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of Ontario



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Mardi  
29 avril 2025

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Speaker: Honourable Donna Skelly  
Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly  
Greffier : Trevor Day

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 29 April 2025

## ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 29 avril 2025

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Good morning, everyone.

*Prayers.*

### ESTIMATES

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I beg to inform the House that, pursuant to standing order 62(c), the 2024-25 estimates of the Office of the Assembly; the Office of the Auditor General; the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer; and Ombudsman Ontario, having been approved by the Board of Internal Economy and tabled on April 17, 2025, are deemed to be concurred in.

### OPPOSITION DAYS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Members will be aware that appearing on today's Orders and Notices paper is a notice of motion for an opposition day scheduled to be debated tomorrow, April 30, 2025. Standing order 45(a) provides for five opposition day debates in each of the spring and fall meeting periods. However, the timing of the opening of the current session has resulted in an abbreviated spring meeting period. Given that the scheduling of opposition days is prohibited during the last eight sessional days of the meeting period, pursuant to standing order 45(b)(vi), and that opposition days are limited to one per meeting week, pursuant to standing order 45(b)(i), it will only be possible for three opposition days to be scheduled and debated before the House adjourns for the summer.

When faced with similar circumstances in previous Parliaments, the Speaker has determined the allocation of opposition days between the recognized opposition parties on the basis of the membership of the caucuses relative to each other. This is the approach provided by standing order 45(b)(iii), used to determine the distribution of the five opposition days, so it is fair and reasonable to apply the same approach to the distribution of the three total opposition days that may be held during this meeting period. This formula provides that two opposition days will be allocated to the official opposition, the first of which will occur tomorrow, and one opposition day will be allocated to the third party.

I hope that this provides clarity for members and that it will help avoid any confusion going forward.

I would like to thank the House for its attention.

### REPORT, FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I beg to inform the House that, during the adjournment, the following document was tabled: a report entitled Ontario's Labour Market in 2024, from the Office of the Financial Accountability Officer of Ontario.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### PROTECT ONTARIO BY UNLEASHING OUR ECONOMY ACT, 2025

#### LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN LIBÉRANT SON ÉCONOMIE

Mr. Lecce moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 5, An Act to enact the Special Economic Zones Act, 2025, to amend the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and to replace it with the Species Conservation Act, 2025, and to amend various Acts and revoke various regulations in relation to development and to procurement / *Projet de loi 5, Loi édictant la Loi de 2025 sur les zones économiques spéciales, modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur les espèces en voie de disparition et la remplaçant par la Loi de 2025 sur la conservation des espèces, puis modifiant diverses lois et abrogeant divers règlements en ce qui concerne le développement et l'approvisionnement.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** Good morning, Madam Speaker. First off, I want to just note that I will share my time with the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade; the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; and the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

Honourable members, I rise to lead second reading debate for Bill 5, the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act. This is being done in partnership with the solid leadership of the member from Mississauga–Lake-shore, the member from Scarborough Centre, the member from Sault Ste. Marie and of course the associate minister of energy who have been working together to ensure we build a strategic response to the unprecedented challenges and opportunities facing our province.

Ontario is at a crossroads. The global economic landscape has and continues to shift dramatically. Thus, we must act decisively to secure our future for our kids and our grandchildren. We must respond in the face of these unjustified, illegal tariffs imposed by President Trump—

tariffs that have upended well-established global trading systems, tariffs that are aimed at weakening our economy, our industries, our workers and our nation. But, Speaker, let us be clear: This government was elected to protect Ontario, and we won't back down. We will be relentless in our pursuit of economic sovereignty in defence of our province, of our workers and in a quest for stability and security for all who are blessed to call this province home.

It was a little over a month ago when the Premier turned to this team with the expanded portfolio related to mining and critical minerals, and it has been an absolute privilege and honour to have this role, recognizing the opportunities before us as a nation. So far, one thing is perfectly clear: Harnessing Ontario's critical mineral wealth is essential to our future prosperity.

I think we acknowledge as parliamentarians that the world is changing, that the alternatives to non-democratic regimes like China, where they corner the market—that they will trample labour rights, ignore environmental standards and infringe on the dignity of the person. Over 50% of the global coal electricity generation on earth comes from China alone. In 2024, they started construction on 94.5 gigawatts of new coal-fired plants. Their dominance in the critical minerals market, albeit their harsh labour and environmental standards, is shocking. According to the World Economic Forum, they're responsible for around 80% of the world's rare earth minerals.

But we as Canadians can do something about this. The world is watching our province. We are one of the most mineral-rich regions on earth, and the key resources like nickel, titanium, cobalt and lithium, which are critical for our cellphones and computers, our medical devices, our energy, our electric vehicles and clean economy—the demand for our resources is growing. So we need to seize this opportunity as Canadians, but we have to do so on our own terms—because today, in Ontario, it can take upwards of 15 years to open a mine in the province. With this barrier in place, why would any investor want to set up shop in our province when they have the ability to realize those investments are going to be tied up in bureaucracy and red tape for over a decade?

In India, the state must give a decision within 90 days on a mining lease application, and they fast-track mining applications in that democracy. In Australia, it can take upwards of six or seven years to open a mine—this is a Commonwealth-comparable democracy—and yet they can do it in roughly half the time. In the European Union, it takes eight to nine years to open a mine. Meanwhile, here in this country, look no further than the provinces of Alberta or Saskatchewan, where they too are seizing this opportunity to build mines faster. Ontario—it seems to be lagging behind. This seems to be a common theme when it comes to the realization of our true economic potential as a nation.

In the Philippines, where mines are now opening within three to six years, the industry is calling on their government to find ways to open them faster, and they have.

In Ontario, we rank number 10 out of 10—dead last—in subnational jurisdictions when it comes to attracting foreign investment in the mining sector. One of the most common contributing factors of this delay is the government bureaucracy that inhibits or that prevents the ability to get to yes on these projects—the process of obtaining necessary permits and approvals from provincial bodies. Under this government—we just sought an election on a mandate to move with speed responsibly but with a credible plan to get these resources out of the ground. And we'll take new action, in addition to accelerating our response on resource development vision, to also secure our resources, Canadian resources, from hostile foreign actors, something we currently have no tools in order to act upon.

#### 0910

Speaker, 90% of Canadians support an investment plan to grow the economy, to support our resource sector. According to the Mining Association of Canada, 83% of Canadians say they would like to see more mining projects in Canada, because this is a means to displace the Chinas and the human rights violators of the world. And 80% say we need a stronger mining sector for Canada's economy to be healthy in the long term. In Ontario alone, public opinion polling is showing that 60% see mining as an industry of the future; 86% in northern Ontario see mining as an essential industry of the future.

The numbers speak for themselves, Madam Speaker. We recognize in this Legislature that we need to step up. The realization of this vision came from the Premier when, earlier this month, we outlined substantial reforms to how we permit in the province, how we get to yes on these critical projects, and the delays that have posed real consequences to the economic potential of Canada and our own national security too. Right now, mining companies deal with multiple ministries with no coordinated point of contact—it's like multiple ships passing in the night—and rendering this disjointed system by introducing a “one project, one process” framework that has been at the centre of our economic plan to move at the speed of the market and to seize the opportunity as Canadians.

We're creating this white-glove concierge service that will work with project proponents and Indigenous communities directly to reduce delays and provide clarity and certainty. This starts with a dedicated mining authorization and permitting delivery team; this is essentially a central lead in the Ministry of Energy and Mines that will now shepherd these permits through the government, including through extensive consultation with Indigenous communities. These teams will create very integrated permitting plans. It will take the project proposal to all the relevant ministries at the beginning of the permitting process and determine all the necessary permits, create the strategic road map and really help get them streamlined in a sensible and responsible way that moves these projects forward, where we end the needless delay. We're no longer going to allow these outdated bureaucratic processes to impede our potential as a country.



Not only this, but we're also implementing clear benchmarks and service standards to hold ourselves accountable. What I mean by that is—as the new guy in this ministry my early observation is, how do we create some rigour and accountability on the public service—and frankly, on elected members and government too—to make decisions in a responsible, timely manner? I think that accountability is necessary in this moment of time of great change in geopolitics. Under the old system, there were no deadlines on government to have any mining applications turned around or submitted, so we're going to change this. We made a commitment to do this and we're following through on this commitment where every permit, every authorization will have a review deadline that must be met. By doing this, we're seeking to provide clarity to our proponents, to our investors, to our communities, with greater certainty.

Our objective here is actually not to be incrementalists: We're seeking to reduce the overall review burden for designated mine permitting by at least 50% to provide that acceleration of timelines to global investors and Canadian investors alike so that we can get multi-billion dollar capital in our province, which is positive when it comes to job creation, GDP growth, the capacity of government to build revenues to invest in the social services we depend on in our communities.

That is why it means getting shovels in the ground faster—almost an existential opportunity for Canada given the madness taking hold to the south from what was, throughout my life, the most reliable, enduring trading relationship on earth, which has been totally upended because of President Trump. The question posed to parliamentarians today is: How do we realize our potential as a clean-energy superpower? How do we stand on our own two feet? How are we self-reliant and independent of any nation, any elected President abroad? Thus, we make the case today that we need a plan to move forward with speed and ambition, and a sense of responsibility and balance in how we achieve that too.

We're looking to really revolutionize how we look at, how we reflect upon a new state when it comes to acceleration. If this legislation is passed, there are 12 large projects—12 large projects—before the government today: mining projects that will unlock billions in economic growth, create hundreds of value-added jobs in this province, often with Indigenous youth leading the way in employment. This is our moment to realize that potential. Every project before government today will benefit from a 50% reduction, a “one project, one process” framework which I believe has become mainstream amongst the political discourse. It was our party that campaigned on this principle in the last election. We're elated to see all of the mainstream parties in the national election take on this position.

I think we recognize this is the moment to step up as Canadians and to do things differently, because the status quo in this respect seems indefensible when benchmarked against every global democratic, industrialized society that cares about and legally protects environmental re-

sponsibility, labour standards and human rights. I don't compare us to the Chinas of the world; I'm comparing us to the European Union. If they can do it faster, then certainly Ontario can catch up and lead the way.

And so, that's why we're here. Part of this bill, led by the Minister of Economic Development and Trade, has been this concept of creating the development of a special economic zone. Minister Fedeli will speak to this at length, but I just want to say that these zones are designed to be geographic areas where strategically important projects and sectors exist, led by these trusted proponents that will now benefit from streamlined requirements and accelerated permitting too.

We have one of the world's largest untapped critical mineral deposits—we know this as Canadians—and one that will build prosperity in the north, but drive manufacturing in the south, and so all Ontarians benefit from our resource bounty. And so, it's important that we don't follow the lead of governments of the past, who made empty promises about unlocking the potential of Ontario; who actually added red tape and delay to get projects completed, while capital fled away from the province into other resource economies. That means that northerners, Canadians, paid the price.

We must learn lessons from the former Liberals, because we look at projects like the Ring of Fire and so many others, where delays and lack of action—a lack of leadership to get any meaningful dialogue with local communities to build the access roads, to build the infrastructure, to enable potential long-term prosperity in that part of the province.

Obviously, we recognize, Madam Speaker, this is a rather historic piece of legislation, given the time we are in, the moment of time we lead in as parliamentarians. And so, in order to realize the world-class deposits of critical minerals, the first special economic zone that the government will invoke will be in the Ring of Fire, as a signal to global markets and Canadians alike that we are serious about the partnership, the collaboration and the growth that can take hold to realize the potential for the benefit of Indigenous and northern communities in northern Ontario.

I'm excited about the use of that power—one that this Legislature may give to government—but it's essential that we do this in partnership. I want to emphasize this, Madam Speaker, because I think most Canadians recognize that if we want to do big things, nation-building energy projects, we need to do it in partnership and collaboration with Indigenous communities. We recognize that.

There's a reason why, Madam Speaker, at every transmission project, we have approved in the Ministry of Energy, it's been fifty-fifty equity partnerships. It's why, some weeks ago, I stood with the member from Timmins, the minister of economic development for the north, where we announced two large, net-new hydroelectric projects that were led by two Indigenous leaders and chiefs who led the way. We're just backing them on this project, because we believe in clean, affordable power.

Everything we do is being done in partnership. I want to emphasize that today, and I want to be clear to all Indigenous and First Nations communities and leaders what this bill does not do: It does not, in any way, impede or supersede the obligations to consult and to listen, and to do so meaningfully. We remain firmly committed to consulting with First Nations communities and Indigenous leaders, and we want to be a better partner in this respect.

Just yesterday, at the First Nations Major Projects Coalition conference, Premier Ford emphasized the importance of this relationship, and he explicitly asked First Nations communities to work with him and us as a government when it comes to these types of nation-building, job-creating projects. A strong relationship with Indigenous communities is the cornerstone of our mutual prosperity and is the reason why we were able to build an access road to the gateway of the Ring of Fire: because that partnership, that respect is being delivered.

And it could also mean, Madam Speaker, when it comes to the new, streamlined process and how this benefits all communities on the ground, that communities don't have to respond to multiple contacts and multiple ministries all on the same project. Under the new process, as I mentioned, we intend to ensure that there are meaningful partnerships delivered at the front end when our project proponents bring forth more mature, comprehensive projects based on meaningful consultation.

**0920**

We're emphasizing to the companies, the proponents, "You've got to do more work on the front end to ensure that the voices of those communities are captured in the submission to the ministry." We think it's important to hear those democratic voices of communities in some of the most remote parts of Ontario. And I will tell you, there's great work being done with Minister Rickford and our Premier and many others across government, including Minister Pirie, to lead economic growth for the benefit of all Ontarians.

Earlier this year, our government and Aroland First Nation Chief Sonny Gagnon signed a shared prosperity agreement. This is to provide the economic growth to build the infrastructure into northern Ontario, into, as I had mentioned, the Ring of Fire. The lead of this agreement dragged on for, really, two and a half years. A simple invitation to Chief Gagnon from the Premier captured in a productive meeting led to this result. Partnerships can be realized. The case study for this is the access road that was announced just prior to the provincial election. Now, this goes to show what we can do when we work together in the benefit of Canada.

The agreement also provides the Anaconda and Painter Lake roads, which are important connections on the road to the Ring of Fire. It also provides new investments in infrastructure, in energy transmission in the region, because we need more power in the north—81% of energy forecast, which exceeds the provincial average of 75%. So we're making these commitments and we're putting money on the table as a meaningful partner to get this done.

This initiative builds upon existing agreements with First Nations partners. I think about Marten Falls and Webequie. I was just with the chief of Marten Falls. It was an honour to stand with him in Thunder Bay with the member from Thunder Bay, where we spoke about the progress being made on the route to the Ring of Fire. It sets the stage for future potential partnership, and we look forward to seeing these relationships grow and to drive meaningful development in the region.

Now, Speaker, we live in an increasingly dark and complex world. I think that it's fair to say as Canadians much has been upended with the election of President Trump with global trading norms, and our assumption of democratic allies has changed. And so, we live in this volatile geopolitical world where it requires Canada to stand strong and to make sure our resources are protected from geopolitical adversaries who do not share our interests or our democratic, freedom-loving values.

Global demand for critical materials is intensifying and with it the threat to our province and our resources from these foreign actors too. The threat posed by states or entities acting contrary to Canada's and Ontario's interests has demonstrably increased. In fact, in 2021 a report from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, CSIS, specifically noted that Canada's abundance of natural resources makes us, right here in Ontario, a target for foreign interference: "Canada's abundance of natural resources, advanced technology, human talent and expertise ... has also made it an attractive target for foreign interference. In addition, certain foreign powers are known to leverage Canada's multiculturalism for their own benefit..." and it goes on to say that they use deceptive, clandestine threats and practices.

It's obvious we need to be very aware of the risks and clear-eyed of the threats before us. It means we have to ensure that the immense wealth generated from Ontario's natural resources benefit Ontarians, not our adversaries and those working against our democratic values. The current legislative framework offers no tools to specifically address the growing threat in the context of mining claims. It's why under this legislation we're making critical amendments to the Mining Act to fundamentally protect our province from our resources getting in the hands of hostile foreign authoritarian regimes or entities or state-owned enterprises which are an extension of governments.

And so, we're creating a new authority. It's the first principle that will stop bad actors in their tracks. Through these proposed measures, we'll have the authority to suspend access to the Mining Lands Administration System. We'll be able to block suspicious transfers of claims or leases. We'll be able to remove hostile foreign registrants from the system entirely, ensuring that only legitimate, responsible operators can claim and develop mining here in Ontario. If you're a threat to Ontario our point is simple: You will not get your hands on our minerals, full stop.

Our government has also made an unwavering commitment to protect Ontario's critical assets, and that

extends equally to our energy infrastructure. We recognize as we build out our energy grid—our clean energy grid, our affordable energy grid—we're going to need to make sure we have those safeguards in place, that risk management in place, when it comes to generation and transmission, and the hundreds of billions of dollars Ontario will expend over the next few decades to build. But when we turn the lights on in the morning from the energy that powers our factories, its security and its reliability are simply non-negotiable.

In a world of cyber attacks, of state-sponsored actors deliberately seeking to deceive people, we must be vigilant about protecting this valuable infrastructure from foreign interference. That includes risks like malware, potential manipulation or the tampering that could cause outages. I think about the threat of extortion, unauthorized surveillance and other actions that could compromise the grid's reliability. The current tools available to specifically address foreign-state interference and influence in sensitive parts of the energy sector are simply insufficient, which is why we've brought these amendments before the House.

Before us, we're now creating a specific regulation-making authority to limit foreign, state-owned or state-controlled companies from specific jurisdictions from participating in Ontario's energy sector. Our objective in seeking the authority is clear: To protect our province's energy sector from a wide range of risks before they become risks to the people we represent. Ensuring the security, reliability and sovereign provincial oversight of our energy grid is a fundamental responsibility of government, and that's why we're building upon it.

Madam Speaker, we are in serious times and they demand serious leadership—a clear, comprehensive plan to get on with building to end the needless delay that has put Ontario as a laggard instead of a leader. Yet the juxtaposition of that, with having one of the critical mineral bounties on earth when the United States is literally 100% dependent on the critical minerals, specifically the rare earths, of China in many cases, and yet the Chinese have imposed an export ban on those rare earths to the US, creates an opportunity for Canada. When Canada has these minerals, has a plan to extract them responsibly and in partnership with local communities, and the European Union and the Asia-Pacific is calling for a reliable—I emphasize “reliable”—ally to step up, this is our moment. How else can we achieve that economic sovereignty, which I believe all parliamentarians support, if not responsibly getting our projects done in a manner that is defensible, that is within a benchmark amongst industrialized democratic societies before us?

The question for us that we're going to be seized with is: Do we accept the status quo system? Do we believe it is working in a post-Trump world? I would argue that perhaps we needed this motivation for change, because it's giving Canadians the confidence to look with a sense of ambition, to think about the next generation, to plan for our future, and to invest in the industries, the sectors and the jobs that will give us promise as Canadians. So we're

proud, under our Premier's leadership, to really focus on enhancing the competitiveness of our province to unleash our potential and to make Ontario a more attractive place to invest, to build, to create jobs and to live.

The essential part of this bill is that by cutting the accumulated red tape, particularly in mining, through the innovative “one project, one process” framework, it empowers us to accelerate the development of critical mineral projects, like the immense untapped potential that exists in the north, for the benefit of the clean economy that we need to drive. The entire EV chain depends on access to critical minerals, and the question—if we don't step up, if Canadians don't assert ourselves as a confident, clean-energy superpower, then we are allowing the likes of China and Russia, human rights and environmental pariahs, to lead the way. Some 80% of solar, 60% of wind, of these technologies, are being made in China when the overwhelming majority of their grid is powered by coal. They're building a coal plant a week. At what point do we as Canadians, with one of the cleanest grids on earth, the highest standards of environmental protection, constitutional obligations that protect Indigenous voices and communities—if not us, why would we allow them to win the day?

That's the question I'm posing to parliamentarians of all parties. Stand with the government and, frankly, decouple the politics. Stand up for our country in this critical moment and work with us as we assert our economic sovereignty, to reimagine a Canada that is strong, that is free, and that is totally independent of any man or woman elected abroad—that we can set our own course as Canadians. It starts with this bill.

#### 0930

It starts, really, with the first bill brought forth before the House to remove all the interprovincial trade barriers, led by the Minister of Economic Development, but it is supported by this second bill brought before this House after our historic re-election as a government: a bill that enables our growth, a bill that will achieve the potential to work faster and smarter and more efficiently, to do the big things as Canadians, to realize our potential as an energy superpower in the world.

So I hope we can count on the members opposite—all members—to stand with us and to embrace our potential as a nation of democracy, of opportunity and economic prosperity.

Thank you so much, Madam Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Welcome to our guests.

We're here today to talk about, quite frankly, the Trump tariffs, the threat that we face from south of Ontario and across the border. You have heard this a thousand times because it's so accurate: It's unprecedented. This has never happened in our business relationship. Right now, President Trump is tariffing our cars, tariffing our lumber and tariffing our steel—there has always been trouble with tariffing our dairy—and the list goes on and on and on.

And based on the comments that we are hearing south of the border, this is not going to end.

I have had two meetings this morning with different groups from around the world, actually, and all they want to talk about is, “What’s going to happen? What do you think is going to happen?” I tell them, “All right. Time-stamp our meeting, because I’m going to tell you where we are today at this particular time, but by the end of the afternoon, it could be very different. We don’t want you out there saying, ‘Well, the province told us X, when now, it’s Y.’” You actually have to, if you can imagine, time-stamp your statements because we know they are going to change.

The auto sector saw some news from President Trump yesterday, Monday, and again this morning, Tuesday—completely different than we heard from President Trump on Friday. So we know that this is going to be turmoil, back and forth, up and down. It is causing instability, and already, we have seen the effects of these unjustified tariffs. Markets in the US have shed trillions of dollars. This has affected their families, their families’ futures. Their pensions in the States—they call it their 401(k)—their 401(k)s are dismantled because of the trauma and the uncertainty brought on by President Trump.

Canada: Of course, our market is also down. It has continued to work its way back up because people acknowledge the stability that is here in Canada, but not by the States—we kind of get splashed. But business and consumer confidence level has plunged, right across the globe. No matter where you go in the world, there is that feeling of uncertainty; you just don’t know what to expect. So as a result, business and consumer confidence that has plunged has caused a chill. Businesses have paused making investment decisions. There is no question that there is a business chill right around the globe.

We know that these tariffs are bad for business and that they are bad for consumers. I can tell you, in our trips throughout the United States all the month of January, we heard from every group—whether it was members of Congress, senators, the chamber of commerce, the associations and the groups—that these tariffs are bad for business, they are bad for people, they are bad for the Americans, but we’ve seen the President push through.

Again, these tariffs are bad for business, but not just in Canada: It’s bad for business around the world. Even as the US businesses, their lawmakers, their families all throughout the United States are speaking up, they’re voicing concerns against these tariffs, they still come. They’re still here. They change every day, every second day, every hour. We cannot be certain either that these tariffs on Canadian goods are going to be temporary, like they were under President Trump 1.0. There is a huge amount of concern in the business world.

We will continue our advocacy. We’re going to continue to call on the US administration to remove the tariffs. We’ve done so all along—all January, all February, all March, all April. We were in Washington on several occasions through the year, last year as well, saying to the

government of the United States, “Here is what these tariffs are doing.”

I’ve told the story in this Legislature several times, but when you hear President Trump say, “We don’t need anything from Canada”—just think about that for a second. “We don’t need anything from Canada.” I tell the US trade representative’s office, when I sit there—first of all, in the United States they have one nickel mine, one lithium mine—“Your aerospace sector purchases 80% of all the nickel that they need in aerospace from Ontario.” So 56% of all the nickel that they buy just for their defence sector comes from Ontario.

So when you say, “We don’t need anything from Canada,” quite frankly, that’s sickening to hear. Think about aluminum: pop cans, beer cans, soup cans, engine blocks: Think of that aluminum. So 60% of the aluminum that the United States buys comes from Canada. If they had all of their aluminum factories fired up at 100%, working 24/7, 365, they’d only make 16% of what they need—60% comes from Canada. We can talk about potash, oil, all of these things. So it’s sickening when you hear, “We don’t need anything from Canada.”

We cannot depend on a stable US. We must be prepared to succeed in this era of protectionist policies, this geographical realignment and heightened global economic uncertainty. We just ultimately do not know what President Trump is going to do with his tariffs. Again, we’ve seen how fast he’s changed his mind.

But we do know the end goal. We have worked so hard in Ontario to bring \$70 billion worth of goods and services and businesses here to Ontario since we were elected—\$70 billion worth of new industries are here. What does President Trump want to do? He wants to take our industries and he wants to take our jobs. We’ve done that work to bring them from around the world here; he wants to pick them up and bring them to the States. He wants our businesses and he wants the jobs that we’ve worked so hard to win over. That’s the reality that we face and that’s what we must be prepared for.

That is why we’re ensuring that Ontario is ready to succeed in this new era. At a time when businesses are desperately seeking certainty, we here in Ontario are going to ensure that they have that, that they have that certainty they’re looking for.

The Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act is one way we will do that. This legislation, if passed, will cut unnecessary red tape and regulatory burdens that stifle new business investment. It will reduce approval times by 50% to get shovels in the ground so that we can unleash the full economic potential of Ontario. It will enable us to designate special economic zones so projects of critical importance to our economies and our economies’ prosperity are rapidly approved.

**0940**

We can no longer afford to have businesses waiting for up to 10 years to get shovels in the ground. We need to ensure we can build on the progress we have made here in Ontario. We need to fight off this fierce competition for investment from across the globe. Again, we have brought

\$70 billion worth of businesses here. President Trump wants to take that business and put it in the States. We need to be ready to fight at every turn. In Ontario, our status quo is no longer sustainable. If we don't make bold changes, Ontario will be completely shut out of the conversation. We will lose our ability to attract investment.

Here's an interesting twist. We've just returned from Japan and South Korea; two weeks before that, Germany. Businesses there are grappling with this unprecedented amount of uncertainty in the global economy. They look to us, first of all, because we've been through it as Canada: President Trump started picking on us on day one. He hadn't spread to the rest of the world until April 2.

These businesses are now feeling it; they're now feeling what we've shared since election day. But what we hear most from all of these countries is, decisions to make strategic investments are paused. They're going to be paused probably for a year. Again, date stamp and time-stamp are forecast of the business chill lasting certainly this year. There is a chill on business. We know it, we feel it, the numbers show it. But it's happening because companies just can't make a clear investment, because they don't have that understanding of what the political or the economic or the regulatory environment is going to be. So, we're seeing it shaped, we're seeing it changed; they don't like the uncertainty, they're pulling back, they're keeping their cash. We think that will happen for the year.

This is a challenge for us today, for Ontario and for jurisdictions all around the globe, but it is opening a window of opportunity for the people of Ontario. The move to pause their investments in the near term means something: That cash is building up. These companies that are not investing are storing their cash. They're ready. They'll have that cash, and that capital is being amassed today on a massive scale—tens and tens and tens of billions of dollars in each country. Eventually, that glut of capital is going to need somewhere to land. And we need to ensure that Ontario is well-positioned to be the destination of choice for those billions of dollars of capital that are sitting waiting to be invested. We're revitalizing our province's competitiveness to secure that investment, and more must be done.

Since we took office, we've worked to cut red tape and make it easier for business to invest and expand. We have seen 550 pieces of red tape being cut, but more than that, we have lowered the cost of doing business by \$8 billion. Remember when we first got elected and companies were leaving Ontario? We lost 300,000 manufacturing jobs under the Liberal government. We stepped in and looked at what the problem was. The companies told us—especially the auto companies who were leaving. They said to the former Premier, "You have made Ontario the most expensive jurisdiction in North America in which to do business." Premier Ford said, "That will change today."

We lowered the cost of WSIB premiums without touching the benefits. We put in an accelerated capital cost, which means businesses can write off the cost of their investments in-year. The WSIB saves the businesses \$2.5 billion a year. The accelerated capital cost investments

saved \$1 billion a year. We lowered industrial and commercial energy rates by 16%—\$1.3 billion in savings. The red tape reductions—we didn't go ahead with the previous government's new \$465-million tax in January of the year after we were elected. That's a permanent reduction. Add all these things together and all of the other things that we've done, and it is \$8 billion in savings.

As a result, two things happened. Number one: Businesses—it reinvested that money and hired over one million people since we were put in office. That's number one. Number two: The province's revenue rose from \$150 billion a year when we were elected to \$214 billion a year now. It rose by \$64 billion without ever raising a penny of tax. All of that is because a million people were put to work in the province of Ontario because of the business climate that was created—\$46 billion in auto investments; \$6 billion in life science investment; tens of billions in tech investments; \$70 billion worth of investments into the province of Ontario. Those were the good days.

Times have changed. What we did to secure those investments is no longer going to be enough to land investments of that similar magnitude. We need to move faster. We need to give business the certainty that they're looking for.

That buildup of capital around the world that we're going to see over this next year will be looking for a home. Businesses will want to deploy that capital urgently. They'll be looking for jurisdictions where they can get shovels in the ground quickly to make up for the time they've lost waiting out the economic uncertainty sparked by President Trump's tariffs.

We need to make sure Ontario is positioned as the best destination in the world for investments to land. We need to speed up the approval processes for projects that will create good-paying jobs. We need to get rid of all the duplication in the assessments—the regulatory, the approval processes. That has to go. We need to cut red tape so that shovels can get in the ground immediately, and that is what our government is prepared to do.

I'll go back to that \$46 billion in auto that we landed. Volkswagen: \$7 billion investment in St. Thomas; 3,000 direct jobs—tens of thousands of indirect. NextStar—we visited NextStar's \$5-billion plant in Windsor recently: 2,500 jobs at the plant; another 2,500 spinoff jobs are directly related to that.

These are the type of investments that this legislation would enable us to land in the current context. The legislation would allow us to designate these projects as projects of critical importance to our province's economic prosperity, so that we can get shovels in the ground and get those jobs immediately.

We need to ensure that Ontario continues to be seen worldwide as the best destination for companies to invest, expand and create more good-paying jobs. This legislation is the way to do this. This legislation will say to the world, "Come back to Ontario. Use that money that you've been stashing because of the uncertain climate and the uncertain times. Put that wealth to work. Put that wealth into factories and companies and plants in Ontario. Put our

people here in Ontario to work. We are your stable, reliable, credible, predictable partner.”

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

**0950**

**Hon. Todd J. McCarthy:** It’s indeed an honour to join the debate today to follow the Minister of Energy and Mines and the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade this morning to speak and support Bill 5, the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025.

Madam Speaker, several of the items in the bill are the direct result of the hard work of my dedicated team within the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. They support our government’s commitment to protect Ontario from global economic uncertainty by unleashing our economy while continuing to protect our environment. My colleagues have already done a tremendous job of laying out some of the threats to Ontario’s economy and, indeed, to our future.

We find ourselves in unprecedented times, and we need to act.

I fundamentally reject the idea put forward by some on the other side that we need to make a choice between protecting our environment and growing our economy. Without the conditions in place to protect and grow Ontario’s economy, no government would have the resources to do the things necessary to protect our environment. Now is not the time for business as usual.

That is why, Madam Speaker, our ministry is working hard to modernize environmental approvals, streamline processes and improve supports for businesses. Our efforts are dedicated to upholding our province’s environmental laws, ensuring that strict environmental protections are not an impediment to investment but rather a driver of job creation and economic prosperity for all.

One of the ways we are doing this is by examining how we can accelerate environmental approvals. Ontario’s current system for issuing permits is expensive, slow and complicated, causing unnecessary delays for housing, transit and critical infrastructure. In some cases, simple permits can take two or more years to work their way through the system.

That’s simply not acceptable. In my view, the days of making proponents wait years for approvals and permits are over. We cannot afford to have projects wait on the sidelines as our competitors keep moving forward in other jurisdictions. We can and will build the Ontario of tomorrow in a way that protects the environment and protects jobs.

That is why as one of my first acts as Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, I asked my ministry to begin reviewing all environmental permissions to identify even more opportunities to speed up the approvals process.

As part of Bill 5, the Protect Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act, 2025, our government is proposing a new approach to environmental permitting for activities that

impact certain species. The current approach to protecting and conserving species is overly complicated, takes too long to complete and simply is not delivering the outcomes that Ontarians expect.

That is why we are introducing an entirely new approach. The proposed approach would shift nearly all species-related authorizations to a registration-first approach, also known as “permit by rule.” It is a process already used very successfully for many other environmental authorizations, including 95% of authorizations under the current Endangered Species Act, 2007.

If passed, this new approach would set clear expectations and rules for proponents to follow, rules that would focus on activities that are most likely to have a direct impact on species. These rules will be set out in new regulations, should the act be passed, and my ministry would develop those over the coming months in consultation with the public and our Indigenous communities.

Anyone undertaking an activity that impacts certain species will be required to follow those rules. Provided they do, proponents would be able to register and proceed immediately with their activities without waiting as many as two years or more for the ministry to review their application.

Let me be perfectly clear, Madam Speaker: Strong compliance and strong enforcement tools are at the heart of this new, modern system. Clear expectations and rules for proponents to follow will be set in stone, and there will be zero tolerance for bad actors who would dare to harm species.

Our new approach will leverage strong enforcement, including significant fines, potential jail time and even stronger investigative powers and compliance tools for our environmental compliance officers in the field throughout the province. This includes new, stronger powers for our provincial officers that would enable them to inspect project sites without a warrant, to ensure compliance with all aspects of the act.

Coming from a legal background, I recognize that this is an exceptional power that we are granting to our enforcement officers. It is a tool that should never be used lightly, but it is necessary to enable the zero tolerance for offenders that we are putting forward with this bill, an approach that will include spot audits on project sites and give the ability for the ministry to issue orders whenever misconduct is identified on a site.

And in addition to these other compliance tools I’ve just outlined, serious or repeat offenders may also be prosecuted and face tough fines: up to \$1 million for a first offence and \$2 million for a second offence for each species harmed, and that’s for a corporation. For an individual, it’s \$250,000 for a first offence and \$500,000 for a second offence with the possibility of jail time.

With these changes that would help get projects moving, if it is passed, we are proposing other measures that will see additional supports for important on-the-ground activities that are already helping to protect species in Ontario. Since 2018, our government has funded 215 projects for species conservation efforts, creating over

2,000 jobs while enhancing or restoring over 44,500 acres of habitat.

While we have seen great results from these investments, we recognize even more can be done to support the important work that experts and community organizations are doing on the ground. That is why, as part of Bill 5, our government is proposing to significantly boost our investments in species conservation and recovery through a revamped Species Conservation Program. The new Species Conservation Program will invest \$20 million annually in conservation projects across Ontario. That is a \$4.5-million annual increase in funding compared to the old program. I'm confident that by expanding this program to such a large extent, we can be even more effective at protecting species in Ontario and building on our track record of strong environmental stewardship, preserving the rich biodiversity of our province for future generations.

Finally, Madam Speaker, we are proposing a substantial change to how we administer the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry, the EASR. The EASR is a public, web-based system that allows businesses conducting certain activities to register them with the ministry rather than applying for an environmental approval. It is at the heart of the registration-first model that I spoke about in these remarks. The EASR is used for activities or sectors that pose minimal risk to the environment and human health when regulated and required to follow specific rules, and to use equipment and processes that are standard to the industry or sector with known environmental impacts. Registrants are required to follow eligibility rules and regulations and are subject to inspections and compliance penalties. Similar processes to protect the environment are found across Canada, the United States and abroad.

Right now, to register, proponents must pay a fee. To further protect our economy and support businesses, we are proposing in this bill to permanently eliminate registration fees for the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry. Businesses in sectors across the economy—including construction, housing, transit, manufacturing, energy, breweries and waste transportation—are expected to realize savings of about \$2.6 million annually.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful for this brief opportunity to speak to some of the proposed amendments put forward by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks with this bill—amendments that will protect Ontario's economy, that will protect Ontario's future, and most importantly, will continue to protect Ontario's environment.

**1000**

I ask my colleagues in this House to support Bill 5, and I will now hand it over to the member for Sault Ste. Marie and the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Mines to conclude our remarks on behalf of the government this morning.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member from Sault Ste. Marie.

**MPP Chris Scott:** It's an honour to rise for the first time in this House today to speak to Bill 5, the Protect

Ontario by Unleashing our Economy Act. As the member of provincial Parliament for Sault Ste. Marie and parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Mines, I am proud to highlight how this bill will transform Ontario's mining sector, strengthen our position as a global leader and make us a critical energy superpower.

Just last week, I had the privilege of joining the Minister of Energy and Mines in Sudbury, where we announced key initiatives that will fundamentally change the way we approach mining and resource development in northern Ontario and across all of Ontario. As we continue to build a stronger, more self-reliant Ontario, this bill is right at the heart of our strategy to unlock our full economic potential and set ourselves up for success in the global economy.

The ministers have already painted a very clear picture of the challenges that we're facing today. This is a serious problem, and it requires serious solutions. Across northern Ontario, mining is not just an industry, but a fundamental part of our economy, and today's legislation is a bold step forward. It's a game-changer.

We need to act. We need to stand up for Ontario's autonomy, especially with the threats posed by President Trump and US tariffs. We're not going to back down. We're here to protect every family, every business, every worker in every sector, because that's exactly what the people of Ontario elected us to do.

One of the biggest, most exciting pieces of the bill is the "one project, one process" framework. It's designed to streamline how we approve mining projects in this province. For too long, Ontario has been bogged down by red tape and a tangled web of permits that result in a mine taking up to 17 years to open. This bill, if passed, will fix that. It will cut government review times by at least 50%—I will emphasize again for this House "government review times"—while fully respecting our constitutional duty-to-consult obligations and our upholding the high environmental standards Ontarians expect. It's about getting shovels in the ground faster, especially in key areas like the Ring of Fire and all across northern Ontario.

The "one project, one process" approach will bring all the necessary permits and approvals into one clear, coordinated system, a new Integrated Permitting Plan managed by a dedicated team with the Ministry of Energy and Mines. It will mean faster decisions, less red tape and more certainty for companies looking to invest, hire and build right here in Ontario. As the mayor of Greater Sudbury said last week at our announcement, certainty and efficiency around permitting are absolutely key if Ontario wants to lead in the critical minerals space, and that's exactly what this legislation does. This legislation will put Ontario at the top of the list for mining investment, which is not only vital for Sudbury but for communities like Sault Ste. Marie where critical minerals are a huge part of our economic potential and our economic future.

Another major part of the bill that I'd like to discuss today, as the minister emphasized last week in Thunder Bay, is the protection of Ontario's critical minerals and energy infrastructure from foreign interference. As Min-

ister Lecce stated, “In today’s global landscape, Ontario’s natural resources are increasingly at risk from foreign governments and corporations that may not have our best interests at heart.”

Ontario is one of the most mineral-rich regions in the world, home to essential minerals like nickel, cobalt and lithium—minerals that power everything from electric vehicles to energy storage to high-grade medical equipment. Without the right protections in place, these resources could easily end up in the hands of foreign interests. That’s why this bill introduces new tools to remove hostile foreign actors from Ontario’s mining lands administration system, and it also blocks the transfer or lease of mining claims to any foreign entities that threaten our economic sovereignty. It’s simple: Canadian resources need to stay in Canadian hands, to the benefit of Canadians.

This bill isn’t just about faster paperwork, it’s about real opportunities: new jobs, new investment and stronger communities.

Right now, mining in Ontario supports more than 31,000 jobs directly and another—

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** It is now time for questions.

I recognize the member for Spadina–Fort York.

**Mr. Chris Glover:** I want to thank the members for their comments this morning.

Bill 5 extends the legal protections for the Therme deal at Ontario Place.

I just want to read the definition of fraud: “Fraud is the wrongful deception intended to result in financial or personal gain.”

The Auditor General reports that Therme, in making the deal, lied about their credentials. They claimed to own and operate six spas in Europe when they actually only operated one. They had taken the name and the logo from the other five.

Did Therme commit fraud against the people of Ontario in securing the deal with Ontario Place?

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** I will just note that the overwhelming impetus of the bill before the House is to ask members opposite if they will stand with the government of Ontario amongst the mainstream political parties that ran in the last federal election who campaigned on accelerating resource development.

I appreciate you will want to conflate or avoid the subject matter before the House, but 99% of the statute before you deals with critical minerals. So I’m curious: Will you support our plan to accelerate development and get jobs back to the people of Ontario?

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Hon. Graham McGregor:** I note the opportunity that we have in front of us when we think about a trillion dollars—over a trillion dollars that is under the ground of Ontario right now. I think about the hospitals that we can build for that. We just got the second one started in Brampton. I think about the third one that we could get built with that. I think about the schools that we could

build. I think about the investments we could make in our communities if we are able to harness that wealth and get those resources out of the ground, but it takes too long.

I’m wondering if the minister could explain to us a little bit how long does it take to open up a mine and start a mine in other jurisdictions, like-minded jurisdictions like Ontario, and how long it takes in our province, and how is this bill going to address that gap and get shovels in the ground and prosperity for our citizens?

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** I want to thank the minister for his question, for his leadership involved in this bill—it is worthy of recognition, because this is a team effort and it’s a Team Canada approach to seizing our potential as a country.

It’s not just comparable democracies on earth like the Australians or the European Unions, it’s the New Democrats of BC, who have accepted a premise. It’s the Liberals of Newfoundland and Labrador. It’s the New Democrats in Manitoba, whose Premiers have affirmed their commitment to cut the time it takes to get projects done. There is a growing consensus in the nation to move with a sense of speed, ambition and, yes, balance in what we achieve, because, as the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks so brilliantly articulated, it is not a choice between economic development and environmental protection; we can do both, and that’s the spirit of this bill.

And in answer to the member’s question: It takes too long, which is why we have a plan to cut the timelines by 50%.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question? I recognize the member for Beaches–East York.

**Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon:** Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and, wow, it’s great to see you in the chair.

The Endangered Species Act is being ripped up—I’m trying to do some yoga breaths over here over that—and you are going to introduce and create this new Species Conservation Act. You’re going to ensure strong compliance and strong enforcement and zero tolerance for offenders.

**1010**

I would like to know, in full detail, what that looks like, especially if some of the offenders are your friends.

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** Well, very briefly, Speaker, what I will note is that the bill brought forth by the government, led by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, actually initiates an enhancement of the enforcement regime, creating new investigative powers that didn’t exist before. We now have the capacity to send in inspectors without the awareness of the company—warrantless searches. We have the capacity to impose jail time for those that break the law.

Of course, the enforcer of the law is our court system, which I believe the member would not impugn by any suggestion of a lack of commitment to the enforcement of the rule of law by the justice system. We have confidence in the system, so much so that we’re strengthening the enforcements. We are quadrupling the funding for the



species at risk conservation program. We're demonstrating you can grow a modern economy by protecting the environment.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** First Nations across the province are deeply alarmed that a bill that profoundly impacts their rights, their lands and the fish and animals that feed their people—that they were not consulted before this bill was introduced. This is especially alarming given the poor record of this government's consultation with First Nations.

Will you to commit to free, prior and informed consent before approving any project that impacts Indigenous rights?

**Hon. Stephen Lecce:** I appreciate the question from the member opposite. We are firmly committed to fully respecting our obligations under the Constitution, including the duty to consult.

You will note in the bill, upon your review, that the government intentionally does not, in any way, in spirit or in a literal reform to the statute, amend our commitment or in any way dissuade from the focus on respecting Indigenous partnership.

Everything we have done in our ministry and across our government has been done in partnership. The access road was done in partnership with the chiefs of Marten Falls and Aroland. The generation we're building in northern Ontario, the large hydro lines coming into your riding, into your region, are done with fifty-fifty partnership and equity with Indigenous communities.

Minister Greg Rickford has been leading this work, but I assure the member the answer is yes, we will fully respect our commitment and our obligations under the Constitution.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** A reminder, we do not refer to ministers by their name.

I recognize the member for Whitby.

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** Earlier today the Minister of the Environment spoke about modernizing environmental permissions and how essential it is to keeping Ontario competitive.

With this legislation, the government has indicated also that they will continue to work to streamline other environmental approvals. Can the minister please elaborate on how we're going to modernize other environmental permissions?

**Hon. Todd J. McCarthy:** Thank you to the great member for Whitby for the question. We do not have to make a choice. When we say it's no longer business as usual, we do not have to make a choice between protecting our environment and building the Ontario of tomorrow. We are doing both harmoniously.

That is why when it comes to protecting species at risk, while introducing and building upon an already proven track record of "permit by rule"—or registration first, in terms of the approval process—we are also introducing newer and stronger enforcement powers than ever before:

—the ability to go into any site without a warrant to ensure compliance with aspects of the act to protect

species and to stop those few bad actors and offenders in their tracks in the process;

—to gather evidence without a warrant and to Prosecute;

—jail time for individuals; and

—up to \$2 million for a second offence for corporations.

That is what I call strong law enforcement—

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** It's 10:15, which means it's time for members' statements.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## WEARING OF PINS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** On a point of order, I recognize the member for Essex.

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** Speaker, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent to allow all members to wear pins in recognition of April being the Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil campaign.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** The deputy government House leader is seeking unanimous consent for all members to wear pins in recognition of the Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil campaign. Agreed? Agreed.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### SUN-BRITE FOODS INC.

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** Today, I'd like to tell the assembly about a very important person in my riding. His name is Onorio Iacobelli, but most people just call him Henry. Over 50 years ago, Henry was a seamer mechanic: That is the person who works on machines that puts the seal on cans that hold food. One of Henry's customers was retiring, so he spoke to his wife and together they agreed to offer to buy that business. That was over 50 years ago.

Since then, Henry and his family have grown that business and today, it's called Sun-Brite Foods Inc. and it employs over 500 people, including in the riding of Essex. Sun-Brite Foods Inc. produces millions and millions of cans of food and is the exclusive supplier of pizza sauce for every single Domino's restaurant in all of Canada.

I want to thank Henry and his entire family for their remarkable contribution to Essex county, and I want to encourage Henry and everyone like him to continue making a fantastic contribution to Ontario's incredible agriculture and food industry.

## HEALTH CARE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Today, I bring Sydney Gesualdi's voice to the Legislature. She is a 25-year-old woman, lives in the London-Fanshawe riding and operated a full-time small business until July 2023. She was rear-ended at a stoplight. As a result of her injuries, Sydney now lives in chronic pain, forced to use a wheelchair and wear a neck brace. She has been referred

to eight doctors at spinal clinics across Ontario, but so far, she has been denied a consultation each time due to wait-lists, heavy caseloads and her condition being outside the scope of practice.

With no diagnosis from an Ontario spinal surgeon, she was forced to travel to Spain to get a proper diagnosis from a specialist. With a diagnosis of craniocervical instability, she still cannot get the health care treatment that she needs. Her efforts to obtain OHIP funding for out-of-country care is close to impossible because the OHIP application requires an assessment from a Canadian surgeon and she's been denied by every surgeon she has been referred to.

The Ontario health care system has failed her. Her only choice is crowdfunding to pay for her care in New York. This is the reality for many Ontarians trying to navigate the health care system under this current government. Sydney and all Ontarians have the right to health care. I ask the Minister of Health to meet with Sydney to understand the barriers she is facing accessing the health care she needs in this province.

#### HIGHWAY TOLLS

**Mr. Rob Cerjanec:** On behalf of Ontario Liberals, I'd like to congratulate Prime Minister Mark Carney and federal Liberals on their election result last night.

We know the Premier and the government have shown they can work well with Liberals in Ottawa. We hope they will extend that same collaborative spirit here and at Queen's Park by meeting and working with all parties to strengthen our economy, reduce taxes, fix health care, improve education, build homes and create an Ontario all of us can be proud of.

I'd like to discuss an issue that matters to Ajax and Durham region. The provincially owned Highway 407 east is fast and convenient, but it's also expensive and barely used. Families and businesses in Durham are already stretched: They should not have to choose between high tolls or spending extra time in traffic on local roads or the 401.

With Winchester Road construction in Brooklin and Whitby, congestion across Durham will only get worse if we do not make the 407 east available to all. This public highway from Brock Road in Pickering to Highway 35/115 in Clarington should be used to ease pressure and connect people across Durham and the GTA. It's not serving that purpose and it's out of reach for working families and businesses just trying to survive. Councils in Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa and Durham region have already called to remove these tolls.

1020

On behalf of my constituents in Ajax, I'm calling on this government to reach across the aisle, act without delay, remove the tolls and keep Durham region moving.

#### CANADA FLAG LAWN SIGNS

**Ms. Natalie Pierre:** Over the past few months, I've been deeply inspired by the support my riding has shown

for both our province and our country. Despite the difficulties we see down south, the message I'm hearing from my constituents is clear: That we do not want to become the 51st state. There is a strong sense of identity and pride, one that is deeply rooted in Canadian values, and it is something that we must continue to protect.

In support of this effort, my constituency office has been delivering Canadian flag lawn signs for constituents who wish to proudly show their commitment to protecting Ontario and the values we share as Canadians. The Canadian flag is more than just a symbol, it's a beacon of hope, resilience and pride. It's a visible expression of who we are and what we stand for, and what our veterans fought to protect. These flags, displayed across our community, remind us of the strength we have together.

I'm incredibly honoured to represent the voices of the people of Burlington for another term. Under Premier Ford's leadership, together we are building a future that reflects the strength of Ontario.

#### RIDING OF PARKDALE-HIGH PARK

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** I rise not to speak about wins or losses but about something deeper: the strength of democracy in Parkdale-High Park. In a time when democratic institutions are under pressure around the world, from rising authoritarianism to voter suppression, we showed up. We participated. We made our voices heard.

In fact, 23,000 residents cast early ballots in the advance polls. It's a testament to the commitment of voters from Parkdale to the Junction, from Roncesvalles to Swansea. With a very full heart, I say to every volunteer that knocked on doors, to every neighbour that drove someone to the polls, scrutineered the ballots late into the night: Thank you.

To the riding associations from every single party, thank you for modelling healthy political engagement, and to each candidate—Edward Fraser, Anna Gorka, Wladyslaw Lizon, Terry Parker, Rimmy Riarh, Lorne Gershuny, Bhutla Karpoche and Karim Bardeesy—thank you for your courage and your public service.

I want to recognize Bhutla Karpoche today—a colleague, a community builder, a fierce advocate—for her years of service to Parkdale-High Park and her tireless efforts in the campaign. I welcome Karim Bardeesy as our new federal representative.

Friends, democracy is not automatic. It is an act of hope, built vote by vote, voice by voice, and I hope we the elected, at every level, live up to the trust placed in us.

#### FERRERO CANADA

**Mr. Will Bouma:** It's my great honour today to extend a warm welcome to distinguished guests from Ferrero Canada to Queen's Park: Mr. Omar Zausa, president of Ferrero Canada; Mr. Eric Houdet, senior vice-president, Canada industrial and plant director for Brantford; and Ms. Stephanie Cass, vice-president, institutional affairs and corporate communications.

Speaker, today we recognize their outstanding leadership and celebrate Ferrero's historic \$445-million investment in Brantford–Brant. Ferrero is Brantford–Brant's largest employer and this landmark investment will also create 500 new jobs. Ferrero has chosen Ontario to produce Nutella biscuits for the very first time outside of Europe—a milestone moment for our province. Even more exciting, Ferrero will also debut its new Ferrero Rocher chocolate squares here, marking the company's first-ever new product launch outside of Europe.

Before I become too distracted by the thought of eating any number of Ferrero's delicious products, I want to make it clear that I am proud to represent a government that remains laser-focused on ensuring that its manufacturers and food processors can remain globally competitive, especially given the ongoing economic challenges. With Ferrero's partnership and support, we can ensure that domestic production in Ontario remains strong and vibrant now and into the future.

Thank you again to Ferrero Canada for your confidence in Ontario as the best place in the world to live, to work, to play and to raise a family.

#### COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AWARDS

**Mr. Chris Glover:** One of my favourite events in Spadina–Fort York is our annual Community Recognition Awards, to recognize people who build and strengthen our community. I want to give them a shout-out: Kseniya Tsoy, who beautifies our community with vibrant murals; Indigenous artist Monica Decock; business owner Alan Liu, who brings vibrancy to Queen Street West; Tonny Louie, a business owner who has been serving the Chinatown community for decades; Luke Anderson and StopGap, who make ramps that make businesses accessible; disability advocate Rose Finlay; environmental advocate Jasmine Persaud; Rachelle Chevalier, who helps to keep our neighbourhoods clean; the U of T Trash Team, who diverted 200,000 pieces of plastic from Lake Ontario; Barbara Ceccarelli, who welcomes francophone seniors to the GTA; Negar Nasrkhani, who helps to address youth poverty in Toronto; the Asian Toronto Running Club; Isin Unlu, who builds community at the Woodsworth co-op; Nesreen Hajjar of the Liberty Leaders Toastmasters club; Ruby Kooner, who has been organizing the community in the wake of Liberty Village's coyote attacks; Theresa Kapusta and Jacques Bernier, who help to furnish newcomers' homes; Tina Guglietti and Barbara McLardy, for their commitment to Evangel Hall Mission's drop-in centre; and finally, lifetime achievement award winners Chris Fraser, for his 25 years of advocacy with the Liberty Village BIA, and Joan Prowse, for her years dedicated to the Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association.

Thank you all for building and strengthening our community.

#### END JEW HATRED DAY

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I want you to imagine this: a small coffee shop targeted, its windows and doors violently smashed, the contents within stolen or trashed, and the perpetrators painting a Star of David in front of the business with a clear intention of hate and to encourage a boycott of that Jewish-owned business. This is not 1933 Nazi Germany. It's a coffee shop, just a 10-minute walk from this very location of the Legislature. Sadly, I've visited countless locations just like it.

The reality is that this has been affecting our community in escalating figures since October 7, becoming normalized, and it's a sad reminder of the ugliness of anti-Semitism. And it doesn't just end at that. It has led to violence against the innocent in our schools and on our streets, and twisting our minds and our hearts. But it does not change who we are. The Jewish community will not be intimidated.

And as we stand stronger and more unified, I'm asking everyone to join me today as we recognize End Jew Hatred Day, an international day of pride, action and solidarity to this growing threat. I want to thank Alexandra Smith and Brooke Goldstein for their leadership on this initiative.

Let today be a call to action. It's our collective responsibility to reject hate and build a province where everyone can live in peace and dignity.

#### MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** The Ontario government is helping to create safer communities and supporting people struggling with addiction and mental health issues in Durham region by establishing a new Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hub in Whitby. This new hub is part of the province's plan to support safer communities by investing \$550 million to create a total of 28 HART hubs across the province.

Durham Community Health Centre will serve as a lead agency for the new HART hub, in partnership with the region of Durham, the fastest-growing region in the province. Durham region's HART hub will reflect regional priorities by connecting people with complex needs to comprehensive treatment and preventative services.

Planning efforts to create the HART hub in Whitby are under way, and once opened, its services could include primary care, mental health and addiction services, employment and income supports.

Speaker, our government is helping more people get the treatment and support they need, when and where they need it, by taking the next steps to improve access to mental health and addiction services right in the region of Durham.

1030

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** This past week, citizens across Kitchener Centre celebrated Earth Day. As we celebrated, we reflected on the earth, our mother. She feeds us. She gives us clean air to breathe and clean water to drink, sustaining all life.

I believe in a world view where we are not dominant but part of an interconnected web; that when we do harm to one part of the living world, we do harm to ourselves; and when we nurture part of the living world, we nurture ourselves. Because in the words of Autumn Peltier, Anishinaabe Indigenous rights advocate, you can't eat money and you can't drink oil.

This Earth Day, the city of Kitchener supported neighbourhoods to clean up their local parks. I joined the Eastwood Neighbourhood Association in cleaning up Montgomery Park. Thank you to ENAK for bringing us together, because parks are where we connect with each other, with nature and our own well-being for free.

I also visited the Victoria Hills Neighbourhood Association eco fair featuring initiatives like LoveMyHood projects, Red Raccoon bike tune-ups, AFRO youth waste diversion projects and many others.

Finally, a shout-out to Kai Reimer-Watts and my constituency office staff for organizing a screening of Beyond Crisis at the Kitchener Public Library. Thank you, Eda, Patience and Courtney, for bringing us together to reflect on our relationship with the earth and renew our commitment to action.

As we confront the reality of an unlivable future, may each of us as elected officials make—

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Unfortunately, that's all the time we have for members' statements. We'll be moving on to introduction of visitors.

## NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Before we get to introduction of visitors—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** First of all, if we could have some calm in the House, please. Thank you.

I beg to inform the House that the late show scheduled for this evening, standing in the name of the member for Ottawa South, is cancelled.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I would like to introduce a member in the gallery from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: the former member from the 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd and 43rd Parliaments, Mr. John Yakabuski.

**Hon. Todd J. McCarthy:** I want to recognize in the gallery today the family of page Grace Krmpotic: her

parents Dan and Meghan; two of her siblings, Alex and the younger sister—young Myles isn't here today; he's saying hi from home—and her wonderful grandparents Barb and Drago. Welcome, Krmpotic family.

**Mme France Gélinas:** Thank you to all my colleagues for wearing the daffodil from the Canadian Cancer Society.

We have members of the Canadian Cancer Society with us today: the executive vice-president, mission, research and advocacy, Dr. Stuart Edmonds; and we have Kelly Wilson Cull, Stephen Piazza, Helena Sonea, Hillary Buchan-Terrell, Kaela Dainard, as well as volunteers Kirsten Watson and Justin Brown. Welcome to Queen's Park. They're making their way in.

**Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon:** Good morning, everyone. The member across the way stole my thunder for congratulating powerful page captain Grace Krmpotic here and her beautiful family. It's always great when beautiful Beaches–East Yorkers are in the House. Welcome.

**Hon. Sylvia Jones:** In addition to the Canadian Cancer Society volunteers and members already highlighted by the member opposite, I would also like to welcome Daniel Nowoselski and Michael Lebenbaum. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I would like to welcome Justin Brown, who is a constituent of mine, a volunteer for cancer care and also a survivor himself. He's a long-time friend and has helped me tremendously. Justin, it's so nice to have you here today.

**Ms. Laura Smith:** I'd like to welcome Alexandra Smith from the organization #EndJewHatred and CIJA—Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs—president Michelle Stock. We'll actually be taking pictures on the stairs after the proceedings.

**Hon. Kevin Holland:** From Thunder Bay, I'd like to welcome Mr. Harold Wilson to the House.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** I'd like to recognize Omar Zausa, president of Ferrero Canada; Eric Houdet, senior vice-president; and Stephanie Cass, vice-president.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** It's an honour to introduce my good friends Matt Richter and Christi Gardner who are here from Parry Sound–Muskoka. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I want to recognize today page Vivian, who is our page from LaSalle, Ontario, and our captain today. Thank you, page Vivian.

**Mr. Adil Shamji:** I'd like to welcome members of the Canadian Cancer Society who are here today: notably, Mike Lebenbaum, Daniel Nowoselski, Dr. Stuart Edmonds, Kelly Wilson Cull, Stephen Piazza, Helena Sonea, Hillary Buchan-Terrell, Kaela Dainard, Kirsten Watson, Justin Brown and J. Nadia Headley. Thank you for joining us today.

## ATTACK IN VANCOUVER

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Good morning. I seek unanimous consent of the House to observe a moment of silence in

memory of the lives lost during the Lapu Lapu Day festival this past weekend, and to show our solidarity with the people of Vancouver and the Filipino community all across Canada.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** The member is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to observe a moment of silence in memory of the lives lost during the Lapu Lapu Day festival this weekend and to show our solidarity with the people of Vancouver and the Filipino community. Agreed? Agreed.

*The House observed a moment's silence.*

## QUESTION PERIOD

### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** This question is for the Premier. I'll start, though, by saying that yesterday, Canadians elected a new government, and I want to congratulate Prime Minister Carney. He has got his work cut out for him, but I think we are all here ready to roll up our sleeves and defend Canada alongside him.

After two back-to-back elections, Ontarians are more than ready for their governments at both levels to get to work fighting Trump's tariffs and strengthening Ontario and Canada for the future. This weekend, I was very proud to join thousands of Unifor members from all over Ontario at a rally in Windsor for Protect Canadian Jobs. It was a powerful show of solidarity and pride in their work in the auto sector that they built over a hundred years ago in this province.

I want to hear from the Premier about what steps he has taken since the provincial election to prevent Ontario auto jobs from leaving for the United States.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** President Trump's tariffs have created chaos and uncertainty, not only across North America but around the world, but, yes, to here in North America in our auto sector. Our auto sector supply chain is deeply integrated. Parts cross the border six, seven, eight times before they finally get put in a vehicle, and we've seen the damaging effects that these tariffs have had on our industry, not only here in Canada but throughout all of Mexico and all of the United States as well.

1040

We are in constant contact with the auto companies who have operations here in Ontario. We are going to continue to work with them and our labour partners to protect the progress that we have made. We have landed \$46 billion in the auto sector. We are not going to let President Trump take our jobs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Back to the Premier: Let's be real here. Donald Trump's tariffs are going to put a target on

our auto sector, and he's not going to be happy until all those jobs are gone south.

Under this government, Windsor's unemployment rate is already the highest in the province. I already raised with the Premier a couple of weeks ago that auto workers in Windsor were having to put themselves between company trucks and the border to stop them from shipping the equipment south. That's happening now.

Well, I met with those workers this past weekend, and they're wondering how this can be allowed to happen after taxpayer dollars have been used over and over again to subsidize these very same companies, those supply chains, and right now parts makers are up and pulling stakes. They're heading south. The company trucks are being loaded up. Those companies and those parts cannot be allowed to leave this province. Once they go, they are not coming back. So back to the Premier: What is he going to do about this?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** President Trump is clear: He wants our jobs, and he wants our industry. He's envious of the progress that we have made over the last four years, attracting \$46 billion in auto investments alone, \$6 billion in life science, tens of billions in tech. We have worked to rebuild that auto sector that both the Liberals and the NDP have tried to decimate over the last decades. We have worked closely with our industry partners all across the supply chain to ensure we protect the progress that we have made. Those companies chose Ontario because they know we have everything they need to be successful, to be competitive. We have world-class talent, we have industrial land, we have low-cost clean energy—all the things that these companies have that the United States does not have. That's the message we continue to bring to the businesses here in Ontario and around the world.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Back to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Back to the Premier: I want to be very clear. When those auto jobs are gone, they are not coming back—thousands of good, family-supporting, union jobs on the line. Those workers are not going to go down without a fight.

What is missing, though—and I heard this loud and clear this weekend—is a provincial government that's willing to stand up and stop these factories from being stripped. In the absence of any kind of government action—I already mentioned it—the workers themselves are putting themselves at risk, taking matters into their own hands, and that's what they will continue to do. They will continue to block the removal of factory equipment in Windsor and all across this province when all they really want to do is get back to work.

So back to the Premier: Every time equipment is allowed to leave this province, that's on you. Will you intervene before it's too late, or are Windsor's workers on their own?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** You know, it was only a few short years ago, under the Liberal government, propped up by the NDP at the time, where the auto workers and the auto companies said to the Premier, Premier Wynne at the time,

“You have created the most expensive jurisdiction in all of North America in which to work.” We turned that around by lowering the cost of doing business by \$8 billion every single year without ever raising a tax. We saved the 100,000 auto workers whose jobs were in absolute jeopardy. We not only did that, but we attracted \$46 billion in additional investment. We’re not going to let that investment go anywhere. That was investment that was not supported by the NDP, not supported by the Liberals. We stood up for the auto workers, we saved their jobs and added tens of thousands of jobs in the auto sector.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** We remember that. That’s when the Premier said, “That ship has sailed,” remember? And by the way, it was the union that fought for those jobs and brought those jobs back here in the province of Ontario.

This question is for the Minister of Education. A new report from Community Living Ontario confirms what we’ve been hearing from parents and educators and advocates for so many years. Your education system is failing students with disabilities. We are hearing stories of unfair seclusion, exclusion and restraints being used in Ontario schools. Many students are being sent home or told to stay home because the school couldn’t meet their needs.

When is this minister going to reverse the years of underfunding that his own government has overseen and ensure that students with special needs receive the same level of education as their peers?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I appreciate the question from the Leader of the Opposition.

Look, Madam Speaker, let me just say this: I can tell the Leader of the Opposition through you that the government is spending record amounts in special education, but I don’t think that really matters to a parent whose child hasn’t been treated in a fashion that makes the child feel safe, or the parent feel that their child is being respected.

I am going to be meeting with the authors of the report. I’m going to be meeting with parents, as have the previous ministers before me who have continuously increased funding. But I know we share the same concern to ensure that all students, but especially the most vulnerable students, have all the tools that they need to succeed, and more importantly as well, that the teachers who are in the system have the resources and the training that they need to provide these students with the absolute highest level of education and care. That brings some confidence in the education system on their behalf.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Back to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** Thank you, Speaker, but I would remind the minister that his own government has cut per-student funding by \$1,500 per student under this government. So maybe he needs to look at that again.

You should know that every school board in the province is running a deficit in special education. They’re spending more than they’re getting from this government.

Not only has the government failed to provide guidance for schools on these issues—seclusion, restraints, exclusion—but there’s also no provincial data being tracked. Instead, school boards are creating and implementing their own policies. Students with disabilities, some of them as young as five or six years old, are being physically restrained and separated from their peers.

Will the minister stop abdicating responsibility and take the necessary action so that children with special needs are safe at school and get the same education as every other student?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I think it will maybe surprise the Leader of the Opposition to know that I agree. We have to modify or change the way school boards react and behave. I certainly agree with her. The Ministry of Education needs to ensure that there’s a more unified level of response from our school boards. Perhaps we’ve given too much autonomy to school boards, and they are making decisions that are not always in the best interests of students, parents and teachers.

I think last week we made our first steps into ensuring that accountability returns to our school boards. As I have said countless times, and as the ministers before me have said, we will stop at nothing to ensure that students, parents and teachers have the resources that they need to give our students the best possibility of success.

Let me be extraordinarily clear to school boards out there: When it comes to how we treat children with special needs in our system, they should always put the needs of the child first. They should ensure that the teachers have the resources to do that and that parents will have the utmost confidence. If our boards aren’t going to do it, I agree with the Leader of the Opposition: I’ll do it for them, and this government will get it done.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Back to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms. Marit Stiles:** I will say to the minister that, really, at the end of the day, the most important thing he could do to start is to put that \$1,500 per student back because there’s no way that boards can meet the needs of these kids without that funding. That’s an enormous cut across all of our education system that was implemented by this government.

You’ve got to read this report, Speaker, to truly understand the extent of this. It’s about police being called in on a six-year-old Black student with disabilities. She was cuffed at the wrists and ankles and held down on the ground by police—a six-year-old. It’s about an autistic grade 1 student who was repeatedly locked into a padded room without his parents being notified. I will remind you that Landyn Ferris died last just last year in a very similar situation, while he was sleeping unsupervised in his school’s sensory room.

**1050**

I want to ask the minister again: Restore the funding as a starting point, and then let’s talk about what you can do to actually meet the needs of our kids with disabilities.

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Obviously, funding isn’t necessarily the issue here because we have record levels

of funding in the school system. In fact, that's a hallmark of this government. We've increased funding to education.

Ultimately, I don't think parents care what the minister says with respect to the record levels of funding when you hear instances where children with special needs aren't being treated with respect and that their parents can't have the confidence that their kids are safe in their schools.

I don't blame teachers. Obviously, boards have not given the resources that are required to ensure that teachers have the training and that students are treated with the respect, dignity and care that is required under all circumstances.

So I will be again abundantly clear to school boards out there: We give you record levels of funding. There is an expectation that that funding is used to ensure that students, parents and teachers have the resources that they need for success. If they can't do it on their own, I will step in, and we will do it for them. We will not fail on this.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mr. John Fraser:** My question will be for the Premier, but first of all, I just want to acknowledge that most of us are pretty tired this morning—late night. I want to say thank you to every person who put their name on a ballot across this country, across this province, whatever party they're in. We all know what people do when they do that, and I think showing them a sign of appreciation is the right thing to do. I know we already have. I look forward to working with the new members of Parliament, as we all do. Again, thanks.

Let's get down to business. What exactly did the Premier mean when he said he was going to double- and triple-check that his backroom deal for Ontario Place passed the smell test?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Response? I recognize the Minister of Infrastructure.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** We've been clear in this House, as we were clear the very following day through a statement released by Infrastructure Ontario, that there was a sound financial test that occurred; that it was audited by a third party, Ernst and Young; and that our review of audited financial statements had occurred.

I don't know why the member opposite just can't understand the facts. He can't understand the AG report or the IG report that simply said that it was a competitive process.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** A pretty quick turnaround, double- and triple-checking in less than 24 hours. That's pretty darn good.

Look, I know the Premier will understand this because we had similar jobs. When I was growing up, I was a fishmonger. I loved that job—I really did. I used to get off and I'd get on the bus at night, and every once in a while, I'd get a strange look from somebody. I never made anything of it.

Then, one night, I'm walking home, and there's a cat following me. Then I realized sometimes, you're so

covered in the stench and the smell of something, you can't smell it.

Speaker, back through you to the Premier: Does he think that \$2.2 billion and a 95-year lease to a foreign company with literally no money and no experience doesn't stink?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I would challenge the member opposite to talk about the 2018 procurement that the Liberals led when he was in cabinet. I would challenge the member, and I would challenge the media to maybe inquire about that because the truth is, Therme was a top contender in that process. The process was very much the same.

But you know what? It's okay. The Liberal Party stunk then, and it still stinks now. That's why nobody supported you in the last election, and—

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I'm going to ask the minister to withdraw.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** The member opposite did say that it was a stinky situation, so I'm just simply referring to that stinky situation that existed when the member opposite was in cabinet in the Liberal Party.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I'm going to ask the minister to withdraw.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

The truth is, the Liberals ignored the site. They left it to fall apart—disrepair—and now it's coming to life. It is under construction. In a number of years, all Ontarians will have a wonderful place to visit with their families, and we will all be proud of that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Back to the leader of the third party.

**Mr. John Fraser:** No real money, no real experience—sounds like a good deal to me.

We all know the stakes—the Auditor General, the Integrity Commissioner, the New York Times, public servants—and Speaker, I know there are government caucus members that can smell it too.

So back to the Premier: Therme didn't get a deal for Ontario Place, they won a prize. We all know that this deal stinks to high heaven. Will the Premier do the right thing—what he did with MZO's and the greenbelt and urban boundaries—and reverse this deal with Therme?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** The AG clearly said publicly that there was no interference from the Premier's office. The IG report that was made public in January of this year had no reason to even pursue an investigation, in my name as minister.

That member is speaking out of tone. It is misconduct, and I would just like to raise that with the Speaker and the Clerk today.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mr. John Fraser:** I appreciate the minister taking the high road.

Speaker, I thought that's what I would hear, and it was evident last week when the government introduced Bill 5.

It's the playbook for a backroom deal. It's the playbook for Ontario Place: Trusted partners—

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Point of privilege.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I apologize. I want to state that you cannot make a point of privilege during question period.

I will go back to the leader of the third party for questions.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Trusted partners, special economic zones, unfettered ministerial power and avoiding accountability—and then putting it in legislation. That's pretty special.

So, Speaker, through you: Does the Premier really believe that introducing Bill 5 will take the stench out of his \$2.2-billion backroom deal for Ontario Place, or any other backroom deal that's being cooked up right now?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Minister of Infrastructure.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Madam Speaker, as a point of privilege, the member is wilfully misleading this House. We have an AG report and an IG report that stated the opposite—

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I would ask the minister to withdraw.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** I will withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Response?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Madam Speaker, the member opposite is stating things that are contrary to what the AG report said, to what the IG—the Integrity Commissioner—stated this year.

The point is, we are redeveloping Ontario Place. We are turning it into a place that everyone can enjoy. The Liberals left it abandoned for a many number of years, and this government is finally getting it done and making it a wonderful place for families to enjoy.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary?

**Mr. John Fraser:** In Bill 5, the government is going to create special economic zones, and actually, Ontario Place is identified as one of them. So let's just be honest with each other: They're going to be special scandal zones. Just like we saw with Ontario Place, there will be no transparency and no accountability—just like the greenbelt, just like urban boundaries, just like MZOs.

Does the Premier really believe, Speaker, that introducing legislation will make his \$2.2-billion backroom deal for Ontario Place legitimate?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Madam Speaker, I am in complete dismay. The member opposite is choosing to ignore the AG report, the AG's comments. The member opposite is choosing to ignore the decision made by the Integrity Commissioner. But that's okay; that's his conduct. He will have to speak to his conduct.

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What I will say: In an economic crisis, in a housing crisis and in an affordability crisis, this is what he's raising, instead of working alongside government—and now a new federal government—to make sure that we protect Canada, Ontario, our jobs and our economy here? That is exactly the focus of this government while

removing interprovincial barriers, making sure our workers are retrained while we invest in infrastructure, and the member opposite is not participating in any of that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Back to the leader of the third party.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Well, Speaker, you can't just read the stuff you like. You've got to read all of it.

So we know there was a \$2.2-billion backroom deal for Ontario Place and an \$8.3-billion backroom deal that happened for the greenbelt. It's the same kind of thing. It happened with urban boundaries. It happened with MZOs. It's kind of like MZOs 2.0. It's a pattern with this Premier and this government.

So, once again, back to the Premier: Does he really expect Ontarians to believe that Bill 5 won't lead to more backroom deals like Ontario Place, the greenbelt, urban boundaries, MZOs?

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** What I will say this bill will lead to is finally investing in our economy, bringing jobs and prosperity to Ontario, to Canada.

The purpose of this bill is to make sure that we continue building infrastructure. The purpose of this bill is to make sure that we finally unlock the prosperity of the north in northern communities.

Now, it's fine that they're not interested in any of that, which is why they are sitting on the opposite side of the House with very little support from Ontarians, but the Premier will continue to lead this nation, lead this province and defend us, protect us and protect our jobs, right here in Ontario.

## LONG-TERM CARE

**MPP Jamie West:** My question is for the Premier. Last week, my colleague from Nickel Belt and I shared shocking concerns concerning Extendicare Countryside with the Minister of Long-Term Care. A few of them are listed here: frequent falls and fractures, preventable infections, medication errors, residents not being fed, residents put back into soiled clothing.

Kimberley Blanchette told me, "Kenneth, my 88-year-old dad, has been at Extendicare Countryside since May. He has had nothing but infections. Every single day, I see the neglect and abuse of my dad."

Speaker, residents pay nearly \$3,000 a month for care. Last year, Extendicare posted a profit of over \$16 million. My question is, why isn't the Premier insistent that the money goes into senior care and not into shareholders' pockets?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Minister of Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta:** Good morning. I thank the member for that question. The member, as well as the member for Nickel Belt and I have had numerous discussions on the topic, and I'm really glad to update this House this morning.

Of course, there is a cease-of-admission order that is in place, and this order will not be lifted until we are confident that the home has met our standards and can



keep compliance going forward. Ministry inspectors have had a strong and ongoing presence in the home, and I can tell you that they have spent over 700 inspector hours in the home, making sure that things are going in the right direction.

I've also had the opportunity to have conversations with Dr. Michael Guerriere, who is the CEO of Extendicare, and he has reassured me that the amount of agency hours is going down and they have increased their recruitment and retention efforts.

So we will continue monitoring the situation very closely, to ensure that our residents and our long-term-care homes are safe and they have the care that they deserve.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary? I recognize the member for Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Extendicare Countryside is responsible for the care of hundreds of elderly people in my riding, yet families tell us that the basics—going to the bathroom, feeding, bathing, getting dressed—are not being done, never mind post-surgical wounds not being addressed. Whistle-blowers tell me that the workload they are assigned is absolutely impossible to do, no matter how hard they work.

How will the government make sure that the millions of dollars they give to Extendicare Countryside goes to care and not to profit?

**Hon. Natalia Kusendova-Bashta:** We will continue to monitor the situation very closely and will not lift the cease-of-admission order until we are fully satisfied that things are proceeding in the right direction, that residents are receiving the proper care.

I am proud to be a member of this government, which is continuously investing historic amounts of dollars into long-term care. We're building long-term care across the province of Ontario. This past week I broke ground on a new Muslim long-term-care home. This is unprecedented investment. We are also leading the country in our four hours of direct care per resident per day, which we are very close to achieving.

I am very proud of the investments that we are making. This home is on a path to achieve compliance, but until that compliance is met, we will not be lifting that cease-of-admission order.

## JOB CREATION

**Ms. Stephanie Bowman:** Last week, the FAO issued their 2024 labour market report, and it's not good news: 608,000 workers in this province are unemployed. They're feeling the pain of this government's failure to deliver jobs.

Despite this government's boasting on billboards, the numbers tell a different story. Unemployment is up, from 5.6% to 7% in one year under this Conservative government. We have the worst Ontario unemployment rate on record under this Conservative government: 44% of young people in Toronto were employed in 2024, down from 48% a year earlier under this Conservative government.

My question to the Premier: When will he stop boasting and start focusing on actually creating jobs for the people of Ontario?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** President Trump's tariffs are causing chaos and uncertainty all across the global economy. There are going to be challenging times for businesses and for workers, but our government will be there to support them every step of the way.

Since we took office, we've ensured that the business environment in Ontario promotes investment and job creation. We have numbers too: One million jobs have been created under this government. And despite tumultuous times we still saw businesses add 39,000 jobs in January and 17,000 jobs in February.

We're going to do everything that it takes to ensure that Ontario remains the best destination for businesses to invest, expand and create more and more and more good-paying jobs.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Stephanie Bowman:** Well, there they go again, deflecting and boasting instead of focusing.

In 2018, Doug Ford guaranteed he would create 300,000 manufacturing jobs; he's only delivered about one tenth of that. His guarantee failed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I will remind the member to use the title and not the person's name.

**Ms. Stephanie Bowman:** Thank you, Speaker.

The Premier boasts about helping Ontario business, but under his watch public sector job growth outpaced that of the private sector by three to one. No win for business there.

An unemployed construction worker visited my office last week saying he wants work not welfare. Some 27,000 construction workers like him lost their jobs in the last two years. This Premier is failing him and them. While he and the government boast about their record, 608,000 workers who lost their jobs know what this government really needs to do.

To the Premier: When will he start protecting jobs and not losing them?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Mississauga—Erin Mills.

**Mr. Sheref Sabawy:** Despite tariffs from Trump, which are only hurting our businesses and workers, our priority is keeping businesses open and our people employed. In response to these potential layoffs, Ontario is taking immediate action to support affected workers. That includes \$3 million in the Automotive Industries Association of Canada to prepare over 200 workers for the auto sector and over \$1.5 billion in the Skills Development Fund, aiming to train over one million workers across Ontario, a vital initiative for developing a skilled, competitive workforce that meets the demands of the ever-changing global economy. An additional \$2-billion rebate through the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, WSIB, which will be provided to safe employers in the

spring, helping to keep costs down for businesses. In addition to this investment, Madam Speaker, we are raising the minimum wage.

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### INTERNATIONAL TRADE

**MPP Chris Scott:** It's a pleasure to rise for the first time to ask a question to the Honourable Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, a fellow northern colleague and absolute champion.

President Trump's tariffs have created a cloud of uncertainty over the global economy. They have forced Ontario businesses to recalibrate their supply chains and look to other reliable jurisdictions for trade. Every year, Ontario alone does nearly \$500 billion in two-way trade with the United States. While they are our largest trading partner, Ontario also has several strategic economic partners across the globe.

I understand the minister has just returned from Japan and South Korea, two countries we have long-standing trading relationships with. Speaker, can the minister please explain why Ontario is embarking on trade missions to Asia and Europe, and how these missions benefit our economy?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Our mission to Asia was part of our government's plan to accelerate Ontario's trade diversification strategy. This plan didn't begin after President Trump's tariffs; it's something we've been working on for the last seven years. Last year, Japan was Ontario's number one source of inward foreign direct investment. Two-way trade with Japan is up 21% since we took office. Two-way trade with South Korea has nearly doubled since we took office. Whether it was in auto, in life science, AI, manufacturing—all of these companies that we continue to meet with—our message is very, very clear: In these uncertain times, Ontario is the partner who is reliable, predictable, dependable. We are the partner you're looking for.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Supplementary?

**MPP Chris Scott:** Now more than ever, Ontario needs to work with reliable trading partners. We can't be certain what will happen with these tariffs. We've seen just how quickly the President of the United States can change his mind. We're going to continue our advocacy to the United States, pushing them to remove these harmful barriers and tariffs.

But at the same time, we need to focus on bolstering our economy by cutting red tape, boosting interprovincial trade, unlocking new trade partnerships and getting more Ontario products to markets around the world. We need to work closely with our businesses who are directly affected by these tariffs and with the ones who are struggling to plan for the years ahead.

The minister met with a number of businesses over the course of his mission in Asia, we just heard. Speaker, can the minister share what he was hearing from these companies and how it benefits businesses here in Ontario?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Speaker, the uncertainty created by Trump's tariffs is top of mind for businesses right across the entire world. These tariffs have put a chill on businesses, not only here, but abroad. Now this does present a significant challenge for Ontario and the world, but there is a window of opportunity in all of this, Speaker.

There will be a glut of capital over the next year as businesses hold off on making important investment decisions. That capital will be amassed and will eventually need a home. Companies who want to invest, they will want to invest it fast, which is why we're already doing the groundwork to ensure that that capital lands here in Ontario. That is why you're seeing such an ambitious legislative agenda from our government. It's to ensure that Ontario is the choice destination for that capital.

### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** My question is to the Premier. People with disabilities continue to live under tremendous strain, with those on the Ontario Disability Support Program living far below the poverty line, struggling to meet their basic needs for shelter, food and transportation. The federal government's Canada Disability Benefit does not go as far as promised, but it is a start, and it is meant to be in addition to the meagre provincial supports available through ODSP.

Will the government commit to not clawing back the Canada Disability Benefit from ODSP recipients?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Response? I recognize the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services.

**Hon. Michael Parsa:** I thank my honourable colleague for the question.

Madam Speaker, we have been very clear from the beginning: Our intent is to make life more affordable for all Ontarians, including those on social assistance, which is why we pushed and worked with the community on the delivery of this program. But it's imperative that any support that is provided complements the already existing supports, which is why, during my meeting with my federal counterpart, members of other provinces and territories joined me in requesting that the federal government make amendments to the Canada tax act to make sure that these supports come with fewer barriers and fewer burdens as possible. It's why we asked the federal government to treat all those receiving ODSP as automatic recipients.

On this side of the House—and I'm hoping that my colleagues across the aisle will support us in making sure that life becomes more affordable for Ontarians—we will never stop fighting for them.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Thunder Bay–Superior North.

**MPP Lise Vaugeois:** I think a simple, "Yes, we will not claw back," would actually answer the question.

The struggle to survive from day to day too often leads people to suicide. It is easier to get an assisted death in

Ontario than it is to get support to survive, and that is shameful. An extra \$200 a month will not bring people up to the poverty line, but it will help.

Will the Premier do the right thing and join the other six provinces that have already committed to not clawing back the Canada Disability Benefit?

**Hon. Michael Parsa:** Madam Speaker, I'm not sure what part of the answer my honourable colleague misunderstood when I said we have fought from day one to make life more affordable for Ontarians. I know that they struggle with answers sometimes.

It's why we increased the Ontario Disability Support Program by nearly 17% in just over two years, the largest increases in the program's history in decades. It didn't come from the NDP; it didn't come from the Liberals. It came from this government. It's why we increased the earned income threshold from \$200 to \$1,000, so those that are able and are willing to work can get a job without it affecting their benefits up to \$1,000.

We have been very clear: We will support any initiative that makes life more affordable for Ontarians. That includes those on social assistance, which is why, once again, I'm asking my colleague to join me in asking the federal government to amend the Income Tax Act and make the recipients automatic and make ODSP recipients automatic in this support.

#### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** Speaker, Bill 5 hands out too much unchecked discretionary power to these ministers. After seven years in power, they say they still need more ways to pick who can get a pass on rules and regulations—more ways to pick which historical sites, waste dumps or green spaces suddenly don't matter.

With all the trouble they've gotten into from pet projects over these last seven years, how can we trust that this government's decisions will be for the good of the people instead of about who buys a ticket to get access to the minister's ear?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Response? I recognize the member for Sault Ste. Marie.

**MPP Chris Scott:** I want to be crystal clear in the House today: Our government is committed to meaningful, free, prior and informed consent, and we are fully committed to our duty-to-consult obligations. This legislation in no way impedes that, guys.

The bottom line is, it can't take 17 years to open up a mine in this province anymore because the world has changed. In the EU, mines are opening up within eight or nine years. In Western Australia, mines are opening up in six or seven years. Ontario is 10 out of 10 in subnational jurisdictions when it comes to attracting mining investments. It's time for a change.

The former Liberals sat on their palms and made empty promises when it came to developing the Ring of Fire for over 10 years. They killed billions in potential investments, and we're not going to take any lessons from the members opposite on this file.

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**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** The government claims that it's been transparent when making decisions for Ontario, but were they transparent on the Therme deal for Ontario Place? Look at their record on the greenbelt. They said they wouldn't touch it, and then they did, with promises made behind closed doors, triggering investigations by the Integrity Commissioner, the Auditor General and the RCMP. The lobbying from friends and donors who stood to gain billions from rezoning was just too much for them to withstand.

Now, in Bill 5, when it comes to mining or energy, Conservative ministers are also getting special discretionary power to impede or help foreign actors. Can this government withstand the inevitable lobbying?

Speaker, how can we take this government seriously when they claim that, after the changes from Bill 5, they will wield their new discretionary power properly, when their record shows the opposite?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Sarnia—Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Madam Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of our great communities. They create jobs, drive innovation and help our cities and towns grow, but in today's economy, with rising global pressures and tough competition, it's more important than ever to stand behind these Ontario businesses and their workers.

When we buy Ontario-made goods, we're not just getting great products, we are supporting good-paying jobs, strong local supply chains and the future of this economy. That's why initiatives like Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day are so important.

Can the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery please tell the House—

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I'm sorry to interrupt the member. That was the response to the previous question.

#### SCHOOL TRUSTEES

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Moving on to the independents for questions, I recognize the member for Kitchener Centre.

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Education. Yesterday evening, queer advocacy groups, Indigenous and ally community members, concerned staff and students came together to stand up against hate. Some trustees at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, who are supported by an organization called Campaign Life Coalition, have been trying to ban the pride flag, 2SLGBTQ books and other symbols of inclusion, including the "Every Child Matters" flag. These actions and behaviours of trustees, many of whom were appointed, not elected, go far outside their role.

Ontario's education system is publicly funded and must be inclusive of all students. So I ask the minister, will you intervene and stop these trustees who are wasting time and taxpayer dollars fighting about what books should be in libraries and what flags should be on poles?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** I will say this: I am encouraged today that both the Leader of the Opposition and the Green Party seem to fully agree with me that we have to ensure that our school boards are focused on what matters to the people of the province of Ontario, and that is ensuring that students, parents and teachers have the resources that they need in order to ensure maximum success for our students for the jobs of tomorrow.

I completely agree. That's what our school boards should be focused on, and I have said this since the day that I was sworn in to the file, that school boards should be put on notice. If you don't do this, if you don't start putting parents, teachers and students first, then I will do it for you, because that is what people expect. They expect that their education system and that boards are focused on students, making sure that they have all the tools to succeed—and not pet projects, not other things that matter, not to how a student does in the future.

Let me be clear again, and I thank the member: School boards, you will either do what you're tasked to do—that is, put resources for education—or we will step in and ensure that those resources go to the people who need it most.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Kitchener Centre.

**Ms. Aislinn Clancy:** Unfortunately, these hateful actions are just the tip of the iceberg at the Waterloo Catholic District School Board.

A recent FOI request shows that the board has spent over \$200,000 in the past two years to silence opposing trustees. Their tactic: They pursue a code of conduct charge to keep elected trustees from voting, speaking and attending meetings for months, all this to suppress equity, accountability and transparency. It got so bad that this week, a judge intervened. This style of American politics has no place in Ontario school boards.

So again to the minister: Will you intervene to ensure that trustees stay in their lane and make decisions related to improving student experiences, rather than wasting hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars to undermine democracy?

**Hon. Paul Calandra:** Well, I completely agree. In fact, politics has no place in schools at all. Unless you're teaching politics, politics should not be in a school, so I absolutely agree. That was the bargain that we had in this province for a very, very long time. Students respected teachers, teachers respected parents, and parents made sure that students respected their teachers as though they were their parents. That was the bargain that we had in this province, and that has changed because politics has entered our schools through school boards.

Again, I agree with the member opposite: Our school boards should be taking the resources that we give, with record levels of funding. But again, parents don't care

when a minister says it's record levels of funding; what they care about is that when their kids go to school, they are having all of the resources that they need for maximum achievement, so that they can prosper in the jobs of tomorrow. And when school boards get into politics, when the classroom becomes political, it is the students who suffer.

I can tell you this, Madam Speaker: I will work with the opposition on this new mandate that we all seem to agree upon, to get the politics out of the classroom, put education back in and put students first.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member for Sarnia–Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Well, Madam Speaker, as the song goes: We'll take it one more time with feeling, right from the top.

Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of our communities. They create jobs, drive innovation, and help our cities and towns grow. But in today's economy, with rising global pressures and tough competition, it is more important than ever to stand behind Ontario's businesses and their workers. When we buy these Ontario-made goods, we're not just getting great products; we're supporting good-paying jobs, strong local supply chains and the future of this economy. That's why initiatives like Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day are so important.

Can the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery please tell the House how our government is helping small businesses and Ontario workers through this important initiative?

**Hon. Stephen Crawford:** Thank you to the great member from Sarnia–Lambton. I know this is a particularly important question given your proximity to the United States.

Madam Speaker, there is one leader in this country who has stood up for our country in this difficult time, and that is Premier Ford. That's why we brought about Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day legislation. Buy Ontario, Buy Canadian Day is an opportunity to celebrate the strength of Ontario's economy and the people who drive it. Our government proudly supports local producers, farmers and manufacturers because we know when we choose Ontario-made, we support good-paying jobs and drive economic growth.

Economic modelling shows that shifting just 5% of our consumer spending to Canadian-made goods can boost the GDP by billions of dollars and support hundreds of thousands of jobs across this great country. That's why we continue to invest in Ontario's manufacturing sector, promote local food through programs like Foodland Ontario and reduce red tape so businesses in Ontario can thrive.

Speaker, we will always stand with Ontario businesses and Ontario workers.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** The member for Sarnia–Lambton.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Thank you to the minister.

Madam Speaker, small and medium-sized businesses are key to Ontario's success. They are the heart of our towns and cities. They build strong communities, create good jobs and support Ontario's families. But today's economy is changing very fast. Businesses need new tools to keep up, grow and compete. That is why our government is making the smart investment to help small businesses modernize, move online and reach new customers. We are also making sure Ontario businesses have a fair chance when it comes to public contracts and government procurement.

Buying Ontario-made goods supports good jobs, strong supply chains and a stronger economy for everyone. Madam Speaker, can the minister please explain and share how our government is helping small businesses grow and win here at home?

**Hon. Stephen Crawford:** Thank you again to the member. Our government recognizes that small and mid-sized businesses are the foundation for Ontario's economy. They are innovators, job creators and they are the heartbeat of our main streets, from downtown Toronto to rural communities right across this great province.

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Madam Speaker, we've launched initiatives to help small businesses modernize and expand their digital presence and access new markets. Programs like the Ontario Made initiative through the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters organization are helping connect local manufacturers with buyers and consumers, both here and across Canada.

We are also working to ensure government procurement prioritizes Ontario-made products wherever possible, giving our small businesses a fair shot at procurement right here in the province.

Whether it's investing in skills training, cutting red tape or promoting made-in-Ontario products at home and abroad, our government is ensuring Ontario's small and mid-sized enterprises have the tools they need to grow and succeed here in Ontario. Because when Ontario businesses succeed, Ontario families succeed. And under the leadership of Premier Ford, we'll continue to stand with them every step of the way.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** As a reminder, we do not refer to members by their name.

I recognize the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane.

#### HIGHWAY SAFETY

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. Northerners are very used to having to play chicken or being run off the road by commercial vehicle drivers who are obviously poorly trained. But even we were shocked last September when it came to light that international students were getting commercial licences with visitor visas.

And the minister was too. I'd like to quote the minister: "Visitors in this province would be illegal to drive without a work permit. So absolutely, if there's any loopholes

there, we'll definitely be fixing those and making sure that that should not happen and cannot happen...."

Could the minister please brief the house on what steps have been taken since last September to close those loopholes?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the Minister of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Mike Harris:** I appreciate the opportunity to answer this question in the House here today. I can tell you that the Ontario government takes highway safety very seriously, especially in northern Ontario. We have embarked on one of the largest transit plans in North America. This includes roughly \$28 billion in highway improvements and expansions. I can tell you that that includes safety initiatives like twinning sections of Highway 11 and 17 in northern Ontario, and also the first-of-its-kind 2+1 lane system in North America that is being piloted right now just outside of North Bay.

We certainly take a lot of these questions and concerns very seriously. I appreciate the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane raising them again here, and I'm sure that we'll have an answer for him forthcoming.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to thank the member for that question—I don't know what else the government has done on commercial vehicle licensing, but I know one thing they have done: They instructed Ontario DriveTest to change their website, and now the website says you have to be a resident of Ontario to apply for a licence. But when DriveTest said in their operational impact document—what they're still doing is, "The Minister of Transportation has confirmed that staff should not deny a licensing transaction solely based on a customer presenting a visitor record or declaring that they are not a resident, as we do not currently require a document to verify residency." So on this one, as of this document, you have done nothing.

Please, take this and other highway issues seriously. We're tired of hearing about a 2+1 that has never been built. Please take this issue seriously.

**Hon. Mike Harris:** Let's talk about taking things seriously. The people of this province consistently have voted for Progressive Conservative members in northern Ontario. Every time I look across the aisle, I see fewer and fewer members. We have a great member from Sault Ste. Marie. We have a great new member from Algoma-Manitoulin. We have a great member from Timmins. We have a great member from—gosh, Sault Ste. Marie; we already said that.

Speaker, the people of the north know that only a Progressive Conservative government is going to take them seriously. We've heard for years from the Liberals—they even called it a no man's land. Shame on them.

This Progressive Conservative government is going to unlock the potential in the north. We're going to unlock the Ring of Fire. We're going to make it easier for permitting and processes when it comes to mines and

energy. And we are going to get it done for the people of this province.

### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**MPP Stephanie Smyth:** I'm going to go back to Bill 5. It's not about unleashing Ontario's economy, it's more about unleashing party favours with a pen. We all are in favour of getting jobs going in this province. We want to unlock Ontario's potential and create jobs. But this government's playbook is clear: Weaken the rules, sideline the public and hand out permits to the Premier's insiders.

We watched them try to carve up the greenbelt. We watched them with the MZOs, flying out like candy. And now, with Bill 5, they want to greenbelt-ify the entire province, one secret permit at a time.

But do you know what? Ontario fought back. They fought back about that kind of backroom dealing before. In fact, even the Auditor General's report, which the minister just boasted about a few minutes ago, said that the government's track record on process has not been fair, transparent or accountable.

My question is to the Premier: Why is the Premier so determined to repeat the same mistakes by giving ministers free rein to hand out permits like party favours?

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Response? I recognize the Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** In the last six years, we have landed \$70 billion worth of investment here in Ontario. They are generational investments that are creating good-paying jobs. We faced fierce competition around the world for those investments, but ultimately, those companies chose Ontario, to locate here, because we have everything they need to succeed.

But right now, Donald Trump's tariffs are creating a competition to land those investments, and we need to protect our investments. Companies are seeing a pause in all of their investments. We need to create an even greater environment for those companies to succeed, and this legislation will enable our government to use the tools that we need to land all of those critical investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I recognize the member from Toronto—St. Paul's.

**MPP Stephanie Smyth:** Again, if the Premier hasn't learned from the greenbelt fiasco, what protections, if any, is he willing to put in place to ensure that Bill 5 does not just become another vehicle for rewarding political donors?

**Hon. Victor Fedeli:** Again, this investment will enable the government to use all of the tools that we need to land these critical investments. Special economic zones will serve that pressing need, but these zones will also be designated judiciously, with transparent criteria, and they will not be created in every region in the province. They will be used to streamline permitting. They will be used to follow approval processes, so we can get those projects that are critical to Ontario under way faster. They will

include publicly posting the processes, along with clear scoping details. This is all designed to bring even more record investment here to the province of Ontario on top of the \$70 billion worth of investment we have already landed.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Lorne Coe:** My question is for the Solicitor General. We know that the risk of auto thefts is a growing concern for many Ontarians. Organized crime groups are stealing cars and hurting hard-working families. People are worried about their safety and their property. Stolen cars are often sold using fake vehicle identification numbers, making it hard for people to know if a car is safe to buy.

Our government has always stood up to protect people from crime. We made strong investments to support police and crack down on auto theft. Speaker, can the Solicitor General please tell this House what next steps we are taking to stop auto thefts, fight organized crime and make sure people and families are better protected?

**Hon. Michael S. Kerzner:** I've said this before in the Legislature: There has never been a government in my lifetime that has prioritized our public safety more than our government, led by Premier Ford.

Last week, our new associate minister of auto theft and bail reform was standing with Halton police and Carfax Canada to announce a new VIN fraud check tool which will help indicate potential fraud. What does this mean? It means that this tool will help protect buyers from buying stolen cars, and it will help protect dealers from unknowingly selling stolen cars.

**1140**

Our government's tackling of auto theft means that we've invested our \$51 million wisely, and the \$18 million times three which is flowing each year to police services across Ontario. Partnering with great people like Carfax will make a difference. At the end of the day, protect Ontario means just that: protect Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** There is no further time for questions.

### NOTICE OF DISSATISFACTION

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** A little bit of housekeeping before we break for lunch: Pursuant to standing order 36(a), the member for Kingston and the Islands has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to his question given by the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Energy and Mines regarding Bill 5. This matter will be debated today at adjournment.

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 9(g), the Clerk has received written notice from the government House leader indicating that a temporary change in the weekly meeting

schedule of the House is required, and therefore the afternoon routine on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, shall commence at 1 p.m.

#### MEMBER'S COMMENTS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I now recognize the Minister of Infrastructure on a question of privilege.

**Hon. Kinga Surma:** Thanks to the Clerks' assistance, I think I'm going to get it right this time.

Madam Speaker, I would like to file notice—a complaint against the member from Ottawa South. The member is wilfully misleading this House, contradicting findings from the AG report and the IG report, both of which have been tabled here. As such, by continuously wilfully misleading this House, he is breaking parliamentary convention. He is using parliamentary privilege as a tool to harass and slander members of this House.

Madam Speaker, I kindly ask that this is something that you can look into, as well as the Clerk. I appreciate your time. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Pursuant to standing order 23, the member is entitled to raise a question of privilege without first giving written notice, where it arises out of the proceedings of the House.

Do any other members wish to speak to this question of privilege? I recognize the leader of the third party.

**Mr. John Fraser:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I'll be interested to see the written submission that the member's going to put forward.

I just want to backtrack here a little bit. In reference to the Auditor General's report, she did say that there was a problem with fairness, accountability and transparency. That's very clear. I said earlier on you can't just read what you want to read; you have to read the whole thing.

Our job here is to point out things in the government that are inconsistent. If you take a look at the New York Times article, which has not been refuted by anybody, this company, this deal, which is the basis of my question—not the minister, the Premier, had to sign an NDA. The government was allowed to do whatever they wanted to do. Public servants raised concerns. A company that got a 95-year land lease on the crown jewel of Ontario and \$2.2 billion of taxpayers' money had literally no money, a little more than a million bucks.

Speaker, I look forward to the written response, and I don't want to keep everybody from lunch here.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Fraser:** No, I'm serious. We can discuss and debate this later. I'm looking forward to it. Speaker, our job over here is to highlight those things that the government doesn't want to highlight. That's what we've got to do.

To be fair, I do not appreciate the minister saying that I've misled the House. I did hear in her response that she accused me of misconduct. My questions were not directed at her. They were directed at the Premier and they were specific to the deal and the facts that we know that

are on the table. If the government doesn't like those facts and if the minister doesn't like those facts, that's not our problem.

Speaker, I won't keep people from lunch. I look forward to the written submission and we will be responding as well.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Do any other members wish to speak to this question of privilege?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm not going to prolong the debate this morning, but I know I've spoken to the minister about this and she feels very strongly about the independent officers of the Legislature, the fact that they were seized with this matter, have ruled on this matter, and feels now that it's taken a different turn. I know as well, we've had conversations about our own members' code of conduct and how we treat each other. I know that's a separate issue than her point of privilege, but it's an important one and I wanted to make it at this time.

Again, we have independent officers that look at these things and the minister has outlined her feelings about how the member, and members opposite, have charged language on this issue. I look forward to your ruling, Madam Speaker, but I wanted to make sure I put my comments on the record supporting the minister's point of privilege.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Do any other members wish to speak to this matter?

I invite the Minister of Infrastructure and any other member to make further submissions to me in writing. I will take the members' submissions into consideration and provide my ruling at a future date.

The House now stands in recess until 3 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1147 to 1500.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Introduction of visitors? I recognize the member for Mississauga–Lake-shore.

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your new role here.

As well, I would like to introduce my two cousins who have come here from Italy: Mario Potestio and Giandomenico Potestio. [*Inaudible*] since 1968 to this country, so it's a big change over here in Canada. I want to welcome them here to Canada.

As well, I know the member for Mississauga East–Cooksville will be introducing my brother-in-law Angelo Gualtieri, who is her husband.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Welcome.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs pursuant to standing order 113(b).

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Ms. Armstrong presents the committee's report.

Does the member wish to make a statement?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** No, thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Pursuant to standing order 113(b), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs pursuant to standing order 109.1(a).

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Ms. Armstrong presents the committee's report.

Does the member wish to make a brief statement?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** No, thank you, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Pursuant to standing order 109.1(a), the report is deemed to be adopted by the House.

*Report deemed adopted.*

STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
PROCEDURE AND HOUSE AFFAIRS

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** I beg to inform the House that standing order 66(a) provides that each standing committee shall present one report with respect to all of the estimates and supplementary estimates considered no later than the third Thursday in November of each calendar year.

The House did not receive a report from the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs in this 44th Parliament on the following estimates:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs;
- Ministry of the Attorney General;
- Cabinet Office;
- Ministry of—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Dispense? Agreed.

Pursuant to standing order 64(b), the 2024-25 estimates of these ministries and offices, not having been selected for consideration, are deemed to be received and concurred in.

*Report deemed received.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MFIS HOLDINGS AND INVESTMENTS  
INC. ACT, 2025

Mr. Riddell moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr2, An Act to revive MFIS Holdings and Investments Inc.

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

*First reading agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I have a very important petition. It was submitted by Sally Palmer. Sally is concerned about the social assistance rates in Ontario. She has noted that Canada's official Market Basket Measure poverty line—the ODSP rates are far lower than poverty standards, and for OW as well.

A little while ago, they sent an open letter to the Premier and two other cabinet ministers with hundreds of signatures asking that the doubling of Ontario Works and ODSP support programs take effect, because with inflation it's so hard to keep up with rent and all kinds of other amenities.

So the citizens of Ontario petition the Legislative Assembly to double these social assistance rates for OW and ODSP, and I hope the government will consider that going forward in the session.

I want to give my petition. I will sign it and pass it to page Ellie to deliver to the table.

## CANCER TREATMENT

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Betty MacIsaac from Val Caron in my riding for these petitions. They're called "Coverage for Take-Home Cancer Drugs."

I'm really proud to see that most MPPs are wearing their little daffodil today, because April is cancer month.

The Canadian Cancer Society has been working really hard to try to get Ontario to cover take-home cancer drugs. Most other provinces, whether you look at British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba—they all cover take-home cancer drugs; Ontario does not. What that means is that for some people, the treatment is available. They could manage their cancer, they could cure their cancer, if only they had access to the drugs they needed. The drug is available in Ontario. They just don't have the money to pay for it. In other provinces, take-home cancer drugs are covered.

You're in the hospital, they start you on a new drug, it goes well—it's all covered. The minute you leave the hospital, which every patient wants to do—they want to go back home—then you have to pay for your own drugs.



Some people have a drug plan—yay!—many people do not, and they either end up in financial trouble or they decide they don't want to put their family in debt by buying the drugs. They go without, and the consequences on their health and on their lives is never good.

We have hundreds and hundreds—namely, patients and their families—who have signed this petition, who want Ontario to follow the lead of other provinces in Canada and cover take-home cancer drugs; so do I. I will ask my good page Grace to bring it to the Clerk as soon as I sign it.

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Just a reminder that it is a brief explanation of the petition.

Petitions?

#### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Ms. Chandra Pasma:** I'm pleased to rise today to table this petition on school attendance and having students' safety and well-being be protected in schools so that children can attend school—with gratitude to Logan Shields, a student in Ontario who pulled this petition together and sent it in.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I hear “brief” and I'm like, hmm—it's like I see a sign that says, “Don't step on the grass.” I wonder what that means.

Regardless, Speaker, I have before me here a petition stating that, in a time of global economic uncertainty and the threat of Trump tariffs, we need to support our businesses even more, and basically that we as a government need to permanently reduce fuel taxes to help our exporters stay viable as we move forward.

I fully endorse this petition. I will affix my signature to it and give it to page Lauren.

1510

#### SCHOOL SAFETY

**Ms. Chandra Pasma:** I'm pleased to rise today to present this petition and to say thank you to the members of COPE 527 who gathered these signatures from across Ontario on the issue of school violence and the need to increase the number of education support workers.

We know that violence is at crisis levels in our schools, and that it is both students and teachers and education workers and administrators who are on the receiving end of this violence. It is a crisis that parents and workers want to see addressed, but we cannot address it without actually having enough workers in the classroom to provide each child with the support they need.

So the signatories petition the Legislative Assembly to increase the number of education workers in classrooms across Ontario immediately.

I completely support this petition. I will affix my signature to it and send it to the table with page Haajrah.

#### SERVICES FOR THE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

**The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly):** Petitions? I recognize the member for Guelph.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** Thank you, Speaker. It's good to see you in the chair today.

This is a petition with well over 300 signatures on it, from parents who are connected to Community Living Guelph Wellington. It's called “Silent No More.” They've noted that Community Living and programs that support adults with delayed development have not kept up with the cost of living and inflation, and as a result, services and staff are being cut back. In some cases, parents with adult children who are developmentally delayed—their children are actually losing their housing.

So they're petitioning the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to increase funding to Community Living agencies in line with both the cost of living and the needs of developmentally delayed adults.

I fully support this petition. I will sign it and ask page Krish to bring it to the table.

#### SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** I have a petition here that is called “To Raise Social Assistance Rates.”

As we know, the social assistance rates, right now, of \$733 for people on OW and \$1,300 for people on ODSP are inadequate.

The members signing this petition are asking that we double the assistance rates for both OW and ODSP.

I support this petition. I will be signing it and handing it to page Leah.

#### UNIVERSITY FUNDING

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** I have a petition from my constituents, many of them connected with Queen's University.

Amongst the various things about universities, they point out that they nurture informed, equitable and democratic societies, and who wouldn't want to live in a society like that?

They also point out, amongst other things, that funding in Ontario universities per student was just 57% compared to the average for the rest of Canada.

So they're asking the government to invest in Ontario's future by boosting Ontario universities' base operating funds.

#### TUITION

**MPP Jamie West:** This petition is—some of my colleagues were just talking about “Fight the Fees.” It has to do with the tuition fees that students are paying.

Since 1980, undergrad tuition has increased by 215% and domestic graduate tuition has increased by 247%. Our students are now graduating with a median debt of around

\$17,500, which takes an average of almost 10 years to repay.

We're in an affordability crisis. The cost of living is higher than ever.

So these students really want us to provide free and accessible education for all. They want to transition from loans to grants. They also want to legislate students' right to organize, which was overturned legally a while back.

I support this petition. I'll affix my signature, and I will provide it to page Gabe for the table.

### HEALTH CARE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Diane Lemay from Garson in my riding for these petitions. They're called "Health Care: Not for Sale."

You know full well, Speaker, that medicare guarantees to Ontarians, to Canadians, that we get care based on our needs, not on our ability to pay.

The government has issued requests for proposals for MRIs and CT scans—private, for-profit MRIs and CT scans. A new request for proposal has gone out for hip and knee surgery—private, for-profit hip and knee surgery surgical centres. So people are worried that they won't be able to have access to care. If you are really rich, you will be perfect. For the rest of Ontarians, it will mean longer waits and problems gaining access to the care that they need.

Thousands and thousands have signed the petition, to make sure that our health care system remains publicly delivered, not privately delivered. I will also sign it and give it to Hasrat to bring to the Clerk.

### SCHOOL SAFETY

**MPP Jamie West:** This petition is entitled "Petition to Increase the Number of Education Support Workers Across Ontario." I want to thank COPE 527 for the signatures on this petition.

This has to do with the increasing amount of workplace violence that is affecting education workers in our sectors. In Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board alone, there were 4,000 reported incidents. This is something that has been increasing on a regular basis across Ontario.

One way that we can help on this is to increase the number of our education support workers, to help kids who have special needs. I know this is important to families as well, including Sean Staddon in my riding, who talked about how his son is one of the people who may be violent towards somebody and how they need extra help.

I obviously support this petition. I'll affix my signature and provide it to Ellie for the table.

### ASSISTIVE DEVICES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Joffre Labelle from Hanmer in my riding for this petition. The petition is called "Modernize the ADP."

In Ontario, we have a program called the Assistive Devices Program. If you need a device such as a wheelchair or a walker or a quad cane, the government will help pay for 75% of those assistive device products. The problem is that the list of products that the government helps you with has not been modernized in a very long time. There are many new ways to help people stay independent—to get in and out of the shower, up and down from the toilet, feed themselves, move around—that are not on that list. Plus, a lot of the devices have a maximum.

If you take hearing aids, there's a maximum of \$500 per ear. Speaker, it is impossible to find a hearing aid for 500 bucks. Most of them are close to \$3,000 or \$4,000. But the government, which is supposed to help you with 75% of the cost through the Assistive Devices Program, does not do this; they give you a maximum of \$500.

So a lot of people have signed this petition asking the government to modernize the Assistive Devices Program. It's a good program; it needs to be brought up to 2025.

I fully support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask page Gabe to bring it to the Clerk.

### TAXATION

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I'm presenting a petition today, and the petition speaks about how drivers often have to pay hidden taxes on fuel, and even layered taxes on top of other taxes on fuel. It also speaks about transparency at the pumps and lower prices, and what should be Ontario's response to global price instability, and, of course, tariffs. Finally, this petition calls upon the Ontario government to assist drivers by lowering fuel taxes—and we've done that.

I can tell you that I support this petition. I am going to sign it. I will give this petition to this excellent page Lauren, who I am sure will execute her duties fantastically and bring it to the Clerk at the table.

### SOINS DE LA VUE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'aimerais remercier M. René Fournier d'Azilda dans mon comté pour ces pétitions. La pétition s'appelle « Assurer une vision claire pour » toutes les personnes âgées. On sait très bien que d'avoir une bonne vision, c'est essentiel pour tout le monde, mais c'est très important pour les personnes âgées pour s'assurer que personne ne tombe, qu'elles peuvent demeurer chez elles, qu'elles peuvent vivre en sécurité.

Malheureusement, il n'y a aucune façon pour les personnes de plus de 65 ans à revenu minime de payer pour les lunettes. De plus en plus, les lunettes vont coûter de plus en plus cher. Les gens aimeraient avoir un peu d'aide du gouvernement, peut-être au travers du programme qui existe déjà pour les aider à couvrir une partie des frais pour avoir des lunettes bien ajustées à leur vue, pour qu'ils demeurent en sécurité. Ça, ce serait pour les personnes de plus de 65 ans.

J'appuie cette pétition, je vais la signer, et je demande à Ellie de l'amener à la table des greffiers.

1520

### CAREGIVERS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I would like to thank Michel Huart from Val Caron in my riding for this petition. It's called "Enact Family Caregiver Day."

Basically, what the petition is about is that more and more people are becoming family caregivers, either to a member of their family, to one of their friends, or to one of their neighbours. Family caregivers are experiencing high levels of stress, sometimes depression. Sometimes their own physical health declines because of their responsibility towards caregiving.

Did you know, Speaker, that 3.3 million, or 29% of Ontarians, are unpaid family caregivers?

To support the caregivers, to tell them that they're important, and to dedicate a day to caregivers would be very meaningful to all of those people.

So they have signed this petition to ask that a family caregiver day becomes a reality in Ontario.

I support this petition. I will affix my name to it and ask page Leah to bring it to the Clerk.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

#### DÉBAT SUR LE DISCOURS DU TRÔNE

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 16, 2025, on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

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

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** A global economic crisis is upon us. While this government has let the basics of life deteriorate for the people of Ontario, it's like we're playing in the 1972 Summit Series between Canada and the Soviet Union. We're a team—our elbows are up, but we're struggling because the basics have been ignored for too long: stickhandling, passing, forechecking and physical conditioning. The loud cheering of the home crowd won't make up the difference.

The government's throne speech and its actions over the past seven years haven't got the basics of life right, like housing that's affordable, a properly funded public system that keeps us as healthy as possible, classrooms where violence and disruption are not interfering with learning, or a post-secondary education and training system that's globally competitive.

Imaginons un gestionnaire d'une entreprise qui envisage de lancer ou d'étendre ses activités en Ontario et qui doit tenir compte de tous ces facteurs de base. En fait, c'est déjà arrivé que la guerre commerciale de Donald Trump amène certains à se demander s'ils veulent déménager en Ontario. Malheureusement, ils peuvent

également constater que les éléments de base pour leurs salariés ne sont pas correctement mis en place.

In my remarks today, I also want to explain how the throne speech is off the mark because of the Premier's fortress mentality and not discussing a plan for reaching out to the rest of the world and building new economic relationships beyond the United States.

I want to talk about how this throne speech fails to address the basics for the people of Kingston and the Islands.

However, before I go further, I would like to thank the people of Kingston and the Islands for voting and sending me back here to the Legislature to represent them. It's an honour to represent you.

Let me address what I see as the big picture. I believe that we are at a critical moment in political and economic history and that we must think and act accordingly. As much as the Premier says it's all about the tariffs, the fight at this moment in history is not simply about escaping Trump tariffs. Instead, precious social assets that have been built up over generations are at stake. We see the loss of trust between nations, and the questioning of alliances, military and economic. We're losing a rules-based international system where big and strong countries can't bully smaller countries. These relationships matter to you and I because international friendships and co-operation, which have guarded peace and prosperity, are no more. "Every country for itself" has never been a way for civilization to flourish and prosper. You name anything which underlies a good society and it's under attack south of the border, in a country that at one point aspired to be a champion of rule of law, democracy, a professional and independent civil service, integrity, public purpose, equality of opportunity, justice and sustainability. These are all under attack in the United States, right next door to us. Economic damage will follow.

Already, investment in capital and people has been delayed, not only for companies directly affected by tariffs or tariff uncertainty, but also for any companies connected by supply chains. People have lost their jobs here at home and around the world. Consumer confidence has plummeted. Inflation is expected to jump. Political advantage, cronyism and corruption, delivered with a healthy serving of incompetence, will determine capital flows; not productivity gains, returns on investment, nor diversification. They leave us with protracted uncertainty which, along with the loss of confidence, threatens to push us into a global recession.

Ontario jobs and livelihoods and retirement savings are at risk.

How did we get here? One thing is that some people got left behind by the knowledge economy, the creative economy, the winner-takes-all economy, the globalized economy, the automated economy, the too-big-to-fail bailout economy. It is so important to get the basics right so that no group feels left behind, so that we have the social cohesion to rise to the challenges of our time, and to prevent the rise of people like Donald Trump.

Where do we go from here? Where are our new partners? Other countries, for the most part, do not want to follow the path taken by the US, under Trump. Other countries, for the most part, will also be looking for new economic partners. We have to reach out to start creating a new, trusted multilateral trading system to replace the one broken by Trump.

Here, we've identified two important challenges that should be but are not at the centre of the government's plans in the throne speech: taking care of the basics for Ontario people, and reaching out around the world with a strategy to create new partnerships for Ontario businesses, instead of retreating into a fortress.

I don't think this government is good at getting the big picture right and putting an overall vision and strategy for Ontario front and centre.

In the spirit of giving advice to this government—I think that transactional politics makes them focused on making certain stakeholders happy and on getting re-elected, instead of the big picture. In the past, this government has had a record of focusing on what its friends want in housing, health care or energy, and not enough on what will make Ontarians strong now and for generations to come.

Mon message à ce gouvernement? Je vous en prie : ne retombez pas dans les travers d'une politique transactionnelle ou, pire encore, dans la malfaisance.

When it comes to tariffs, this Premier talks about constructing a fortress. It sounds like we want to wall ourselves in. But the answer to US isolationism is not for us to isolate ourselves too.

Since the throne speech, the White House has reaffirmed its desire to make Canada the 51st state. Why does the Premier continue to talk about Fortress Am-Can, hoping for the best from an untrustworthy and dangerous US administration? That is the wrong strategy for creating Ontario's place in the new world order. We should be reaching out around the world. What other place than Ontario has such a diverse population with global connections to diversify away from our dependence on trade with the United States?

Let's talk about what it takes to successfully reach out and expand trade relationships around the world.

If you are trying to help Ontario's businesses expand or break into new markets, productivity growth and increased competitiveness are crucial. The throne speech talks about skills training, interprovincial trade, looser permitting and trimming environmental assessments but does not discuss the innovation side of productivity growth and competitiveness. Access to capital to scale up successful enterprises was not mentioned. Often, the company which is better capitalized beats another company with better technology and better people. If our companies are to expand into new markets, they need the resources to be competitive.

So I ask this government, what happened in the wake of their 2020 Capital Markets Modernization Taskforce? Improving the capital markets doesn't capture the attention of most voters, but it matters to job creation,

attracting investment and the competitive positions of our workers on the world stage.

The throne speech did not mention that we could protect Ontario by targeted procurement. It is better for the health of our companies and their ability to compete if, instead of handing out money, like grants or tax breaks, we support businesses by procuring what we need—getting our companies to exercise their muscles, so to speak, to make goods or provide services. That's a better way to encourage innovation and to improve our competitive position.

1530

I went around my riding last week to find out if there are ways that the province of Ontario could procure things that are really needed and which Ontario workers and Ontario companies would benefit from at the same time. Lo and behold, it was not hard to find them. We need housing that's affordable. This government has started looking at modular housing. That's great. It's faster and less expensive to build housing in factories and then assemble it on-site. Now is the time to procure it. For example, Lodestar in my riding just built, with prefabricated concrete blocks, a new building which is the new home of the Saint Vincent de Paul society.

We need boats so the OPP can help the CBSA patrol our border with the US—the border across which fentanyl and illegal guns come into Ontario. The Premier talked about it in a press conference last December. MetalCraft Marine in my riding is a world leader—probably the world leader—in smaller watercraft, building them in Kingston for fire, police and naval applications all over North America.

We are also saving money in our prisons with video remand booths, so that provincial detention centre staff don't have to escort inmates to courtrooms. Instead, they use specially constructed video remand booths for court hearings. Many detention centres have yet to purchase them. They are made by SnapCab, right in my riding of Kingston and the Islands.

All of these companies are adversely affected by tariffs, and all of these companies have ready-to-go cost-saving opportunities through government procurement of things we need anyway.

I'd like to turn now to the reaction to the throne speech from the local perspective of Kingston and the Islands.

A high school-aged constituent, Joyce, thinking about the long term, said about the spending on tariff relief, "I also wonder what funding cuts are being made to other areas to further these plans." The throne speech was silent on fiscal planning. Maybe Joyce was also wondering about how she will pay for the astronomical cost of a tunnel under the 401, when maybe what she really needs is to be able to buy a house and walk to work someday. Joyce read the throne speech and said, "I have concerns about Canada's climate plans in the long term." Environmental protection is not a priority for this government, and Joyce knows that her generation will pay the price if we ignore the environment.

The government plans, over the next four years, to deal with the problem of homelessness and mental health issues leading to encampments by handing legal tools to municipalities. Lumping the social problem together with the crime section of the throne speech is something which—as a young constituent, Hannah, points out—dehumanizes homeless people and misses the underlying causes. If this is a plan for the next four years, it doesn't recognize that the homeless are lacking the basics of affordable housing and support from adequately paid front-line mental health and addictions workers.

This government is unambitious, and its throne speech does not address the need to help the building of housing across the spectrum of affordability.

My young constituent Athena read the throne speech and wanted to “urge the government to recommit to ambitious housing targets, address affordability, and ensure that new developments include affordable and supportive housing options.”

My constituents in Kingston and the Islands need the rental vacancy rate to go up for all types of dwellings so that rents can go down for good tenants who are trying to make ends meet.

Athena also asked about other sectors of the economy.

The throne speech does not mention agriculture, and yet pork producers have to deal with a 25% tariff from China on pork. Ontario exports most of its pork.

Hurdles to trade appear on multiple fronts. We can't just focus on the United States.

Safety is a part of any strong society. Any long-term strategy, such as one the throne speech might put forward for this government's mandate, must address underlying causes.

Jack, another young constituent who read the throne speech, saw that it didn't talk about resources for municipal police and said, “Here in Kingston, I've experienced first-hand issues with crime in relation to homelessness and mental health. The police often say they are underfunded, and there is little point in arresting offenders, as they will often be released quickly without necessary mental health supports. I believe that an effective strategy for crime reduction must include more funding for local police and a large expansion of mental health support in relation to crime.”

Speaker, police funding is not a new issue. Several municipalities have recently pointed out that this government has given a funding boost to communities that use the OPP but has not given the commensurate funding increase for communities that run their own police forces.

This throne speech does not talk about funding for municipal police. It does not talk about funding for front-line mental health workers.

Ethan, another young constituent, noticed that the throne speech did not mention tourism. Tourism is an important part of the Kingston and the Islands local economy. The sector is readjusting. People around the world are choosing not to travel to the United States, and we should be ready to take advantage of that.

Son Honneur la lieutenant-gouverneure de l'Ontario a parlé dans le discours du trône de l'héritage francophone de notre province, une communauté qui, depuis des siècles, contribue à façonner et à renforcer les institutions sociales, culturelles et politiques de l'Ontario.

Une priorité pour les francophones de Kingston et les Îles est la disponibilité des soins primaires en français. Un problème particulier est l'impossibilité de tirer les francophones de la liste d'attente Accès Soins. Lorsque la ville de Kingston a réussi à recruter deux médecins bilingues, on a gaspillé l'occasion de lier et servir les francophones avec des médecins francophones.

La communauté franco-ontarienne est un atout sur les plans économique et social de l'Ontario. Le discours du trône en est silencieux, sauf la déclaration tout au début.

The Premier has had good success getting on American TV, on right-wing TV news, on business news shows. I'll grant him that. He has put his likability to good use in the US. But he hasn't talked enough about reaching out overseas.

Can we reduce tariffs imposed by Brazil, increase trade with Africa? Can we do something about the 25% tariff on Canadian pork sold to China? Can we raise quotas on tariff-free beef and pork exported to the European Union?

Sure, reducing interprovincial trade barriers is a logical first step, and it's good that this government tabled Bill 2 for that. But we're debating the throne speech here. Looking to the future, a long-term plan must prioritize reaching out across the oceans to improve relationships everywhere.

I'm an optimist. It's exciting for me to imagine what Ontario could be. Despite the problems we face, we are a province of enormous potential. We have one of the best-educated populations in the world. If Ontario were a country, our GDP would be amongst the 25 top nations. Our land area would make us the 26th-largest country in the world. We have a diverse economy, from natural resources to agriculture, technology, manufacturing and services. We have a global city, Toronto, which needs some fixing up, but Toronto can lead the world in its ability to attract talent and take advantage of a diverse population.

The Trump crisis has highlighted the enormous problems Ontario needs to tackle.

We are also blessed, in Ontario, to have all the resources we need to become the most just, sustainable and prosperous society the world has ever seen. So I can't help but believe that if we have smart, visionary leadership, we can overcome our problems, move forward and build that just, sustainable and prosperous Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'ai bien aimé le discours que le monsieur a fait. J'aimerais vous demander, spécifiquement par rapport à l'accès aux services en français—oui, je suis très fière que la lieutenant-gouverneure a été capable de faire une partie de son discours en français—elle est francophone—et que vous avez pris le temps

d'amener la voix d'une personne francophone de votre comté qui veut avoir accès à des soins de santé.

À part les soins de santé, quels sont les dossiers les plus importants pour les francophones de votre région qui n'ont pas vraiment été adressés lors du discours du trône?

1540

**M. Ted Hsu:** Dans mon comté, il y a un centre culturel. Le Centre culturel Frontenac est très ambitieux envers les programmes culturels, et ils trouvent qu'il y a un manque de financement pour les activités du centre culturel. Pour moi, c'est peut-être la deuxième chose qu'on peut demander pour la communauté francophone à Kingston.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I appreciate the opportunity to engage with the member in conversation. I was intrigued. I listened intently to his speech for almost 20 minutes, and it sounded like he wanted to return to all of the principles of the previous Liberal government that, well, we all admit, and even the former Premier, Kathleen Wynne, said, were disastrous for health care. So I was wondering—because a lot of it was aspirational, didn't really speak about anything concrete—if he could add anything to the conversation, about what a new Liberal government would do in the province of Ontario that would be substantively different than what the previous Liberal government had done.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** Well, the world is substantively different than eight years ago, when there was a Liberal government here.

Here's one thing that could be done right now—maybe a detail that I could add to health care policy, which the member brought up. I think we need to be flexible.

There's a primary care team that was set up in Kingston, and the health minister likes to refer to it. One of the problems was, it had a hard time getting a guarantee of continued funding. It got a chunk of money for one year. But if you get a chunk of money for one year and you don't have a guarantee of funding for future years, it's really hard to hire staff if you can't guarantee that they will have—you can't sign a contract, you can't sign a lease on a place to rent, and you can't hire people because you can't guarantee them that the funding will be there after one year.

So I think one thing that I would ask this government to do—it's a really practical thing—is, as much as possible, try to guarantee funding for a long period of time, so that these new team-based primary care clinics can sign long-term leases for space and hire physicians and nurse practitioners and nurses for long-term contracts.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member from Ottawa West—Nepean.

**Ms. Chandra Pasma:** Thank you to the member from Kingston and the Islands for your thoughts on the throne speech.

I want to ask about one thing you didn't mention, which is education funding. We know that this government has cut funding by \$1,500 per student in the past seven years, and that's from a level of funding, under former Premier

Kathleen Wynne, that was already not sufficient to meet the needs of students and that had already led to a very large repair backlog. So I'm wondering if the member agrees that it's time to reverse the trajectory of the former Liberal government and this Conservative government and finally provide the funding that's required to make sure that all of our students receive the supports and resources they need in our classrooms.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** I thank my honourable colleague for bringing up the topic of education.

In my throne speech—second paragraph—I mentioned very generally, so I'm going to try to add some more details, that we can't have a society with strong kids when there's violence and disruption in our classrooms because we don't have enough adults in the classroom, and when universities and colleges are underfunded, making cuts, and the students who are graduating are not competitive on the world stage.

So I think it's really important—everything from child care, before- and after-school care, elementary school, secondary school, post-secondary education and training—all of it has to be working well so that we can—and I'm going to frame it in terms of what the government wants to frame its mandate about, in economic terms. We have to be competitive when it comes to education so that our kids are the best prepared in the whole world for this new world that has been turned upside down in the last year, where we have to compete on the world stage and we have to find new markets. We're going to have to work hard to get our place in the new world economic order.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member from Ottawa—Vanier.

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's really great to see you in the chair. I hope you enjoy the experience as much as I did. It's certainly an enlightening experience.

I want to thank the member for Kingston and the Islands for his speech in reaction to the throne speech. I totally agree that there are some major, major investments that haven't made their way into the throne speech.

The member alluded to the importance of investing in housing, but, more particularly, in supportive housing. I would like to ask the member to elaborate a little bit more about how it is important and why it is a smart investment to invest in supportive housing to look after vulnerable people in our society.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** I think the character of society is degraded when you have people lying on the streets and unable to help themselves. You just shouldn't be living in a society like that. I think it harms everybody. It's an offence to our moral sensibilities.

So, it's really important—what do we do? People, first of all, need a stable place to be before they can pick themselves up or be willing to go on treatment or do anything to get better. They need a stable place to live, and that is the purpose of providing housing.

Supportive housing goes a little bit further. It also provides people to watch over those who can't take care of themselves and who need to prevent self-harm, for

example. So if we're just talking about how we take care of the least amongst us, supportive housing is one of the essential ingredients. There's a whole spectrum of housing that we need to work on.

And that has an enormous economic benefit. The US has a lot better data than we do if you're looking historically, but people have estimated that the GDP could be 10% higher—I forget what the exact number is, but it's a significant number—if people could easily move around to where the jobs are. If we have the housing that we need, our economy would benefit immensely.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member for Brantford–Brant.

**Mr. Will Bouma:** A very quick one, Speaker. Thank you.

I can recall when the previous Liberal government, without consultation, cut 25% of the surgeries that the ophthalmologists in my community were allowed to do. They saw 25% of their business vanish; wait times went back to a year and a half to two years for cataract surgery.

My question to the member is—you've said that your policies would remain the same as the previous government's. Unless you can show me something concrete—how would they be different?

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** You always have to look forward, right? If the member is constantly talking about the previous Liberal government, I have to go back and look at the research. Let's just look at what we should be doing going forward.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate?

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** It's always an honour to rise in this House today to debate the speech from the throne.

Before I begin, Speaker, I want to congratulate you on being appointed Deputy Speaker.

I also want to put it on the record: My congratulations to the MPP from Flamborough–Glanbrook for making herstory as the first woman Speaker in Ontario history.

1550

I also want to take some time to thank the people of Guelph for electing me to be their MPP for the third time now. My commitment to you—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** Thank you, thank you.

My commitment to you is to continue to work hard, to put service above self and to always do what I tell my staff: The people of our riding are our boss, and we work hard for them.

I also want to take a moment, since yesterday—and actually, before I do that, I want to just congratulate all the new members who were elected to the Legislature this time and all the returning members who are back for another Parliament.

I also want to take a moment, since yesterday was the federal election, to congratulate Prime Minister Mark Carney; Dominique O'Rourke, who was elected MP in my riding, in Guelph; and, in the neighbouring riding of Wellington–Halton Hills North, which now comprises a

portion of the southern part of Guelph—to congratulate Michael Chong for being re-elected as MP.

I also want to take a moment to just thank everyone who put their name on a ballot in both the provincial and the federal elections and especially give a shout-out to Dr. Anne-Marie Zajdlik, who ran for the Ontario Greens in my riding, in Guelph.

One thing I think we can all agree on regardless of party stripe is that Trump's ridiculous and chaotic tariffs are hurting workers in Ontario and Canada and are hurting workers in the United States, and I feel that in my riding, in Guelph, where the Conference Board of Canada says that Guelph is the most trade-exposed city in the province of Ontario and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has identified Guelph as the fourth most trade-exposed city in Canada. So when it comes to automotive, appliances, agricultural manufacturing and exporting, we feel the tariffs.

The one thing I'll say to my constituents and I'll say to the members in this House: I will work across party lines to support legislation that provides financial support to workers and businesses that are directly and negatively impacted by these ridiculous Trump tariffs. I will also work to diversify our trading partners and to reduce interprovincial trade barriers.

At the same time, Speaker, I want to be clear to my constituents, because they have told me this loud and clear: that protecting Ontario not only includes protecting industry and business, but it also means protecting the people and places we love in this province.

Many of you know I grew up on a farm in a small town in the middle of nowhere, raising grain and cattle, and my mom for a long time was a small-town rural schoolteacher. Both of them taught me, whether it was in the two businesses I've started or the non-profits I've helped start or in my life as an MPP, that you have to care for the land that feeds us and the people who are part of our community.

People wonder why I am such an avid supporter and I work hard to protect prime farmland in this province. It's because I know what it's like to work that land and grow food for people. If people want to know why it's so important to me to protect the environment and species, it's because I grew up hunting and fishing, camping, hiking, canoeing, spending time in nature, and I want to protect the nature that protects us, especially at a time when the climate crisis is bearing down on us.

Last summer, the floods in the GTA cost \$1.3 billion an hour. The ice storm that just hit last month made communities, including the one—my daughter goes to university at Trent. She was in Peterborough for over a week without access to electricity. So when we talk about environmental standards, when we talk about environmental protections and environmental assessments, part of it is protecting our loved ones, our communities, our infrastructure, our businesses from the increasing severity and frequency of the climate crisis. It also means investing and attracting investment in the \$2.1-trillion green energy

transition to Ontario to help tariff-proof this province by making us a global leader in the new climate economy.

I'm also going to talk about the crisis of caring, Speaker, in addition to the climate crisis:

- the crisis in our health care system;
- the crisis in the fact that \$1,500 per student has been cut from our education system;
- the crisis in our housing, where so many people can't afford a home;
- the crisis in the fact that people on ODSP are living in legislated poverty, or that adults with developmental disabilities don't have the supports and services we need.

My pledge to my constituents in this next provincial Parliament is I'm going to fight to address the climate crisis and the caring crisis.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** To my colleague—for the new members, his nickname is Mr. Green. My question in the House today: I won't ask him if he's thinking of running for the federal Green leadership; I know I would happily support him in that endeavour. But my questions on the throne speech and his remarks today are about how we can continue to make those important investments in our agriculture sector around processing. What are some ways you could see that, especially in the Guelph and Wellington area?

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I appreciate my colleague from Perth–Wellington. It was nice to have you in Guelph last week to open the expansion of our emergency department. I actually want to thank the Minister of Health for being there as well.

I think we need a fund to invest in local processing and local supply chain development. We know how vital processing is, especially for people in our fruit and vegetable sector and in our protein sectors, to expand capacity in Guelph and in other places.

I think now is a perfect opportunity to have a Buy Local strategy with supply chain investments, because we know that, in addition to saving and protecting farmland, we need to ensure that the farmers who farm that land can do it profitably. Having strong local supply chains is a part of that.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Guy Bourgouin:** I always enjoy hearing you speak, the member from Guelph.

In the throne speech, we heard how this government wants to expedite access to the critical minerals that will be in the Ring of Fire. But we also know, now that we're debating bills, that when we talk about assessment and endangered species—and the Ring of Fire is close to the James Bay coast—how vulnerable the peatlands are, how vulnerable the territories are there, and the lack of consultation with First Nations.

I really want to hear from you on these three issues—if you can, one, or the one you pick—but because you're talking environment, how much you're concerned about

the expedited process—we want to move sometimes too fast—that could hurt climate change and First Nations.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I appreciate the member's question. Let's be clear: Protecting the land and the environment that protects us is not red tape. Indigenous sovereignty, First Nations consultation and consent is not red tape. Worker health and safety in mines and in other developments are not red tape.

Yes, we need economic development, and we know that critical mineral mining is going to be critically important for mining the EV manufacturing supply chain. We know it will be important to investing in made-in-Ontario, low-cost, renewable energy.

But we can't cut corners. We can't cut corners in the peatlands. We can't cut corners in the Ring of Fire. We have to take the time to do this right.

We can actually expedite approvals if we have Indigenous, First Nations consultation and consent, and if the public has the confidence that the social licence of environmental protections, especially for sensitive ecosystems like the boreal forest and the peatlands, are in place.

Let's do our homework and get that in place so we can move forward with development in a proper way.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

1600

**Mr. Rob Cerjanec:** I recognize, during the member for Guelph's remarks around some of the recreational activities—in particular, being out on the water. I'm just curious what he thinks that the province should be doing and maybe what should have been in the throne speech as it pertains to protecting our waterways and headwaters.

**Mr. Mike Schreiner:** I was so eager to respond to that, I got up quickly, eh? I just want to say thank you for the question.

One of the things that I'm deeply concerned about that we heard in the speech from the throne and that we see in subsequent legislation is a further eroding of the ability of conservation authorities to protect our waterways—a lack of understanding of the role that wetlands play in cleaning our drinking water and protecting us from flooding events.

We need stronger protections for water.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate? I recognize the member from Mississauga East–Cooksville.

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** Madam Speaker, congratulations to you on your new role in this Legislature.

I'd like to take a moment to thank the member for Mississauga–Lakeshore, who introduced our cousins who came from overseas—so welcoming. I'm thrilled to have them here. They come from Milan, the city of business, fashion, art and music—and if you've ever been there, you never want to leave.

I'd also like to acknowledge my good husband, Angelo, who has been there with me through thick and thin; my two very good friends Dianne Lawson and Julie Samuel; friends and staff.



With great pride and humility, I rise today as the elected representative for the incredible riding of Mississauga East–Cooksville, a place I am honoured to represent. This moment carries the weight of five generations of family, history, the dreams of a young girl from Mississauga, and the love of a community that has shaped me, strengthened me and ultimately sent me here to be their voice.

I am proud to say that my family has called Mississauga home for five generations. I grew up in the little town of Port Credit, a place where everyone knew your name, where kindness was currency, and where values like hard work, loyalty and service to others were taught and lived every day.

My husband, too, comes from a family deeply rooted in Mississauga, settling in Cooksville, one of the oldest villages in what would become the vibrant city we know today. His family arrived in the 1950s, when much of the land was still farmland and dreams were built from the soil up. He attended TL Kennedy Secondary School, named after Premier Thomas Laird Kennedy, a proud son of Peel county who believed that public service is the highest calling—a belief that I, too, hold dear. My husband's name remains etched on the honour roll plaque in the school's foyer—and in the records of three universities he attended for his BA, MA and PhD—a lasting reminder that hard work and community spirit are consistently recognized and remembered in our neighbourhoods.

Those are the reasons that, to me, Mississauga East–Cooksville is not just a riding, it's the heartbeat of Peel. It's home—home, where classical music and the click of coffee cups meet in a home library warmed by books and family values. That's how I was raised, and that's the warmth I carry into this chamber.

Madam Speaker, Mississauga East–Cooksville has a rich political legacy.

The late Bud Gregory, a cherished friend of our family, was a proud Progressive Conservative who represented our riding from 1975 to 1987. He served under the governments of Premier Bill Davis and Premier Frank Miller.

Our Honourable Bill Davis, a giant in history, was among the first to show me what leadership with principles looks like. During those early years of Davis's political career, my husband, Angelo, then only a teenager, had the distinct honour of being his translator in the newly arrived Italian community.

Thanks to the confidence of the good people of East Cooksville, our Progressive Conservative Party proudly won this riding in 2018, 2022 and 2025—a hat trick. I think Bud Gregory would have smiled at that. I most certainly smiled when it became clear with that check mark beside my name that I had won the riding of East Cooksville, surrounded by my family in my family room. They all gave a resounding cheer, and we dashed off to a volunteer party organized by my excellent campaign staff.

Let me take a moment to thank my family, some of whom are here with me today in the gallery. Like my family home, my family itself was built on hard work, on

values, stitched together with faith, books and music. I wouldn't be standing here without them.

And to my husband—who embodies tolerance, tradition and quiet strength that makes the house a home—I owe my deepest gratitude. His love of country, faith and family inspires me every day.

I'm the proud mother of three incredible daughters, grandmother to two spirited grandsons and a beautiful little princess of a granddaughter. Soon we will welcome another precious bundle of joy into our family. They are my heart. They are the reason I stand here with you today.

Madam Speaker, my journey to this chamber was not in a straight line. It was marked by hard work, perseverance, sacrifice and faith. I began my career in teaching, one of the most noble professions, where every lesson planted is a seed of potential. Later, alongside my husband and our extraordinary team, I helped build a financial insurance business, learning the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship first-hand.

During my off-work hours and when I scaled back from working part-time, I volunteered in the community, attending events and meetings for local charities. But my most beloved volunteer hours were helping my Progressive Conservative Party as president and fundraising chair in various ridings.

Through it all, I was a working mother, balancing meetings, after-school practices, business deadlines and bedtime stories. As many of you know, the juggle is real and the sacrifices are real, but so too are the moments of profound joy when you realize you're shaping lives, building dreams and creating futures for yourself and future generations.

Madam Speaker, I would not trade one moment in my heart of hearts. Let me underline that public service, like motherhood, is built on love, sacrifice and the steadfast belief in the province of tomorrow. As I look around this chamber today, I see colleagues who have taken different careers and political paths to arrive here but who share the same calling to serve greater than ourselves; to lift those we represent; to build a stronger, more compassionate and more just Ontario. I am deeply honoured to walk this path with you all.

Now, Madam Speaker, let me speak about the real heroes of my campaign: my volunteers. If you've ever tried campaigning in Mississauga–East Cooksville in February, you know it's a cross between a polar expedition and a fitness bootcamp. But there they were, our fearless volunteers. Some came from around the province, some from around the corner, but all of them came with fire in their bellies, snow in their boots and the belief of something bigger than any of us: a stronger Ontario. They pounded rebar, knocked on doors in biting cold and smiled through icy gusts. And yes, they even ensured I didn't wipe out on the black ice.

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We were joined by high school students, university students, first-time canvassers, friends from various parts of our beautiful Ontario, seasoned community organizers and volunteers from every corner of our riding's cultural

mosaic: Polish, Italian, South Asian, Vietnamese, Filipino, Ukrainian and more. The Polish cultural centre welcomed us all with warmth. We had the steadfast support of LIUNA, the dedication of our local firefighters and the kinds of cross-cultural solidarity that genuinely reflects the spirit of Mississauga East–Cooksville.

I also want to thank my friend Peter Tolias, who handled signs and even drove after snowstorms to brush them off so that our message would be visible. Three of our star canvassers, Jasleen, Sahil and Jaskaran, didn't just knock on doors. They knocked it out of the park by knocking on most doors across the province on multiple days and multiple shifts per day.

As they say, an army marches on its stomach. I'm also convinced we ran the best-fed campaign in Ontario. From fried chicken to seafood pasta, we kept spirits high and stomachs full. I thank those of you from the riding of King–Vaughan, with their constant supply of delicious pizza. We were a small but mighty team, fierce, focused and united in our mission to protect Ontario.

Beyond that never-say-die spirit of our volunteers, we were uplifted by the visits of then candidates and now members of the ridings of King–Vaughan, Northumberland–Peterborough South and Brampton South. Their presence sent a clear message in Mississauga East–Cooksville that it mattered. Thank you to them, my campaign managers, my team and every volunteer. You were the spring in my snow boots.

Madam Speaker, Mississauga East–Cooksville is a remarkable place. It's a mosaic layered with stories steeped in history, alive with new beginnings. Some families have called it home since before the Second World War. Many more arrived in waves afterwards, bringing their cultures, their hopes and their recipes with them—which I had the pleasure of sampling more than once.

Our riding is the home to beautiful Christian churches, places of peace and community. Our parishioners gather to share faith and fellowship. We have mosques where the faithful bow in prayer, and just at the corner of our riding, a synagogue and vibrant youth centre bringing hope to the next generation. They have all welcomed me and prayed with me and for me. This harmony of faiths and shared respect makes Mississauga East–Cooksville a model of coexistence.

Cooksville itself has a fascinating history. It is the home of Mississauga's very oldest house, the Cherry Hill House, which remains the oldest homestead in Peel. It was once owned by the Silverthorn family, United Empire Loyalists who settled in the area in the early 1800s and built this palatial home of what is now Dundas and Cawthra Road, which was once rugged wilderness.

Joseph Silverthorn built his house in colonial style, designed much like the New England homes where he was born. It was called Cherry Hill for the cherry tree orchard that he planted and that stretched for miles behind his home. This home still stands proudly on Silver Creek Boulevard and has been designated a heritage property by the city of Mississauga since 1978.

Cooksville is a community that has evolved into one of Ontario's most diverse, welcoming and dynamic neighbourhoods. The vibrant textile shops, the multicultural restaurants and the ethnic grocery stores are all woven together in a beautiful tapestry of life, energy and optimism. Events like the Taste of Cooksville are the work of the local BIA, a strong and vibrant innovative group bringing people together, beautifying our streets, to prove once again that they flourish when we nurture our communities. They instituted security patrolling, streetscapes, cleanups, banners and flowerpotting, and they hold free-to-attend street festivals with Cooksville's best restaurants, live music, friendly games and activities.

Madam Speaker, you know business is booming in our riding when finding an office space feels like trying to snag concert tickets for your favourite band. You blink and it's gone. Every time we see the perfect spot to relocate my constituency office, by the time we call to view it, someone else is moving in. It's a good problem to have; it shows how vibrant and thriving our community is.

When it comes to schools, we are well served by both the Peel District School Board and the Dufferin–Peel Catholic District School Board. They both are headquartered on Hurontario, north of the 403, but I remember when the Catholic school board was tucked inside a little church on Dixie Road. That quaint space is now a daycare attached to the All Serbian Saints Serbian Orthodox Church.

Bring your appetite if you're hungry in Mississauga East–Cooksville. Madam Speaker, we have Greek, Italian, Punjabi, Filipino, Caribbean, Middle Eastern—you name it. And for those in need of something fried and friendly, we've got good old-fashioned local pubs serving pints and politics.

We are the home to industrious people: educators, health care workers, tradespeople, truckers, restaurateurs, small-business owners and tech innovators. It is a riding built on sweat, equity, dreams and an unshakable work ethic. But to match that energy we need investments: infrastructure, housing, health care and economic development. They are not wants; those are needs, and our government is delivering.

That said, we are also not immune to the challenges that every family faces in Ontario today. I stand before you at a pivotal moment in Ontario's history, when we are faced with headwinds and uncertainty from south of the border. Ontario is standing at a crossroads, a moment where strength, clarity, conviction and leadership make all the difference. I can proudly say that under Premier Doug Ford's leadership, Ontario is not just holding steady; we are moving forward with purpose, with compassion and with boldness.

While we can't control the decisions made in Washington, each of us in this chamber absolutely controls the future we build right here in Ontario. From boosting trade to building transit, from defending jobs to delivering care, from the training of our young people to modernizing our economy, we will continue moving forward with determination and purpose. I am proud to be part of a

government that's putting in the work, and even prouder to serve under a Premier who never backs down from a challenge and never forgets who he's fighting for: the people of Ontario.

Once again, I want to thank God and the good people of Mississauga East–Cooksville for the honour and the opportunity to serve them in these challenging times. I want to thank them for their trust and tenacity, and most importantly, it is because they believe in a better Ontario. I will not let them down.

To my colleagues in this House: I look forward to working with you, even if at times we disagree. I assure you, in East Cooksville, we welcome good debate, warm food, hot coffee and sometimes all at once. I invite you to come and visit and to come hungry. We are in this together. Together, we will protect Ontario's prosperity and Ontario's promise.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

1620

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Congratulations to the newest member from Mississauga East–Cooksville. We are so thrilled that you are joining us in the Legislature. We know that you already have some good family members. One is here to give you guidance—your brother, the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore.

Thank you to such a wonderful family who's in the gallery and some of the volunteers I know from the past.

Hello, Dianne Lawson.

I love the cultural mosaic that goes on in your riding—and so well-spoken. I love to hear how the pieces of Ontario have been mapped together, and now we have the communities we have—and you have such a rich heritage in them.

I love the “polar bear express fitness boot camp”—my Lord, I do love that phrase. And I think we all experienced it.

So welcome to the inaugural campaign for yourself—because I think you did a few campaigns before, in your history.

I want to welcome you and—what is it going to be like working with your brother? I guess that's my question.

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** The question is, how do I like working with my brother?

I've always worked with my brother. We've worked on campaigns for many, many years. Even in his campaign, I helped him tremendously, I'd like to say. Thank you. He has become the man I thought he would. So I'm really happy to be here.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism.

**Hon. Graham McGregor:** I've got to tell you, I was blown away by the member's speech. I didn't realize that the member from Mississauga–Lakeshore was the member's brother. I thought he was her uncle or something—or zio.

The member talked very passionately about the member's riding, the member's community. I know this election was a tremendous experience for the member. I

want to congratulate the member again on winning but also ask what surprised the member about the campaign. Are there any lessons that the member took from the campaign that will help her in her role serving her constituents?

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** The campaign was wonderful. I never experienced such a coordinated and congenial campaign. Each of us got along so well. We never spoke a word out of turn. We just did what we had to do. We put our nose to the grindstone, and we just focused, we executed and we did our job.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I want to congratulate the member from Mississauga–Cooksville on her election.

I noticed that you mentioned that you started up a financial insurance company. So I had some questions around what education led up to you opening up that financial insurance background. And is it still active today?

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** Yes, we started the financial business after my husband's time at the university. He spent many years at the university as a professor, and then we decided the business was really our calling. That's when we branched out into business. We had many friends in the insurance business, as well, who were also very good Progressive Conservative members, and we opened up our business. We worked very, very hard to have it flourish, and it's still working today. We're still operating it today.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity.

**Hon. Charmaine A. Williams:** It is so wonderful to hear you speak. As the minister for women, it's so important for me to highlight and encourage women to see themselves as parliamentarians. But there's also the fact that you're a businesswoman and you started a business at a time when you had young kids and you did it all.

What kind of advice do you have for people watching and other women who are interested in taking the same kind of career path that you have taken? Sometimes these women feel very frustrated and tired and disempowered by the systems. But we know that it's possible. So what kind of advice can you give to a lot of women who are looking at you as an inspiration?

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** You're so sweet. Thank you.

For many years, I've aspired to this role. But over the years, I also knew that my family was my first concern and that my children were my first concern. So instead of coming forward, I helped others in their quest for this position, and I'm very happy that I did that. At one point, I was asked again—for the third time—so at this point I said yes. I thought it was just the opportune time to come into this role. I know that Premier Ford has been doing such an excellent job, and I wanted to contribute to that work.

What I would like to give as advice to women is just to go for it, but it will come in your own good time. Just be

courageous about it, do your job daily, work hard, and don't worry about what people say.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

**Mr. Guy Bourgouin:** Thank you for your inaugural speech.

I was trying to find a question to ask you—but I'm going to ask something different. I want a good story on your brother. We got elected at the same time, so I really want to hear a good one—because we only got one in your inaugural speech. So this is your chance. We want a good story on your brother.

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** I don't really have a good story on my brother. All I know is that I've loved him dearly since—oh, wait a minute, you're the older one—he was a child. We did everything together, because I was there for him. The two of us sort of coexisted as brother and sister in everything we did.

I do remember at times we just could look at a fly on the wall and we could laugh about that fly on the wall. That's how in sync we were.

So that's all I can say. We love each other dearly.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** I recognize the member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**MPP Paul Vickers:** The question I have for my fellow MPP: You talked a little bit about your campaign trail, but what has happened since the campaign has been over—getting an office all going? Just tell us a little bit about what has happened since the election.

**MPP Silvia Gualtieri:** Thank you for that question.

Our office is an office that was for a former MPP. The office is a little bit smaller than we had hoped. We're managing now, but we are looking for a different location. The reason why we're looking for a different location is that we would like to be visible, and the reason why we want to be visible is because that's what the job is—you have to be visible to your constituents. So that's what we're looking for. Somewhere where people can come, they don't have to use an elevator—or they can't even get into the elevator, or they have to climb steps—especially if you're an older constituent. So that's what we're looking for now.

I'd like to tell you a little bit about the people in my office. When I called upon them, they said, "You really want me to work?" I said, "Yes, I do. If you want to work, yes, you can come on board." I have incredible people—people who are seasoned in politics, people who are precise—and they'll do anything for me. I also have people in the office who have already been in politics; they've been assistants to other ministers in the past. I also have some young ones who are just starting off, like that young man up there, Roman, who's looking into a future maybe in politics, in media.

I'm enjoying every minute in the constituency office.

As all constituency offices do, you have cases that come and you have issues that erupt.

But they're all there, and they're all doing a really, really good job. So thank you.

1630

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate?

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Yes?

**Mr. Rudy Cuzzetto:** I first want to congratulate my sister on being elected.

This will be the first-ever brother-sister team at Queen's Park; not only that, Madam Speaker, I am the baby brother. Remember that. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate? Member from Ottawa Centre.

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** It is my absolute privilege that I rise today to deliver my inaugural speech in the Legislature as the member for provincial Parliament for Ottawa Centre.

*Interjections.*

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you.

I must begin by, of course, thanking my campaign team for their incredible success in helping me to win Ottawa Centre. To every worker or donor, you made it possible for me and others to simply go out, knock on doors and talk to residents while all of the work was happening back in the office, and we had as much fun as a team could have outside in the cold for almost two months. While there are too many of you to name, you know who you are. And I know that many of you came out of a very long campaign again yesterday. So you know who you are, and thank you.

I also want to thank my wife and best friend, Catharine, who laughs at all of my jokes, listens to my rants and my worries, drinks tea with me every single night at 8:30, before bed, and always encourages me to take chances. I love you.

Catharine and I will be married 20 years this June. We were one of the first gay couples to marry in Ottawa when equal marriage was made legal in 2005. For almost two decades, we really thought there was no turning back the clock on the hard-fought wins we experienced in our lifetime, but we are living in a time when many human rights are at risk, when trans kids are being targeted at their schools by adults, when queer people watch in horror as they're used as political pawns and threatened with removal of their charter rights.

I just want to say to every other trans and non-binary person, to every queer person, to every newcomer and marginalized person, to always know that your community in Ottawa Centre is here for you. Don't let anyone keep you down.

In Ottawa Centre, voters do always embrace love and hope over anger and fear. It is an honour of a lifetime to win your support, and it remains an immense privilege and duty to serve this incredible community that I love.

We take collective pride in the many things that make Ottawa Centre a great place to live—the dozens of festivals that it holds every year, the main streets that house our small businesses, our community health centres that deliver health care to the diversity of residents who reach in for their services, and the existing and new affordable and mixed-income communities that we welcome.

But what makes Ottawa Centre the best place to live are the people who call it home. They have a reputation and a history of welcoming newcomers, who make our city and our downtown more prosperous.

Our last great mayor, Marion Dewar, is remembered for welcoming thousands of Vietnamese refugees to Ottawa in 1979, in what became known as Project 4000. This new community added to the earlier vibrant settlements in Ottawa Centre by Italian and Chinese newcomers and was followed by decades of arrivals of many others into our neighbourhoods.

The people of Ottawa Centre also demand that we have supports for people who need proper health care and harm reduction services. Whether you are a tenant in a local rooming house, a homeowner, a renter, or living unhoused and unsheltered, we welcome you and want to keep you safe from the harm of the poison drug crisis that continues to rage in our community.

People in Ottawa Centre show up to advocate for affordable housing in their neighbourhoods. They fight for it because housing is a human right that can only be realized with more truly affordable community-built homes and the supports people need to keep their housing. They know that we can have better-maintained schools and supports so that all of our kids thrive. It is the hundreds of both large and small gestures every day from people in our neighbourhoods that make our city and Centretown and Ottawa Centre a great place to live.

I've had the honour of, first, being elected as the city councillor for Somerset ward in 2014, after spending many years as a senior staff at the city. As a city councillor, I also had the great privilege to work with the community to have Ottawa declare a housing and homelessness emergency in 2020, the first one in the country. We fought for better transit, and we collectively stood up for our downtown neighbours when the trucker convoy occupied our residential streets in 2022.

We are resilient, and we care about each other.

I also know first-hand how life-changing good public services can be, and that's why I made the decision to seek this seat in provincial Parliament. There was a time I would never have imagined myself in this esteemed provincial Legislature.

I was a 25-year-old single parent, and I had just moved back to Ottawa from Edmonton with two very young children. My first priority was housing. I needed a deeply affordable home that was a safe and stable place for us. At that time, it took only three months to find a place in community housing with a subsidy that made the rent affordable to my circumstances. I later looked to local schools for my kids and child care for before and after school. I also almost immediately had space in the local child care program and access to child care subsidies that made the care affordable.

With housing and child care in place, I was then able to look towards education for myself. With grants and some loans from the Ontario Student Assistance Program, what we know as OSAP, I was able to attend university, using a local transit pass to get around on what was, at the time,

a consistent, affordable and reliable public transit system. I graduated with a relatively low amount of debt.

From there, I was able to secure employment working for a local organization, with a steady income, and I was able to move into the private rental market, which, at the time, was still affordable to a single working parent.

It was only because of those provincial support systems that were in place at that time that I was able to set the path which brought me here today.

Without affordable community housing, subsidized child care, affordable and reliable transit and grants for post-secondary education, I would be in a much different position today. I want to take the time and this opportunity to thank those who came before us here in the Legislature for making the decisions to put these programs and the truly affordable housing in place at that time that made it possible for a better life.

**1640**

We are in a time in our country, in our province, where we can and must choose a better future—one where public services are well-funded and accessible; where housing is a right; where health care and education workers have the best working conditions in Canada; where transit is reliable and affordable; and where those struggling today have the chance to build a better tomorrow. This is essential to building a productive economy, and a healthy and a happy population.

Now, we cannot discuss land use and housing without recognizing that Ottawa Centre is located on unceded Algonquin, Anishinabek territory. These lands were stolen from the Algonquin people for the purposes of settlers. Dispossession of land is one form of ongoing colonization that has led to First Nations, Inuit and Metis people disproportionately experiencing homelessness.

In Ottawa, while Indigenous people make up approximately 2% of our population, they account for over 30% of those who are unhoused. We cannot be okay with this. We have a duty and a responsibility to recognize and rectify the harms that we have caused, harms which we are still causing today. We sit within these walls with immense power to both harm and heal, and I implore us all to do what is right for the people upon whose land we live.

I'm always struck at the sight of the owl on the wall just behind us here that the government side of the chamber faces, reminding them that the decisions they make must be wise; and the eagle that we look up at each time we take our seats here on this side of the chamber, reminding us that we are here to remain vigilant in holding the government to account.

Now, I'd just like to tell you two stories that I think about often that demonstrate how essential the work of the provincial Legislature is to our lives. The first is of a woman I met when I was city councillor. For today's purposes, I will call her Rita. While this is not her real name, the remainder of her story is unfortunately very accurate.

I met Rita at city hall on a very cool morning in 2019, sitting on a bench just inside the main doors of the building.

She was dressed in mostly red and carried two large suitcases with her. At first, she seemed to intensely dislike me and did not hesitate to let me know. But over time, we became friendly and spent many mornings on that bench talking about where she had spent the previous night and how we could find her housing, because Rita was homeless. She had lived with her adult son up until his death a year earlier and could not afford the rent on her own. Rita experienced anti-Black racism almost daily and, for a variety of legitimate reasons, was very fearful of staying in a shelter.

So she developed a plan that included two investments of her limited income. She purchased a monthly transit pass so that she could ride the bus every night until the last run at around 2 a.m., when she would then start a brisk walk to stay warm until 6 a.m., when the central library doors opened. On the coldest nights, she would find an all-night coffee place, but was mostly unwelcome. At around 8 a.m., she would come to city hall and then spend the rest of her day finding day programs that offered meals and other supports. Her other investment was to rent a motel room once a month for two nights where she could sleep and wash her clothes before heading back out.

I don't know where Rita is today, but in 2019, there were approximately 40 people in Ottawa who were unhoused and unsheltered, either living like Rita or in encampments, hidden from the public. Today, there are close to 300 on any given night—each of them, no doubt, with a story similar to Rita's.

The other story I'd like to share is one of a classmate I had in grade school. Again, I'll use a pseudonym, Shirley, but the rest of the story is accurate. I went to grade school in Sturgeon Falls. My dad worked at the lumber mill and I was the oldest of five. We lived modestly but did know poverty. Unfortunately, many of the kids that I went to school with from grade 1 through grade 8 lived in deep poverty, including Shirley. Shirley and I were classmates and we always finished first and second alternatively, in both grades and in sports. One year, she would have the highest grade or win the medals in track and field. Next year, I would be on top. This continued throughout most of grade school when my family left Sturgeon Falls shortly after. But I often thought about Shirley and my many friends who lived in poverty.

It was not uncommon to have a classmate faint because they were hungry. I remember many coming to school on cold and wet days with plastic bread bags over their feet, tucked inside boots or shoes that didn't fit properly and couldn't possibly be warm. They lived in mostly inadequate housing that was poorly maintained and overcrowded.

As I later settled into high school, I came to the realization that for Shirley and me to be equal in academics and in sports, she was exceptional while I was average. Because every day, I came to school after a good breakfast, with a healthy lunch, and I had slept well in a house that was properly insulated and not overcrowded.

Today, as I stand in the Ontario Legislature, I reflect on how many Shirleys we leave behind without proper invest-

ments in housing for individuals and families, and for women fleeing domestic violence with their children, and without proper investments in accessible health care, in public education and in employment opportunities.

To the people of Ottawa Centre and to my colleagues here in the Legislature, I commit to working together to make life more affordable; to keep people housed; build affordable housing and safe streets; properly fund transit; ensure that there are proven harm reduction programs in place while we continue to build the capacity for treatment and supportive housing; and that we will build the schools we need and properly fund public education and public health care.

Now, I just want to end today by circling back around to the trucker convoy occupation that took over our residential Centretown streets in the deep cold of early 2022. Centretown is home to many seniors, families, newcomers, people with disabilities and many others. It's a vibrant neighbourhood and one that is truly welcoming to all. The convoy arrived from across the country, bringing with them disruption, harassment, intimidation and a level of fear and trauma that this neighbourhood and its residents had never experienced. Those who had other options left to stay with friends or family, but many were left to shelter inside their apartments, too afraid to leave for groceries, pet food, work or school.

As a local city councillor in that ward, I went down every single day and I walked amongst those who were there to protest, imploring them to leave and return the streets to its residents. Being there day after day, talking with the occupiers, gave me unique insight into the role that our current political environment played in the shaping of the occupation.

I ask you to reflect on the words of the former leader of the federal Conservative Party, Erin O'Toole, in his final speech to Parliament before his retirement in 2023. He rightfully argued that we must debate with insightful reason and warned against conspiracy theories going unchecked in our political discourse, where we are becoming "followers of our followers when we should be leaders" and that "we must strive to inspire and be careful not to incite."

While I do not agree with the reasons for the convoy protest and their actions in our neighbourhood, I do also need to recognize the role that our current economic and political environment played in what occurred in that winter of 2022. As I spoke to the convoy occupants, it became evident that many of those who stayed after the first weekend, when the majority of truckers made their way back home, were poor. They were disenfranchised and angry. They had found a common cause.

Today they likely remain poor. Until we begin to invest in them and others left behind, my greatest concern is that a global epidemic was the spark that gave form to their outrage, and that unless we find a way to truly make life affordable for people so that they can afford their housing, have access to affordable groceries and secure good-paying jobs with serious and thoughtful policy decisions,

other neighbourhoods can fall victim to what occurred in Ottawa in the winter of 2022.

My colleagues, we can do better. That is the Ontario that we all deserve, the one that we know is possible, where people feel secure in their future and can afford life today and for their children.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

1650

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** I wanted to congratulate the member for getting elected and welcome the member to this chamber.

I understand the member previously worked for the legendary Ed Broadbent. I never knew Ed Broadbent because, of course, as members know, I'm much too young to remember Ed Broadbent. But the member apparently has some experience with Ed Broadbent, and I would invite the member to comment on the member's experience with Ed Broadbent. What does that bring?

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you for that question. I did work for Ed Broadbent. I worked for him when he was a member of Parliament for Ottawa Centre, but we became very close friends.

I'm going to tell you just a quick story about Ed. On my second date with my wife, Catharine, she was coming to my office on the hill, and I told Ed. I said, "Ed, I met this woman. We went out on a date." He often worried about me because I'd been alone for years. I said, "She's coming to have lunch with me," and he said, "Look, you don't have to say yes"—I knew right away I had to say yes. But he said, "You don't have to say yes, but do you think I could join you?" So Ed Broadbent was actually on my second date with my wife.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**MPP Alexa Gilmour:** I want to congratulate you on an exceptional and inspiring inaugural speech. It's a pleasure to be your seatmate.

One of the things that you spoke so beautifully to right at the very beginning was around the hard-won human rights of those in the 2SLGBTQ community, and you also spoke of the fault lines that lie beneath the surface that we need to tend to.

I wonder if you want to speak a little bit more about where these fault lines lie, what sectors that provincially we have some jurisdiction over, what we can do to secure them and what we should be doing to keep progressing in those rights.

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Your own human rights are an interesting path to navigate. If you are not doing well, it is easy for somebody to remove your rights. It is easy for someone to continue to ensure that you are not speaking out for yourself.

I look at it two ways. One is collectively, absolutely, we have to ensure that all rights are treated equally, that we do have human rights, that we do have Charter rights in this country, and we just cannot override them. It is a slippery slope once you start. The fault lines often can be

drawn when it's easy to polarize ourselves, so we need to be careful about that.

So I would say this: I would say that if you have good housing, if you are doing well, if you have a good job and you are able to take care of yourself, you're much better able to stand up for your human rights.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**M<sup>me</sup> Lucille Collard:** I want to congratulate my friend from Ottawa for her win in the election. It's really a pleasure to see you here in the Legislature. You and I are from different parties, but we've worked together on different important issues of mutual interest, and I know you're very passionate and you're very committed.

So I would like to give you an opportunity to maybe speak out a little bit about what you're hoping to achieve during your years here at the Legislature.

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you for that. It is nice to work with you here as well.

If I could leave here in four years and we could, as a Legislature, have in place good supportive housing for people so that we can remove them out of encampments, so that we can take people out of chronic homelessness, if we can put those supports in place and we could have the housing—we know what the solutions are. They exist already. We need more, and we just need that commitment. If there could be one thing, it would be to ensure that people who are chronically homeless in this province have a safe and secure place to live.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Congratulations to my colleague from Ottawa Centre. That was a very interesting speech, and I would say I learned a lot about where you came from.

I really was interested in the story of Rita and how you became friends with somebody who was homeless, but my question will have more to do with the closing of the supervised consumption site that affects the people of your riding. What kind of impact do you figure that will have on the good people of Ottawa Centre who have a drug addiction or are using drugs or are at risk of addiction?

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you to the member for that question. We have had a consumption and treatment centre closed in Ottawa Centre, in my neighbourhood, about three or four blocks from where I live, in Chinatown, and I have never experienced the amount of open drug use on our streets. What was occurring at the health centre with supports, with housing workers, with health care workers, is now occurring out on the street. People are very, very unwell, and others are feeling unsafe. It is quite evident to the business community and residents that we had something that was working, and we need to find a way to ensure people get both harm reduction along with recovery services.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Anthony Leardi:** The member mentioned that the member comes from Sturgeon Falls—or originally from Sturgeon Falls—and it sounds like a unique place in the

world. I'm sure the member carries some memories of that place every single day, and so I'd like to invite the member to talk a little bit about Sturgeon Falls. Is there anything about Sturgeon Falls that particularly stays with that member on a day-to-day basis?

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you for that question. Yes, we moved to Sturgeon when I was six, so I went from grade 1 through grade 8 in Sturgeon Falls. My parents moved us from an even smaller town in Quebec to Sturgeon Falls, and what remains with me, really, are the friends that I made. I had many friends who, again, lived in very deep poverty, but maybe I'll throw another quick story at you.

I was in grade 1. My friend came back from Christmas break, and I asked her, "What did you get for Christmas?" And she said, "I got a stuffed snake," and I said, "Well, what else?" And she said, "A stuffed snake." And I said, "I don't understand, because your parents are good for about seven or eight gifts and Santa is good for about another seven or eight." And she said, "I got a stuffed snake." I challenged my parents—I was the oldest of four at the time—and they had to admit to me that there was no Santa Claus. Then I went and told all my brothers and sisters that there couldn't be a Santa Claus if I got seven gifts and my friend only got a stuffed snake.

That's my story from Sturgeon Falls.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Chandra Pasma:** I want to thank and congratulate my colleague from Ottawa Centre on a fantastic inaugural speech. I am so excited to have the member here. I have seen their fantastic work first-hand in Ottawa and I look forward to the many great things that they're going to do here and that we're going to be able to do together for the people of Ottawa.

The member skipped kind of quickly over their experience in the issue of housing. You spoke about your personal experience living in housing and meeting a resident who needed housing, but I also know you have a lot of policy expertise in housing. Can you give us a bit of a brief overview of what that expertise is?

**MPP Catherine McKenney:** Thank you to my friend from Ottawa West—Nepean.

I was the council liaison for housing and homelessness for the city of Ottawa. When I was on council, I worked very closely with the entire housing sector in the city, as well as provincially. So I have worked on housing and homelessness policy and issues for almost a decade now, and I look forward to bringing any type of expertise that I have here—not just here, but across the aisle—to work with anybody who wants to move that yardstick forward on affordable housing.

1700

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate?

**MPP Tyler Watt:** Before I begin, I would like to extend my congratulations to the Speaker on her election. It was an absolute honour to participate in the selection of the first woman as Speaker in Ontario's Legislature.

I would like to thank the people of Nepean for placing their trust in me. I have always said that it is an honour and a privilege to be an elected official, and it is not a responsibility that I take lightly. Nepean, I will work tirelessly—tirelessly—to ensure your voices are heard loud and clear at Queen's Park. Regardless of who you voted for, my door will always be open. I'm here to listen, to learn and to advocate for our incredible community.

I would like to acknowledge my predecessor, Lisa MacLeod, who represented Nepean for almost two decades, and I thank her for her years of service.

What we saw in the federal election last night is what I've known for years: Nepean is a special place. Nepean is a place of opportunity for growth and community. And for me, Nepean is home. I was born and raised in Barrhaven.

Nestled in the western part of Ottawa, Nepean is the gateway between the heart of Ottawa and the beautiful rural landscapes our surrounding areas are known for. Nepean spans over 170 square kilometres and is home to more than 170,000 proud residents. It is an incredible place to grow up, to raise a family and to be a part of a community. The people of Nepean care.

When the massive storm hit in May 2022—I know we all remember that well—I saw a community come together, helping each other clear the fallen trees and debris from our neighbours' yards, making sure that our seniors were being taken care of and that everyone had what they needed. Places like our local gurdwara opened up their doors to anyone who needed power, food or water.

Just recently, a new apartment building under construction in Bells Corners was destroyed by a tragic fire. A week later, a retirement residence hosted a thank-you lunch for the firefighters who bravely took on that fire to protect the community.

The Barrhaven Food Cupboard is an amazing organization filled with caring and passionate volunteers who work to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry.

This is the Nepean that I know and love.

I am so honoured to be standing here today as the MPP for Nepean. I want to make my community proud of who they elected, and I will work tirelessly every single day for you.

It is with a heavy heart that I leave my full-time position as a registered nurse at the Queensway Carleton Hospital. I had several people tell me at the door, "Why should I vote for you when we have such a nursing shortage?" And I hear that, but what excites me is seeing the hope again in nurses and health care workers after this election. They see that a nurse has been sent to Queen's Park, who is going to advocate for health care workers, patients and the absolute basics of health.

For four years, I worked in geriatric rehab. I was a part of a phenomenal team of various health care professionals who worked on getting our patients stronger and safe to get back home. This is the type of health care we need in our community and the type of health care I will not stop fighting for. It is about time we ensured this province has access not only to primary care, but prevention. We need



to change the way that people experience health care, and I'm here to be that advocate.

Of course, I wouldn't be here without some pretty amazing people in my life.

To my fiancé, Anthony: You are my rock, and thank you for being there for me throughout this wild adventure.

To my amazing friends and team—Erin, Jordan, Andrew, Chris, Connor, Renee and Sarah: You all believed in me from the get-go, and I can't thank you enough for your support.

To my incredible Liberal riding association and team of volunteers: Thank you for everything.

To my family—my mother, Debbie; brother, Brandon; soon-to-be sister-in-law, Taylor; Mary; Nadine; Brian; Aaron; and baby Lennon: Thank you.

And to my father, Randy Watt, who I know would be so proud to be here today: Thank you for all that you did for me throughout our short time together.

My father passed away in December after his battle with ALS. It has been so hard losing my father. I struggle to this day with why this happened. But one of the most important conversations I had with him was about how his legacy would continue. It was tough working 12-hour shifts—sometimes 16—and visiting my parents' house afterward to help my dad. It was tough to watch him progress through the disease and lose his independence. It was tough to experience so many barriers and issues in our health care system.

When we heard whispers about a possible early election, I had the conversation with my father about running again. I wasn't sure I'd be ready to do it. How could I be ready to do it and give 100% of myself to my community when mourning the imminent death of my father? This was something I had to seriously consider, but he said to me, "Tyler, you have to do it. Don't give up on what you have already accomplished, and use my story to advocate for a better health care system." I made a promise to my father that I would not give up and that his legacy would live on through my work as an advocate and at Queen's Park, if I were successful. My father passed away on December 6, 2024. It has been one of the hardest things I've ever experienced, but I keep reminding myself how important all of this was to him and what his battle against ALS means for the changes I will continue to fight for.

We need to change the way that people experience health care in this province. We need meaningful investments and increased access to timely quality services. We need more care facilities, health hubs that serve as a seamless one-stop shop, where all health needs can be addressed by providing access to physicians, nurse practitioners, testing services and diagnostic imaging. We need to educate and retain more doctors and health care professionals and ensure that Ontarians can access the care they need, when and where they need it. We need a government that will make the necessary investments to deliver that kind of health care we all deserve, because lives depend on it.

As a nurse, I understand that health encompasses more than just your physical health. To even start achieving the

absolute basics of health, you need access to primary care, a meaningful education, a clean world to live and breathe in, a safe roof over your head, and a stable income and job, just to name a few. These are all things that the provincial government is responsible for, and it's about time we start taking this seriously. It is our job to work for the people of this great province and improve their lives. We need a government that invests in our public education and health care systems.

I am here with a new perspective, to give people hope again, to talk to the other side and people with different opinions. Ultimately, it is how we learn, it is how we grow together and make a positive impact for this province. I am here to hold the government accountable, to support them when they do good and advocate for what matters most to the people of Nepean.

One of the best things I took away from the two elections I've run in is the opportunity to connect with so many people, but also have the chance to inspire them. I learned that the best thing I can do to get people to vote is to give them hope. People want to know that their elected officials are listening, taking them seriously and are passionate about representing their community on a provincial level.

Some politicians are quick to dismiss young people and write them off. The amount of times I've heard, "Young people don't vote"—but I ask you, why? It's because they want someone to believe in. They want someone who inspires them enough to go and cast their vote. I can't tell you how much it warms my heart when I meet young people who told me they cast their very first vote for me in this previous election. It is a feeling and responsibility I will never take for granted.

It is truly the honour of a lifetime to be standing here at Queen's Park.

Nepean, I will work tirelessly every single day to represent you and make you proud, regardless of who you voted for.

1710

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Chandra Pasma:** Congratulations to the member for Nepean on your inaugural speech and on your election. I look forward to serving the residents of Ottawa together, as your neighbour in Ottawa West—Nepean and, of course, residents of the old city of Nepean who are super proud of being from Nepean. We even have our own theme song, which I'm not sure you know the words to, but I can go over it with you in lobby afterwards.

I know you worked at the Queensway Carleton Hospital. We know that the hospital is not the right size to serve the population of the west end of Ottawa. I'm wondering if you can share a little bit more about your experience at the QCH and what kinds of changes we need to see to make sure the hospital can support the people of Ottawa.

**MPP Tyler Watt:** Thank you for that question.

The Queensway Carleton Hospital is an amazing place. It's an amazing community. It is a community hospital. It

was built in the 1970s to serve the population at the time. Ottawa-Nepean has grown immensely since the 1970s, let alone the 1990s, when I grew up. It serves 50% of the population of the city of Ottawa right now, and it is still being funded as a community rural hospital.

Things that I would like to see done for the hospital—things that they have been advocating for are the necessary funding to expand their emergency room, double the amount of beds that we have there. We have one of the longest wait times in the province, and there's just not enough room, resources or health care professionals to care for them.

The other thing I would like to see there is just to help continue the expansion of all the things that they're researching, the initiatives that they're taking.

It is so wonderful to have worked there over the last four years. You see people who have worked there their entire lives, and I think that speaks volumes to the hospital that it is.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Lee Fairclough:** You talked a lot about hope, and you talked about your nurse colleagues and your other health care colleagues feeling some level of hope seeing you here.

Can you just talk a little more to the changes that you think that our colleagues—I'm coming from a health care background as well. What do you think our colleagues would like to see, and what do you think you'll be advocating for?

**MPP Tyler Watt:** Thank you for that question.

I think that nurses and health care workers are excited to see one of their own, someone from the front lines who is now here at Queen's Park, Ontario's Legislature, who can advocate for what they've been asking for for so long; who knows what it's actually like to be on the front lines, to work in those conditions—those lack of resources—and who can actually do something about it. We all have the same goal of caring for our patients. We just want the proper resources and support to be able to do that.

To see the number of colleagues I had who are so burnt out, who are considering leaving the profession or province altogether—for them to have seen me come here, to know that I'm going to be fighting for them, is truly meaningful, and I can't wait to see what happens.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon:** You mentioned giving hope to people. I know with a lot of young people—I have a young son and daughter—there's much apathy, and there's much despair over the climate emergency and housing crisis, the affordability crisis.

Can you tell us, from your point of view, what someone of your demographic, your age, would bring compared to, say, someone from the member from Ottawa South—versus his age? What would you bring here that he wouldn't?

**MPP Tyler Watt:** Thank you for that question.

Being a millennial, being someone in their mid-30s, knocking on doors, connecting with young people—it surprises them. A lot of people were surprised to see a somewhat young person who's running. I think it gave them the chance to connect with someone they could relate to. I'm having an authentic conversation with them. I am talking to them about the same issues that they're going through. I'm still renting. I feel like I will never be able to own property—that's something I can easily relate to, with a lot of young people. So what I'm bringing to the table here is to represent those issues and problems and make sure that the voices of young people are heard.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate?

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** I rise today to deliver my inaugural speech in the Legislature, honoured by the trust placed in me and mindful of the responsibility that we all share in serving the people of this great province.

I'd like to start by congratulating our Speaker on her historic election. Madam Speaker provided support and guidance leading up to and throughout my campaign.

For those who know Hamilton well: This is the first time in a generation that MPPs from the same party can thank voters on both sides of Rymal Road for electing them in the Legislature at the same time.

As I stand here today, I draw strength from my family, knowing that they will be on this journey with me every step of the way.

First and foremost, I want to thank my husband, Greg—my most trusted adviser, my best friend, and my biggest supporter, not only throughout the campaign, but from the moment we met 15 years ago as classmates at the University of Michigan. Go Blue!

Greg is a proud born-and-raised Hamiltonian. After law school, I moved there to join him, and we've made Hamilton our home ever since. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be standing before you today representing Hamilton Mountain.

I would also like to thank my parents, John and Patti, for the values, lessons and guidance that they provided. They raised me in a home full of love, they prayed for me, and they taught me the meaning of hard work by the power of their example.

To my brothers, Chris and Robert—and like many here, my definition of “family” goes much farther than your immediate family, so thank you to my cousins, aunts and uncles who believed in me and supported me through the ups and the downs.

And a special thank you to my best friend, Aideen Connolly.

And while they are no longer with us, I carry my grandparents in my heart today. I know they would be proud, and I only wish that they could see this moment.

I also want to take a moment to thank my incredible campaign team. I couldn't be prouder of what this team accomplished. Together, we made the unthinkable happen. This was the first time in 30 years in my riding of Hamilton Mountain that they elected a Conservative. We left it all out on the field, and we came out on top. Like a

championship team, we trusted the game plan, executed under pressure and finished strong. Campaigns aren't won by luck; they're won by grit, discipline and teamwork.

I also want to sincerely thank all the donors who supported my campaign from day one. Their generosity made it possible to run a campaign of the size and strength that we did. I am deeply grateful for their support, and I will be calling them all very soon.

I also want to thank the incredible volunteers. Together, we knocked on tens of thousands of doors in February and made twice the number of phone calls. According to our data, this is a record for any PC candidate in Hamilton Mountain. We outworked and outlasted everyone who said that it couldn't be done.

I don't have time today to list the army of volunteers who showed up in the ice, the rain or the snow, but I want to say thank you for giving it everything you had. This win is as much yours as it is mine.

And thank you to the incredible people of Hamilton Mountain for placing your faith in me to represent you, to fight for you and to work for you. That's exactly what I intend to do. Being a member of provincial Parliament means that I'm here to be your voice and work on your behalf, not the other way around. I am here for you and because of you.

I want to take a moment to share a little bit about myself, how I came to stand here today and what I hope to bring to the Legislature. Like many in this chamber, my journey has been shaped by family, by hard work and by a belief in public service. I come here with a background in law, in public policy and deep roots within my community. But most importantly, I come here with a sense of duty to serve the people who placed their trust in me.

1720

I know first-hand that leadership isn't about titles. It's about showing up, doing the work, listening and delivering results. That's the spirit I intend to bring to Queen's Park every single day on behalf of Hamilton Mountain.

I was born and raised in London, Ontario. From a young age, I understood the value of hard work. Whether it was through my first part-time job as a cashier or volunteering in my community, I learned that nothing worthwhile comes easy.

I later moved to Windsor for graduate school and then onto the University of Michigan where, as I mentioned, I met my husband, as we were among the only Canadians in the class. After completing my master's of public policy, I fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a lawyer. I specialized in municipal and planning development law and practised in the private sector here in Toronto. But it was the real-world impact of local government that truly captured my passion and led me to serve on the public sector side, practising for several municipalities across the province.

Wanting to make a direct impact in my own community, I joined the city of Hamilton, where I most recently served as the director of municipal law and licensing compliance. I came to the public sector because I wanted to help people deliver real results, but what I found was a

front-row seat to just how big and bossy government had become. I saw first-hand how long it can take to get a shovel in the ground, a crane in the sky, open a business or move a project forward. I saw how red tape and bureaucracy often stand between people and opportunity. I realized after having a front-row seat that the best way for me to effect change is to put my name forward and run provincially.

Just as my career gave me a front-row seat to challenges people face, my family story shaped the values that guide me. I'm a proud second-generation Canadian. My father came to this country from Italy after landing at Ellis Island more than 70 years ago before making his way north to Canada. My parents raised me with conservative values of hard work, faith, family and personal responsibility, and it is those values that I carry with me every day as an MPP of Hamilton Mountain.

I want to talk a little more about these values that are important to me. First, I believe in merit—that you get ahead in this province and on Hamilton Mountain not on the colour of your skin or your postal code but on the content of your character and your contributions. I also believe in personal responsibility. Strong families and strong communities create strong citizens. When you grow up in a family that teaches you the value of a hard day's work, you have dignity because you've built something yourself. Canada was founded on this idea—that it doesn't matter who your parents were, what matters is what you do. Ambition is noble, striving is beautiful and working hard is still the surest path to a better life.

And I firmly believe in the rule of law. Whether you came to Ontario yesterday or your family arrived 300 years ago, whether you live on a home overlooking the escarpment or you live in an encampment, the rule of law means that no one is above it and no one is beneath its protections. It protects our property rights, it upholds our contracts, and it creates the stability that allows businesses to grow and communities to thrive, and it is these values that I intend to bring to this House. These are not Liberal values or Conservative values. They are Canadian values that our soldiers fought two world wars to secure, and ideals that have led our business leaders in Ontario to spend tireless hours building the pillars of our economy.

Let me share a little bit about my riding of Hamilton Mountain. Hamilton Mountain might not be the Rockies, but I say it's built on even harder ground. The people of Hamilton Mountain are not afraid of even harder work. When I think of the Mountain, I think of Concession Street diners opening at dawn. It's the shops on Upper Ottawa staying late to serve the neighbourhood. It's the pride you see on the peoples' faces driving up the escarpment access after the shift whistles blow.

Up on the Mountain, life isn't about shortcuts. It's about generations working the lines of Stelco and Dofasco and the nurses hustling through night shifts at the Juravinski Hospital. You can feel the heartbeat of Hamilton Mountain on every corner, from the mom-and-pop shops along Fennell to the workers clocking in across industrial parks off of Nebo Road. This isn't just a riding.

It's a community built on hustle, sacrifice and a mountain's worth of heart.

Now, Hamilton Mountain is changing, but the spirit stays the same. Many families might wear suits to offices downtown or to tech hubs in Toronto, but they carry the same grit their grandparents had while working at the mills. Today, Hamilton Mountain is filled with nurses, teachers, engineers and entrepreneurs. You'll see them grabbing a coffee at Tim Hortons or a breakfast sandwich at Denninger's, before catching the GO train or logging into early morning meetings from their home offices.

Whether it's commuting down the 403 or building new businesses off Stone Church, the Mountain is rising, and it's built on hard work, new skills and old-school pride. On Hamilton Mountain, we don't use easy trails; we carve our own paths. You can feel it walking the halls of Lime Ridge Mall or on the toboggan hills at Stone Church and Garth. Hamilton Mountain has always been about building and now we're building in new ways. That's the spirit that we built into our campaign, and that's the spirit that we're going to build into the future.

I want to take a moment to share some of the priorities I heard at the doors and how I plan to work every day to deliver these real results for the people of Hamilton Mountain. In a time like this, we must take bold steps to ensure we remain resilient and prosperous in the face of unprecedented challenges. Hamilton Mountain, like much of Ontario, is built on hard work, sacrifice and the pursuit of a better future. But as we all know, the world around us is changing rapidly. Ontario's economic future faces significant pressures, and one of the biggest is the growing uncertainty in our trading partner with the United States.

That's why I'm committed to working with Premier Ford on our plan to protect Ontario's future by building a more competitive, resilient and self-reliant economy. This isn't just about surviving in uncertain times; it's about ensuring long-term prosperity for the people of Hamilton Mountain and all across Ontario. As you heard in the throne speech, Ontario's first priority is to unlock the full potential of our economy by removing interprovincial trade barriers. Right now, Canada's internal trade barriers cost our economy about \$200 billion every year. These barriers are making it harder for businesses to thrive across our country and across Hamilton Mountain. That's why I will work with my colleagues to ensure that Ontario treats goods, services and credentials from other provinces equally, allowing businesses to expand, innovate and succeed.

By removing trade barriers, we can make the construction industry boom in Hamilton Mountain. I am equally encouraged that Ontario will invest more than \$200 billion into infrastructure projects, the largest investment in Canadian history. This historic investment will include improvements to roads, public transit and public services. For Hamilton Mountain, this means better connectivity, stronger local infrastructure and more opportunities for businesses to grow—and for people to spend less time in traffic and more time with their families.

I also heard at the doors that infrastructure alone is not enough, and that Ontario must also prioritize workforce development. By investing in education and training, we're ensuring that Hamilton Mountain's workers have the skills they need to succeed in tomorrow's economy. By breaking down trade barriers, building homes and infrastructure, and investing in our workforce, we can actually unite this province—not through empty words but through action, because, you know what, success is unifying. Building things is unifying. Getting things done is unifying. That's who we are as Ontarians and that's who we've always been. Ontario is the engine of this country and the people in this room are the horsepower. Our plan to protect Ontario is the plan that is going to drive us over the finish line.

Safety is also a priority for me and for the people of Hamilton Mountain. I'm committed to supporting policies that keep our communities safe and secure. The people of Hamilton Mountain are eternally grateful for the courageous law enforcement officers who risk their lives every day to keep our families safe. I'm proud to stand with our men and women of law enforcement. They don't do it for the fame or for the glory, but because they love their city and the people they represent. Ontario is focusing on cracking down on illegal drugs, weapons, auto theft, crime and human trafficking, while also investing in programs to address homelessness and addiction recovery. We also must ensure our communities are safe, clean and welcoming for all.

Additionally, in my role as the parliamentary assistant to the Ministry of the Attorney General, I will continue to press for reforms to our judicial system, ensuring that violent offenders are kept behind bars and the rights of victims and law-abiding citizens are protected.

**1730**

I want for Hamilton Mountain what I want for every Ontarian: safe neighbourhoods, clean streets, good jobs and a better life for your children, a health and education system that treats everyone fairly, regardless of your postal code.

My message to millennials, speaking as one myself: For years, our federal government sold us a false bill of goods by driving up housing costs, making it almost impossible for some of us to afford a down payment to a home. They loaded up debt that falls on my generation's shoulders, telling us that if we took out student loans, put our heads down and followed the rules, we'd be able to achieve the Canadian dream, when, in many cases, it hasn't worked out that way.

We can't be cynical about our situation because Ontario is a beacon of hope. It's the engine of change, rife with potential. We deserve a government that gets things done and tells us how it is, and under the leadership of Premier Doug Ford, we have one. Our government will continue to protect our great province and stand up to Donald Trump.

You know, I'm just a daughter of an Italian immigrant who grew up in southwestern Ontario, and now I have the incredible privilege of standing here as parliamentarian number 1979, helping build a stronger, safer and more

prosperous province for us all. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to rise today and share the work ahead and how I will work every single day to make life better for the people of Hamilton Mountain who have placed their trust in me. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Will Bouma:** I think one of the most interesting things about having new members in the House is probably hearing some of their stories about campaigns, especially new members.

I remember just in this last campaign, I was walking down the street and a lady ran out of her house. As many of you know, last summer I had the opportunity to donate 50% of my liver anonymously to someone I'll never meet. This woman ran out of her house, ran up to me and said, "Are you Will Bouma?" Sorry, I'm not supposed to use names here. I apologize. And I'm like—because you never know—I said yes, and she pulled up her shirt to here and showed me this incredible scar. She said, "Someone donated their liver to me three years ago, and you did that for someone else. Thank you."

I was wondering if the member could share a campaign story for us this afternoon.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Thank you for that question. I truly appreciate it. I do have one, but I want to highlight, first, the historic victory that we were able to achieve in Hamilton Mountain. That is certainly quite the accomplishment after 30 years.

But one highlight was a conversation I had with a woman named Pat. She was 80 years old and lived in my riding. She invited me in for tea after I knocked on her door. It was very cold, so I graciously accepted the opportunity to get in there. We sat in her living room, and if walls could talk, that house had not changed in the 60 years since she had lived there. We talked about friends, we talked about family, and we talked about the neighbourhood. It was such a great conversation, and she turns to me and says, "Well, Monica, I just never vote Conservative." I'm like, "Shoot. Okay, well, it's great to have good dialogue." But she said, "This time around, I'm going to vote for the person," and so she said, "I will vote for you." I look at her—she's 80 years old: "Do you need a ride to the poll?" She said, "No, I will be good."

May I continue on the story? I'm over a minute. Is that fine? Okay.

So, 80 years old, I had to confirm that she didn't need a ride to the poll. She says, "No, I'm fine. I'm still independent. I drive." I'm like, "Okay." Well, some time between the time I met Pat and election day did she not fall and break her knee, and I only found out about it because she called my office on election day for a ride from the hospital to the polling station to cast her ballot. So we sent a team member over there to the hospital, picked her up, put her in the car, wheeled her into the polling station, and she was able to cast her ballot. She said that she has voted in every election and she was not going to miss this one. I have maintained a relationship with Pat

since that story, and she has fully recovered as best as she can be.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Tom Rakocivic:** Congratulations to the member. She had a very strong speech. She talked about her own philosophies and the reasons why she chose the political ideology that she has, and I think she made a strong case as to why she has done so.

We all are elected at different times and we all have our ideas about this place. We all have our impressions. Now that you're here, what is your impression thus far?

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Thank you for that question. I must admit I was not prepared for the feeling I was going to have walking in the doors on the first day, and I still, every moment I'm in here, have goosebumps that this is a reality. It is an incredible honour to be in this seat representing my riding, and I will never lose that feeling.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Mr. Matthew Rae:** Thank you to my colleague, and welcome to this place. It's wonderful to have you here. As you mentioned, it's a very historic win for our government and our party.

You also mentioned that you're a millennial. It's great to have a fellow millennial here. We keep growing and growing after each election, which is good to see.

I'm just wondering this afternoon if you could enlighten the House as to why, as a younger individual in Ontario, you decided to put your name forward, to put your family through public office, and why you really decided to run under Premier Ford. Thank you.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Thank you for the question. I think it's important to ensure that we have different perspectives in this House. As you've said, it's nice to be able to see a wide range and a millennial base also growing, but I think we also have a different perspective.

In my opinion—I mentioned it in my speech—we were sold a false bill of goods that if we worked hard and took out loans, we'd be able to afford a house and achieve the Canadian dream, and for many, that isn't the case. So being able to advocate on their behalf in order to make life easier or better for them—that is why I am here, and that's why I put my name forward.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Congratulations to the member for Hamilton Mountain. You have big shoes to fill, just from my perspective.

You had mentioned you had attended law school, and it led you to municipal service and municipal law. You talked about delay in a lot of development and construction. I wondered: Was there an actual municipal law in place that perhaps delayed but was justified, and the reason it was there in order to create development that's safe? Do you know what I'm saying? It was a delay, but it was purposeful. Could you talk about a municipal law you experienced in your career there? Thank you.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Thank you for the question. I think it's important to highlight that laws and regulations are in place for reasons. I think that they are there to ensure people are safe and work is getting done. But I think our government has demonstrated there are also opportunities to amend those laws. When we look at interprovincial barriers to trade, if something is good in New Brunswick, the law should also be accepted here as well.

When it comes to actual building, I think what I had a front-row seat to see was bureaucracy sometimes getting in the way of what people wanted to achieve. If there's an opportunity for us in this House to have constructive conversations, to make those more streamlined or easier, that would be what I am here to advocate for.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**MPP Paul Vickers:** My fellow MPP, I can tell you're very driven, very work-oriented, but you must have other things you do. You and your husband must have some kind of hobbies that you do, so I'd like to hear little bit about them.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** As I had mentioned in my speech, my husband and I actually met at the University of Michigan, and so we have bonded over college football. We go to games every year. We are big Wolverines fans. Last year, we had the opportunity to go down to Tuscaloosa and see an SEC game, if you really want to get into the nitty-gritty about it, but that is something—

**Hon. Greg Rickford:** Roll Tide.

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Roll Tide, exactly. But, go Blue! That is something that we do in our spare time and it's something we bond over.

1740

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Question?

**MPP Jamie West:** Thank you as well and congratulations to my colleague from Hamilton Mountain.

One of the things I was finding interesting is how similar but different the province is. Many parts of the province are struggling for housing or the opioid overdose crisis or the need for family doctors, but it's also unique in different areas.

In Hamilton Mountain, what is an issue that you're fighting for your constituents that may be unique and maybe not similar to, say, in my riding, in Sudbury?

**MPP Monica Ciriello:** Thank you for the question. I think something that I heard consistently at the doors in Hamilton Mountain is the issue for safety and crime. It's an opportunity that I used to speak about in my first member's statement. Auto theft is a big issue, specifically in Hamilton Mountain. We were able to participate in Project Polar Bear, which recovered vehicles and which was an exceptional partnership between our government and the local municipality. But what we discovered when we were doing that is 80% of the vehicles that were stolen from the city came from our one riding.

And so, crime and auto theft is something that is very near and dear to the residents of Hamilton Mountain and

it's certainly something I will be championing for in this House.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Further debate?

**M. Guy Bourgouin:** Ça me fait plaisir de parler sur le discours du trône. Mais avant de parler du discours du trône, c'est la première fois que je parle depuis les élections, fait que c'est sûr que je vais prendre l'opportunité pour remercier tous les électeurs de mon comté de Mushkegowuk—Baie James qui m'ont donné encore un troisième terme pour les représenter. C'est un honneur puis un privilège. Je veux les remercier pour la confiance qu'ils mettent en moi.

Mais aussi, on vient de passer—puis je voulais dire, aussi, pour l'élection provinciale, tous les candidats qui se sont présentés, il n'y a rien qu'un gagnant, mais tous les autres ont travaillé aussi fort, que ce soit—qu'ils viennent des autres partis. On met coeur et âme dans une campagne électorale, puis je peux vous dire que ce n'est pas facile.

Sur la question de l'élection fédérale, je veux prendre l'opportunité de remercier aussi Gaétan Malette, qui est le nouvel élu fédéral. Fait que, ça va nous faire plaisir, Gaétan, de travailler avec toi. Je pense qu'on a des valeurs en commun. Je sais que lui, il vient de l'industrie forestière, comme moi. Puis, en étant un député que—on s'est rencontré quand j'étais syndicaliste, puis lui, il était, dans le temps, pour Domtar. Mais, félicitations, Gaétan, puis aussi à tous les candidats qui se sont présentés au fédéral, puis en particulier Nicole Fortier Levesque. Je sais, Nicole, que tu as travaillé très fort, puis tu peux en sortir la tête haute.

So, pour revenir au discours du trône, souvent, le monde ne sait pas c'est quoi. On parle d'un discours du trône; ce n'est pas tout le monde qui est accoutumé ou qui a été exposé à un discours du trône. Je peux vous dire que, quand tu es assis ici, c'est de quoi de grand. On a la lieutenant-gouverneure qui parle ou qui lit le discours du trône qui vient du gouvernement. Et c'est ce que le gouvernement veut faire où, comme qu'ils disent, « Meet the moment », puis, « Respond to the moment ». Tu sais, répondre au moment puis aussi ce que les Ontariens passent au travers—les difficultés que les Ontariens passent au travers, comme on peut penser.

C'est surtout ce qu'on a entendu beaucoup, que ce soit provincial ou fédéral, avec le président des États-Unis, les menaces qu'il nous fait à la province ou qu'il a faites au Canada. Tu sais, on a entendu « elbows up » puis, tu sais, le 51<sup>e</sup> État. Je pense que ça fait beaucoup peur au monde. Ça a amené beaucoup d'incertitude. Puis, comme mon collègue de Sudbury disait, comme c'est là, il a déjà perdu 600 emplois. Ces 600 emplois, là, je peux vous dire, dans une communauté comme Kapuskasing, ça représente beaucoup. Même à Sudbury, ça représente beaucoup. Puis ça, c'est sans mentionner d'autres où on va perdre d'autres emplois à la grandeur de la province.

On doit répondre au moment. On a une obligation de répondre au moment. Puis ça, c'est de travailler ensemble. Travailler ensemble, c'est aussi de se consulter; c'est pas d'imposer. Très souvent on prend une approche qu'on a

vue dans les derniers—c'est mon troisième mandat—dans les deux autres mandats. Je peux vous dire, l'approche n'était pas si amicale que ça. C'était tellement partisan. Il va falloir qu'on s'éloigne un peu de la partisanerie. On a été élu pour représenter nos concitoyens. On a une obligation—on a tous une obligation de répondre au moment. Ce n'est pas juste unique au gouvernement; c'est aussi important pour moi-même.

Je vous ai parlé de l'industrie forestière. Pour moi, je viens de l'industrie forestière. Je peux vous dire, les tarifs vont impacter ma circonscription, mais ça ne s'arrêtera pas à ma circonscription. Ça va être à la grandeur du Canada. Ça, ça veut dire qu'on va faire face, peut-être, à des fermetures d'usines, des pertes d'emplois. Il y a des communautés où la seule industrie qu'ils ont c'est peut-être l'usine de sciage. Si tu fermes le moulin à papier, le monde ne réalise pas qu'il va y avoir un effet domino. Ça, ça veut dire que toute une région va être impactée. Ce n'est pas unique à juste au moulin à papier qui va fermer, disons, à Kapuskasing. Il n'est pas en danger, comme c'est là. Mais il faut être vigilant, faire certain, puis que le gouvernement—je sais que le gouvernement va faire des annonces pour aider notre industrie, puis aider Kapuskasing. On a besoin de support financier pour passer à travers.

Mais aussi je pense aux travailleurs. Je pense aux 600 employés que mon collègue de Sudbury mentionnait. Ce n'est pas juste une question de salaire; c'est de protéger les pensions. On l'oublie souvent. On pense salaire, mais quand une compagnie se met sous la protection du « CCAA », comme on dit en anglais, le dernier qui se fait payer c'est le travailleur. Sa pension se fait impacter. On va rembourser les actionnaires, on rembourse tout le monde, et le dernier qui se fait rembourser c'est le travailleur.

Le premier ministre dit qu'il est là pour les travailleurs. Commençons par ça. Commençons à dire que s'il y a des faillites, si des employeurs se mettent sous la protection, on va protéger les travailleurs, on va protéger leurs pensions. Commençons par ça. Parce que je peux vous dire que, là, vous allez représenter les travailleurs, parce qu'ils devraient passer en avant des banques; ils devraient passer en avant des actionnaires. Protégeons les travailleurs, protégeons leurs pensions, parce que ça, ça fait la différence pour une personne après ça—de continuer à se trouver un autre emploi, tout en sachant que sa pension est protégée, puis que sa famille, mets que ça arrive, saurait qu'il est encore capable de fournir du financement à sa famille.

Mais on n'en parle pas de ça. On parle de la protection des travailleurs sur le financement, sur le monétaire—puis il faut le faire. Il n'y a pas de doute là-dessus. Il faut essayer de trouver des solutions pour recycler nos travailleurs.

J'écoutais dans le débat aujourd'hui, ou en période de question, que les travailleurs sont obligés de se mettre devant les camionneurs pour empêcher l'équipement de sortir de leur usine. Pourquoi est-ce aux travailleurs de faire ça? Pourquoi met-on en danger la vie des travailleurs

qui se mettent là pour protéger leur gagne-pain, protéger leur industrie? Pourtant, on a dit que, non, on va protéger nos industries. Pourquoi est-ce rendu à ce point-là? À cause que le président des États-Unis nous fait des menaces qu'il veut ramener toute notre industrie.

Il faut la protéger, notre industrie, mais commençons à être là aussi avec ces travailleurs pour dire : « Non, il n'y aura rien qui sort de cette usine-là—ça va être illégal de sortir de quoi de cette usine-là. » Commençons à mettre les protections pour protéger ces travailleurs.

Il ne faut pas s'arrêter juste à dire les belles paroles. On dit des belles paroles—bien, des fois, il faut que les bottines suivent les babines aussi. Puis on entend souvent des belles paroles, mais les bottines ne suivent pas.

Et qui paye pour ça, madame la Présidente? Je peux vous dire c'est qui qui paye. Moi, je viens du milieu syndical. Je n'ai pas honte de ça, puis je suis fier de le dire. J'ai représenté les travailleurs pendant plus de 25 ans. Toutes les fois qu'il y a une faillite ou une fermeture, sais-tu c'est qui le plus grand perdant dans tout ça? Le petit travailleur.

Mais, pourtant, c'est le travailleur qui a mené l'industrie où est-ce qu'elle est rendue, ou qui a fait des concessions pour garder leur usine, souvent, pour qu'elle puisse continuer et être productive—un financement viable. Mais quand les temps deviennent vraiment durs, comme ce qu'on vit, là, bien ce sont encore les « shareholders » et les banques qui vont se faire payer avant le travailleur qui a fait bien des concessions, souvent, pour se rendre où on est aujourd'hui.

Fait que, je pense qu'on a une obligation, et c'est pour ça que j'ai dit que ce n'est pas rien qu'une obligation—c'est une obligation sur notre bord, puis de faire certain, comme on a fait dans la période des questions, de poser ces questions au gouvernement pour dire : « N'oubliez pas ces travailleurs-là. » C'est notre devoir de faire ça.

**1750**

Puis, eux autres, il faut qu'ils répondent. Les premiers mots que j'ai dits, « Meet the moment », puis ils répondent aux Ontariens qui passent des temps difficiles, puis ça ne sera pas juste les 600 travailleurs qui ont perdu leurs emplois. On en a plein dans le sud de l'Ontario avec les automobiles, mais l'industrie forestière s'en vient parce qu'on sait qu'ils veulent en imposer d'autres. On espère que ça n'arrivera pas, puis on espère que le nouveau gouvernement fédéral va être capable de faire reculer le président Trump sur ça, parce qu'ils payent déjà près de 15 % de « dumping fee ». On paye déjà ça, là. C'est de l'argent qu'on ne devrait pas—il y a des programmes que le gouvernement ontarien avait faits, puis, comme vous le savez, il y a une conférence à Toronto sur l'industrie forestière, OFIA, pour les deux prochains jours. Je vais être à la réception ce soir et demain, à la conférence.

Quand j'entends que—j'ai rencontré des indépendants. Je pense à White River Forest Products et je pense aussi à Hornepayne—en passant, c'était tous des anciens membres. J'ai parlé au directeur gérant, et il me disait : « Guy, on a besoin de l'aide comme continuer la question de la “subsidy” des copeaux. » Pourquoi? Parce que ce qui

est dur pour une usine de sciage, c'est que, quand le tas de copeaux devient trop gros, là, ça devient un problème premièrement aussi environnemental, mais aussi il faut qu'on s'en débarrasse.

Quand on a fermé l'usine de Terrace Bay, ça a enlevé à ces industries-là la chance de [*inaudible*] des copeaux. Mais là, on a une opportunité de dire qu'il faut sauver notre industrie. Trouvons des acheteurs, investissons dans le moulin à Terrace Bay pour que cette région-là puisse se sortir de cette misère-là, pour mieux supporter notre industrie forestière.

Comme c'est là, à Kapuskasing, il y a un moulin à papier, puis à Thunder Bay. Avant, il y en avait d'autres. Je pense à Espanola. On a fermé Espanola. C'est venu tout chambarder l'industrie forestière qui est entourée, puis ça, ce ne sont pas juste des usines de sciage. On oublie que tous les « owner-operators », tous les particuliers à qui appartiennent les pièces d'équipements—qui coûtent des millions, en passant—eux autres, qu'est-ce qu'ils font et comment est-ce qu'ils vont se faire payer?

Si tu les mets sous la protection ou qu'ils font faillite, ils ne se font pas payer, ce monde-là, puis leur bois reste dans le bois et pourtant ils l'ont tout coupé. Puis il y a une perte financière, une grosse perte financière à ce monde-là, puis, souvent, eux autres aussi sont obligés de faire banqueroute parce qu'ils ne sont pas capables de payer leurs pièces d'équipement. Fait que, c'est un gros cycle vicieux, et on a une obligation de répondre à ce besoin-là. On est dans une situation—puis c'est vrai qu'on est dans un des pires temps qu'on n'a jamais vu au Canada, mais comme gouvernement et puis comme opposition officielle, il faut trouver des solutions à ça, mais ça, c'est en travaillant ensemble. Est-ce que j'ai encore du temps? Il me reste cinq, huit minutes. Ça passe vite en baptême.

Je veux parler des routes, parce que s'il y a de quoi que, moi, chez nous, est important—je peux dire que sur toutes les portes où j'ai cogné, il n'y a pas une porte où le monde ne me parlait pas des routes.

Comment ça nous affecte? Écoute, il a neigé encore, puis des routes ont été fermées et des autobus ont été « annulés ». On est, quoi, le 29 avril? Il a neigé à Kap. Il y a eu du « freezing rain » à Kap. On est rendu qu'on ferme nos routes par précaution. Mais tu fermes la route pour précautions, mais qu'est-ce que tu penses qui arrive? Nous autres, on n'a pas d'autre « bypass ». Ce sont nos artères. Ce sont les seules routes où on peut aller pour travailler, aller à nos rendez-vous médicaux, aller à l'école. Écoute, la liste est longue.

Il ne faut pas oublier tous les millions qu'on perd. C'est pour ça que, si on veut répondre aux besoins qu'on a en province, commençons—c'est beau, les tunnels, bien beau. Vous en voulez, un tunnel? Moi, chez nous, chez moi, on veut des routes sécuritaires. On veut des routes qui peuvent être ouvertes à l'année, et pas : « Il y a apparence de neige? On ferme nos routes. » On a du monde qui conduit et qui ne devrait pas être derrière la roue, parce qu'on a privatisé et que les institutions donnent des licences à des camionneurs qui ne devraient pas être derrière la roue. Puis nous, il y a du monde qui meurt sur

nos routes. Quand quelqu'un meurt sur la route, qu'est-ce qui arrive aux routes 11 et 17? Elle est fermée pour plus de huit heures, 10 heures. Souvent, c'est 12 heures. Il y a des routes qui ont été fermées pendant deux jours. Avez-vous pensé au monde qui est pris sur la route qui attend pour une journée, qui s'en allait soit à la maison ou, bien donc, à un rendez-vous médical? Mais ils ne peuvent pas avancer. Ils ne peuvent pas aller nulle part. Ils sont pris là.

Mais ça, vous ne voyez pas ça dans le Sud puisque vous avez toutes sortes de routes. Vous avez des « bypass ». On peut prendre une route alternative. Chez nous, il n'y a pas de routes alternatives. On est pris dans ça. Puis ça, c'est sans mentionner que quand les routes ferment, qu'est-ce qui arrive? Les camionneurs se parquent en ville—pas de place à nulle part aller.

On a une obligation de faire beaucoup mieux. Nos infrastructures—on parle du Cercle de feu. Je parlais avec Villeneuve Construction. Mario a dit : « Guy, c'est correct. Il faut le développer. Il faut développer le Cercle de feu, mais il faut le faire de la bonne façon. » Mais nous, juste pour se rendre au Cercle de feu, il faut tout bien que nos routes et que l'infrastructure soit là aussi, parce qu'il va y avoir encore plus de camions qui vont passer là, puis beaucoup plus pesants parce qu'il faut tout bien emmener les matériaux là.

Ça, ce n'est pas moi qui le dis, c'est du monde, des professionnels qui construisent des autoroutes, des routes pour la province. C'est leur métier. Ils disent : « Bien, écoute, la route 11, Guy, il va falloir qu'il y ait de l'investissement plus sur les infrastructures, parce qu'on ne sera pas capable de fournir ça, ou la route ne sera pas capable de prendre toute cette pression. » Ça, on veut y répondre, parce que si on commence à faire tout ce qu'on veut faire pour être capable d'enlever le « border » puis tout le reste dans le [*inaudible*]<sup>1</sup>—il faut que notre infrastructure soit améliorée, puis surtout nos routes. Parce que là, comme c'est là, le monde a peur de conduire sur nos routes. Tous ceux qui viennent du Nord ont peur. Je peux te dire, que ce soit à Thunder Bay, en s'en venant, même North Bay, quand tu tombes sur les routes 11 et 17, il y a beaucoup de monde qui a peur, assez qu'il s'est rendu qu'ils vont éviter d'aller à des places, ou qu'ils disent à leurs enfants, « Ne venez pas, restez à la maison », parce qu'ils annoncent de la pas belle température ou il y a le potentiel de la pas belle température. C'est rendu une réalité.

Je peux vous dire, le jour de l'élection, de mon « récit », il y a quelqu'un qui est mort sur la route. Il a quelqu'un qui est décédé encore sur la route. Il y a eu beaucoup de décès cet hiver sur nos routes. On doit faire mieux. On a une obligation de faire mieux.

Écoute, je veux parler un petit peu des soins de longue durée. J'ai une maison, Extendicare. J'ai parlé à la ministre de ça aujourd'hui—un peu similaire avec ce qui se passe avec Extendicare à Sudbury. Tandis que Sudbury, eux autres, c'est une maison neuve; nous autres, c'est un « C home ». Les « C home » devraient être éliminés en 2026. Ils étaient supposés de bâtir—c'est une annonce qui avait été faite en 2018. Donc, on ne peut pas avoir une maison



neuve; ils ne l'ont pas bâtie. Ils ont donné une extension, puis on a une pénurie.

Mais, on ne peut pas les sortir. On ne peut pas dire : « Fermez cette maison-là ». Mais on voit qu'il y a de l'abus. On voit que c'est un manque de personnes qualifiées. Puis qui paye, qui souffre? Ce sont les personnes âgées qui ont eu—je ne mentionnerai pas tout ce qui s'est passé là. J'en ai parlé à la ministre aujourd'hui. On va avoir une rencontre avec la ministre pour adresser ça, mais je pense que la maison doit être mise en tutelle. Pourquoi? Parce que ces gens-là, ce qu'ils passent à travers, puis les familles, c'est horrible. C'est horrible, et la ministre doit faire des choses. J'avais [*inaudible*] d'adresser ça avant, mais je pense qu'il est grand temps qu'ils réagissent.

Je veux parler aussi des Premières Nations. Il me reste trois minutes; ça passe vite. On parle de « free, prior and informed consent ». On entend dans le dernier projet de loi, puis dans le discours du trône, qu'il faut accéder des minerais. Ça prend trop de temps; on est tous d'accord. Pour ouvrir une mine, ça prend beaucoup trop de temps. Je pense que les partis reconnaissent ça. Mais il ne faut pas aller trop vite là-dedans non plus, parce que quand tu vas trop vite, tu crées des problèmes. Quand on pense à l'environnement, si on va dans le Cercle de feu, on s'entend, ce sont des territoires qui sont sensibles. « Peat moss »—ils appellent ça « the lungs of the earth ». Puis les Premières Nations sont concernées. Elles disent, bien, écoute—puis même pour les projets de loi dont on traite, les prochains, là—

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** It is now 6 p.m. and time for the late show.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

1800

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Pursuant to standing order 36, the question that this House do now adjourn is deemed to have been made.

## ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

### GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** The member for Kingston and the Islands has given notice of dissatisfaction with the answer to a question given by the Minister of Energy and Mines. The member has up to five minutes to debate the matter, and the minister may reply for up to five minutes.

**Mr. Ted Hsu:** I am here tonight because, really, I didn't get an answer to my question. I would say that the answer to the first question was a non-sequitur, and there was really no answer to my supplemental.

I'm here because the government didn't respond at all to my question, they haven't thought about the most obvious question relating to Bill 5, which is, does all the extra power—the discretionary, unchecked power to, for example, give exemptions to certain projects from rules

and regulations—have the potential to corrupt? That was the essence of the question. I can't believe that the government wasn't ready to answer this question. To me, that really begs the question in the first place. Maybe this government really isn't ready because it hasn't thought about that potential.

Now, I don't want to stand up here and just criticize the government, because there is a potential solution here. Imagine that you're in wartime and you have to make some really difficult choices that people won't like in order to fight a war. You have this wartime cabinet where you get together, the government gets together with opposition leaders and they agree to take certain actions for the public good. During wartime, you might need to take freedoms, for example. Well, you just agreed to do this between the government and the opposition and you hashed out any differences and then you proceed.

Well, the same thing here, because Ontario Liberal leader Bonnie Crombie has suggested an all-party committee be set up so that we can make some of these difficult decisions, so that we don't have to expose ourselves to the potential of buying favours or foreign influence when we take aggressive actions to deal with the serious threat that is being provided by Donald Trump in the United States.

I can use Donald Trump as an example for what I was getting at, because Donald Trump has set up a system where he and his crew can make selective tariff exemptions in the United States. This has been criticized because it opens the door to favouritism and to lobbying, and it takes away transparency. We have already had the Auditor General refer to the lack of transparency when it comes to the Therme project that the government is supporting with public money at Ontario Place.

Of course, this is really bad for when it comes to Donald Trump, but there is the potential for personal or party enrichment when you have these discretionary, unchecked powers. There is more possibility of foreign government influence. You have to really watch out for foreign government influence because they have certain levers of power that your average stakeholder might not. For example, a government could threaten some action for one part of Ontario unless you granted a favour in another part of Ontario.

It's better if a minister can just stand up to foreign governments and say, "Sorry, we have these procedures; we have to think about this carefully and check these things," and, "Sorry, there's nothing I can do about going around the rules, because we have rules for a reason." That's an example of how foreign government influence is a lot more possible when you give ministers such unchecked, discretionary powers.

Finally, there is economic distortion. If you're making decisions based on favouritism or cronyism, you don't make decisions that are best for the Ontario economy. Our economic system is set up so that our capital can go to where the greatest opportunities are, where there are opportunities for increases in productivity or possibility of financing something to provide a service that people really need. If you plan for economic growth—I can see my

colleague from Sault Ste. Marie can't get up to speak, he's so perturbed. He should be perturbed because this government is not prepared.

Now, that is the wrong way to run an economy, and we can see examples of how, throughout history, crony capitalism fails.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** Response? I recognize the member from Sault Ste. Marie.

**MPP Chris Scott:** I'm happy to rise and provide further context to clearly answer the question posed by the member from Kingston and the Islands, even if the question was not very clear.

When businesses look to Ontario as a place to invest, they want to see a competitive business environment and a regulatory process that provides certainty. Speaker, it's simple. We can drive economic growth while maintaining the world-class environmental and Indigenous commitments necessary to complete projects in Ontario. It doesn't need to take 17 years.

But, of course, unsurprisingly, the members opposite will try to tank robust legislation that will ensure our government has the tools needed to protect our province against adversarial foreign regimes, the tools to cut red tape and bureaucratic gridlock, and the tools to open mines with more predictable, competitive project timelines. After all, it was under the previous Liberal government that 300,000 manufacturing jobs were driven out of this province. Billions of dollars in business investment fled Ontario at their hands because of outdated and unnecessary red tape. So frankly, Speaker, we're not going to take any lessons from the members opposite. Ontario is going to lead, not follow.

We will secure the resources that power our future. We'll defend our economic sovereignty. We'll build prosperity for generations to come. It's exactly why the people of this province elected this Premier and this government to a third straight majority.

Ontario and Canada are facing unprecedented attacks on our economy and outdated bureaucratic policies are hindering our potential to be a true superpower in this space. When we look to comparable jurisdictions, here's what we see: We see the Philippines, who are opening mines within three to six years, and they're still constantly looking for ways to speed up permitting. We see Australia, who is opening up mines within six to seven years.

Speaker, Ontario does not need to lag behind, especially when we have the human capital, ingenuity and potential to become the global capital of resource development and advanced manufacturing. The reality is that Bill 5, if passed, puts Ontario back in the driver's seat. We will take back control of our resources. We'll streamline resource development. We will ensure that there's one process for one project, the fundamental initiative that's highlighted in this bill.

We will ensure there are benchmarks and service standards that hold our government and future governments to account. We will have review deadlines that must be met. And we will do all of this by consulting with First Nations communities and Indigenous leaders, because, like the Minister of Energy and Mines said earlier this morning, I, too, want to be explicitly clear and reassure all First Nations communities that this bill does not impede or supersede our constitutional duty-to-consult obligations. A strong relationship with Indigenous communities is the cornerstone to mutual prosperity.

Speaker, unleashing Ontario's economy in today's complex and often volatile geopolitical landscape requires more than just speed. It demands vigilance and the protection of our strategic interests and assets.

What the members opposite fail to understand is that during serious times, serious leadership is warranted. Under this Progressive Conservative government and Premier Ford, our government is drawing the line. Ontario's future will remain in the hands of Ontarians. We will build it, we will defend it, and Bill 5 will protect Ontario.

We will remove barriers that impede our development. We will enhance our competitiveness because, while the members opposite might be satisfied with the status quo, we know the reality is we must act decisively to secure our future now—the future of our kids and the future of our grandkids. We have the ability to responsibly develop our resources and be the economic engine of the world.

We will. We won't back down today or any day going forward.

**The Acting Speaker (MPP Andrea Hazell):** There being no further matters to debate, pursuant to standing order 36(c), I deem the motion to adjourn to be carried.

This House stands adjourned until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 1810.*





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Cerjanec, Rob (LIB)	Ajax	
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Ciriello, Monica (PC)	Hamilton Mountain / Hamilton-Mountain	
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
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Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Cooper, Michelle (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
<b>Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement / Ministre des Services au public et aux entreprises et de l'Approvisionnement
Cuzzetto, Rudy (PC)	Mississauga—Lakeshore	
Darouze, George (PC)	Carleton	
Denault, Billy (PC)	Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke	
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 Emergency Preparedness and Response / Ministre de la Protection civile et de l'Intervention en cas d'urgence
Fairclough, Lee (LIB)	Etobicoke—Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<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	
Firin, Mohamed (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
<b>Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)</b>	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)</b>	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	Premier / Premier ministre Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Leader, Third Party / Chef du troisième parti
<b>French, Jennifer K. (NDP)</b>	Oshawa	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Première Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn (PC)	Newmarket—Aurora	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gilmour, Alexa (NDP)	Parkdale—High Park	
Glover, Chris (NDP)	Spadina—Fort York	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Grewal, Hardeep Singh (PC)	Brampton East / Brampton-Est	
Gualtieri, Silvia (PC)	Mississauga East—Cooksville / Mississauga-Est—Cooksville	
<b>Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)</b>	Milton	Associate Solicitor General for Auto Theft and Bail Reform / Solliciteur général associé responsable de la Lutte contre le vol d'automobiles et de la Réforme relative aux mises en liberté sous caution
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
<b>Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)</b>	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
<b>Hazell, Andrea (LIB)</b>	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<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	
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)</b>	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
<b>Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent—Leamington	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et de l'Agroentreprise
Jordan, John (PC)	Lanark—Frontenac—Kingston	
Kanapathi, Logan (PC)	Markham—Thornhill	
Kernaghan, Terence (NDP)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	
<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 Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
<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 Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)</b>	Hamilton East—Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est—Stoney Creek	Minister of Sport / Ministre du Sport
Mamakwa, Sol (NDP)	Kiiwetinoong	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
<b>McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)</b>	Durham	Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks / Ministre de l'Environnement, de la Protection de la nature et des Parcs
McCrimmon, Karen (LIB)	Kanata—Carleton	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)</b>	Brampton North / Brampton-Nord	Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism / Ministre des Affaires civiques et du Multiculturalisme
McKenney, Catherine (NDP)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	
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
<b>Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)</b>	Niagara West / Niagara-Ouest	Minister of Francophone Affairs / Ministre des Affaires francophones 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	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)</b>	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
<b>Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)</b>	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
<b>Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)</b>	Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry	Minister of Colleges, Universities, Research Excellence and Security / Ministre des Collèges et Universités, de l'Excellence en recherche et de la Sécurité
Racinsky, Joseph (PC)	Wellington—Halton Hills	
Rae, Matthew (PC)	Perth—Wellington	
Rakocevic, Tom (NDP)	Humber River—Black Creek	
<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 Responsible for Ring of Fire Economic and Community Partnerships / Ministre responsable des Partenariats économiques et communautaires pour le développement du Cercle de feu
Riddell, Brian (PC)	Cambridge	
Rosenberg, Bill (PC)	Algoma—Manitoulin	
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, Chris (PC)	Sault Ste. Marie	
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, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)</b>	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente 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	Associate Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre associé des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Smith, Laura (PC)	Thornhill	
Smyth, Stephanie (LIB)	Toronto—St. Paul's	
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

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)</b>	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
<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 Attorney General / Procureur général associé
<b>Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)</b>	Oakville North—Burlington / Oakville-Nord—Burlington	Deputy Speaker / Vice-Présidente Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Tsao, Jonathan (LIB)	Don Valley North / Don Valley-Nord	
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	
Vickers, Paul (PC)	Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound	
Wai, Daisy (PC)	Richmond Hill	
Watt, Tyler (LIB)	Nepean	
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	