the arrogant use of the “notwithstanding” clause, questionable procurement, costly privatization, delayed transit projects, massive cost overruns, gas pump stickers that peel off, invisible licence plates, a guy named Mr. X calling their shots, walking back their own bills and bad decisions over and over again—this is not what people signed up for in 2018.

This government has become what they said they hated, what they said they would stop.

Will they admit that they have become the new Liberal Party of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Order. Order. Order.

*Interjections.*

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

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Opposition side, come to order.

Start the clock.

Minister of Infrastructure.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I guess the NDP don’t know how to count. While there are a handful of Liberals here, we have a strong majority, and we intend on keeping that strong majority.

What our government is focused on is building subways, expanding the subway system by 50%, making sure that we reduce traffic and congestion through new measures. We are expanding and building 50 new hospitals across the province of Ontario. We’re going to build 30,000 new long-term-care beds. And we will continue to build schools.

The people of this province elected this government to get the job done and build Ontario, and that’s what we’re doing.

## JOB CREATION

**MPP Jamie West:** Merry Christmas, everybody.

While other provinces are seeing employment rates improve and stabilize, Ontario is moving in the other direction. Unemployment is on the rise, and good-paying, full-time jobs are on the decline. Jobs, last month, fell in almost every industry: construction, utilities, manufacturing, trucking, warehousing—even in finance, insurance and real estate.

My question is, why is the Premier letting Ontario fall so far behind the rest of the country?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** To reply, the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** The fact is that 850,000 jobs have been created in Ontario since we were first elected. This year alone, 200,000 new jobs have been created in Ontario. Several of our auto plants are retooling at the same time, as part of the greatest revolution in Ontario’s proud auto history. Some \$45 billion in new auto investment has landed in our province over the last four years. As they reopen, with the most modern plants in the world, tens of thousands of those auto workers will be back. They’ll return to the new manufacturing jobs that are being created. We know that the NDP and the Liberals didn’t want that to happen.

Under the Liberals, we lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs because they made us the most expensive jurisdiction in the world.

Speaker—200,000 new jobs this year alone.

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

**MPP Jamie West:** Only the Conservative government can brag about having a 7.8% unemployment rate, the highest in the country.

Back to the Premier: The Premier and the Conservative government promised to bring back the 300,000 manufacturing jobs we lost under the former Liberal government, but they keep making things worse. Ontario has 13,400 fewer manufacturing jobs today than it did when they were elected in 2018.

This government continues to hand out massive corporate subsidies—over \$20 billion—to attract EV manufacturers, with the promise of bringing manufacturing back to Ontario. But what do we get? Closures of production lines in Oshawa, St. Catharines, London and Windsor.

How can the Premier be proud of his total failure to bring jobs back to Ontario?

1100

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** We understand that the members opposite do not support the expansion of growth in Ontario.

They obviously missed what I said, so I'll reiterate it: These plants are now retooling. When those plants reopen—with the most modern plants in all of the world—those tens of thousands of jobs will come back to those plants.

We understand that this party does not support all of the things—they voted against it. That member himself voted against the changes in the Mining Act to bring mining jobs back to Ontario. That's the kind of rhetoric we get. I don't know why they keep talking Ontario down.

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

**MPP Jamie West:** Back to the Premier: I'm proud to stand up for Ontario.

In fact, it's under the Conservative government that life has continued to get harder for workers in Ontario—and it's why we're here. There are 13,400 fewer jobs now than there were when the Conservative government took office. Ontario's unemployment and job vacancy rates are some of the worst in the country.

Instead of making every household in Ontario pay \$400 for his private luxury spa in downtown Toronto, the government needs to invest in workers across the country. What we need is to improve wages, improve working conditions, and improve access to public services and affordable housing that workers need.

My question: When will the Premier stop wasting time and money on his schemes and scandals and focus on making life better for Ontarians?

*Interjections.*

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

The Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

**Hon. David Piccini:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

He said, "When will this government focus on investing in workers?" Perhaps he has missed the Skills Development Fund, a \$1.5-billion employer-driven fund that is connecting workers with the skill sets they need to succeed.

Perhaps he should talk to the member from Niagara Falls, who calls when he's not invited to the SDF announcement by unions that are benefiting from better training and better jobs with bigger paychecks. His own caucus members call us, upset that they don't get invited to these announcements. Unions have abandoned them in full force because they recognize that when it comes to investing in workers to build a stronger Ontario, this government, under this Premier, is going to ensure they have a paycheque to take home to their family—better training, better jobs with bigger paycheques.

## HOMELESSNESS

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** My question is to the Premier.

The Conservatives have had six and half years to fix the homelessness crisis, and it has only gotten worse. The government's own documents show that there are 234,000 people in Ontario who are facing homelessness, and yet this government has built just over 1,000 affordable homes in six years. That is a staggering failure.

Instead of criminalizing people who have nowhere to go, can this government get serious about the homelessness crisis and build thousands of affordable homes?

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

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** First, Mr. Speaker, let me just remind the member opposite that the government does not actually build homes. It's our partners who actually build homes across the province of Ontario.

The supports that we have provided have provided over 12,000 units of affordable housing across the province of Ontario.

More importantly, we inherited a system that had thousands of units that could not be occupied. The Liberals and NDP counted those as units. They could not be occupied because they were infested with mice; they were mould-infested. What we have done is put 100,000 of those units back in production, back to make them available again—do you know how?—by renovating them, by cleaning them, by bringing them up to modern standards.

Mr. Speaker, we lead the entire country. We have put more units back in the system than all other provinces combined. That is a record that we're proud of. We're going to double down, continue to build more and fix more so that people can live—

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

Supplementary question.

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** I'll tell you what Ontario is a leader in: encampments. There are 1,400 encampments in towns and cities across Ontario. That is this government's legacy.

Instead of taking responsibility for the crisis, the Conservatives are pushing legislation aiming to put people in jail, instead of building permanently affordable housing.

My question is this: It is cheaper to put someone in housing than it is to put them in jail, so why are you choosing the more expensive option?

*Interjections.*

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

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** The opposition has no clue what they're talking about, and Ontarians should listen to a question like that and tremble in their boots.

Let me be very clear to the opposition, but more importantly, let me make this commitment to the people of the province of Ontario: We are going to clear up encampments. We are going to return and restore parks to the kids of the province of Ontario. We're going to restore our downtowns so small businesses can thrive.

We're not going to put people in jail. Do you know what we're going to do? We're going to provide them wraparound services so that they can get better and they can contribute to society.

This is a party, supported by the other opposition parties, that supports sanctuary cities, which has led to the chaos that we have in our streets. They want to double down on unsuccessful policies that have given us tents, that have taken away dignity from thousands of people.

We'll restore dignity. We'll give people back their province. We'll make it stronger and better than ever.

## ENERGY POLICIES

**Ms. Donna Skelly:** Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries.

Ontario is growing fast. More people are calling our province home every day, and with that growth comes the need for more energy. Families and businesses need reliable power to keep their homes and operations running.

For years, we've heard about the challenges of meeting Ontario's growing energy needs because of the failed Liberal green energy policies of the past.

Ontario has an opportunity to lead once again, not just in producing energy, but in building a strong, innovative energy system. We can build an energy system that connects every part of the province, supports economic growth, and keeps energy bills affordable for families.

Speaker, can the associate minister please share how our government is building a strong, reliable energy system that meets today's needs and prepares us for tomorrow?

**Hon. Sam Oosterhoff:** I want to thank the member for Flamborough-Glanbrook for her advocacy for her families and job creators in her riding.

She's absolutely right; the importance of ensuring affordability and reliability in Ontario's energy sector is completely paramount for our government. We're taking an integrated approach to energy planning that breaks down the silos of the past and creates an integrated energy plan that considers all energy options—sources like electricity, natural gas, hydrogen and more—bringing together a plan with a focus on reliability and affordability.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of joining the Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products in Thunder Bay,

where we announced the completion of the Wataynikaneyap power project. It's an 1,800-kilometre power project that is Indigenous-led—the largest Indigenous-led energy project in Ontario's history—connecting 16 remote First Nations to Ontario's grid.

It's these kind of projects, like the Watay project, that demonstrate our commitment to getting real results, practical solutions that ensure communities and businesses across Ontario have access to clean, reliable, affordable energy, while strengthening our economy and also ensuring economic opportunity for all communities in the province.

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

**Ms. Donna Skelly:** Ontario has always been a leader in energy innovation. We have one of the cleanest electricity systems in the world, with 90% of our electricity coming from non-emitting sources.

Now, as the world shifts to cleaner energy, Ontario can showcase our strong leadership once again.

Hydrogen is an exciting new technology. Hydrogen is clean, versatile and full of potential to power our homes, businesses and industries. It can cut emissions, support jobs and create new opportunities right here in our province. Families and workers want to know how we can take advantage of this game-changing technology to demonstrate our continued global leadership.

Can the associate minister please explain how Ontario is driving the hydrogen economy and leading the way in clean energy innovation?

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**Hon. Sam Oosterhoff:** Thank you very much to the member for Flamborough-Glanbrook.

In her own community of Hamilton, we're seeing how innovators are driving change and clean energy power through hydrogen production, through GH power.

I want to say that this speaks to a fundamental difference between the Liberals, propped up by the NDP, and our government. They believed in taxation and repressing opportunities for growth. We believe in incentivizing technological expertise.

That's why our hydrogen strategy represents a tremendous opportunity for Ontario. It represents opportunities for Ontario's workers to create more jobs, to lead in the clean energy opportunities before us.

We're also creating more export opportunities, and that's why we're backing our researchers and our businesses innovating through the Hydrogen Innovation Fund here in Ontario. One of the successes that we've seen is the Markham Enbridge gas pilot program, where they are now blending hydrogen to heat homes and businesses in Markham. This is the first of its kind in Canada—as well as Atura Power's Niagara Hydrogen Centre, which is producing Ontario's largest green hydrogen facility for industrial applications.

These are the kinds of examples of a government that looks towards supporting innovation, supporting those who are taking risks and entrepreneurs who are succeeding



in driving down emissions while supporting industrial applications and jobs.

We're not going to focus on taxation. We're focusing on technologies.

#### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE FUNDING

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Premier.

This government's funding for Ontario colleges is by far the lowest in Canada—just 44% of the national average.

Without the international student tuition that was keeping the sector afloat, Ontario colleges are facing huge revenue challenges, forcing spending cuts of \$752 million so far this fiscal year.

In communities across this province, college programs are shutting down, campuses are being closed, staff are being laid off, leaving employers without the skilled workforce they need and denying domestic students the careers our province depends on.

What will it take for this government to finally accept its responsibility to stabilize our college sector before it is too late?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The Minister of Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Nolan Quinn:** As I've said before, we are hyperfocused on making sure our post-secondary programs get students into rewarding careers that address the province's current and future labour market needs.

Our post-secondary sector is going through a rebalancing right now, and some difficult decisions are being made by our institutions to ensure that they're able to continue delivering world-class education right here in the Ontario that we all know. We have been working and will continue to work with the sector to ensure that they're able to keep doing exactly that—providing Ontario students with the education and skills they need for good-paying, in-demand jobs and careers, which is why, earlier this year, we provided \$1.3 billion to stabilize the sector, the single biggest investment in almost 15 years. That is on top of the more than \$5 billion we provide in operating funding every year, which we put into the sector so that they can continue to prepare our students.

We'll continue to be in constant contact with our post-secondary education system.

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

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** This week, we learned from the Financial Accountability Officer that this government has actually slashed spending on post-secondary education by \$425 million this year, which is a cut of 6.9%.

Ontario universities are also struggling with the lowest per student funding in Canada—just 57% of the national average.

This government's chronic underfunding and cuts to post-secondary education have put both colleges and universities in an impossible position.

Universities are looking at a \$1-billion revenue loss from international student tuition, which will force cuts to programs, staff and student services.

Speaker, why does this government not understand that investing in post-secondary education is an investment in our province's future?

**Hon. Nolan Quinn:** I'll say it again because the opposition might not have heard me: Our government provided the single largest investment into post-secondary education—\$1.3 billion—earlier this year to stabilize the sector. That's on top of the \$5 billion in operating funding we put into the sector every year so our schools can continue to deliver for Ontario students.

Variances between planned and actual spending identified in this Q2 FAO report are explained by fluctuations in our demand-based programs, such as OSAP. We expect to spend the entirety of the forecasted and planned budget by the end of the fiscal year as we continue to support our world-class post-secondary education system.

Speaker, the FAO reports reflect a snapshot in time in the funding, and as the report also outlines, post-secondary funding is increasing over the next three years.

#### ONTARIO ECONOMY

**Mr. Rick Byers:** My question is for the Minister of Finance. For 15 long years, the Liberals, supported by the NDP, ran Ontario into the ground. They hiked taxes, racked up debt and left families with fewer opportunities. Their decisions hurt hard-working families across our province. Ontario's economy stalled and our credit rating took hit after hit from agencies around the world. Families, businesses and workers paid the price for their reckless choices.

Since our government came to office, we've been focused on turning things around. Now, Ontario's economy is stronger, and the proof is in the numbers. Can the minister please explain how our government's plan is helping to rebuild Ontario and securing a brighter future for everyone?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** My great thanks to the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound for that question. I will be in your riding on Saturday; you know that. So I'll see you then.

Over the course of 15 years of Liberal governments, Ontarians watched as their taxes got higher and the economy got worse. The Liberal fiscal plan was simple: get downgraded by credit rating agencies and raise taxes on the people of Ontario. But it is our government that is rebuilding Ontario's economy and fixing the damage done by the previous government.

I'm happy to say that just last week, Ontario received the first credit upgrade in almost two decades from Standard and Poor's. Because, you know, with higher revenues and lower costs, this proves that once again, our plan is working, and that Ontario's economy is stronger than ever.

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

**Mr. Rick Byers:** Thank you to the minister for your excellent response. I look forward to seeing you in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

For years, under the Liberals, Ontario's finances were a mess. They piled on debt, raised taxes and left us paying billions in interest costs. It didn't just hurt our bottom line, it hurt families, businesses and communities. The Liberals' mismanagement meant fewer jobs, less investment and crumbling infrastructure. Under our government's leadership, we've turned things around. We've taken control of the books, boosted the economy and improved Ontario's credit rating. Thanks to our strong leadership, Ontario now has some of the lowest borrowing rates in Canada.

Can the minister please tell us more about how our government's leadership is saving taxpayer money and creating opportunities for the people of Ontario?

**Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy:** Thank you again. My gratitude to the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. For years, six times under the previous Liberal government, Ontario was downgraded by the credit rating agencies, wasting billions of dollars of interest on debt. Today, thanks to the improved economic outlook, Ontario today enjoys the lowest borrowing cost of any province in Canada, and the ratio of our debt-to-GDP and our revenues is at the lowest point since the 2010s. That means, by managing the economy, we are saving a billion dollars of taxpayer money this year alone.

What that means is that we can now use that money to invest in transit, in infrastructure and, of course, hospitals. Speaker, under Premier Ford, we have rebuilt the economy, are putting money back into the pockets of the hard-working people of Ontario, and we've done it all without raising taxes.

#### GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

**MPP Lisa Gretzky:** To the Premier: Under this Conservative government, families in Windsor-Essex are struggling like never before. We have an affordability crisis and the numbers of people relying on food banks is at a historic high across the province. People in Windsor-Essex made over 211,000 visits to the food bank; 27% of those were for the first time. We have the highest unemployment rates in the country and a government that is failing to deliver affordable housing, leading to a record number of people experiencing homelessness.

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Instead of addressing the affordability crisis that he created, the Premier is charging every family in Windsor-Essex \$400 to pay for his luxury foreign spa in downtown Toronto. Will the Premier cancel his \$2.2-billion luxury spa deal, rip up the bill that he's sending to families in Windsor-Essex and invest that money in ensuring that no child, family or senior goes hungry or needs a food bank?

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

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** See, our approach is different. Under the leadership of the Liberals, Ontario Place was at a loss. In fact, government had to subsidize the site for many years. Our vision for an Ontario Place, with multiple

tenants, will ensure that we have a self-sustaining site that will bring in revenues for government.

But this is just one project of many under the Ministry of Infrastructure, and we are spending \$190 billion to make sure that we have the hospitals, the public transit, the highways, the long-term care and the schools to make sure that hard-working Ontarians have the services that they need, when they need to access them.

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

**MPP Lisa Gretzky:** I'm talking about 211,000 visits to a food bank—27% of those were new users—and the Minister of Infrastructure is talking about their dream and their vision for a luxury spa in downtown Toronto. You are so out of touch. Shelters are over capacity—

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

Member for Windsor West.

**MPP Lisa Gretzky:** Shelters are over capacity every day and must turn away women and children fleeing domestic violence due to overcrowding and underfunding.

Last year in Windsor-Essex, children made up 30% of food bank users. That number is even higher this year. Children are going to bed hungry under this Premier's watch. We have 15 food banks in Windsor-Essex, and one alone provides 300 food hampers daily. They have all reduced how often they provide food for struggling people because they can't keep up with demand without running out of food. Meanwhile, the Premier is charging every family in my riding, Windsor-Tecumseh and Essex \$400 to fund his luxury spa project in downtown Toronto.

Why does the Premier feel paying for a luxury spa in Toronto is more important than supporting people accessing food banks or facing homelessness in Windsor-Essex?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Well, let me just talk about some of the things that our government is doing to make sure that life continues to be affordable for families: keeping electricity costs down, providing supports for seniors, gas tax relief, toll relief—\$200 to constituents, Mr. Speaker.

But, again, part of our mandate and part of the reason why we are here and why we have such a strong majority government is because we made a commitment to build the services, facilities and infrastructure that the people depend on and that the people need.

Mr. Speaker, let me just talk about the hospitals that we are currently building that are under construction today, thanks to the Premier's leadership: Hamilton Health Sciences, Niagara Health new South Niagara Hospital, CHEO 1Door4Care, Ottawa Hospital's new Civic redevelopment, Quinte Health, Weeneebayko, Cambridge Memorial Hospital and Trillium Health Partners' Mississauga and Queensway sites. We are going to make sure that we have hospitals providing services to Ontarians no matter where you live in the province of Ontario.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Vincent Ke:** My question is for the Solicitor General. Last week's daylight robbery at a Markham

jewellery store has shaken the community once again. Reports indicate that at least four of the accused robbers were out on bail. The current bail system is a catch-and-release system and a revolving door at the courthouse. The Toronto Police Association, Ontario Provincial Police Association and Police Association of Ontario are calling for immediate action by keeping repeat and violent offenders in jail while they wait for trial.

Speaker, what action is this government taking to reassure our communities that safety is our top priority?

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** Morning, noon and night, public safety is the priority for our government, led by Premier Ford. When you look at the record of this government, the \$112-million investment in the Bail Compliance and Warrant Apprehension Grant—we sent a message across Ontario that we will not find it acceptable to have repeat and violent offenders on our streets.

And do you know what, Mr. Speaker? When we look at leadership, it's Premier Ford. When we look at leadership, it's not the Liberal leader, Bonnie Crombie, who is scared of the police—and she said it as the mayor of Mississauga. She's scared of the police. That's not leadership.

Our government will continue to prioritize our public safety, morning, noon and night.

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

**Mr. Vincent Ke:** Thank you to the Solicitor General for his response. Speaker, my constituents from Don Valley North applaud Ontario's calls for immediate federal action on bail reform. They have expressed that keeping dangerous offenders off the streets is the only way to make the community feel safe. We have also heard concerns that Ontario correctional institutions have insufficient capacity.

What actions is this government taking to keep dangerous criminals behind bars, where they belong?

Thank you, Speaker, and I wish everyone a happy holiday.

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** The member is correct that public safety matters. I've said this before: If somebody feels that they want to act in a criminal way, we have room for you. And we are investing a lot of money—billions of dollars, we're investing, to complete a 345-bed new jail in Thunder Bay. We're investing over a half a billion dollars to make improvements to our existing jails and correctional system. We are hiring over 1,500 new correctional officers. Mr. Speaker, we will spare no expense in prioritizing public safety.

I'll say it again: When a leader of another party is scared of the police, that's not who we trust for public safety. Ontarians will trust a government that stands up for them. That's our government, under the leadership of Premier Ford.

#### LABOUR LEGISLATION

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development.

Ontario's workers are the backbone of our economy. They drive our industries, they build our communities and

they make our province stronger. But many workers are facing challenges that make it harder for them to do their jobs safely and thrive in their careers. Some face high training costs and the lack of proper protection at work.

Workers in Essex county and in Ontario deserve better. That's why it's encouraging to see that our government is taking steps to prioritize workers' health and safety and professional development with Working for Workers Act number 6. Supporting workers with smart, forward-thinking policies is key to our success.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how these measures in Working for Workers Act number 6 can help protect workers and set them up for success in their careers and in their workplaces?

**Hon. David Piccini:** Thank you to the member from Windsor-Essex for that question and for the work he's doing to ensure a more productive, healthier and safer workplace in Windsor.

Speaker, as we've seen declining productivity, we have to reverse that. That's what this Premier and our government are on a mission to do. We're doing it through a historic investment in the Skills Development Fund. That member and I have been first-hand to SDF training programs in union halls in Windsor, seeing workers get better training, with a bigger paycheque. It's been remarkable. But we're not stopping there.

We're expanding our workforce, ensuring under-represented groups and more women enter rewarding careers in the trades through enshrining properly fitting PPE in the Occupational Health and Safety Act. These are important measures we're taking.

What's the net result? We've seen workers in Windsor take home a cumulative payroll of \$14 million. That's \$14 million in payroll we wouldn't have had, because the member for Windsor West voted against it.

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

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I thank the Minister for his answer. We know that strong businesses create strong communities, and when businesses succeed, they invest more in their workers, leading to better jobs and safer workplaces.

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But for too long under the previous Liberal government, businesses struggled with rising costs and outdated rules, making it harder to focus on innovation and safety. Safe workplaces aren't just good for workers; they're also good for business too. That's why it's crucial to encourage employers to take steps that better protect their teams while supporting their growth in Essex county and across Ontario.

The Working for Workers Six Act is about striking that balance, helping businesses thrive while ensuring workers are safe and supported. Can the minister please explain how this new legislation supports both businesses and workers while keeping workplaces safe?

**Hon. David Piccini:** Again, thank you to that member for that question.

When Liberals are in charge, what do we see? High tax, high burden, a complex web, a myriad of approvals and

fees that drive down productivity and drive jobs out of our province. That's why we lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs, and we're slated to get nothing in automotive investments.

Well, we've turned that around: as I've said, \$14 million in payroll in Windsor per week to building trades. We're attracting incredible foreign direct investment because we recognize that when you create a low-tax, business-friendly climate, we create good-paying jobs. When you invest in skills training, supporting workers, PPE, health and safe workplaces to expand the number of women and under-represented groups in occupations like the trades, Ontario thrives and succeeds.

Enough of delay and enough of the "no" that defined the previous Wynne-Crombie Liberal government. We're saying yes to building public transit, yes to automotive, yes to highways, roads and bridges to build a stronger Ontario.

### HEALTH CARE

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** Speaker, through you to the Premier: Two months ago, my mother, in her eighties, received notice that the MRI appointment she needed was finally scheduled. Hearing rumours of lengthy wait times, she was preparing for the worst. However, the worst was yet to come. Imagine her shock after learning that her appointment in Niagara has been scheduled for the end of February 2026.

To the Premier: Earlier this year, you suggested that seniors like my mother, overflow patients, seek a local animal hospital. Through you, Speaker: This shows how out of touch this government really is. Why are residents in St. Catharines waiting years for an MRI?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** To reply, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** I'm not sure if it's the Christmas season or April Fool's. The member opposite is talking about the need for expanding diagnostic services in her community. I agree. That is exactly why our government has announced 49 new MRIs since 2018. Those are in community hospitals that have never had an MRI before. We're making those investments.

But this is the same member representing the NDP, who are speaking out against expansions of community diagnostic services. I am frankly appalled that you would stand up and say, "We need more," and then vote against expansions of MRIs—

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

Supplementary question.

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** April Fool's has long gone past, and I think you're the biggest fool at last. My mother is not an—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to ask the member to withdraw the unparliamentary comment and again remind the members to make their comments through the Chair.

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** Withdraw, Speaker.

This minister is so out of touch. You can supply all the MRI machines you want, but if you never address the staff

shortages, and with the deep cuts that you are doing and the lack of effective staff strategies—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Comments through the Chair.

**Mrs. Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens:** Through you, Speaker: In May of this year, it was reported that Niagara residents were waiting 306 days for their MRI appointment. Now the wait is over 500 days. However, the Ontario Health website lists outdated wait times. Patients cannot rely on this government's data.

Again, Speaker, knowing that only 24% of the patients at St. Catharines hospital are being provided MRIs within the targeted time frame, how do you sit around and ignore this extreme backlog, forcing seniors and others to go out of town and some going out of country?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Speaker, I have to ask, how do you continue to vote against these investments? Forty-nine MRIs—

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Stop the clock. I didn't vote against the investments, because we make our comments through the Chair.

Start the clock. Minister of Health.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Speaker, when members of the opposition choose to vote against our investments, it highlights that they don't care about their community. It highlights the fact that they don't care that we have 49 new MRIs operating in 43 hospitals across Ontario because of investments that we've been able to make under Premier Ford.

I am not ashamed of the investments we've made. I am not ashamed of the fact that we have made investments in MRIs, in CTs, in emergency departments, in ORs, in ICUs, in pediatric care. We're getting it done. They keep voting against it.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for St. Catharines will come to order.

The next question.

### TAXATION

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

Speaker, the people of Ontario are struggling with rising costs, and the Trudeau-Crombie carbon tax is making everything more expensive. From heating our homes to filling up our gas tanks, this tax is hitting families and businesses hard.

But it doesn't stop there. The tax is also hurting industries that are the backbone of our economy, like the natural resources sector. These industries are critical to building Ontario's future roads, schools and hospitals, which depend on materials like aggregate. Instead of helping, the Trudeau-Crombie carbon tax is driving up costs, slowing down projects and making it harder to get work done.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is supporting Ontario's natural resources sector against this harmful tax?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Newmarket–Aurora and parliamentary assistant.

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you to the member from Ajax for that excellent question. I agree: I am proud of the infrastructure investments in hospitals like Southlake Health, right in my riding.

We know that building faster, more connected care for people in Newmarket–Aurora and the surrounding communities requires thousands of truckloads of aggregate. Our government is supporting aggregate producers by ensuring product is sourced close to market. Our government cut the gas tax, ended tolled roads and removed licence plate sticker fees, and our government is working to simplify regulations for new and current aggregate producers.

The members opposite want hospitals and schools built, but why don't they build them? Only our government is fighting the Trudeau-Crombie carbon tax, making life more—

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

**Ms. Patrice Barnes:** Thank you to the member from Newmarket–Aurora for that response. My question follows up, Speaker.

The people of Ontario are struggling with rising costs and the carbon tax is adding to the bottom line of that. The natural resources sector is a key part of building our province, providing the materials we need for schools, hospitals and roads. But the Trudeau-Crombie carbon tax doesn't just raise costs; it puts jobs at risk and forces businesses to pass expenses on to consumers.

Meanwhile, our government has been working hard to balance growth with environmental stewardship. By using innovative technologies like carbon capture and storage, we can reduce emissions and support our industries.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how our government is helping Ontario's natural resources sector to reduce emissions while standing against the Trudeau-Crombie carbon tax?

**M<sup>me</sup> Dawn Gallagher Murphy:** Thank you again to the member from Ajax for that question, and thank you for all the great work she is doing in her community.

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As I mentioned, our government is reducing the tax burden for businesses by cutting the gas tax, ending tolled roads, and removing licence plate sticker fees.

My ministry recently enabled carbon storage to support Ontario's natural resources businesses. Carbon storage will reduce emissions by seven million tonnes per year—that's equivalent to annual emissions from two million cars. Second, it will support the creation of upwards of 4,000 good jobs. And thirdly, it will reduce the carbon tax Ontario businesses pay by \$1.2 billion per year.

Our government is the only government that is supporting growth for our natural resource businesses and reducing carbon emissions. Standing up for Ontario's natural resource sector, workers and communities ensures Ontario will remain the greatest place to live anywhere in the world.

## HEALTH CARE

**MPP Wayne Gates:** My question is to the Premier.

We have over 2.2 million Ontarians without a family doctor, and this crisis has been created under six years of this government.

In Niagara, we are short 106 family doctors; in Niagara Falls—to my understanding, the mayor is here today—we are short 36, the largest shortage in the region. Niagara Falls is now even considering paying doctors \$100,000 to recruit them, meaning local taxpayers are now on the hook for this government's mistakes. We have around 40% of seniors in our community who can't wait years for a solution—they need a doctor today. We have met with local health care experts who have real solutions right now, but they need a government willing to take that action.

Will the Premier commit to take action today, or does he believe seniors and families don't deserve a family doctor in the province of Ontario?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** To reply, the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** Thank you for giving me an opportunity to highlight some of the investments that we've already made this year in terms of expanding primary care access in the province of Ontario.

So 78 new teams—that means across Ontario we are seeing teams that are hiring, that are taking on new patients, as recently as last week, in Minto-Mapleton. We have seen those teams start up in the Niagara region. There was an investment; that means 7,800 more people are now connected to primary care.

That's the work that we've been doing. When we make investments in our colleges and universities, expanding the number of seats available for young people who wish to train as physicians, as nurses, as nurse practitioners, as PSWs, that's when you start to see a difference in community.

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

**MPP Wayne Gates:** I don't believe that Niagara Falls should be at an auction—"I'll give you \$75,000"; "I'll give you \$100,000"; "I'll give you \$104,000"; "I'll give you \$150,000"—trying to get a family doctor. It makes no sense to me.

The community of Fort Erie is also suffering due to a lack of 24/7 services at Douglas Memorial urgent care centre.

Urgent care centres play a crucial role as a primary care safety net and can keep people out of emergency rooms while saving lives.

In Fort Erie, we have a community where, again, 40% of the residents are seniors and where they have bad weather, snowstorms, roads are undrivable—meaning a local urgent care centre is even more important.

People shouldn't have to worry about losing their lives because they can't get timely access to urgent care.

The Premier and the minister have the ability to restore the urgent care centre in Fort Erie today.

Will the Premier and minister commit today to continue long-term operations—urgent care and other current services—at Douglas Memorial for years to come? Yes or no?

*Interjections.*

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

The Minister of Health.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** I know the member opposite is aware of the fact that there are actually 600 new hospital beds that are in the works in the Niagara region—I know, because he was at the opening. We have two new facilities in the Niagara region—and I have to say, when I look at the Port Colborne mayor working directly with Niagara Health to make sure that, as facilities become available, they are thinking about innovative, creative ways to continue to serve their communities.

We are investing in the Niagara region in the same way we are investing in Hamilton, in Toronto, in Ottawa, in Sudbury—across Ontario, 50 hospital capital builds worth the equivalent of \$50 billion. That's the impact that we are making in Ontario.

#### NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

**Mr. Ross Romano:** My question is for the Minister of Northern Development.

Northern Ontario is full of talent and potential, but it's clear that we need to provide strong supports to help our communities thrive.

People in the north face unique challenges: geography, limited resources, and the need for skilled workers to grow their businesses and their economies. I know first-hand how hard families, small businesses and organizations in the north work to build up their communities.

One of the key challenges is ensuring that northern businesses and communities have access to the talent and the workforce that they need to grow and to succeed. Northern businesses need partners who understand their needs and are ready to invest in their future.

Speaker, can the minister please tell this House how our government is supporting skills development in northern Ontario through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund and various other funds that benefit our communities and help our communities in the wonderful north grow, prosper and continue to flourish?

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The parliamentary assistant, the member for Brantford–Brant.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you to the member for that question.

Speaker, as part of our government's commitment to build Ontario, we extensively modernized the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to ensure programming was responsive to the needs of the north. This includes the People and Talent Program, which is tailor-made to attract, develop and retain skilled workers to ensure that our northern communities and businesses have the talent they need.

Our government is helping people like Katia Borjas, who was hired through this NOHFC program with the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association. Katia leveraged her experience with NOMA to continue her career as an economic development coordinator with Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek. In her new role, Katia is shaping career pathways in her community, supporting partnerships between municipal and First Nations organizations, and ensuring long-term economic opportunities in the region.

This is what the People and Talent Program is for. It doesn't only create opportunities for individuals; it also helps to foster relationships that will strengthen communities in the north.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order.

Supplementary question.

**Mr. Ross Romano:** It's very encouraging to know that our government is continuing to take action so that families, businesses, communities and organizations can thrive and prosper.

Northern Ontario is so full of hard-working entrepreneurs. These are the backbone of our communities. They fix our cars, they run our stores, they cut our hair, they drive innovation, and they do so much to support our local industries. However, to grow their businesses, they need support in hiring staff, training workers and expanding operations. The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund can make a real difference for these businesses and the people who work for them.

Speaker, can the minister please tell us how the government is using the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to support entrepreneurs and help them succeed in the north?

*Interjections.*

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

Members will please take their seats.

Restart the clock.

The member for Brantford–Brant.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** Thank you to the member from Sault Ste. Marie. I really appreciated his statement in the House this morning, and I look forward to seeing how he moves forward in the future.

**1150**

Speaker, our government has a proven track record in ensuring that businesses across northern Ontario have access to the investments that they need to remain competitive.

For example, Andrew Kennedy of Andrew's Auto Repair in Sudbury has benefited from the NOHFC's People and Talent Program by hiring two interns: a customer service representative and a mechanical apprentice. Andrew says the NOHFC has been a game-changer, from recruitment to retention. The young man hired as an apprentice is now a licensed technician through Andrew's business and has been a key team member in their recent expansion. In a northern, resource-rich city like Greater

Sudbury, industry professionals count on Andrew to keep them moving safely between job sites.

Unlike the former Liberal government, which characterized northern Ontario as a no man's land, we are investing in entrepreneurs and workers, building a workforce that is driving economic growth and proving that the north is open for business.

### HOSPITAL PARKING FEES

**Mr. Jeff Burch:** Speaker, through you to the Minister of Health: Last week, parking fees at Niagara hospitals were increased for families, patients and staff. Since then, I've heard from families across Niagara dealing with the increased financial cost just to park at the hospital, while struggling with the emotional toll of caring for a loved one.

To the minister: Why should anyone caring for and visiting a sick loved one be burdened with thousands of dollars in parking fees? And will the minister take action and support our call to remove parking fees at Ontario hospitals?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** The member opposite knows the parking fees have been in place in the province of Ontario for decades, including when the NDP were in government.

We empower hospitals to make local decisions based on their local community. But I will say that we did actually, when we came into government, put some controls and measures in place to ensure that hospitals did not unduly burden their patients and their families and their employees. We did that by making sure that they offered not only daily rates, but weekly rates and monthly rates—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Order. The member for Hamilton Mountain will come to order. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will come to order.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** —and of course, each individual hospital makes those determinations depending on their communities and their needs.

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

**Mr. Jeff Burch:** Whatever the minister did didn't work.

Health care workers have faced such mistreatment and disrespect from this government over the last six years.

At Niagara hospitals, like hospitals across the province—

*Interjections.*

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

I'm going to remind the member for Hamilton Mountain and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing that it's almost Christmas. I want to wish them both a merry Christmas. Thank you.

Start the clock.

The member for Niagara Centre has the floor.

**Mr. Jeff Burch:** Thank you, Speaker.

Health care workers have faced mistreatment and disrespect from this government over the last six years.

At Niagara hospitals, like hospitals across the province, front-line workers are short-staffed, overworked and stressed out—last week, another slap in the face, as fees they pay to park at work were increased with no warning or explanation.

Can the minister explain why front-line workers at Niagara's hospitals are being slapped with higher parking fees just to come to work and do their jobs? And will this government finally take action and make parking for health care workers at Ontario hospitals free?

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** That's pretty rich from a member who represents the NDP that brought in Rae days.

Speaker, I've said it before, and I will say it again: Hospitals make these determinations based on their communities, based on their needs. I have faith in hospital CEOs' leadership, and I will let them do that important work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our scheduled question periods for the fall sitting.

### SEASON'S GREETINGS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Before I recognize any members with points of order, I would like to thank all members for their hard work this year on behalf of their constituents and the people of the province of Ontario. The role of a member of provincial Parliament is demanding and difficult, but it can also be rewarding, meaningful and life-changing. Thankfully we don't do it alone. We could not serve as MPPs without the support of our families, our friends and our staff colleagues in constituency offices or here at Queen's Park.

We're also supported by the incredible staff of the Legislative Assembly—those we see here every day, like the Clerk and the LPS officers, and those who work behind the scenes, like the cleaners or the camera operators. For 50 years now, the Office of the Assembly has been dedicated to serving Ontario's Parliament, and they do so with professionalism and passion every single day. Coming into the building as a member, guest or visitor, you can't help but be amazed by the grandeur of the Legislature and the many functions it fulfills. You can see democracy in action, and that's all possible thanks to our incredible staff.

As another year comes to a close, it's easy to reflect on our past when walking through the halls of this historic building.

When we pass the sparkling lights and hear the students filling the air with holiday music, we can also look forward to the bright promise of tomorrow that we are all building together.

I'd like to again thank all members and staff for a wonderful year here at the assembly, and wish you all the very best for a relaxing and joyful holiday season, ahead of another year serving the people of the province in 2025.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Hamilton Mountain has a point of order

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I seek unanimous consent that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, the order of the House dated May 16, 2024, referring Bill 74, An Act to amend the Missing Persons Act, 2018, to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be discharged and the bill be ordered for second reading.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Miss Taylor is seeking the unanimous consent of the House that, notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, the order of the House dated May 16, 2024, referring Bill 74, An Act to amend the Missing Persons Act, 2018, to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be discharged and the bill be ordered for second reading. Agreed? I heard some noes.

#### ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WEEK ACT

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** The member for Scarborough–Agincourt has a point of order.

**Mr. Aris Babikian:** On behalf of my colleague from Oakville North–Burlington and myself, and as two members of this House from Greek and Armenian Orthodox roots, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our colleagues on both sides of the aisle for passing this important bill: Bill 167, Orthodox Christian Week Act.

Also, I would like to acknowledge that yesterday two representatives from the Armenian Orthodox Church were here, and I would like to acknowledge their presence and their contribution to this bill: the Very Reverend Archpriest Father Zareh Zargarian, vicar of the Armenian Church Diocese of Canada, and the Very Reverend Father Karekin Shekherdeman from St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church. Thank you very much for—

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

#### DEFERRED VOTES

##### RENT CONTROL FOR ALL TENANTS ACT, 2024 LOI DE 2024 SUR LE CONTRÔLE DES LOYERS POUR TOUS LES LOCATAIRES

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 48, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 with respect to rules relating to rent / Projet de loi 48, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation en ce qui concerne les règles relatives au loyer.

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

*The division bells rang from 1158 to 1203.*

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

On December 11, 2024, Ms. Karpoche moved second reading of Bill 48, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 with respect to rules relating to rent.

All those in favour will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Andrew, Jill	French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy
Begum, Doly	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Bell, Jessica	Glover, Chris	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Gretzky, Lisa	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Harden, Joel	Tabuns, Peter
Burch, Jeff	Jama, Sarah	Taylor, Monique
Clancy, Aislinn	Karpoche, Bhutila	West, Jamie
Fife, Catherine	Kernaghan, Terence	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** All those opposed will please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Anand, Deepak	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Pinsonneault, Steve
Babikian, Aris	Hamid, Zee	Pirie, George
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Quinn, Nolan
Barnes, Patrice	Hogarth, Christine	Rae, Matthew
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Holland, Kevin	Riddell, Brian
Bouma, Will	Jones, Sylvia	Romano, Ross
Bresee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Sabawy, Sheref
Byers, Rick	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Leardi, Anthony	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Lecce, Stephen	Skelly, Donna
Coe, Lorne	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Martin, Robin	Smith, Graydon
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Surma, Kinga
Dixon, Jess	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Dowie, Andrew	Mulroney, Caroline	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Downey, Doug	Oosterhoff, Sam	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Jill	Pang, Billy	Tibollo, Michael A.
Fedeli, Victor	Parsa, Michael	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Flack, Rob	Piccini, David	Wai, Daisy
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Pierre, Natalie	Williams, Charmaine A.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day):** The ayes are 29; the nays are 66.

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

*Second reading negatived.*

#### WORKING FOR WORKERS SIX ACT, 2024

##### LOI DE 2024 VISANT À ŒUVRER POUR LES TRAVAILLEURS, SIX

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 229, An Act to enact the Skilled Trades Week Act, 2024 and to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters / Projet de loi 229, Loi édictant la Loi de 2024 sur la Semaine des métiers



spécialisés et modifiant diverses lois relatives à l'emploi et au travail ainsi qu'à d'autres questions.

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

*The division bells rang from 1206 to 1207.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** On December 12, 2024, Mr. Piccini moved third reading of Bill 229, An Act to enact the Skilled Trades Week Act, 2024 and to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour and other matters.

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

#### Ayes

Anand, Deepak	Gates, Wayne	Pinsonneault, Steve
Andrew, Jill	Gélinas, France	Pirie, George
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Glover, Chris	Quinn, Nolan
Babikian, Aris	Gretzky, Lisa	Rae, Matthew
Bailey, Robert	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rakocevic, Tom
Barnes, Patrice	Hamid, Zee	Riddell, Brian
Begum, Doly	Hardeman, Ernie	Romano, Ross
Bell, Jessica	Harden, Joel	Sabawy, Sheref
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Hogarth, Christine	Sandhu, Amarjot
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Bourgouin, Guy	Jama, Sarah	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Brady, Bobbi Ann	Jones, Sylvia	Sattler, Peggy
Bressee, Ric	Jones, Trevor	Schreiner, Mike
Burch, Jeff	Jordan, John	Scott, Laurie
Byers, Rick	Kanapathi, Logan	Shamji, Adil
Calandra, Paul	Karpoche, Bhutila	Skelly, Donna
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Ke, Vincent	Smith, David
Cho, Stan	Kernaghan, Terence	Smith, Graydon
Clancy, Aislinn	Kerzner, Michael S.	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Surma, Kinga
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Tabuns, Peter
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Tangri, Nina
Cuzzetto, Rudy	Martin, Robin	Taylor, Monique
Dixon, Jess	McCarthy, Todd J.	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Dowie, Andrew	McGregor, Graham	Thompson, Lisa M.
Downey, Doug	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dunlop, Jill	Mulroney, Caroline	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Fedeli, Victor	Oosterhoff, Sam	Wai, Daisy
Fife, Catherine	Pang, Billy	West, Jamie
Flack, Rob	Parsa, Michael	Williams, Charmaine A.
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	Wong-Tam, Kristyn
French, Jennifer K.	Piccini, David	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Pierre, Natalie	

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

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day):** The ayes are 97; the nays are 0.

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

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

*Third reading agreed to.*

#### LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** It is now my sad duty to ask our pages to assemble.

I am delighted to have this chance to say a word of thanks to our legislative pages. Our pages are smart,

trustworthy and hard-working. They're indispensable to the effective functioning of this chamber, and we are indeed fortunate to have had them here.

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

I will ask the members to now please join me in thanking this group of legislative pages.

*Applause.*

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

*The House recessed from 1212 to 1300.*

#### HOUSE SITTINGS

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the government House leader on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I just want to advise members of the House that the night sitting scheduled for this evening is cancelled.

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** When we rise as members of this Parliament to introduce visitors, it is always a happy occasion. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce someone who had passed away just a couple of days ago with every intention to be here today. That was my community volunteer coordinator in my own constituency office of York Centre, the late Mr. Stan Federman.

Shortly before my election, Stan Federman, who I got to know very well as an active advocate for our greater community in Ontario, approached me, and he said, "If you get elected, I want to come to work for you in your office for a dollar a year," which later became \$0. He received dispensation by signing a non-disclosure agreement, and I gave him a key and a desk. When I had no one in my office to open up the constituency office in June of 2022, he came there and volunteered.

Earlier this week, Mr. Stan Federman passed away from cancer. Mr. Stan Federman is an example of saying that everyone one day will pass. Stan Federman lived.

I want to say his three sons—to Howard, to Lawrence and to David—thank you so much for giving your father to our community so he could help us see something else: ourselves.

**MPP Jill Andrew:** I would like to say thank you to my dear mom and partner, who I know are watching this debate coming up.

I also want to wish happy holidays to everyone in St. Paul's: merry Christmas, happy Kwanza, happy Hanukkah, happy winter solstice and, most importantly, let's focus on love and community and peace at this time.

**Mr. Andrew Dowie:** I want to wish a warm welcome to the great mayor of the city of Windsor, His Worship Drew Dilkens.

**Mr. Joel Harden:** I want to welcome someone who's tuning in on the live stream, who I think we can all share some thoughts for: Michael Longfield, who is the vice-president of Cycle Toronto, unfortunately, a couple of days ago involved in a bad accident here in the city. He tuned in to a call I had over lunch from a hospital room.

Michael, we wish you a speedy recovery. Thank you for all you do for safe streets. We love you, buddy, okay? Be well.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I beg to inform the House that today the Clerk received the report on intended appointments dated December 12, 2024, of the Standing Committee on Government Agencies. Pursuant to standing order 110(f)(9), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF GOVERNMENT BILLS

### PEEL TRANSITION IMPLEMENTATION ACT, 2024

#### LOI DE 2024 SUR LA MISE EN OEUVRE DE LA TRANSITION DE PEEL

Mr. Calandra moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 240, An Act to make statutory amendments respecting the transfer of jurisdiction within The Regional Municipality of Peel and the appointment of Deputy Provincial Land and Development Facilitators / Projet de loi 240, Loi apportant des modifications en ce qui concerne le transfert de compétence dans la municipalité régionale de Peel et la nomination de facilitateurs provinciaux adjoints de l'aménagement.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Would the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing like to briefly explain his bill?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** The proposed Peel Transition Implementation Act would amend the Municipal Act and give greater independence to Mississauga, Brampton and

Caledon so that they can address the needs of their growing communities.

### MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2024

#### LOI DE 2024 SUR LA RESPONSABILITÉ AU NIVEAU MUNICIPAL

Mr. Calandra moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 241, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 in relation to codes of conduct / Projet de loi 241, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la cité de Toronto et la Loi de 2001 sur les municipalités en ce qui concerne les codes de déontologie.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** I'll invite the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to briefly explain his bill.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** The bill, if passed, would amend the Municipal Act and the City of Toronto Act to strengthen the municipal code of conduct.

If passed, this bill would improve consistency of ethical standards and process across municipalities and strengthen accountability for members of council and certain local boards.

It includes introducing regulatory authority to create one standardized code of conduct for all municipalities, establishing a regulatory authority to create standardized investigation processes for municipal integrity commissioners and creating the ability to impose stronger penalties for serious code of conduct violations, which would also serve as a deterrent for misconduct.

The proposal shows that we have listened. I look forward to further debate on this.

### SAFER MUNICIPALITIES ACT, 2024

#### LOI DE 2024 POUR DES MUNICIPALITÉS PLUS SÛRES

Mr. Calandra moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 242, An Act to enact the Restricting Public Consumption of Illegal Substances Act, 2024 and to amend the Trespass to Property Act respecting sentencing / Projet de loi 242, Loi édictant la Loi de 2024 visant à restreindre la consommation en public de substances illégales et modifiant la Loi sur l'entrée sans autorisation en ce qui concerne le prononcé des peines.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Would the minister like to briefly explain this bill?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Not at this time.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### GILDA INVESTMENTS LIMITED ACT, 2024

Mrs. Martin moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr49, An Act to revive Gilda Investments Limited.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

### MFIS HOLDINGS AND INVESTMENTS INC. ACT, 2024

Mr. Riddell moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr65, An Act to revive MFIS Holdings and Investments Inc.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

1310

## MOTIONS

### CONSIDERATION OF BILL 241

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 241, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 in relation to codes of conduct, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Calandra has moved that, pursuant to standing order 77(a), the order for second reading of Bill 241, An Act to amend the City of Toronto Act, 2006 and the Municipal Act, 2001 in relation to codes of conduct, be discharged and the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### COMMITTEE SITTINGS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Speaker, I move that the following standing committees be authorized to meet during the 2024-25 winter adjournment:

—the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and

—the Standing Committee on Social Policy; and

—the Standing Committee on the Interior; and

—the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy; and

—that the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be authorized to meet during the 2024-25 winter adjournment for the consideration of the intimate partner violence study.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Clark has moved that the following standing committees be authorized to meet during the 2024-25 winter adjournment:

—the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs; and

—the Standing Committee on Social Policy; and

—the Standing Committee on the Interior; and

—the Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy; and

—that the Standing Committee on Justice Policy be authorized to meet during the 2024-25 winter adjournment for the consideration of the intimate partner violence study.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I move that, when the House adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned until 10:15 a.m. on Monday, March 3, 2025.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Clark has moved that, when the House adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned until 10:15 a.m. on Monday, March 3, 2025.

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

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

All those opposed will please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is carried.

**Interjection:** On division.

**The Speaker (Hon. Ted Arnott):** On division.

*Motion agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

### TRUCKING SAFETY

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I have a petition regarding road safety and illegal truck yards that was hand-delivered by very concerned citizens in Bolton and Caledon who have organized into the Caledon Community Road Safety Advocacy Group. They have brought me 13 pages of signatures to bring attention to their plight.

Illegal land use for storage of trucks and cargo containers is rampant, with approximately 300 illegal yards inside the town of Caledon alone. They're very concerned about the unsafe truckers and improperly trained or licensed truck drivers on local roads.

They are petitioning the Legislative Assembly to increase penalties, protect properties and empower municipalities to deal with these road safety challenges and illegal truck yards.

I've met with these concerned citizens. I really hope their own MPP will address these major concerns.

But I support this petition, will affix my signature and send it to the table with page Jonah.

### TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

**Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady:** I have a petition here entitled “Reconstruction of the Argyle Street Bridge Is Well Overdue—MTO, Get It Done.”

I stood in the House five times calling on the government to get this done. The petition asks for the assembly of Ontario to immediately announce and commit to a firm date to commence reconstruction of the Argyle Street bridge.

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will send it to the table with page Charlotte and will affix my signature to it.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** I recognize the member from London–Fanshawe.

**Mr. Terence Kernaghan:** London North Centre.

Well, it’s kind of fitting, Speaker, because I’m presenting the following petition on behalf of the member from London–Fanshawe, myself and the member from London West.

It is about sewage biosolids. The petition is concerned about sewage biosolids which are taken from municipal sewage, whether it’s factory, hospital and residential waste. It’s been dehydrated, pelletized.

This petition is calling upon the Legislative Assembly to immediately place a moratorium on sewage biosolids that are being applied to the land.

We fully support this petition. I will affix my signature and deliver it with page Autumn to the Clerks.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** I too am here to share a petition with some folks from Kitchener concerned about the use of biosolids and their application.

I support the petition, and I’ll sign it and hand it to page Jack.

### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Ms. Bhutla Karpoche:** I am tabling what is possibly my last petition in this House, and I would like it to be a call for the government to raise social assistance rates.

We know that recipients on Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program receive far from adequate in order to cover the cost of rent, the cost of food and other basic necessities.

Over 230 organizations have written a letter to the Premier and to cabinet ministers asking that social assistance rates be increased.

We know that people are living far below the poverty line. This is legislated poverty, and the inaction by the government and keeping the recipients in poverty actually costs money in the long run. So why not give recipients an amount that allows for dignified living so that we can avoid paying a lot more down the road in our health care system, in the justice system, in so many ways?

So, Speaker, together with the undersigned citizens of Ontario, I call on the government of Ontario, as a start, to immediately double social assistance rates.

### LAND USE PLANNING

**Ms. Bobbi Ann Brady:** I have hundreds of signatures on a petition here that is entitled “Say No to the MZO.”

Haldimand county has requested a minister’s zoning order to accelerate the development of a proposed city of 40,000 people on industrial-zoned buffer land in the Nanticoke industrial park.

The petition calls on the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to not grant the Haldimand county request for an MZO.

I wholeheartedly support this petition, will affix my signature to it and send it to the Clerks’ table with Juliet.

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

Orders of the day? I recognize the House leader.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Speaker, if you seek it, you shall find unanimous consent to see the clock at 6.

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

1320

### PRIVATE MEMBERS’ PUBLIC BUSINESS

#### PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Mr. Joel Harden:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the provincial government should match municipalities’ funding contribution to operating and maintaining municipal transit systems across Ontario and funding should not be used to replace or reduce municipal contributions to transit.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Mr. Harden has moved private member’s notice of motion number 154. Pursuant to standing order 100, the member has 12 minutes for your presentation.

**Mr. Joel Harden:** I want to begin this debate this afternoon by acknowledging the source for this idea, and I want to be honest about the source because it’s an important source for the province of Ontario. The source is former Premier William Davis—one of the most successful politicians in the history of this province, Speaker, who I had occasion to meet once or twice when he was in this chamber.

Premier Davis was dubbed “transit man of the year” in the 1970s. He authored a report called An Urban Transportation Policy for Ontario in 1972, the very year I was born, and Steve Munro, who is one of Ontario’s transit experts, shared this report publicly. Mr. Munro’s research is some of the research I’ve benefited from in understanding my role as the critic for public transit for the

province, and I want to quote the following passage from this report in 1972 so we can appreciate why the standard I'm talking about in this motion is important for this House and important for public transit in our communities. The report says, from Premier Davis's office, "My government has set as one of the highest priorities the full co-operation with municipalities to provide the best possible systems of urban transportation."

I want to note for the record, Speaker, that Premier Davis made those comments in a context when a debate was taking place in the greater city of Toronto over the Allen Expressway and the creation of a major thoroughfare of a highway all the way down to what we now know as the Gardiner Expressway. Premier Davis, at that time, opted against that idea, maintaining the ravines and the parks and the green spaces in the mid-to-upper sections of downtown Toronto, and threw a lot of funding into public transit with the explicit goal, if you read the report, of cost-sharing with municipal transit authorities—50-50 cost-sharing for operational transit. That's critical.

Why is it critical? Because one of the things that truly hasn't recovered from the COVID pandemic that hit this world are our operational transit systems. I want to read out a few facts that have been brought to my attention from the Ontario Public Transit Association, the organization that brings together transit agencies across Ontario for advocacy in this House. Because of a lack of funding at the municipal level, at the moment, over the last year, 18 municipal transit systems have had to raise fares, 13 municipal transit systems have deferred capital projects, 17 municipal transit systems had to draw on reserves to operate their transit projects and five systems had to adjust or reschedule service. That is simply the reality.

It's important for this House because we've been having a transit debate as long as I've been the critic, for a couple of years. Usually, the way it goes is I make the demand that we put more money into transit and the government describes itself as putting more money into transit than ever before and the number \$70 billion is tossed out. Just for folks watching at home, there's a difference we need to note here between funding and maintaining the systems that we actually have, and the capital projects the government is talking about when they talk about their \$70-billion plan going forward for transit. My motion is germane to the former, not the latter.

Which is not to say we don't want new projects built—of course we do. Of course we do. But, as that old expression goes, "the wheels on the bus go round and round all through the town," and how do we make sure that happens? We've got to make sure that money is put into the coffers of the municipal transit authorities so they can pay the drivers, so they can fix the buses, so the municipalities and their transit systems, all the administration, all that work—thank you, by the way, to all the people working in the transit sector all over Ontario. Those folks need to be invested in for the system to work.

I was having breakfast the other day with a reporter back home, Speaker, not far from the House of Commons. The reporter knows I'm a big advocate for climate policy,

that we need a more ambitious climate policy for the province and the country. He was asking me about carbon pricing because he knows it comes up in this House all the time: "For or against? Do we like what the Prime Minister is doing or do we not?" I smiled and said to the reporter, "Look outside the window." Right outside the window was the number 7 bus rolling through downtown Toronto. I said, "Do you want a climate solution? It's right outside the window. It's right there."

Recently, on October 28, at a national transit summit at the House of Commons, municipal transit agencies, rider organizations and workers who work in the transit sector all got together to ring the alarm bells for our country, that we are in, right now, the throes of what they call a death spiral in transit, where agencies are having to hike fares, agencies are having to reduce transit service and, because of that, people are not taking transit. I am not surprised when my friends opposite talk about traffic congestion in our cities, in our municipalities. It is a real thing. But one of the ways we can reduce congestion, one of the ways we can make life more affordable—and absolutely to the reporter's question that morning—one of the ways we can have ambitious moves is to put money into our public transit systems. That's key.

I want to reference a recent op-ed that was written by two transit leaders back home. These are the gentlemen who lead the transit unions at Ottawa's OC Transpo: Noah Vineberg, who's the president of ATU Local 279, and Jamie Larkin, who's the president of ATU 1760. What Mr. Vineberg and Mr. Larkin noted was that because of the cuts that we've had to implement in Ottawa, because we're not getting enough funding into OC Transpo, OC Transpo had had to cancel more than 1,000 trips per week. We have 74,000 fewer service hours and there are almost 200 buses, which is 26% of the fleet back home, sitting in garages in Ottawa, waiting to be fixed because they're not suited for service.

If you're watching this from Ottawa, folks, the next time you're waiting for your bus to get to school or to get to your appointments, you need to know that there are decisions we can make in this House. It won't happen overnight, and I don't want viewers to be led to believe that, but if we commit to this idea that Premier Davis put on the table of equal cost-sharing between Queen's Park and municipalities—we get back to that—we can take those nearly 200 buses out of the garage and put them into communities where they belong, where somebody doesn't have to wait in Ottawa for 30 minutes in the frigid temperatures of December, January and February for the bus. That's critical, Speaker.

Back home, we have over 340,000 people relying on transit every single day, and the way we will help those folks is by making sure the bus comes on time, that it's at a cost that's affordable to the user and that we compensate the transit operators, the mechanics, the administration and all the staff that make it happen. We have to do that. It's not a nice-to-have; it's a must.

I want us to think about public transit with that in mind too. In many countries around the world—I've had the

good fortune to do some travelling myself. You go to a country in Europe, you go to a country in South America, as I have done, and you begin to understand that in those countries public transit is as important to those societies as a utility like electricity or water, because it's how people get around. You cannot get elected as office-holders in these countries if you don't make significant investments in public transit and intercity, intercommunity transit.

Take the example of Germany, Speaker. According to research that's been given to me from Environmental Defence's Nate Wallace, one of the best researchers we have on transit in this country, it is common for a Canadian to use an intercity VIA train—which I know is outside the jurisdiction of this House, but bear with me—maybe once in every five or six years. But in Germany it's common to use intercity transit at least 10 times a year and they are vote-determining issues about whether or not office-holders decide to invest in those public transit opportunities that help make those German communities among the most transit-efficient in the world.

Here we are in our communities in Ontario—Speaker, I know you're from the great suburban area of Toronto, Ajax, right? People are fighting through thickets of traffic on the 401, one of the most dangerous highways in North America, when I believe we are not putting in the money we need to to operate the GO Transit service, to operate the TTC service in the city. We're holding ourselves back. Let me put it that way.

**1330**

However, we do have an opportunity. Again, I want to say for the record that it comes not from the history of my party; it comes from the history of the government's party. It comes from Premier Davis's declaration at the time to not go forward with a massive highway expansion through the downtown of Toronto, and to invest that money—historic amounts of money—in public transit. And what did it ultimately lead to in my city? The Transitway.

If you've ever visited Ottawa, we had one of the most accessible bus rapid transit systems, through the 1980s, in the world. If you looked at usage rates, the efficacy of how quickly people could get around—our first responder communities, police, fire, paramedic, would use the Transitway so they could get to where they needed to go quickly.

But over time, we struggled to put the money into the Transitway, into the operating of our transit systems, and now we're stuck with a situation, according to the mayor of Ottawa, where we have a \$120-million hole in our transit budget yearly. We went earlier, a couple of months ago, to the community and said, "We're going to have to double the cost of a seniors' bus pass. We're going to have to take away the idea of being able to ride for free for seniors on Wednesdays and Sundays. We're going to have to go to the students at colleges and universities and say, 'I know we agreed to not hike your transit increases for your bus passes by more than 2.5%, but we're going to have to go a different route. We're going to have to go for 5%.'"

So we are putting the onus on the user. And the funding system we have—insofar as my city is concerned, the

money that comes to operational transit right now through the province, comes through a share of a gas tax since 2007. What it amounts to is about \$38 million for Ottawa's transit budget. That is less than 10%, nowhere near Premier Davis's goal of 50-50.

We can get this right. The mayors of Edmonton, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Ottawa got together with Equiterre, an environmental organization; with Environmental Defence; with transit riders and transit workers on October 28 on Parliament Hill and called for the country to do better. That's where this motion comes from. But again, I hope my friends in the Conservative Party, the governing party, realize the genius that Premier Davis had, and we can pass this motion and get going and put the wheels onto the bus. Thank you.

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

**MPP Jill Andrew:** It's an honour to stand today in support of the member's motion calling for a restoration of 50-50 net transit operations cost-sharing between the municipalities and the provincial government.

I'm going to start with a little bit of a story. I've used the bus, the train, the subways, the streetcars for most of my life. I don't have a driver's licence. Many times, you get onto the transit with the best intention to get to work on time, to make that wedding on time, to say your final goodbyes at that funeral on time, and it doesn't work. I would be one of those TTC riders who would get really upset and maybe not even say good morning to the bus operator, because I was so frustrated because the bus came 25 minutes late or whatever the case was.

It's people like TTCriders, frankly. It's people like Marvin Alfred, the president of ATU Local 113, and Brian Connolly, who introduced me to the Keep Transit Public campaign many years ago. When you learn about those 12,000 workers—the bus, streetcar, Wheel-Trans and subway operators; the collectors; the cleaning staff and the maintenance workers who are keeping our wheels on the bus here in Toronto, on the TTC—you really realize that there are systemic challenges that cause those buses to be late, and cause us to be late to that funeral, to that wedding or even to that job interview. I can't say enough how important it is.

It's not just me; 82% of Ontarians want the province to provide more public transit funding. I can tell you every resident in midtown—thousands of us, as we try to cram onto that train to head down to the downtown core—want to see the province pony up its 50-50 and match the municipality's funding to get our transit moving. It's crucial, it really is. It makes everybody's day better when we can get from point A to B and C easier.

I also want to take an opportunity to thank Black Urbanism TO, one of our local organizations in St. Paul's who have been staunch advocates for better transit, staunch advocates for the completion—and opening—of our Eglinton Crosstown LRT. I've spoken many times in the House about this project that is years delayed and billions over budget. That's a true solution that this government has the power to deliver for us in St. Paul's to help

with gridlock and to actually get us moving. But we need to properly fund our public transit in order for it to work.

Don't take me for the expert; let's listen to the Ontario Public Transit Association. They too have identified public transit as an essential pillar of economic growth, environmental sustainability and social cohesion. I think we can all agree. They've recommended enhancing the Dedicated Public Transit Fund. They've also recommended for the government to match the federal Canada Public Transit Fund baseline contribution.

What they say is when governments don't step up and fund public transit there are significant, significant downfalls. There are rising costs—and that's rising costs for us as well as riders—and limited revenue tools. Over the past two years alone transit operating costs have risen by 7% and 13%, respectively, while Ontario added nearly one million more residents.

Our public transit services want to keep us moving. They want our communities to be happy. They don't want people to be stressed out when they get to work. They want their operators to feel safe on the job, to be respected and to be appreciated. If we all work together at the municipal and provincial levels, and if the government of Ontario stands up and provides our public transit agencies with what they need financially, we can keep Ontario, and most certainly the residents of Toronto—St. Paul's, moving.

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

**Ms. Jessica Bell:** I'm proud to be standing here to speak in support of the motion introduced by my colleague and friend the MPP for Ottawa Centre, calling on the provincial government to match municipalities' contribution to transit funding.

We should all be able to easily get from A to B on public transit at an affordable fare. That's the goal. That's what we want. It's pretty simple. Unfortunately, at least in my riding and many other ridings across Ontario, that's not the reality today. We travel in overcrowded streetcars where we get to enjoy the smell of each other's armpits because it is so crowded. We wait too long for the bus to arrive in winter, in very cold bus stops. We are late for work because the subway broke down. I'm sure many of you who are using the subway system and the TTC can personally relate to that. The subway breaks down because it is not properly maintained.

The lack of affordable and fast transit is why people stay at home, sometimes not socializing, sometimes not going to doctors' visits or the community centre. The lack of fast and affordable transit is why so many people continue to drive. It's contributing to our terrible record of having some of the worst commute times in North America. The lack of fast and reliable transit is why our transportation system continues to be the leading contributor to climate change and air pollution in Ontario and across the country. It is a big problem.

There are some very practical solutions that we can advocate for, and I'm very pleased that the member for Ottawa Centre has brought one forward, which is to have the provincial government match funding to the TTC.

When I think about this issue, I think about the many—I used to be the executive director of TTCriders. So, I did a lot of work on transit advocacy, and I think about the many people that I worked with and their struggles.

**1340**

I think about Be So, a Scarborough resident who used to walk in Scarborough to downtown in winter because she could not afford public transit.

I think about Helen Liu, a community garment worker and organizer and leader in the Chinese seniors' community who advocated with us until she passed away. She was so good at organizing, and she never got to see the results of her work because she passed away too young.

I think about the airport workers who want transit to Pearson airport, and I think about the stories of baggage handlers who were telling me that they would sleep at Pearson airport in the car park at night because their shift ended late and they had another shift very early and they could not afford to go home and come back. They just couldn't afford it. They would do it if there was good public transit, but they couldn't afford it.

These are hard stories to hear.

I think about Adam Cahoon, who is still politically active, who uses a mechanized wheelchair and who understands first-hand the indignities of a transit system that remains inaccessible to this day.

I think about the many U of T students who would tell me what it would be like to travel to U of T Scarborough and have to share transit passes with their siblings and their parents because they couldn't afford to collectively all have monthly passes. They would choose their class schedule and what courses they wanted to choose based on who needed the transit pass on that day.

These people and thousands of others would tangibly benefit if this government got serious about investing in transit and properly fund municipal transit systems in Toronto and all across Ontario. People do not want to wait 10 years for these new transit lines to be built. There are practical things we can do right now to help people get from A to B at an affordable price.

I urge you to support this motion. I know I will be doing so. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** It's a real honour to rise today and speak in favour of the member from Ottawa Centre's motion.

The Ontario Green Party has long advocated for restoring 50% funding from the province for operations of local transit. This was something that was part of Premier Bill Davis's—I remind you, a Progressive Conservative Premier—vision for the province. I think the Premier realized at the time that the only way that we were going to build affordable communities, livable cities without gridlock, would be to have transit operations that were reliable, affordable and accessible for people. But unfortunately, right now in the province of Ontario, when you have transit operations experiencing over a half-a-billion-dollar operational deficit, it is incredibly difficult

for transit operations to provide the services their residents so desperately need.

I would add to Mr. Davis's vision that if we're going to have any hope of meeting our obligations to reduce climate pollution, transit is going to play a vital role.

I know many folks—in this House, possibly, and watching on the live stream—oftentimes think of transit as a big-city issue: Toronto, Ottawa, maybe Hamilton. But it's a mid-size-big-city issue, too, in places like Guelph, Kitchener. It's a smaller-city issue in places like Owen Sound, Orangeville. As a matter of fact, I was just at an event the other night with the former mayor of Orangeville Sandy Brown. Sandy told me that when he was mayor, probably the best decision he ever made was to bring in free transit, because the ridership went through the roof. As a matter of fact, the ridership went up so much that they almost had a complete cost recovery because of the additional gas tax revenue they received. But why was it so important? Because students could get to school easier, seniors could get to doctors' appointments easier.

When we look at how transit can make a difference in people's lives—the member from Kitchener Centre was telling me about the Pathways to Education project, a non-profit that provides free transit for disadvantaged students around the country. The Camino non-profit provides \$100,000 in the Kitchener-Waterloo region to provide free transit for students, because it's so critical to their ability to access mental health services, to access school, to access after-school study programs that are vital to educational improvement.

What's one of the barriers to being able to offer programs like this where transit becomes more affordable? The municipal transit box simply cannot provide the operational revenue that it takes to run a reliable, affordable transit system. That's why governments around the world provide operational funding for transit systems. Ontario is one of the few jurisdictions that doesn't do that and it has real negative implications for the affordability of our communities. I do want to echo the member from Ottawa Centre's concerns about the potential death spiral that our transit systems in big cities, mid-sized cities, in towns all across Ontario, are facing right now. Because when you have a situation where they have to raise transit fares so much that it creates a disincentive for people to be able to afford transit, that means ridership goes down and transit services get cut back.

I'll give you an example of my own community in Guelph. All politicians in Guelph were challenged to take transit for a week. I went to the bus; it's a short walk from my house. I wanted to take the bus to the Stone Road Mall, which would normally take me about 10 minutes to drive or 19 minutes to cycle there—provided we continue to have our bike lanes to get me there. When I missed the bus, what would have been a 30-minute bus trip ended up being an hour and a half. I thought I could have walked there faster than that. I'm only saying that because the implications of not providing operational funding for transit systems lead to experiences like that, which reduce ridership and reduce the affordability and livability of our communities.

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

**Mr. Ric Bresee:** Speaker, if I may, I'd like to take a moment—this is the last day of the session—I'd like to wish everyone in the House a wonderful holiday. I hope you enjoy your time back in the riding. I know I will. I hope that the holiday season brings you closer and more joy with your own families and friends, however you celebrate.

To the constituents in my riding, I'd like to wish all of them a very merry Christmas, the best of the New Year and enjoy all the time they can spend with their family and loved ones.

I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill today. Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government has been investing and will continue to invest in public transit across the province. From supporting municipal transit agencies to expanding the public transit network, our government has been a strong supporter of public transit ever since we were elected in 2018. Unfortunately, the Liberals, supported by the NDP, got nothing built while they were in government. They sat by as our communities grew, leaving people stuck in gridlock and on crowded subways.

Unlike the Liberals and the NDP, we are saying yes to investing in public transit. Over the next 10 years, our government is investing \$70 billion to build new public transit. This is the largest expansion of public transit in Canadian history. We are building new projects such as the Ontario Line, the Scarborough subway, the Yonge North subway, the Eglinton West LRT, the Finch West LRT, the Hamilton LRT, the Hazel McCallion LRT and two-way, all-day GO service. Additionally, we just recently signed a historic agreement with all three levels of government to replace the aging subway cars on the TTC's Line 2.

Never before has this province seen this kind of progress to improve public transit, and yet the NDP and the Liberals still oppose building for our future. They voted against the largest transit expansion plan in Canadian history. The previous speaker said they support more transit, but they don't support more public transit. Instead of supporting our plan to build new transit, they continue to say no to building transit. It's clear that they don't actually have a plan for public transit.

**1350**

That's why Ontarians re-elected our government with the second-largest majority in Ontario's history. Ontarians support our plan, which includes two-way, all-day GO service. Under our government, construction is well under way on the GO expansion. While the opposition voted against two-way, all-day GO, we know communities such as Kitchener and Mississauga need more options to travel across the region. The NDP and the Liberals voted against that two-way, all-day GO train service. Time and time again, they've had the chance to invest in transit, and they continue to vote against it.

Let's be clear: The Liberals, supported by the NDP, had 15 years to get transit right. They did nothing. They speak about affordable transit. They didn't get One Fare done; in



fact, they voted against it. They voted against saving the average transit rider up to \$1,600 a year by removing the double fares.

We won't take lessons from the NDP when it comes to supporting transit. Unlike the previous governments, we ensure that every dollar is spent wisely to deliver tangible benefits to Ontarians. The NDP simply don't have a plan for transit. This is just another distraction from their horrible record.

And we're not just investing in the larger communities; we're also making investments to improve transit in our northern and our rural communities. After the Liberals cancelled the Northlander train, our government is bringing it back. The Liberals ignored the people of northern Ontario who relied on that Northlander, but our government is focused on restoring that vital service. The return of the Northlander will make it easier and safer to travel across the north. That brand new train will also reconnect communities and create jobs in the north.

We're also supporting transit in smaller communities, like my own, through the Community Transportation Grant Program, which helps rural and northern communities continue to provide public transit. From the gas tax program, our \$70-billion transit expansion and the One Fare Program, we have taken strong action, not just words, to support local transit.

The NDP have taken every chance they have to vote against improving public transit. Unlike the opposition, as our population grows, our government will continue to invest in public transit all across Ontario. Under this Premier, we're going to continue building the largest expansion of public transit in Canadian history, and we're going to continue building Ontario for the future generations.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** Further debate? I recognize the member from—

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** London West.

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** London West.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Thank you very much, Speaker. As MPP for London West, I'm very proud to rise in support of this motion. Returning to a 50-50 provincial-municipal cost-sharing for public transit would really make a huge difference in my community.

Earlier this week, the city of London released its draft Mobility Master Plan for the next 25 years. The plan recognizes that if we want to move people smoothly throughout our city, we need to expand public transit. London is Ontario's fastest-growing city, especially in the northwest part of the city, which is in my riding, and rapid transit is really the only way we're going to avoid congestion and gridlock. Fanshawe College and Western University are counting on reliable, efficient and affordable transit connections to move students and staff around the city.

With only municipal operating funding available, the London Transit Commission has not been able to make the investments that are needed to make transit work for more people. They've actually been scaling back plans because so much has been downloaded by this province onto municipalities, which means city budgets are spread far

too thin. Londoners want to choose transit, but they need the province to step up so they can make that choice. Returning to a 50-50 split on transit costs would allow the London Transit Commission to improve the services that are necessary to attract new riders.

It would also allow London to keep transit affordable, because we know that, for many Londoners, transit is their only option. If they can't afford the fares, they can't get to work, they can't get to the grocery store, they can't get to daycare, they can't get to school. Right now, a single cash fare in London is \$3.50. That's more expensive than the TTC. Londoners cannot afford for transit fares to go up. They need the government to get back to the 50-50 split.

Most importantly, Ontario needs the government to step up and do this. We are in the midst of a climate emergency. We see it all around us. The only way we're going to get people out of single occupancy vehicles so we can reduce carbon emissions is by offering reliable, efficient and affordable public transit alternatives.

Speaker, not long ago, London had a plan for a majority of the London Transit Commission buses to be zero-emission vehicles by 2030. Right now, only eight buses out of a fleet of 231 buses are hybrid. However, they've had to abandon plans for fleet electrification because it's too expensive. Any new replacement buses are diesel, which means that we're not able to move forward with green transportation solutions.

I urge this government, support this motion today and get transit operating in this province.

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

The member has two minutes to reply.

**Mr. Joel Harden:** I'm getting the sense that my friends over there might not vote for this. That's really too bad.

All of us who are parents, once upon a time we've raised toddlers. We know what toddlers are like. They get an idea in their mind, and it's like a walnut. You just can't crack it, beloved as they may be.

The government is trying to tell the people of Ontario this afternoon, as I understand it, that they're building lots of things, but these are plans on paper, Speaker. These are literally holes being dug, running into problems. These are projects that are overdue—billions of dollars. The one Christmas gift in transit this government did give us was the firing of Phil Verster from Metrolinx. They talked about it like it was a voluntary resignation, but it came to light that Mr. Verster had a car allowance of \$11,000 a year—the guy responsible for public transit for the biggest agency in Ontario—and the guy didn't even own a car.

That's how clueless, sadly, transit management is in the province of Ontario. Brilliant plan, \$70 billion—what are you doing for the personal support worker taking the bus to help the senior in Toronto, in Ottawa, in Windsor, in London, in St. Catharines? Nothing. You're cutting the money to her. The bus isn't going to come on time.

Take your hands off your ears. Look at the people who actually drive the buses, fix the buses, ride the buses—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Joel Harden:** The member for Etobicoke-Lakeshore is heckling me. I've heard her say in this House

that she's tired of road rage and traffic. I would agree. Maybe take the TTC to work and see how it feels to be with people crammed in a bus. That's the future, Speaker, if this government continues, like a toddler, to act as if it has transit solutions when all they're building in Ontario, sadly, are gravy trains and overpaid executives. Ontario deserves better.

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

MPP Harden has moved private member's notice of motion number 154. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

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

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

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

*Vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Ms. Patrice Barnes):** All matters relating to private members' public business having been completed, this House stands adjourned until Monday, March 3, 2025, at 10:15 a.m.

I wish all members of the House happy holidays, merry Christmas and a great time with your families. Thank you.

*The House adjourned at 1359.*





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

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Edith Dumont, OOnt  
Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative: Hon. / L'hon. Ted Arnott  
Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day  
Deputy Clerk / Sous-Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim  
Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Julia Douglas, Meghan Stenson,  
Christopher Tyrell, Wai Lam (William) Wong  
Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Tim McGough

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

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)</b>	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
		Premier / Premier ministre
		Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Michael D. (PC)</b>	York South—Weston / York-Sud—Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Ghamari, Goldie (IND)	Carleton	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Hamid, Zee (PC)	Milton	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harden, Joel (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
<b>Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)</b>	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	
Hogarth, Christine (PC)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	
<b>Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)</b>	Thunder Bay—Atikokan	Associate Minister of Forestry and Forest Products / Ministre associé des Forêts et des Produits forestiers
Hsu, Ted (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Jama, Sarah (IND)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	Dufferin—Caledon	Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
		Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Associate Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre associé de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
<b>Karpoche, Bhutla (NDP)</b>	Parkdale—High Park	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Ke, Vincent (IND)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London-Centre-Nord	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle
<b>Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)</b>	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
<b>Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)</b>	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
<b>Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)</b>	Mississauga Centre / Mississauga-Centre	Minister of Long-Term Care / Ministre des Soins de longue durée
Leardi, Anthony (PC)	Essex	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
<b>Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)</b>	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Electrification / Ministre de l'Énergie et de l'Électrification
<b>Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)</b>	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean	
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Mantha, Michael (IND)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
Martin, Robin (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
<b>McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)</b>	Durham	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)</b>	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Associate Minister of Auto Theft and Bail Reform / Ministre associé de la Lutte contre le vol d'automobiles et de la Réforme relative aux mises en liberté sous caution
McMahon, Mary-Margaret (LIB)	Beaches—East York	
<b>Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)</b>	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones
<b>Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)</b>	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Associate Minister of Energy-Intensive Industries / Ministre associé des Industries à forte consommation d'énergie
Pang, Billy (PC)	Markham—Unionville	
<b>Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)</b>	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	
<b>Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)</b>	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences Deputy Government Whip / Whip adjointe du gouvernement
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
<b>Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)</b>	Timmins	Minister of Mines / Ministre des Mines
<b>Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)</b>	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges and Universities / Ministre des Collèges et Universités
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 Indigenous Affairs and First Nations Economic Reconciliation / Ministre des Affaires autochtones et de la Réconciliation économique avec les Premières Nations Minister of Northern Development / Ministre du Développement du Nord
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Romano, Ross (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Sabawy, Sheref (PC)	Mississauga—Erin Mills	
Sandhu, Amarjot (PC)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
<b>Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)</b>	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	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 / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie) (NDP)	St. Catharines	
Stiles, Marit (NDP)	Davenport	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau Parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)</b>	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
<b>Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)</b>	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
<b>Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)</b>	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Housing / Ministre associé du Logement

<b>Member and Party / Député(e) et parti</b>	<b>Constituency / Circonscription</b>	<b>Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités</b>
<b>Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)</b>	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
<b>Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)</b>	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming—Cochrane	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Vaugeois, Lise (NDP)	Thunder Bay—Superior North / Thunder Bay—Supérieur-Nord	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
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	