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Lundi
17 novembre 2025

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Clerk: Trevor Day

Présidente : L'honorable Donna Skelly
Greffier : Trevor Day

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 17 November 2025

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 17 novembre 2025

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Good morning, everyone. Let us pray.

Prayers.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): And now a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

FIGHTING DELAYS, BUILDING FASTER ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 VISANT À LUTTER CONTRE LES RETARDS ET À CONSTRUIRE PLUS RAPIDEMENT

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 30, 2025, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 60, An Act to amend various Acts and to enact the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025 / Projet de loi 60, Loi modifiant diverses lois et édictant la Loi de 2025 sur les sociétés publiques de gestion de l'eau et des eaux usées.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Flack has moved second reading of Bill 60, An Act to amend various Acts and to enact the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025.

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

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

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Second reading vote deferred.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 SUR LE SOUTIEN AUX ENFANTS, AUX ÉLÈVES ET AUX ÉTUDIANTS

Resuming the debate adjourned on October 29, 2025, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 33, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to child, youth and family services, education, and colleges and universities / Projet de loi 33, Loi modifiant diverses lois relatives aux services à l'enfance, à la jeunesse et à la famille, à l'éducation et aux collèges et universités.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Calandra has moved second reading of Bill 33, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to child, youth and family services, education, and colleges and universities.

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

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

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Second reading vote deferred.

PROTECT ONTARIO BY SECURING AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR GENERATIONS ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN GARANTISSANT L'ACCÈS À L'ÉNERGIE ABORDABLE POUR LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 4, 2025, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to energy, the electrical sector and public utilities / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie, le secteur de l'électricité et les services publics.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Lecce has moved second reading of Bill 40, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to energy, the electrical sector and public utilities.

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

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

All those opposed to the motion, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Second reading vote deferred.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Resuming the debate adjourned on November 6, 2025, on the amendment to the amendment to the motion regarding report writing proceedings of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on the study on intimate partner violence.

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

Mr. Brian Saunderson: It's a pleasure to stand up on behalf of the residents of Simcoe–Grey to continue the remarks I started, a week ago Thursday, about this important topic.

What this motion is about is bringing back the report from the justice policy standing committee from the last to the current Legislative Assembly for the current Standing Committee on Justice Policy for review, with the goal of bringing the report to this Legislature for action on this important issue. It is about finishing the work that was started 18 months ago. That was important work and, as we've heard, it lasted over 13 days—hearing from 150 witnesses, 90 experts, and 60 victims and front-line workers with lived experience.

This report came from an opposition bill, Bill 173, moved by the member from Windsor West to declare IPV an epidemic. That was the extent of Bill 173. It was a simple, one-sentence declaration and nothing more. There was no action plan, no change, no steps to help address this issue that we know is endemic across this province and has been getting worse. While a long-standing issue, it has been getting worse. After second reading, the bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy to examine all of the aspects with respect to IPV: current programs that are available, the root causes, and how we can do better in the province of Ontario to address these issues. As I said, this led to oral hearings and submissions; and we heard from 150 witnesses through the summer and fall of 2024.

Madam Speaker, I had the honour of being part of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, and I can tell you that there were many difficult days as we heard the evidence of the devastation and trauma this issue brings to families, and the vicious cyclical nature that really dooms many who have experienced IPV as children to repeat it in their future lives.

The event of the last election interrupted the standing committee's work, and it is now necessary and very critical to bring that work back to the standing committee so that we can move it forward and take action to address this devastating issue. As I said, we heard from many witnesses with front-line experience—many victims and many survivors. We owe it to those witnesses; we owe it to those experts who have made this their field of study and have given us the advantage of their advice; we owe it to the front-line workers who deal with this issue every day; and, most importantly, we owe it to the victims with lived experience who came forward and shared their knowledge, shared their experience and shared their stories with the committee, despite the many hurdles it took to do that. Most of that evidence was heard in camera because of the sensitive nature of it. We know that this is

an issue that's under-reported, and when it is reported, it's very difficult to relive. Those experiences can often re-traumatize the victims and the survivors, so for them to come forward and tell their stories, to travel to Queen's Park to tell the stories to the committee, was a true demonstration of courage. We owe it to them to honour that courage by moving forward as expeditiously as possible to make sure that we address this problem. As we have heard, it's endemic. It's a long-standing issue with devastating and often lethal consequences for the victims and their families. Their stories are heartbreaking, but what's most heartbreaking is that they're cyclical and there's a pattern. As we heard from these many victims and survivors, you could see the pattern very quickly. There are ways to address that, there are ways to break that pattern, and we must seize this opportunity to do that.

During those hearings, we also heard stories of resilience, of strength, of courage and of hope, as these survivors have changed their lives, taken control of their lives—which is often the issue—come forward and told us their stories with purpose, to make the call for change so that others don't have to endure the same pattern, the same harm and the same devastation.

0910

As I've said, their courage is our call to action, to work together and move forward with purpose and determination to address the many aspects of intimate partner violence: both from treating and assisting the victims when they are in crisis, but also making sure that we're making investments to make our assistance to them more timely; to streamline our justice system; to make sure that they have access to the programs that we need; that those programs are coordinated and intentional; and, also, to make upstream investments in making sure that we address the root causes of intimate partner violence ahead of time. An ounce of prevention is a pound of cure. And in this case, an ounce of prevention would go so far down this road, as we heard from many of the expert witnesses, from the fields of education, from healthy relationships, from sports and other aspects that permeate our children's lives that can influence them and shape them, moving forward.

But words matter. We must begin this issue by naming IPV for what it is, and that is an "endemic." An epidemic erupts suddenly and recedes quickly. The response is temporary, and the actions are aimed at containment. Endemic problems are chronic. They are predictable, they follow a pattern, and they are deeply ingrained into many of our social systems.

The word "endemic" carries enormous weight. It signals that this crisis is not isolated, it is not occasional, it is not temporary. It is woven into the lives of too many people, too many families, and too many communities. It tells us that this violence is not confined to certain households or communities. It is persistent, it is prevalent, it is widespread, and it is deeply rooted across our society. It does not surge and recede like a passing storm. It is sustained by structures, attitudes and inequities that have built up over generations. Because it is persistent, our

response must be equally persistent, must be measured and purposeful. It cannot be measured in headlines, but in systems, standards and results—measured in stability, not symbolism.

Calling IPV an “endemic” is about naming a reality. It is intergenerational, it is ingrained, and it resists quick and reactive solutions. When we use accurate language, we commit to the right type of solutions—solutions that are long-term, solutions that are structural, that are robust and are coordinated. That is how we honour the courage of the witnesses we heard from and how we protect the lives of others.

Declarations are important, but they do not align with training, they do not coordinate calendars, and they do not stabilize base funding; a coordinated, long-term framework does. This motion is about putting that framework in place so that the ministries of this government and our partners in front-line assistance—our police, our educators and our service providers—can act together consistently and with scale.

Madam Speaker, this is something our government has been pursuing across the social services sector. Our government is committed to protecting survivors, preventing violence and building stronger, safer communities. Under the leadership of Premier Ford, Minister Parsa and Associate Minister Williams, we have taken meaningful steps to strengthen supports for victims and to hold perpetrators accountable.

We have increased funding for violence-against-women shelters and sexual assault centres because we know that these are often the first places survivors turn when they need safety. As Minister Williams announced in her comments, we have just recently, last week, announced \$27 million to create 300 new spaces in shelters for women and their families in crisis—these community-based programs that connect survivors to housing, to counselling and to legal resources, particularly in rural and northern communities, where access can be limited.

And we have expanded collaboration between police, crown attorneys and community agencies to ensure that survivors are not left to navigate complex systems on their own.

These are just a few of the concrete steps that this government has taken, and they are making a difference. But we all know there is much more to be done.

That is what this motion is about. It's about bringing that evidence forward, bringing what we've learned from those extensive hearings and turning what we've learned into action to further address the issue of IPV.

As a member of the justice policy committee, let me tell you what I heard during those hearings. First of all, I heard that we need to strengthen our supports for victims when they are in crisis. We need to improve coordination and integration among the available services. We need to modernize how we respond to intimate partner violence and the critical need to strengthen prevention and work on breaking the vicious cycle of IPV and gender-based violence upstream.

This will require an all-of-government approach: continuing to make investments in supporting victim services;

stabilizing funding for critical support services; improving the responsiveness of our justice system; and upstream investments in education and prevention.

I'll start with victim services because they are the most immediate triage that's required to treat families in crisis.

I can tell you that in my riding of Simcoe—Grey we have two very active shelters. My Friend's House has been in Collingwood for over 25 years. In speaking with the former executive director, Alison FitzGerald, during my time on municipal council, but also my time in provincial politics, she told me about the incredible increase they have seen since the pandemic—we know that across the province many were self-reporting a deterioration in their mental health. They were isolating in their homes with their families, and stresses were increasing. So we saw an increase in IPV, and we saw an increase in demand for the services of My Friend's House in Collingwood. And when I spoke with the staff at My Sister's Place in Alliston, the executive director there told me a similar story about the incredible stresses caused by the pandemic.

Frankly, those stresses have not lessened since the end of the pandemic. We heard that during the hearings. We heard about the incredible need for immediate shelter and services when a family is in crisis. And while that is the culmination of the cycle and the pattern, it is probably the time at which those in need are most in need and most need the services that are available.

As Minister Williams indicated, we've created 300 new shelter spots. But we need to make those services more available, we need to get rid of wait times, and we need to have transition housing so that they can progress on the road of recovery. That was one of the main things we heard, particularly from our victims, during the hearings.

The second issue that we need to work on is the responsiveness of our judicial system. And that takes many forms: from the immediate crisis, when the charges are laid, making sure that bail conditions are complied with—we had bail reform hearings earlier, to the justice committee—but we also heard the importance that that serves during the period after the charges have been laid, making sure that we keep the family safe and the victim safe from further interference from the offender.

We heard very important information from the OPP and from other support services about tracking those charged. We know that those charged can move to a different jurisdiction and the police there won't know of the charge. So we want to make sure that we create an interconnected system, so that all support services are aware of the situation, of the charges, of the fact that this individual has been charged, is under bail and must be kept away from the family, but also the implications for any future relationship they might enter into. That was an important part of the topic at the justice policy committee.

0920

And then we spoke of upstream prevention. We heard from many educators. We heard from programs. We heard from coaches. We know that the member for Kitchener South—Hespeler was very involved in the coaching program, and that has been piloted in Hamilton and been very

successful. We hope to now enrol that across the province, to teach young children, particularly young boys, about a healthy relationship, about respect, about emotional dialogue and emotional maturity, so down the road they will be not going down this road. And if they have been in this cycle of violence, it will help them to prevent and break that cycle so that they don't go down that same road.

We know as well that for young girls who are victims of IPV, it also has an impact on their lives because it changes their idea of what emotional dialogue is and what a mature relationship is. We have to break that cycle, we have to break that expectation, and we have to help liberate them and give them the tools they need to have healthy, sustainable relationships, moving forward.

The final aspect we heard of was data. We want to make sure that we're moving the needle, and what gets measured gets done. So, tracking data, making sure we're aware of the statistics, making sure we're aware of the outcomes, making sure we're getting children into programs, getting victims serviced, getting victims through the justice system faster, protecting them from the offender during the course of the litigation and the charges—and making sure that we are marshalling all of that together, which is going to require, as I said, an all-of-government approach. We need many ministries involved in this, and we need all of our service providers to be involved, and we need to coordinate and streamline that to make sure that our dollars are being stretched.

These initiatives are in line with aspects of what this government is doing.

The MPP from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock and the MPP from Thornhill brought a joint PMB to stop convicted sexual offenders from legally changing their names under Christopher's Law. That was passed last session.

Bill 123, or Erin's Law, from the MPP from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry, amends the Education Act to require school boards to implement programs to combat child sexual abuse.

The MPP from Oakville North—Burlington, who's in the chair, brought forward legislation called Keira's Law, which is included in Bill 102, the Strengthening Safety and Modernizing Justice Act, to make sure that the judicial judges on the bench get training in the dynamics of IPV.

So this is a government with a track record of getting things done. This is a motion about bringing forward important evidence and reports to make sure that we can continue that and that we can tackle IPV where it starts—in the homes—and protect people, protect future generations, and ensure that all live safely and happily.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Speaker, it has now been almost seven years since many of us got elected and, in the last seven years, one thing that we learned the most in our lives is that uncertainty is the only certain thing.

Every time I stand up, I talk in my remarks—I always thank the supreme God for giving me the mental health and physical health to be able to stand up and deliver my remarks.

Today, before I begin my remarks, I would like to take a moment to mourn the loss of Anil Bhasin, one of the pillars of our community, a cherished member of our extended family. Anil suddenly departed us, with a void that cannot be filled—in less than 24 hours, he was gone. May his soul embark peacefully on his heavenly journey and attain eternal rest.

Our heartfelt prayers are with the family during this difficult time. May God give you strength and courage. Om shanti.

This is the life that we all have to cherish—when we have till we have.

If you really look at this motion we are talking about and taking care of today, it's about those people—the people who live in our world.

This motion, technically speaking, is talking about two different paths. When I come to Queen's Park every day, Monday to Thursday, I have a choice whether to take the Gardiner Expressway or the 401. At the end of the day, both lead to the same goal of reaching Queen's Park and serving Ontarians, serving the residents of Mississauga—Malton—the same way this debate is talking about two different paths, but our end goal is the same: to build a province where every person is safe in their home. That is the shared goal that brings us to today.

Intimate partner violence is not just a crisis that we measure in numbers; it is an endemic issue, woven into the fabric of our communities, often hidden, often unspoken, and too often suffered in silence.

What is this motion doing? This motion is asking us to choose an approach and a path. But as I said earlier, both paths acknowledge one truth: Prevention is better than cure. When violence takes root, the cost is immeasurable; when we prevent it, the impact is limitless.

I want to thank all the members from both sides for coming together, for meeting with survivors, front-line workers, advocates, and for treating this issue with the seriousness it deserves. As the member from Simcoe—Grey said, there were over 150 stakeholders who came and were part of this consultation. We know this matter is serious and needs serious attention.

I want to take a moment to thank the member from Kitchener South—Hespeler, Jess Dixon, for her compassion, for her leadership throughout the work.

Madam Speaker, as we confront this issue, we must also acknowledge some of the communities where intimate partner violence is not reported or is mostly under-reported.

And when we're talking about intimate partner violence, we're talking about not one gender or the other; we're talking about everybody.

I do remember we were having a meeting, and back then it was about Black Lives Matter. One of the members in the meeting said, "If Black lives matter, what about the rest? Isn't it 'all lives matter'?" My daughter, Suvidhi, raised her hand and said politely, gently, "Absolutely, all lives matter. But if you have two children and one of them is struggling, you don't say, 'Both of the children matter.'" Yes, both of the children matter anyway. We are trying to

fix an issue. The issue here is supporting the community who needs it, the child who needs more help. That's why we are focused on Black Lives Matter.

In the same way, intimate partner violence affects all. But for the sake of this conversation, we'll be talking mostly of those who are affected most: women and girls, who are more prone to intimate partner violence than the rest.

For example, I am from a South Asian background, and studies show that nearly one in five women, about 20%, experience intimate partner violence each year, but a lot of them do not report. It is shameful, but the truth is truth, whether it is because of cultural stigma, family honour—I don't know; maybe it's fake honour—financial needs, worrying about their children.

I did talk to Malton Women Council, and I was amazed to see the work they're doing. Some of the feedback they gave me was touching, which I'll be sharing soon.

Sometimes it is an immigration issue. One of the partners is a resident; the other has applied and is worried about what will happen to them—I don't know.

Language barrier—"Will I be able to represent? Should I keep on carrying this? Should I suffer, or suffer in a different way?"

0930

Madam Speaker, under-reporting does not mean the issue is small; it means the suffering is silent.

Thank you to the members on both sides. Thank you for standing up and talking for those who cannot speak.

Again, going back to the path: When we speak about intimate partner violence, it is important that we choose our words carefully.

I want to share one more thing. When I was thinking that I had to speak on this, I felt for some time as if I am looking in the mirror. Some of the things which we have seen for generations—just because it was being done through generations doesn't mean it was done right or it was the right thing to do.

I'll give you an example. When I got married, being from a South Asian background, following the Sanatana Dharma, some of the things which our families have—because they were all joint families. When a woman gets married, all of a sudden she has a lot more responsibility towards the family, towards the religion, towards the honour. I'll give you some examples.

My wife, Aruna, and I met in university, and subsequently we got married. So we knew each other. We used to be together in university a lot of times. But the moment we got married, the elders in our family told her, "In our family, we don't call the husband by name." Seriously? I was 21. She was a teenager back then.

And this is not an excuse. I do remember the member from Bay of Quinte once said, all these things—when we say, "He was drunk" or "He was impulsive," these are only excuses. What I'm talking about is an excuse as well, and I'm ashamed of that.

Things like, women have to keep—to cover her head. All of a sudden, somebody is in university, she gets married, comes home, and now she has to cover her head

in front of the elders. Yes, definitely, elders need respect, and we need to respect them. But respect comes from the heart, not covering the head.

These are some of the things which have been going on for generations. If you ask somebody older, they'll give you 10 reasons why it was done and why it was the right way to do it, but the reality is, they're trying to justify what was done and what was wrong. Thankfully, these conversations—what we're doing today—are the reasons, over the generations, we have changed.

Madam Speaker, if you really look at a small example—for example, with women's rights. The voting rights for women were received in 1917, not before that. The first woman MPP to get elected for Ontario—was 1943. Eighty years later, we got the first woman Speaker. But I look at it as progress. Do I feel ashamed? Absolutely, I do feel ashamed.

Thanks to the conversations, thanks to Jess Dixon, thanks to the members on both sides—not just this side; both sides. Thank you for these conversations. Thank you for working to make sure—no matter how bitter the past is, let's have a conversation. Sometimes these conversations are not good conversations; they are difficult conversations, hard conversations. But we've got to do it.

Talking about the path—whether taking the Gardiner or taking the 401—the goal is the same.

Some of the members see it as an epidemic—something that suddenly appears, spreads quickly, and demands an urgent response, to be cleaned out right away. Cleaned out right away? Absolutely, no question. A need to clean? Absolutely. But intimate partner violence did not arrive overnight, and it will not disappear with a single vote or a single program.

That is why, on this side, we believe it is endemic. It is rooted in long-standing social norms, generational attitudes, economic pressures, and deeply embedded patterns of behaviour that have existed in every region, every culture, every ethnicity, at every income level.

Madam Speaker, when a problem is endemic, it means it is persistent, recurring and woven into the everyday lives of people, starting from the beginning—a child. That means our solutions cannot be temporary. They must be built around prevention, education, and long-term cultural change.

Viewing intimate partner violence as endemic also changes the way we see survivors. Instead of asking, "Why didn't she report?" or "Why didn't she leave?" we must ask, "What conditions made it so hard for her to seek safety?" The truth is that people do not stay silent out of choice; they're silent, many times, out of fear—stigma, financial barriers, cultural pressures—or the worry that no one will believe them.

One of the mothers had two children—and by the way, when we say she had to leave the house and go to a shelter—a shelter is not a five-star hotel; it is a room with about 15, 20 beds stuck to each other. One of them is in Malton. I thank SacredHand for doing what they're doing to support those who have no other way—they are there with a roof. She had two children—other women were also

going through pain—and, children being children, they were walking around, they were running around, they were making noise because they were not in school. The other women were getting affected. So this woman—politely, cursing herself; cursing, probably, God also—would take those children to the park, to the library, and come back in the evening when they were tired. But that's not life. She was probably debating: "Did I make a good choice by leaving the abusive environment to go to another troublesome environment, or should I have stayed in the abusive environment, where at least my kids had a roof? They were used to being in their home, in their own room. They were doing what they love to do. And we're wandering around now."

Recognizing this as endemic does not lessen its urgency; it actually sharpens it. It reminds us that we need consistent, steady action—not one moment of attention, but a sustained commitment to building a culture where violence cannot take hold.

We talked about the South Asian—where it is under-represented and much lower.

A great example was my dad, actually. He was such a great husband. Yes, they had disagreements, but that's not fights. I wish the whole world was like him and my mom. Ever since my dad passed away, we've seen a deterioration in my mom's health. She has everything that she needs. The only thing she doesn't have is the shoulder of my dad. A great example—I wish I could live even 10% of that.

0940

Madam Speaker, I talked about how prevention is better than cure. Once violence occurs, the harm is deep, emotionally, physically and economically. But when we focus on prevention, when we strengthen families and communities before harm begins, we protect lives long before anyone reaches a crisis point.

I always talk about, when somebody is dying of cancer because of their smoking, I wish somebody was there to tell that—rather than quit smoking, don't start smoking—prevention.

That is why experts at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are urging us to take a multi-level prevention approach, rather than relying on a single tool or reaction.

It begins with teaching safe, healthy relationship skills in schools, so young people learn communication, empathy and conflict resolution early in life, to give them great examples. Teach them at 16 so they don't have to worry at 26.

Prevention also means engaging the adults who shape culture: parents, mentors, teachers, employers—men and boys, absolutely.

When influential voices challenge harmful norms, entire communities shift.

It means creating supportive environments: safer schools, workplaces with zero-tolerance policies, and neighbourhoods where people feel connected rather than isolated. And it means strengthening economic supports for families, because financial stress is the most consistent risk factor for intimate partner violence.

It's so difficult to even think about these words: "intimate partner"—a partner with you; you shared your skin, shared your dreams, shared your life, shared your soul—and then comes the word "violence." There was a point in time, probably, when you met your girlfriend, boyfriend or whatever it is for the first time, and then you proposed—you probably wouldn't have proposed what you said after the journey was over. Where is that point in time when we moved from this to this? I wish we could stop it there, take it back, fix it and work it backward, to go where it was on the day one, not on the day end.

Addressing root causes, strengthening relationships, building communities where violence has no fertile ground to grow—and our government is standing.

Through programs like Ontario-STANDS, we are supporting shelters, crisis lines, violence prevention programs, and community organizations working directly with the survivors.

These actions matter. They save lives. But we must be clear: They're not the finish line, and we need to continue to work.

That's why it is important to know this: that this motion is saying it is an endemic, and we need to continue to work on it.

To conclude: Intimate partner violence is not a reality that any of us can accept as normal. It is not a private matter. It is not a hidden issue. It is not one person's responsibility; it's everybody's responsibility. It's a human crisis that calls every one of us to act.

I'm thankful to members from both sides for coming together, working together so that no one—and I mean it, no one—should have to face this, so that we can live together in harmony and prosperity.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Today I'm going to address the House with regard to government order number 8, which was previously put.

I want to take an opportunity, first of all, to recognize the extensive work done by all members of this House through the committee process, which was led by the member from Kitchener South—Hespeler. She has done, I think, an outstanding job with regard to this issue. Not only has she been a participant at the committee meetings, which have, in this particular instance, been extensive—meeting in several different communities across Ontario, and also hearing from many, many people—but in addition to that, the member herself has undertaken to write an extensive report, of approximately a thousand pages, which would, in any instance, be an accomplishment that any member of this Legislature could be quite proud of. But in this particular instance, to have written such an extensive report and such a detailed report is quite an accomplishment, and I want to recognize the member from Kitchener South—Hespeler for that accomplishment and for all the remarkable work that she has done. I can tell you that I have taken the opportunity to read a portion of the report. I certainly have not read the entire report, as it is, as I said, quite extensive—1,000 pages long—but I read

the part that was dealing particularly with the definitions that we were wrestling with, and I found that particular part of the report to be quite informative. I want to recognize the member for that effort.

I also want to recognize the other members of the Legislature who have taken part in the committee process, because I recognize that they did a lot of work, and I think they should be recognized for that as well.

On the substance of what is before us today, I think that it's worth talking about the aspects of what occurs.

What we have learned through the experts and also through the testimony of victims and people who have gone through these experiences is that this type of violence tends to be intergenerational. Once it occurs, it tends to occur again, not only from one generation, but to the next as well. I suppose that a lot of people much more educated than myself and much more expert than myself will be able to give explanations for why that happens or how that happens, and that's part of the work of the committee and part of the work of experts. But I did want to make that observation. That is part of the cycle we're trying to break. Whether we will succeed is up to the work that we do and up to the commitments that we make on a governmental level and on a community level and on a personal level. I don't think anybody in this chamber thinks that there is one magic bullet that's going to solve this, and I don't think anybody in this chamber thinks that there is one program or one approach that's going to solve this in an overnight fashion. I think we can all agree on that. It's going to take an approach which involves not only government agencies but also community groups and also personal commitments at a personal level. That's the type of thing that's going to help break this cycle. It's a cycle that needs to be broken, and we need to all work together to make it happen. So there is more work to do, and there is more work to do for all of us.

The second observation that I want to make is about the complexity of the problem. Where does this come from? What causes it? It's probably more than one cause. Other members of this Legislature have observed that sometimes the causes, as complex and numerous as they might be, reach a breaking point, and then the violence occurs. We all sometimes concentrate on the breaking point, but there are underlying causes that lead to the breaking point. That's the cycle that we're trying to break. So I thought it was worth making an observation about the complexity of the issue.

I also want to make a third observation, and the third observation is that we talk about gender-based violence, but of course, it also has to do with who is involved in the situation at the time—and how do we break that cycle? What approach do we take? The multiple number of approaches that have been taken and are being undertaken as we speak would address not only women in certain circumstances, but also men. I think that with regard to men in particular, there is an educational component here. I'll not pretend to be an expert in this area, but I'll leave it to the experts to explain and to hone on what that educational component is. While I'm not a psychologist or

psychiatrist by any means—there is probably a psychological factor as well, not only when it comes to men, but also when it comes to women. But I am speaking about men right now. There's probably a psychological factor to be dealt with as well. So when we come up with these strategies, we come up with strategies that address men and women. That is the third observation I wanted to make: that the strategies that are aimed at men might actually differ to the strategies that are provided for women.

0950

One of the strategies that we can talk about is Ontario-STANDS. It's an acronym for a long program: Standing Together Against gender-based violence Now through Decisive actions, prevention, empowerment and Supports. That's where the acronym comes from. That is a government program—I shouldn't call it a program; it's actually more like an approach—which this government has instituted in order to take steps to address these issues in our society and in our communities. The Ontario-STANDS program can be considered to be an action plan, and it has several different aspects to it. One is to make a more connected system where child protection workers, police, judges, social workers, educators and health care professionals collaborate—and that's not always the case, because, as we all know as elected officials, sometimes regardless of what is being delivered from the government, it tends to result in creating agencies that work perhaps well in and of themselves, but not so well with others. Sometimes it's difficult for agencies to work with each other, and sometimes it doesn't necessarily occur to them right off the bat that they should be reaching out to other government agencies or co-operating with other government-funded organizations which deliver programs or actually enforce the laws.

I'll take an opportunity to make a few observations here.

With regard to the enforcement of law, some people might wonder, "Well, how does this happen? How do these things occur?"

I thought it might be worth giving a brief explanation about how someone might go about getting a restraining order. That can happen in several ways, so I'll try to explain the ways that I am aware of.

First of all, if somebody is seeking an order in an instance where the police have not yet been involved, there is a way to do that. What generally occurs is that the person would make an appointment in front of a justice of the peace, perhaps—it might be another official appointed by the government—and then the person would swear a statement. That's called an affidavit. That would be a sworn statement, and it would contain information that that person has in their personal possession, or it might also contain information which has been received by another source. That person would identify the source and state that they believed that source of information. For example, somebody might say, "I am informed by person X, and I believe that"—and then they would say what they had to say. They might also say, "I personally witnessed

person Y do this. I personally heard person Y say this,” and they might also put that in the affidavit. Then that affidavit would be signed at the bottom by the person who is providing this information. Then it would be—what we say is “commissioned”—by somebody in front of whom they would swear it was true to the best of their information, knowledge and belief. Then that information might be put in front of a courtroom, might be put in front of a justice of the peace, who would then review that information and decide whether or not action would be taken. That order might be given on that day, after the justice of the peace or a judge reviewed that information. That justice of the peace might then issue an order, with or without the knowledge of the person against whom the order is issued.

Let us assume, in this particular instance, that the order was issued against the person without their knowledge. They would then be provided with an opportunity to challenge that order at a later date. This, of course, puts all of the onus on the victim—or the alleged victim, but I’ll just use the word “victim.” This puts all of the onus on the victim to protect themselves. This can be a tricky situation, because the person who is seeking protection might already be at the point where they need assistance from other people to get out of the situation that they are in. Placing a burden on them to do even more, to seek a court order, is just one more thing that they have to do. It might be something that they have to do to protect themselves, and that’s important to do, but they need to be provided with the strength and support to do that. That’s why many court offices have victim support services. Victim support services are there to assist people in getting through a process like this one. It’s paper-intensive, it’s rules-and-regulations-intensive, and that can help in some situations and not in others—because, as we said, this situation that we’re talking about today is complex.

One would assume that rules and regulations ought not to be needed in order to control this kind of behaviour, but we have those in place. But sometimes paper and rules and regulations don’t have the effect that we want them to have. That’s why we need enforcement.

That leads me to my next comments. What happens after the law enforcement officials become involved? What happens when police become involved?

You’ll often hear police officers say that they don’t like to receive calls involving intimate partner violence. They don’t like to respond to these calls because of their complexity. Sometimes police officers aren’t necessarily trained in the tools you need to deal with these situations. Police officers receive all sorts of extensive training. They receive extensive training in the use of firearms. They receive extensive training in physically controlling situations. They receive training in how to take command of situations. They probably receive less training in how to deal with interpersonal relationships between people who have a deteriorating relationship which has deteriorated to the point where violence has occurred. Certainly, in my discussions with police officers, this is the case. They tell me that these are complex situations. Police officers want to prevent the violence and want to prevent the harm that’s

occurring, but they don’t necessarily have the tools needed to do that, because the situations are complex, because they are intergenerational, because they are deeply rooted in issues that fall outside of law enforcement and really have to do with interpersonal issues and complex issues aside from that.

So, we have the situation where police become involved, and they will take the accused perpetrator into custody. They might release the accused perpetrator under certain circumstances. There is something called recognizance—a recognizance is something that the police officer might show to the person who has been arrested, and the person might be released upon their own recognizance. That means that the person reviews a document that’s put in front of them. The document might contain certain requirements. Those requirements might be things like not to come within 100 metres of a certain location, not to come within 100 metres of a certain person, not to communicate with a certain person, not to communicate with them directly or indirectly. It might contain conditions to abstain from the consumption of alcohol. It might contain conditions not to be in the possession of a firearm. It might contain various other conditions as well. And it’s quite possible that a person might be released upon their personal recognizance, which just is a fancy way of saying a promise or an undertaking. In more serious situations, where arresting officers don’t feel comfortable doing that, they might actually bring the accused person in front of a justice of the peace. The situation will be reviewed by a justice of the peace, and then a justice of the peace will decide whether or not the person gets released upon a personal recognizance or conditions of bail, which we will often refer to as bail.

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And then we come to a point where somebody might actually be required to have a surety. A surety is a person who assures that the accused person will report for their court date. That’s why the person is called a surety. The surety, typically, is a relative or a close friend who knows the accused person on a close basis. The surety is a person who presumably can exercise authority or can exercise influence over the accused person and assure that the person will actually appear for their next court date, their subsequent court dates. A surety might require the posting—or not—of a bond, might also require the posting of a financial guarantee. It’s not common in the province of Ontario or in the court system of Canada to require financial posting. It is more common that the financial portion of that is without posting or without payment to be collected afterwards—and we can have a long discussion, I think, about whether that’s effective or not. But it really comes down to this: the surety being the person who is going to exercise authority or influence over the accused person to come to court. Sometimes that surety has been a parent; it could be a friend. In cases I have seen myself, the surety has been the person’s sponsor through a recovery program. And there are other circumstances as well.

The reason I’ve talked about this is because we have, again, this complex problem in front of us and we’re trying

to find solutions, and we have this complex, lengthy and expensive solution that is the court system and the law enforcement system. And that is an absolutely necessary portion of enforcement and dealing with this issue. It is absolutely necessary. It must be done. It has to be in place, and it has to be enforced. But if we could find better ways of getting at this intergenerational problem, which is rooted in various causes—a better way than law enforcement or court systems. That, of course, is the preferable way. And that, I think, is part of the Ontario-STANDS program. The Ontario-STANDS action plan tries to find better ways of dealing with this issue, these intergenerational issues sometimes. I think that's a good thing.

We all need to mobilize our communities. We all need to mobilize our social groups. And we should be mobilizing government resources to eliminate this as far as possible—this endemic problem.

I'm glad to see, once again, that the committee has wrestled with this very extensively.

Again, I want to praise the member from Kitchener South–Hespeler for the remarkable work that she has done.

Finally, Madam Speaker, with that, I move that the question now be put.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Mr. Leardi has moved that the question be now put.

There have been approximately 8.5 hours of debate. I am satisfied that there has been sufficient debate to allow this question to be put to the House.

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

All those in favour of the motion that the question be now put, please say “aye.”

All those opposed to the motion that the question be now put, please say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

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

Vote deferred.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Orders of the day?

Hon. Steve Clark: No further business.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): There being no further business, we will be recessed until 10:15.

The House recessed from 1005 to 1015.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HOLIDAY EVENTS IN HASTINGS–LENNOX AND ADDINGTON

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you very much, Speaker. It's great to see you today.

I don't come here and stand in Ontario's House very often to brag, but today I'm bragging.

Some of my colleagues in this House have one Christmas parade in their home ridings; one festival of trees, one lighting ceremony, one holiday market.

But I have to brag today because in Hastings–Lennox and Addington, we have 15 different Santa Claus parades and dozens more holiday events happening between now and Christmas. From the Brighten the Night Christmas Parade in Maynooth to Napanee's holiday market, to the Tweed Festival of Trees, to the ATV parade in Tyendinaga, every corner of our riding is glowing with community spirit. Unfortunately, I can't attend every single one. I will try my best; I'll be very busy from now until the holidays.

But let me be clear, I'm not bragging for me; I'm bragging on behalf of the incredible organizers, volunteers, service clubs and community groups that make Hastings–Lennox and Addington such an amazing place to live. These are our neighbours who pour in countless hours to bring a little more light, laughter and connection to the communities.

So to all of my colleagues in the House: If one Santa Claus parade is not enough for you, you're always welcome to come join me in Hastings–Lennox and Addington. We have plenty more parades to go around.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

MPP Lisa Gretzky: I rise to speak about an epidemic that is claiming lives, shattering families, and devastating communities across Ontario: intimate partner violence.

IPV is not a private issue; it's a public health crisis. It's a health issue, a justice issue, a moral issue. And it's happening in every community across Ontario.

Twenty-six-year-old Ravina Maghera was killed by her partner just days ago in Windsor. My community is reeling from another femicide. We offer our condolences to everyone who knew and loved Ravina.

Since the pandemic, rates of domestic violence have surged. Shelters are full, and support workers are exhausted. Survivors are being told there's nowhere to go. The violence is escalating, and in many cases, it turns fatal. Women are dying, and children are exposed to trauma that will shape their lives forever. We must stop the cycle.

Last year, I brought forward the Intimate Partner Violence Epidemic Act, inspired by the number one ask of the Renfrew county inquest into the murders of three women. Over 150 organizations, numerous police services, and 106 municipalities have echoed that call—including my own. Two provinces have made the declaration, yet our provincial government refuses.

Naming intimate partner violence an epidemic is not simply symbolic; it's a declaration that we will no longer turn away. It's the first step towards coordinated, fully funded action that saves lives.

I'll keep raising the voices of survivors and victims' families in this Legislature until our government recognizes intimate partner violence for what it is, an epidemic, and they take urgent action to stop the violence.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): And not that we have had anyone abuse the time, but just a reminder: It is 90 seconds on the clock. I will stop you after 90 seconds.

HOUSING

Mr. Ted Hsu: For the last four months, Kingston has been number one in Canada, but not for something to be proud of. According to rentals.ca, Kingston has led cities in Canada in year-on-year average rent increases for one-bedroom apartments. Meanwhile, year-on-year rents across Canada have declined for 13 straight months.

Kingston was in a big hole in 2018, with one of the lowest rental vacancy rates in the country. We've been beating our provincial home-building targets in the last couple of years, but we've got a long way to go for housing affordability.

It's no surprise that studentification—expansion of a homogeneous student-housing area around post-secondary institutions like Queen's—has been pushing families out, directly contributing to urban sprawl.

Last week, the Ontario government announced \$83 million in funding to build 1,400 new student beds in a high-rise—high-density, on-campus housing for Toronto Metropolitan University. Let's do the same for Kingston.

1020

I call on the government of Ontario, the city of Kingston, Queen's University, and the Sydenham district neighbourhood association to be bold, to work together and build high-density, on-campus housing. Kingston needs this. Planners support it. The neighbourhood association supports it. Let's be bold, because housing touches everything. Housing that's affordable opens so many doors to solving social problems and fostering economic growth.

Let's build the future Kingston deserves.

HINDU HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. Deepak Anand: Madam Speaker, November is Hindu Heritage Month, a time to reflect on the rich spiritual, cultural and philosophical traditions of over one million Canadian Hindus. Guided by the values of "ahimsa," non-violence; "seva," selfless service; and the timeless ideal of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," "the world is one family," it is a way of life rooted in harmony, duty, compassion and respect for all living beings.

Hindu Canadians have made significant contributions in all sectors. Their achievements reflect the opportunities Canada provides to everyone.

Founded on Vijayadashami in 2021, based in Ontario with chapters across Canada, and aligned with the shared values of our province, the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce is promoting ethical prosperity, community collaboration, and inclusive economic growth. Grounded in the timeless values of "dharma," righteousness; "seva," service; and "samriddhi," prosperity, the chamber upholds the principles of hard work, integrity, and service deeply rooted in "Sanatan Dharm." Keep up the good work.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to all Canadians for their big-hearted embrace of every ethnicity, religion and culture. Canada's spirit of openness allows every community to thrive, contribute and celebrate their heritage with pride.

Happy Hindu Heritage Month. Hari om—which means "May God remove suffering and connect us to universal consciousness."

MEDICAL ISOTOPES

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'm glad to rise today to highlight a recent anniversary that all members should be made aware of.

On October 27, the Canadian Nuclear Isotope Council joined health care and isotope leaders from across the country in celebrating the 74th anniversary of the world's first-ever cancer treatment using cobalt-60, a critical Ontario-produced isotope. This historic first treatment took place in London, Ontario, back in 1951, at the Victoria Hospital, which is now part of the London Health Sciences Centre. In the decades since 1951, over 35 million cancer patients worldwide have benefited from cobalt-60 therapy, with each treatment clearly linked back to this first in London.

Since then, Canada has remained at the forefront of isotope innovation. Today, Canadian-produced isotopes are used around the world to diagnose and treat cancer, sterilize single-use medical devices, and support dozens of other industries.

London, the heart of southwestern Ontario, remains a hub for innovation. From administering the first publicly funded dose of Pluvicto in Canada to leading life-changing cancer research, the critical work of leaders in London continues to change lives across the province.

I want to thank all of the unsung heroes in research—the scientists, physicians, academics, administration and teams who lead in the development of these life-saving and life-changing developments.

This historic anniversary is a powerful reminder of London's enduring legacy in medical innovation, and a milestone that all Londoners and Canadians can take great pride in.

CRAFT BREWERIES

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: Many of you will know Bay of Quinte as one of the top wine regions in the country, but did you know we also have some of the best craft breweries in the nation as well? We are very proud of our incredible breweries, like Meyers Creek Brewing, Midtown, All My Friends, Matron, Slake, Prince Eddy's, and Parsons Brewing Co.

Ontario's craft breweries are a significant economic and cultural driver across the province, especially in rural and northern communities. Today, these small businesses and job creators employ 4,600 people full-time and contribute more than \$685 million annually to Ontario's GDP. Despite representing just 11% of beer volume sold in the province, craft brewers are responsible for 80% of brewing jobs and are often the largest employers in their region. Located in every region of the province—90% of Ontarians have a craft brewery in their community.

According to data from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, for every dollar spent at a locally

owned small business like a craft brewery, 66 cents stays in the local community, compared to only 11 cents of every dollar when consumers buy large, multinational brands. And from my independent testing, it tastes better too.

With that, I would like to welcome all the members of the Ontario Craft Brewers association—Scott Simmons, Jeff Dornan, Josh McJannett, Matt Johnston, Mandie Murphy, Matt Giffen, Natasha Fritzley, Peter Bulut, Jason Fisher, and Craig Prentice. Thank you for the great work you're doing across our province. Cheers.

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Speaker, on Friday, the Premier's jobs disaster deepened. More than 2,600 skilled trades workers—and the Ontario employers who depend on them—had their Ontario immigration nomination program applications returned after months/years of waiting. This is not just a policy failure; this is a moral one. These are human beings. Ontario invited them and said we needed their skills. They followed every rule, paid fees and taxes, built families and futures here based on the promise that their applications would be fairly processed. Lives were built on Ontario's word, and that trust has been broken.

One worker told me that his mother sold her jewellery so he could come here. Another supports two aging parents. And a third said, "Last year, Premier came to my factory. Told us Ontario needed us. Now I have a form letter in my hand. He has played with my future."

It is rich that the Minister of Labour cast sweeping accusations of misrepresentation. While these workers were building Ontario, he was sipping champagne in Paris. Leadership means taking responsibility, not shifting the blame onto vulnerable workers.

This is not a process of integrity. This is an injustice.

Ontario cannot claim to value skilled trades while they are treating people who build this province as disposable.

The minister must act: Reinstate the legitimate applications, restore transparency and fairness. The people who came here believe—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members' statements?

RUTH VOGEL

Hon. Steve Clark: I rise to recognize a true champion of our farm communities in eastern Ontario. For 22 years, Ruth Vogel served as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture's member service representative for zone 11, which covers Frontenac, Dundas, and Leeds and Grenville counties. It was more than just a job for Ruth. Supporting agriculture and farm families is her passion. She was incredibly dedicated, working behind the scenes and around the clock, organizing meetings, farm tours and special events. These activities raised the profile of agriculture and rural life for elected officials, students and the public. She helped people make a connection between the farm and

their plate, giving us an appreciation of why agriculture matters to all of us. The role was perfect for Ruth, who grew up on a dairy farm, where she lives today, growing corn, soybeans and hay.

She knows first-hand that the farm can be a lonely, exhausting and stressful place. That's why mental and physical wellness were often part of her outreach and displays at events. She truly cares about people.

Sadly, Ruth recently lost her mother, Magdalena, for whom she was a devoted caregiver. On behalf of eastern Ontario's agricultural communities and families, I want to extend my condolences, along with our deep gratitude to Ruth for her decades of service to the region's farmers.

Thank you for everything you've done.

AUTISM TREATMENT

Mr. John Jordan: The Ontario government is investing more than \$37 million over the next two years in 100 public and private autism service providers across the province to help more children and families access clinical services in the Ontario Autism Program.

I was very happy to see that this investment included funding for ConnectWell Community Health, serving families in my riding of Lanark–Frontenac–Kingston. ConnectWell Community Health received a two-year grant totalling \$400,000.

Leslie Greene, director of developmental services, said, "ConnectWell Community Health is thrilled to be a recipient of the workforce capacity fund for 2025-27. There is a significant need in our community for Ontario Autism Program core clinical services. These funds will assist families in navigating and accessing local services to support their child's development."

Funding for local service providers through the workforce capacity fund is part of the province's total investment in the Ontario Autism Program. Since 2019, Ontario has more than doubled the program's annual budget, bringing it to a total of \$779 million with the addition of a \$175-million investment through budget 2025. This new investment will continue to support enrolment of children and youth in core clinical services.

Investments in our riding and throughout Ontario will help autism service providers build and retain stable, skilled teams that will allow more families to access the services they need close to home.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Before we move on to introduction of visitors, I just want—I know we have a lot of people visiting us today. If your member is unable to introduce you, it's not their fault; it's my fault. I'm a stickler for time. But we all appreciate that you joined us here in the gallery.

1030

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Ernie Hardeman: I'd like to introduce Stephanie Nevins to Queen's Park. Stephanie is the executive

director of one of the best two nurse practitioner-led clinics in Ingersoll, Ontario.

MPP Wayne Gates: I'd like to recognize four guys who have come in from Fort Erie today: Elliott Jones, Blake Hudak, Cooper Ebert, and my good friend Keith Sutherland. They're up in the corner, all dressed up for Queen's Park. There you go.

Welcome to Queen's Park, guys.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Grewal: I want to recognize two individuals from the insurance brokers of Ontario. They also live in my riding of Brampton East. They are Saqib Mehmood—and also, the former minister of sport for Canada, Bal Gosal, is here with us today.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Stop the clock.

I apologize; I didn't realize we have a former member in our gallery: Eleanor McMahon from Burlington, who served in the 43rd Parliament—and Phil Gillies, the member who served for Brantford, 32nd and 33rd Parliaments. Welcome back.

Start the clock.

I recognize the member for Carleton.

MPP George Darouze: It's a great pleasure to welcome an outstanding delegation to the gallery today from the city of Ottawa.

We're joined this morning by Mayor Mark Sutcliffe and John Light from his office; the CEO of the Ottawa Board of Trade, Sueling Ching; as well as representatives from the Ottawa Board of Trade, Invest Ottawa, Ottawa Tourism, Ottawa Airport Authority, the Downtown BIA, Kanata North Business Association, BOMA Ottawa, and other stakeholders. All 30 of them are right here in our gallery.

I'd also like to especially highlight Carleton residents Scott Phelan, Sonya Shorey, and Michael Abbott.

It's an honour to have you here.

Mrs. Michelle Cooper: I welcome the brokers from the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario to Queen's Park and invite all members and staff to join their reception this evening. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd like to welcome Gabriel Wahl and Angie Chan to Queen's Park. Welcome to your House.

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy: I want to welcome to Queen's Park this morning my great friend and the mayor of Pickering—Kevin Ashe is here along with his wife, Karen O'Brien.

Also from Durham region, my first cousin and great friend Kevin Cahill and his wife, Kim Cahill, are here today. Welcome.

MPP Alexa Gilmour: Joining us today are the 101st Scouts, who meet at St. Olave's church in Parkdale–High Park. They're behind me in the gallery. They've come to learn more about the government and our jobs.

Scouts, your curiosity is fundamental to good citizenship. Keep asking us good questions.

Welcome to your House.

MPP Lisa Gretzky: It is my pleasure to welcome one of my constituents, Mike Fisher, who also represents a

group called Friends of Ojibway back home in Windsor. Welcome to the Legislature, Mike.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I would like to welcome marvellous Mandie Murphy from Left Field Brewery and terrific Troy Burtch from Great Lakes Brewery. They're here with the Ontario Craft Brewers—good Ontario jobs, good Ontario libation. Welcome to your House.

Mr. Adil Shamji: This morning, I had a chance to meet with the brilliant youth from the 101st Scout troop. I want to welcome them today and thank them for their curiosity and for their intellect. Welcome.

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson: I'd like to welcome, from Huron–Bruce, Natasha Fritzley from Cowbell Brewing and Aaron Armstrong from Teeswater Concrete.

Hon. Laurie Scott: I'd like to welcome Marlene Morrison Nicholls of Sentinel insurance, here with the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario. Welcome to the House.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'd like to introduce Jess Rogers from the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario, as well as Susan Somogyi and Chris Brillinger from family services. I'd like to introduce Jennifer Holmes Weier as well as Andrew Chung from Addictions and Mental Health Ontario, as well as Jennifer Smith, who is with the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council, and André Veilleux de l'Équipe de santé familiale académique de Montfort.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I also would like to welcome the members who are here today with the alliance of community organizations for important discussions about health care.

Hon. Steve Clark: I have two representatives here with the IBAO—two Brians: Brian Erwin, IBAO's eastern Ontario director, and Brian Purcell, co-owner of James Purcell Insurance Broker in Spencerville.

Hon. Michael Parsa: I'd like to welcome Adelina Fazelipour to Queen's Park. It's also her birthday. She's visiting from school today.

Adelina, happy birthday, and welcome to Parliament.

QUESTION PERIOD

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: My first question is for the Premier.

Last week, we found out that one of the Minister of Labour's hand-picked recipients of Skills Development Fund grants, Keel Digital Solutions, is now being audited for the funds that they received from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. It has actually been handed over to the OPP. This is the same company that was hand-picked by the Minister of Labour to receive more government funding after that audit had already begun.

Premier, what kind of due diligence did the Minister of Labour do before handing millions over to this company?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: I thank the member opposite for the question.

In fact, one of the measures that I implemented, when I became minister, for continuous improvement with this program was an across-government risk assessment process through the Skills Development Fund. As the member mentioned, we didn't have the results of that audit until after the Skills Development Fund rounds four and five. But what this is about is making sure we're supporting training of the next generation.

Just this morning, in fact, I was on a Bridgecon site of a bridge on Rosedale Valley Road, and I met a recipient of the Skills Development Fund, Lewis, through Oaks Revitalization—incredible work that the Oaks staff are doing to help folks get a second chance who have been justice-affected or justice-involved. This is the impact that these programs are having.

To support government priorities that I've already mentioned, we as a government have a moral imperative to fund to make sure we're supporting our \$200-billion infrastructure spend.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Back to the Premier: But that Minister of Labour, after the audit started, still gave money to Keel Digital Solutions.

I want to remind the Premier that Keel Digital Solutions scored 59 out of 100. It was a low-scoring application, and the Minister of Labour was out there bragging about how he hand-picked them to receive Skills Development Fund grants—bragging in the media. Then he was off to Paris for their lobbyist's wedding. And the next thing you know, he was at the Leafs game, sitting rinkside with that company's executives. Now that same company is being investigated by the OPP anti-rackets branch.

I want to ask the Premier again: After everything we know, Premier, isn't it time to fire this minister?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, that's incorrect. Actually, I was on there talking about a Mississauga investment in firefighters, our first responders.

In a rapidly changing economy, when tariff threats are south of the border, when tech and AI is disrupting our workforces, it's important that we have a fund to invest in training to support workers. And that's what we're doing.

It's not surprising that the members opposite don't support the 18,000 workers we're going to need to support small modular reactors. Or how about refurbishment and new nuclear projects? Of course, they want to shut those plants down.

We're going to make investments in critical infrastructure to support our \$200-billion plan. When I sit around the cabinet table, I've got to make sure we're supporting programs that are helping the next generation actually fulfill those projects we said we're going to build: hospitals, roads, highways and bridges—the same highways they oppose. We're going to invest in the projects

and the training pipelines to make sure we have a workforce.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Back to the Premier—but that minister couldn't dance any faster, boy, let me tell you.

A scathing Auditor General's report, an OPP anti-racketeering investigation under way—and a minister who is caught in the middle of it all.

The Premier's own chief of staff had to send out a notice to political staff this weekend to keep things quiet on Keel Digital Solutions.

1040

Clearly, there is something bigger going on here. And yet, the Premier continues to stand by his man.

I want to know, again, from the Premier, when he's finally going to address the dark cloud that is hanging over this government and fire this minister.

Hon. David Piccini: Let's look at some of the lower-scoring projects they're highlighting. Operating engineers, carpenters—it's not surprising that they don't support these projects, given that they're against every investment that puts these men and women to work. It's Highway 413, the Bradford Bypass—whether it's our transit investments that they voted against.

I think to Chris from Sudbury, who we spoke with, who has gone through that very carpenters' program—it gave him Red Seal certification; he's a Red Seal tradesman now—or Ashleigh, who said, "The opportunity to train on current equipment that is prominent in the industry is extremely beneficial to my apprenticeship." Of course, they were training on equipment from the Stone Age.

We've invested in programming to bring it to the 21st century—for a government that's actually investing in 21st-century infrastructure—and we're not going to apologize for doing that.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, my next question is for the Premier too.

But I can say, first of all, it is disgusting the way that that minister is pulling those hard-working people into his excuses to defend what they have done here.

Over the last week, I spent time in Sault Ste. Marie, listening to steelworkers at Algoma—municipal workers in Mississauga, in Peel; auto workers in Oshawa. And let me tell you, people are really scared out there. I'm sure you all heard it from folks in your ridings too over the last week. They are seeing jobs disappearing all around them, while this government continues to use this Skills Development Fund as their friends-and-family special, and I can tell you, everywhere I went, people said, "That's disgusting." That's what they said.

Clients of the Premier's campaign manager, Kory Teneycke, received \$100 million. Coincidence? I think not. And his favourite nightclub owner received \$11 million.

Speaker, how many permanent, full-time jobs were created by handing out taxpayer dollars to the Premier's close and personal friends?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: Again, it's unfortunate that the leader opposite can't actually name one worker, one program she has spoken to—because she hasn't visited any of them to talk to them about the impact that this program is having. In fact, I know that her office has reached out to a number of unions that have said, "You're not welcome on our training site," because they're appalled at what she has been saying.

For investments like training the workers for jobs of tomorrow—I've spoken about that operating engineer. We made the investments in the programming so she can actually operate brand new equipment that she's going to see on a job site.

Or the job site I was on this morning, giving folks a second chance—again, Oaks Revitalization, in partnership with LIUNA Local 183.

These are jobs that are supporting people in taking home very real paycheques to support an infrastructure plan that they oppose—an infrastructure plan that's building highways, roads and bridges that they oppose; that is investing in new nuclear that they oppose.

We have got to get a next generation into these jobs, into the skilled trades, and we're not going to apologize for making those strategic investments.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

Ms. Marit Stiles: I've been to a lot of training centres, actually, and had lots of tours. The one place I haven't toured yet is the strip club these guys were funding.

In Sault Ste. Marie, in Oshawa, in Hamilton, people are getting notifications of layoffs, while this Premier is letting companies pack up, and jobs walk right across the border. What they are not seeing is a jobs plan. This government is a jobs disaster. There is so much fear and frustration out there.

This is starting to look, I've got to say, a lot like the previous Liberal government's Jobs and Prosperity Fund scandal. The members opposite—many of them were in opposition in those days, and they called it a slush fund. We remember that.

I want to know from the Premier, when are you going to stop the pay-to-play scheme and actually deliver a jobs plan for Ontarians?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, over 100,000 jobs are supported through this fund. So when I look and assess, as minister, and we see a low-scoring project that has identified training, on the exterior façade, as an issue relative to the scoring, it's my job as minister to make sure we're supporting that infrastructure—to assess it, to look at it.

This sort of work is happening on the ground all over Ontario—the operating engineer that I mentioned, the carpenter, the folks I met this morning getting trained at the Bridgecon site.

These are important investments we're making to support the next generation. In a rapidly changing

economy, you've got to make those investments to support that training, and that's what we're doing. Again, it's not surprising that they're against that. They can't actually point to those projects, because those are with labour unions that have abandoned their party because they abandoned those workers. And why? Because the very projects that put those workers to work, the critical infrastructure, the new nuclear plant, the new highway—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Final supplementary.

Ms. Marit Stiles: Speaker, I've got to say that is not what I'm hearing from working people out there. What I'm hearing is that they feel like they have been thrown under the bus by this government.

All of those important projects that their own members' dues, by the way, are invested in, those training centres—all of those projects across this province that they have invested in and that they depend on are now under a cloud of suspicion.

One of those projects that went through the colleges and universities minister is being investigated by the OPP. We have the RCMP still investigating this government—a criminal investigation into the greenbelt. We have the science centre. We have Ontario Place. There's almost nothing you could touch now that isn't touched by some kind of scandal that this government is caught up in.

I want to know why the Premier will not fire this minister. Is it because he's the Premier's favourite bag-man?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for the Bay of Quinte.

Mr. Tyler Allsopp: Thank you to the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

I'm very happy to stand in this House today and defend our record on job creation because it is one of record job creation. We've created over a million new jobs in this province since 2018. We created 87,000 new jobs in the first three months of this year, before the tariffs kicked in. Between June and September, we created 20,000 jobs in manufacturing. In October alone, we created 55,000 jobs, leading this country and surpassing the entire United States by 30%.

If you want to talk about how to fight the tariffs—we put forward \$30 billion in tariff supports, including off-setting taxes for businesses and refunding WSIB premiums; a billion more dollars into the Skills Development Fund; \$600 million for Invest Ontario; \$200 million for shipbuilding; and \$500 million for critical mineral processing. What's your plan? To vote against our plan. Which of those do you think is a more compelling vision for the people of Ontario?

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the Premier.

I don't know about your house, but in my house every Sunday is a football day. My wife, Linda, has the TV on all day, and she's a long-suffering Miami Dolphins fan.

Halfway through Sunday morning, I heard her in the kitchen, and she said, "I can't take it anymore. They just won't stop." And I said, "What?" She said, "Those Protect Ontario ads. They're not helping anybody. They're not getting anybody a job." And I said, "Linda, just wait. Calm down. That's not true. The Premier is protecting one job—the Minister of Labour."

Speaker, through you to the Premier: Why is the only job in Ontario the Premier is protecting the Minister of Labour's job?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, when we've got a tariff—a threat from the States that is having a very real impact on workers of this province, we're investing in critical projects. We've created the climate, as you heard, to lower taxes—something they refused and were incapable of doing when they had the chance to run this province. They raised taxes. They drove those manufacturing jobs out of communities like mine—out of all of our communities. We're bringing those back, and it's not without its challenges.

Economic headwinds come our way, and how do you respond? You have a Premier standing up for workers of this province. We're rolling our sleeves up with labour organizations to support training of workers, to protect those jobs. We're sourcing through a made-in-Ontario procurement strategy that actually builds things in this province again; stockpiled medical supplies from China that that previous government supported.

This is about a government that's investing in training, that's supporting lowering taxes, investing in workers, and making sure we have a plan for critical minerals.

Not surprising, his wife was against it—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

1050

Mr. John Fraser: I think my wife was against the ads, but we can have a discussion about that later.

The thing that Ontarians really need protection from is this Minister of Labour shovelling \$2.5 billion out the door to friends and insiders and lobbyists.

I want to get this straight: The file that the minister is in conflict on—the one that his friend was lobbying for—Keel Digital Solutions was the subject of an audit and in a forensic audit, and then the minister intervened and signed off on it. That's shocking. If the minister worked for any above-board organization in this province, in this country, he would lose his job. He would be fired.

So my question is, why is the Premier of Ontario protecting the Minister of Labour?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, as I said, when we're investing in projects that support the building of this province, again, what do we look at, when we're on this side of the House? Are we going to support projects that are advancing our build agenda, to build the critical infrastructure we need, to support and protect and defend first responders of this province, to invest in training with labour partners that I mentioned—carpenters, operating engineers?

I was at LIUNA 506 for their shop steward seminar this weekend. We heard from labour leaders—in fact, we had federal counterparts of theirs, federal Liberal members, who were there supporting this Premier's plan to support labour. Why do those members support this government? Because our projects are putting their members to work. They see a government with a vision—a vision to build new nuclear; a vision to mine the critical minerals in the north that we're going to need that are having an impact on people like Jennifer, who've I've referenced before, supported through SDF, working on a mine in the north.

This is a Premier, this is a government, that's got a plan to build, and it's not surprising that the men and women who actually build are supporting this plan, because it puts them to work; it helps them collect a better job with a bigger pay—

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

Mr. John Fraser: So, \$27 million to bars and nightclubs in downtown Toronto, and \$10 million of that to a strip club owner—that's all I have to say to that answer.

So the question you have to ask yourself is—the job that the Premier is really protecting is his own, when he's protecting the Minister of Labour.

In this \$2.5-billion Skills Development Fund scandal—it feels like the greenbelt, and we know that in the greenbelt, all roads led to the Premier's office. And the same thing is true here. It's all the same kind of stuff: grants for bars and nightclubs, strip club owners, endorsers, donors, lobbyists, party insiders. It's all the usual suspects, the friends of the Premier.

So the question that I have is, did the Premier or his office intervene on behalf of any low-scoring Skills Development Fund applicants? Yes or no?

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, no—and there is the member again denigrating hospitality workers.

Let's look at the event spaces in downtown Toronto—some of the largest event spaces, to support events like the True Patriot Love gala or large events in downtown Toronto. That member is denigrating the only spaces that can support events of that size. These are men and women in front-of-house, back-of-house; former staff members of the previous government, who are working with the hospitality workers' union on the front lines of supporting men and women in a ravaged sector, through the pandemic, that we're supporting with better training.

We're not going to apologize. We have a world-class destination in Toronto. We've got to support the event spaces that put on some of the largest events our city sees. We're supporting the men and women—the front-of-house, the back-of-house, the hospitality workers who are the engine of our tourism economy, and we're not going to apologize for doing that.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. John Fraser: My question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

We know that an investigation was put into Keel with regard to the audit that the Ministry of Training, Colleges

and Universities did and that it was referred to the unit inside your ministry for forensic audit, and that while that was happening, the company got another grant from the minister.

So I guess the question is, who's on first here? How does it happen that you're putting out a grant to someone who's in a forensic audit? A forensic audit is—what you're saying to that person is, “We don't trust what you're telling us.” I guess my question to the minister is, how the heck did that happen?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Minister of Colleges and Universities.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: In 2023, a routine audit raised concerns about an external service provider. We do many routine audits every year. That process identified irregularities that led to a comprehensive forensic audit of the organization in question. The results of this audit, received on November 5, recommended that the matter be referred to the Ontario Provincial Police. Within 24 hours of receiving this report, the referral was made. All payments associated with this provider are currently under review, and further actions will be taking place based on the outcome.

Out of respect for this process, I will not be commenting further on this matter.

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

Mr. John Fraser: You missed the question. The question is, how did you internally allow this to happen? This is the people's money, right? How can that happen?

If I were the President of the Treasury Board, I wouldn't want to defend this minister either.

For God's sake, they gave money to a company called Scooty that does e-scooters.

Interruption.

Mr. John Fraser: Even the baby is upset.

So I guess the question that I have here is, how can the people of Ontario trust that the President of the Treasury Board is protecting their interests when companies under a forensic audit are getting a grant from this government? I would like an answer to that question.

Hon. Nolan Quinn: As I said earlier, within 24 hours of receiving the results of this audit, the matter was referred to the OPP. As I also said, out of respect for the OPP's process, I will not be commenting any further.

What I would like to comment about is the record investments into post-secondary education. In the last 19 months, we've invested almost \$2.5 billion into the post-secondary sector—\$1.3 billion to stabilize the sector, because your federal counterparts have destabilized post-secondary right across the whole country. On top of that, we've invested another billion dollars, in budget 2025, which I will remind you, you voted down. The member opposite voted down on that billion dollars. Part of that was \$750 million of STEM funding, which will fund up to 20,000 new funded seats in STEM programming, on top of the 70,000 grads we produce every year. On top of that, we're also funding new nursing, new teaching and new construction seats.

We'll continue being there for the sector, while you'll continue pointing out everything that we should be working on, and we'll continue working on that without the help of yourself.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Back to the minister: While you've been shovelling \$2.5 billion out the door in this skills development scandal, 10,000 workers at colleges have lost their jobs. So I don't think you should be too proud of what's going on.

The question here is, how is it that a company under forensic audit—actually, here's a better question: How is it that all of their grants haven't been audited and gone to a forensic audit? Can the minister answer that question? Can the President of the Treasury Board answer that question, as to whether there's a red flag on Keel Digital Solutions and we're going through everything, all the money that you've given them? You've given them a lot of money. I think it's probably close to \$40 million. That's a lot of money. Minister?

Hon. Nolan Quinn: What I will remind the member opposite is that operating funding is the highest it has ever been in Ontario's history. It's estimated to be \$5.8 billion this year alone, which is a 12% increase from 2023-24 and an 8% increase over last year.

We know that the people of Ontario elected this government because they trust us with the post-secondary sector. They know we will make fiscally responsible decisions. They do not trust the opposite Liberals to be able to do that because, let's be honest here, the last time the Liberals were in power—tuition went up almost 43% under the Liberals, when they were in power. We have high inflation right now and unaffordability right across all of Canada. We just know that if the Liberals were in power, students would not be able to afford to go to post-secondary education.

We'll continue being there for the sector time and time again.

1100

TENANT PROTECTION

MPP Catherine McKenney: Speaker, in 2018, the Premier stood in front of voters and promised, “I won't take rent control away from anyone. Period.” He said he would maintain the status quo. But Bill 60 guts tenant protections. It cuts notice periods in half. It fast-tracks evictions. And his own Attorney General admitted that he wants to end month-to-month leases so that corporate landlords can adjust tenancy arrangements based on market conditions.

Speaker, can the Premier show us one single study, one piece of evidence, any data at all that proves that kicking more people out of their homes faster will build a single new unit of housing?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Hon. Rob Flack: What the opposition doesn't want to admit is that rent costs are coming down because we're

creating the conditions to get more rental businesses started.

Speaker, since 2022, we have seen 51,000 new starts. We've seen 17,000 starts over last year, up 38%, with supply—and we're creating the conditions to get that supply. It creates competition, and with competition, rents get lowered. We're seeing a 40-month low in terms of what rents cost people in this province.

We are strengthening the Landlord and Tenant Board. We're bringing balance back to the Landlord and Tenant Board. For too long, delays and efficiencies have hurt this province, have hurt that sector—such as young professionals looking for their first place to live.

We will always protect our most vulnerable with a balanced Landlord and Tenant Board.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Ottawa Centre.

MPP Catherine McKenney: Speaker, this Premier didn't answer the question—because they can't, because this bill doesn't build homes; it destroys housing security. Over 80,000 Ontarians are homeless right now. The LTB is broken because they broke it; not because tenants have too many rights.

So let me ask this directly: When a single mother gets evicted in seven days instead of 14 because her ODSP check is late, when a senior loses their appeal because you cut their time in half, when students are kicked out so that corporate landlords can jack up their rent, how does this build the housing that we desperately need in this province?

Hon. Rob Flack: Speaker, we have an obligation, we acknowledge, to protect our most vulnerable in this province.

People feeling the ravages of chronic homelessness is indeed a difficulty.

Speaker, the bottom line is, when you take a look at—and here's a stat—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order.

Hon. Rob Flack: They don't like the realities here. But our total recorded 20,480 shelter spaces in 2025—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Order. Windsor West will come to order.

Hon. Rob Flack: —with 18,215 spaces occupied—88.9%. That is down from 95% occupancy.

There's progress being made—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The opposition leader will come to order.

Hon. Rob Flack: —much more to be done. Progress is being made.

We have significant investments coming ahead. We're going to be working closely with the National Housing Strategy, the federal government and our municipal partners.

While homelessness remains difficult in this province, we are seeing some progress. I told you the results. The Landlord and Tenant Board is part of that progress.

We're bringing fairness, we're bringing balance back to the Landlord and Tenant Board. And the Attorney General is going to do a great job of making sure more hearings are heard often.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Lee Fairclough: On Thursday, we heard from the Patient Ombudsman that complaints from the health care system have risen again, and it highlighted cases of people leaving emergency rooms without being seen.

We know the health care system is being underfunded by \$3.4 billion this year. Yet, this government refuses to acknowledge or even address the crisis facing patients, front-line staff and health care organizations.

This is a matter of priorities, and we know exactly where this government's priorities lie. Since last week, we've learned more from the Skills Development Fund. We've learned that more than \$7 million went to two dental organizations with direct family ties to the previous minister, and the father of one of those dentists received \$3 million for their business. The police are now investigating another grant recipient that received \$37 million in taxpayer money under the government's watch.

Given this \$2.5-billion skills development scandal, will the minister do the honourable thing and resign?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Essex.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I'm happy to address the funding of the health care system, which the member just spoke about in her question.

When this government first took office in 2018, the health care budget for the province of Ontario was approximately \$62 billion. It now stands at over \$90 billion, which is an increase of approximately 50%. The investments that this government has made in the health care system in the province of Ontario, which I might add is a publicly funded health care system, are historical. Nobody has invested more money in the health care system in the province of Ontario than this PC government and this Premier.

We will continue with those investments because those investments are important to the people of Ontario. They believe in their publicly funded health care system, and we are there to continue that system, because we believe it is important.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Etobicoke–Lake-shore.

Ms. Lee Fairclough: I just do want to remind that we have the lowest per capita spending in health care in the country by far.

Last week, I was in Ingersoll, where I heard about the impact of the auto plant closure that is hitting families and small businesses hard. Affordability is a real concern.

Yet, in the most recent round of Skills Development Fund grants, nearly two thirds of the \$345 million went to organizations led by PC donors.

People in communities like Ingersoll are losing jobs, and people are feeling let down.

The process behind the selection of grant recipients in the \$2.5-billion Skills Development Fund scandal is blatantly unfair—not transparent, nor accountable.

How does the Premier justify the labour minister staying in this role?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The Minister of Labour.

Hon. David Piccini: Speaker, as I've said, ministerial oversight to ensure we're supporting government priorities that get people jobs and get them to work in critical sectors of our economy—the member spoke about automotive.

The Premier and I had a good sit-down with members of Unifor. We've supported them through the Skills Development Fund, with respect to EV, with respect to hybrid, adaptability, ensuring we have a workforce that have the skills that they need. It has been tough. I was on the front line with Unifor members. I was chatting with them in Brampton the other day, and I understand, this is challenging. It's tough. But what they want to know is that they've got a Premier who will have their backs, who will make sure we have procurement policies that support “buy in Ontario, made in Ontario,” a Minister of Economic Development who works to create the conditions to attract world-class investments. We've seen billions upon billions—over \$50 billion in investments to support that sector, and we've got to weather it.

We've got to work with members of our labour partners to support the training, to have the backs of workers, to create a competitive climate that supports them. We're investing in their action centres. We've been responsive to the redesign of that program to support their needs, and we'll always have their back.

ONTARIO ECONOMY

MPP George Darouze: My question is for the Minister of Finance.

Speaker, people across Ontario want to see our economy continue to grow and thrive. They want more jobs. They want safe supply chains. And they want our government to keep standing up for them as global threats grow.

We all see what's happening around us—new tariff threats from Donald Trump, rising trade risks, and pressure on our businesses and workers.

Last week, our government released the fall economic statement. It showed a clear plan to protect Ontario, to build and to keep our economy moving forward.

Can the minister explain how the fall economic statement will help protect Ontario jobs and support local businesses in the face of rising trade threats?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the member for Peterborough-Kawartha.

Mr. Dave Smith: Let's actually take a step back in history here. Back in the spring, we released our budget for 2025-26, and it had some fantastic measures. Just last week, we did the fall economic statement, giving Ontario all the information that they need to know about what we're doing and how we're progressing on it.

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Let's talk about what that fall economic statement was all about. It's about unleashing Ontario's economy. How are we doing that? We're doing it through things like the Ontario Together Trade Fund—a \$100-million increase in that, because we want to make sure that companies in Ontario are prepared and have the tools that they need to continue in that fight against tariffs with Donald Trump—but not just that; we also have the Ontario Made Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit. That is a tax credit for companies to reinvest back into themselves here in Ontario to give them the strong business sense that they need in order to continue having a strong economy here in Ontario.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

MPP George Darouze: Thank you to the member for his answer.

Speaker, we all know that Ontario's strength comes from our workers and our industries. Steel, auto, mining, manufacturing, information technology—these sectors support whole regions and thousands of families. But they face real risks today. Unstable markets, rising costs, high interest rates, and pressure from decisions made from outside our borders—including threats from our friend Donald Trump—are hitting Ontario industries hard.

People want to know that their jobs are protected. They want our government to continue supporting them when times get tough and to keep sectors strong.

Speaker, can the minister explain how our government is protecting major industries and supporting workers as global trade threats grow?

Mr. Dave Smith: The entire purpose of this is to make sure that Ontario is the greatest place in the G7 to invest, to do business. That is what we're doing. And how are we doing it? We're driving prosperity, and we're protecting jobs.

Just look at Darlington, with the SMRs that are being built there—18,000 construction jobs being created. Ontario is the leader worldwide in SMR technology. We will show the world—we will be the first to connect SMRs to the grid.

On top of that, when you look at what the investment is at Algoma Steel, the electric arc furnaces—the steel industry is one that has been very severely hit by tariffs. What are we doing? We're protecting those workers in Algoma. We're protecting that industry. We're making sure that Ontario has the strength that it needs in steel—all of this while keeping a clear path to balance.

And you don't just have to ask us about it; ask the credit agencies who have said Ontario has a clear path to balance. That's why they have given us the upgrades.

LANDLORD AND TENANT BOARD

MPP Lise Vaugeois: To the Premier: In 2018, your government fired all experienced Landlord and Tenant Board adjudicators, left positions vacant for years, and then appointed inexperienced adjudicators.

Kinna-aweya Legal Clinic does incredible work, serving people all over northwestern Ontario, and it is one

of over 130 organizations calling for the repeal of Bill 60 because it scapegoats tenants for a mess your government created and will push thousands more into homelessness.

Premier, will you fix the Landlord and Tenant Board so that both tenants and landlords can receive timely justice?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Doug Downey: That's pretty rich coming from the other side, who failed to support this government when we put \$26 million into fixing a back office that was left in ruins by the previous government, supported by that party. That's just one piece.

The second piece we did is increase the number of back office administrators to help with the flow. Last year, there were 106,000 cases heard—and the year before that was 80,000. So the increased number, while it was significant—at the same time, we decreased the backlog. We have decreased the backlog by 80%, and we are almost at balance.

They also didn't support when we doubled the number of adjudicators from 40 to 80—full-time adjudicators. They are trained, they're in seats, and they're doing hearings.

And this member from that party supported none of it.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Thunder Bay—Superior North.

MPP Lise Vaugeois: I must note that they created the backlog in the first place. I'm glad you're trying to address it—but, frankly, it's not because we didn't vote for it.

The elimination of rent controls and easy approvals for above-guideline rent increases has led to thousands of people being unable to afford a place to live, yet fast-tracking evictions is this government's idea of addressing homelessness. You also removed in-person hearings, making it very difficult for low-income tenants to get a fair hearing.

Speaker, through to you the Premier: If the government's goal is to restore fairness to landlord-tenant relations, will you reinstate in-person hearings and hire sufficient qualified adjudicators so that tenants and landlords can receive timely and fair hearings?

Hon. Doug Downey: Madam Speaker, I find it very unprofessional—the vitriol that she has for adjudicators. Our tribunals are full of professional adjudicators; people who have been recommended by the tribunals, appointed, trained, and they're in seats. They do very serious and important work. They do work that is important for both landlords and tenants. To suggest that they have some sort of agenda or that there are some sort of inadequate individuals in those seats is an absolute insult to the hundreds of professionals who are working for the province on behalf of both landlords and tenants.

Madam Speaker, I am very proud of our record of those who have been appointed to the Landlord and Tenant Board, the Social Benefits Tribunal, the animal care—all 13 of those tribunals are working with professionals. I'm very proud to stand behind every single one of them who we've appointed.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: When I got here to Queen's Park, I hoped we could advance some important issues. Instead, we're seeing that this government is lighting money on fire, with a fantasy tunnel under the 401. And because of the \$2.5-billion Skills Development Fund scandal, we're now seeing a forensic audit referred to the OPP, and \$10 million has gone to organizations associated with a strip club.

Meanwhile, we've got a youth unemployment crisis, and Ontario is not taking the necessary steps to ensure that we can shape the future of AI, instead of it shaping us.

Speaker, through to the Premier: We should be talking about important things like developing a strategy on AI. But is this government's current strategy to distract the public with Skills Development Fund scandals?

Premier, when will the scandals end?

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

Hon. David Piccini: I thank the member opposite for that important question.

We heard earlier from the interim leader there, highlighting a project that supports the fintech sector—AI. You can't have it both ways. You can't say, "But SDF takes money from the post-secondary section"—which we determined, from the minister, is false.

And then we actually find out that the Skills Development Fund works in partnership with colleges and universities—like the AI project supported by the Brampton Board of Trade and Toronto Metropolitan University that's actually helping people in the fintech sector. In fact, the outcomes of that specific program, a third of the way through—has seen them exceed 50% of their employment target.

That's what we're doing—supporting emerging sectors like AI. You do it by creating a competitive climate.

I know that member would reflect back on previous decisions that previous Liberal governments made and likely admit that the high-tax agenda that drove out business, that drove out manufacturing—surely, was that wrong? I think it was. That's why we lost those manufacturing—

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member from Ajax.

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: It seems like the government is happy to continue to talk about the Skills Development Fund and the scandals that we see time and time again, instead of taking responsibility for seven years of sticking its head in the sand.

I've introduced a private member's bill that would create a made-in-Ontario strategy on artificial intelligence. It's a plan to retain and invest in our world-class talent and support our post-secondary institutions. It's a plan to grow Ontario's economy to make sure that every person and region in our province can win on AI.

Ontario does have all the tools it needs to be successful, but it doesn't have a plan, it doesn't have a strategy, and it needs to take action.

Speaker, will the government commit to creating a plan on artificial intelligence by supporting my bill on Wednesday and sending it to committee so that members in this chamber can hear from experts and stakeholders on AI?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): To the Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement.

Hon. Stephen Crawford: To the member opposite: I can tell you that the government of Ontario has a plan with respect to artificial intelligence. In fact, I spent the summer travelling and meeting AI companies.

Let me tell you a little bit about our AI ecosystem here in Ontario. Ontario is the second-largest tech cluster in North America after Silicon Valley—400,000 workers right here in Ontario; last year, 101% growth in AI jobs; over \$2.6 billion invested. Over 17,000 jobs directly related to AI were created last year here in Ontario—also, 70 new AI companies created right here in Ontario; 27 new companies moving to Ontario. That's a 312% increase year over year.

We are leading the pack across Canada in AI, both in adoption and forward-looking legislation.

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TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

MPP Monica Ciriello: My question is for the Minister of Transportation.

People in Hamilton know how important strong roads and highways are. Every day, thousands of Hamiltonians use them to come to Toronto for work, school and appointments. My residents rely on safe roads that keep traffic moving and keep our economy strong.

For years, under the Liberals, major projects were delayed. Drivers sat in traffic. Families lost time. And businesses paid the price. But our government and this minister are taking real action. We are rebuilding our roads. We are fixing key links. And we are working with our municipal partners to get it done.

Hamilton commuters depend on the Gardiner to get where they need to go.

Speaker, can the minister please explain how the government is helping drivers by rebuilding the Gardiner faster and protecting Ontario's infrastructure?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Thank you to the member from Hamilton Mountain for her question. Speaker, we were told that it would take three years to repair the Gardiner Expressway, one of the most critical and vital pieces of infrastructure in this province. There are over 140,000 people who travel the Gardiner each and every single day.

That's why Premier Ford stepped in to ensure that we invested an additional \$73 million, to ensure that this project went 24/7—and ultimately saved us over 18 months. We've completed the Gardiner, and it is now open 18 months ahead of schedule. This investment will save drivers over 22 minutes each way, and it continues on our plan to build this province.

Whether it's the Gardiner, building Highway 413 or the Bradford Bypass, we're going to continue to get shovels in the ground.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Supplementary?

MPP Monica Ciriello: Thank you to the minister for his answer and for his leadership.

Speaker, people in Hamilton know all too well what gridlock feels like. When the Gardiner slows down, Hamiltonians—my residents—are impacted. Our workers, our students and our families rely on that route every single day to get where they need to go.

Unlike the NDP and the Liberals, we know that gridlock has real impacts on daily lives. Long delays hurt our economy, slow down goods, and take precious time away from loved ones.

Our government knows we cannot grow an economy without strong roads. We can't accept travel times jumping by more than 200%. We need faster action and smarter building.

Speaker, can the minister share how cutting the Gardiner construction timelines in half will help Hamiltonians and protect Ontario's economy?

Hon. Prabmeet Singh Sarkaria: Studies suggested that this gridlock would cost over \$273 million over the years. That's why we stepped in with a proactive plan to ensure that we had 24/7 construction on the Gardiner Expressway, not only saving \$273 million in productivity, but also getting it open 18 months in advance—22 minutes back in individuals' time when you're travelling to and from the city. That is real change.

Gridlock costs this economy \$56 billion, and that is why we are continuing on our plan to invest over \$100 billion between transit projects and highway projects. Whether that be the Hamilton LRT, which is another project that we are currently delivering on, or whether it be highway infrastructure projects along the QEW and the expansions that are coming there, we are committed to building in this province, and we're going to continue to get shovels in the ground and deliver results.

AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: My question is to the Premier.

CAMI workers have been stuck waiting for updates about Minister Joly's talks with GM—but that deadline came and went with nothing at all. The federal government got GM to the table and, at the very least, pretended to stand up for workers. It has been almost a month. From the province, it has been crickets.

What has the Premier and his government done to support CAMI workers—because right now, it looks like a solid nothing.

Workers deserve far better than a government that chooses silence over standing with them.

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

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, President Trump's tariffs are causing chaos and uncertainty across the country. The global economy—we are seeing downward pressure on consumer spending in the auto sector and beyond.

Rest assured that we are in very close contact with GM and with our labour partners. The company knows that their Ontario operations are integral to the success of General Motors. That's why they're exploring new opportunities for the Ingersoll facility, along with our government. We're going to be there to support all the workers who are affected, whether it's through the \$20-million Protect Ontario Workers Employment Response Centres or other supports that we are providing.

We will never turn our backs on Ontario's world-class auto workers.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for London North Centre.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: Speaker, I understand the Premier is quite busy shovelling money to his donors and is worried about the RCMP investigation, but he could at the very least show up at CAMI in Ingersoll and stand up for workers.

The workers at CAMI are strong. They said, "Nothing comes in and nothing goes out. If" GM tries "to remove even one single thing from the plant, we are ready to take over. We are not kidding ... We will do whatever it takes to protect our jobs, our members and the future of this plant."

This government could learn from the backbone of these workers.

The Premier hasn't even shown his face in Ingersoll.

My question: Will the Premier do whatever it takes to protect CAMI jobs and the future of the plant?

Hon. Victor Fedeli: Speaker, back in 2018, every single auto company was in trouble, and every single auto company was preparing to leave Ontario, like they had before we were elected. Premier Ford said, "Enough is enough. What do we need to do to save the 100,000 auto worker jobs?"

We made investments. We attracted companies from around the world. We have more investments—\$46 billion worth of investments here in the province of Ontario.

These parties across voted against all of these investments to save those 100,000 workers, and they continue to vote against every support that we put in place.

ADDICTION SERVICES

M^{me} Lucille Collard: My question is for the Minister of Health.

Speaker, just weeks ago, I asked this government to invest in front-line solutions to the toxic drug crisis. The minister responded by touting HART hubs—but what we're seeing in Ottawa tells a different story.

The Sandy Hill supervised consumption site is now being forced to cut weekend hours, not because the need is going down, but because provincial funding has not kept pace with soaring demand. Over half of overdoses are already happening outside the site. These aren't numbers; these are lives.

So I ask again, how can the minister claim to be addressing this crisis when her government's inaction is

literally forcing life-saving services to scale back while overdoses rise in our streets?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The member for Essex.

Mr. Anthony Leardi: Speaker, we heard the message loud and clear from the parents of the province of Ontario that they were tired of stepping over needles on the sidewalks as they walked their children to school in the morning.

That is why we took the action to shut down the drug injection sites that were located within 200 metres of either a school or a child care centre. We don't want our children exposed to that type of activity on their way to school or on their way to the child care centre.

We have implemented HART hubs—"HART" stands for homelessness and addiction recovery treatment. It's a place where you can go if you want to recover from an addiction. It's a place where you can go to get your life back and to get back on the road to recovery. We now have approximately 20 HART hubs open in the province of Ontario. This is the road to recovery, and we support the HART hubs.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Ottawa–Vanier.

M^{me} Lucille Collard: Speaker, I'll respond to that: We don't want our children to die.

The consequences of underfunding are playing out in real time. This year alone, Sandy Hill consumption and treatment services diverted 86% of overdoses from ERs. Without weekend coverage, those overdoses will happen in alleyways, stairwells and washrooms, placing more pressures on hospitals, paramedics, police, and small businesses.

Meanwhile, this government squanders \$2.5 billion with its slush development fund.

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In October, I warned that if the consumption and treatment services are weakened, communities will pay the price. And that's exactly what's happening.

Will the minister finally acknowledge that cutting hours without replacing support is not a solution, and commit to stable, sufficient funding and a coordinated strategy before more lives are lost?

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I recognize the associate minister for addictions.

Hon. Vijay Thanigasalam: Madam Speaker, the existing drug injection sites act like a revolving door. Instead, our government wants to focus on stopping the revolving door and stopping the whole system of giving tools to the people for this drug injection site.

We want to focus on the path to recovery. That's why we have invested four times more at each HART hub across the province—getting almost \$6.3 million.

I'm going to give you some data that I think everyone in this House will agree with, Madam Speaker. The drug injection site system only serves 1,600 people per year. Once fully implemented, the HART hub system will serve over 65,000 people annually in our communities.

We will continue to invest to make sure treatment and recovery are there for people who need it.

RED TAPE REDUCTION

Mr. Will Bouma: My question is for the Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

Speaker, Ontario families and businesses want our economy to remain strong and stable. They want to know that our government is ready to respond to the economic threats that we face today.

President Trump's tariff threats are growing. They are putting pressure on our jobs, on our supply chains, and on our communities. We cannot wait. We must act now to protect our province.

Our government has been clear: Reducing red tape is key to keeping costs down, speeding up approvals, and helping businesses stay strong against new risks.

Speaker, can the minister explain how removing red tape is helping to protect Ontario's economy and shield families and businesses from these economic threats?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you to the member for Brantford—Brant for his great advocacy and bringing red tape reduction ideas from his constituents. He truly believes in common-sense policies. Under the previous government, he knows, businesses faced up to \$33,000 in annual red tape costs. In fact, Ontario had the biggest regulatory burden of any province in Canada.

Speaker, thanks to Premier Ford, we brought hope to the province. We've been able to save businesses \$1.2 million and 1.8 million hours in red tape reductions. But we're not just going to stop there.

The Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act builds on our progress. It's expected to save an additional \$5.8 million and 256,000 hours for people and businesses here in Ontario.

This is how we protect Ontario—by cutting red tape, unlocking growth and putting people first.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Back to the member for Brantford—Brant.

Mr. Will Bouma: Thank you to the minister for her continuing leadership.

Speaker, the previous Liberal government, backed at every step by the NDP, made Ontario less competitive. They piled on rules, they slowed down services, and they pushed jobs out of our province. Families and businesses paid the price. But today, our government is doing the opposite. We are removing red tape, we are speeding up services, and we are protecting people from rising economic threats. That includes tariff threats coming from the United States.

Our government's leadership on this file is making a real impact, and we are making life easier for our workers and helping to keep our economy strong.

Speaker, can the minister explain how our government's work to reduce red tape is protecting workers, supporting families and keeping Ontario competitive?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Under the previous government, red tape delayed services, created backlogs, blocked job creation, and left the vulnerable behind.

With this new bill, thanks to the work of our government and the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, now individuals receiving the Canada Disability Benefit will receive full protection. Previously, they would see a clawback, but, thanks to the work of this minister, they will now receive and keep every dollar that they've earned, which would give them about \$200 more per month—again, us putting more money into the pockets of Ontarians and really taking care of vulnerable populations and putting people first, but it's not just that.

We're building on the work our Minister of Health has done, by putting patients over paperwork, by ensuring that we're modernizing the emergency health services act, to update an outdated system, which will save \$300,000.

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Chris Glover: My question is to the Premier.

Last week, very deep in the Conservative government's budget, my staff found this government's plan to make Exhibition Place part of the Ontario Place project. This would allow the government to seize ownership of the land from the people of Ontario and to break any provincial and municipal law on that land, including heritage planning and environmental laws.

Exhibition Place is the home of the CNE, the royal winter fair, the Caribbean carnival, the TFC and the Marlies.

Every time this government touches public assets that belong to the people of Ontario, there's a scandal—the greenbelt, the foundry, the Hearn gas plant, Ontario Place, the science centre.

Now this government is giving itself the power to seize control of Exhibition Place.

What deal has this government made with Exhibition Place, and who's going to benefit?

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

Hon. Stan Cho: I wish I had more than a minute to answer this.

Here we go again with “the sky is falling” from the NDP.

Let me be clear, to start: We are not taking over Exhibition Place.

Here's what we are doing, though: We are making it faster to actually build Ontario Place. It's not Toronto's Fort York place. This is for all the people of this province. Expanded green spaces—in fact, 50 acres of public trails, the largest green space in all of the downtown core, a splash park for all the kids to play in, walking trails, beaches, marinas, a year-round concert centre. This thing has been shuttered for the better part of two decades, thanks to that member, and he wants it to stay that way. This government disagrees.

Whether you're visiting from Michael Crockatt's—“the rocket”—Ottawa with Mayor Sutcliffe or you're coming from Kapuskasing, Windsor, Cornwall, or you're coming from all over the world—six million visitors.

We will restore Ontario Place to its previous glory.
You're not going to stop us from building.

DEFERRED VOTES

FRANCO-ONTARIAN BOOKSTORE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR LA PROMOTION ET LA PROTECTION DES LIBRAIRIES FRANCO-ONTARIENNES

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

Bill 58, An Act respecting Franco-Ontarian bookstores and other Franco-Ontarian cultural institutions / Projet de loi 58, Loi concernant les librairies franco-ontariennes et d'autres institutions culturelles franco-ontariennes.

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

The division bells rang from 1137 to 1142.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, please take your seats.

On November 6, 2025, Madame Collard moved second reading of Bill 58, An Act respecting Franco-Ontarian bookstores and other Franco-Ontarian cultural institutions.

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

Ayes

Bell, Jessica	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Gilmour, Alexa	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Gretzky, Lisa	Smyth, Stephanie
Burch, Jeff	Hazell, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Cerjanec, Rob	Hsu, Ted	Tabuns, Peter
Clancy, Aislinn	Kernaghan, Terence	Tsao, Jonathan
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Vanthof, John
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vaugeois, Lise
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Watt, Tyler
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	West, Jamie
French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom	
Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Allsopp, Tyler	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rae, Matthew
Anand, Deepak	Hamid, Zee	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Mike	Rosenberg, Bill
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Khanjin, Andrea	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David

Cooper, Michelle	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Crawford, Stephen	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Darouze, George	Mulroney, Caroline	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Denault, Billy	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dixon, Jess	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dowie, Andrew	Piccini, David	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Downey, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Vickers, Paul
Fedeli, Victor	Pinsonneault, Steve	Wai, Daisy
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Williams, Charmaine A.
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Racinsky, Joseph	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 37; the nays are 70.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion lost.

Second reading negated.

FIGHTING DELAYS, BUILDING FASTER ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 VISANT À LUTTER CONTRE LES RETARDS ET À CONSTRUIRE PLUS RAPIDEMENT

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

Bill 60, An Act to amend various Acts and to enact the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025 / Projet de loi 60, Loi modifiant diverses lois et édictant la Loi de 2025 sur les sociétés publiques de gestion de l'eau et des eaux usées.

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

The division bells rang from 1146 to 1151.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, please take your seats.

On October 27, 2025, Mr. Flack moved second reading of Bill 60, An Act to amend various Acts and to enact the Water and Wastewater Public Corporations Act, 2025.

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

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rae, Matthew
Anand, Deepak	Hamid, Zee	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Mike	Rosenberg, Bill
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Khanjin, Andrea	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Cooper, Michelle	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Crawford, Stephen	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Darouze, George	Mulroney, Caroline	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Denault, Billy	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dixon, Jess	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dowie, Andrew	Piccini, David	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Downey, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Vickers, Paul

Fedeli, Victor	Pinsonneault, Steve	Wai, Daisy
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Williams, Charmaine A.
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Racinsky, Joseph	

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

Nays

Bell, Jessica	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Gilmour, Alexa	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Gretzky, Lisa	Smyth, Stephanie
Burch, Jeff	Hazell, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Cerjanec, Rob	Hsu, Ted	Stiles, Marit
Clancy, Aislinn	Kernaghan, Terence	Tabuns, Peter
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Vaugeois, Lise
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	Watt, Tyler
French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom	West, Jamie
Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 38.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, the bill is ordered for third reading.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND STUDENTS ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 SUR LE SOUTIEN AUX ENFANTS, AUX ÉLÈVES ET AUX ÉTUDIANTS

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

Bill 33, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to child, youth and family services, education, and colleges and universities / Projet de loi 33, Loi modifiant diverses lois relatives aux services à l'enfance, à la jeunesse et à la famille, à l'éducation et aux collèges et universités.

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

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Same vote? Same vote.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 38.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, the bill is ordered for third reading.

PROTECT ONTARIO BY SECURING AFFORDABLE ENERGY FOR GENERATIONS ACT, 2025

LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN GARANTISSANT L'ACCÈS À L'ÉNERGIE ABORDABLE POUR LES GÉNÉRATIONS FUTURES

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

Bill 40, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to energy, the electrical sector and public utilities / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'énergie, le secteur de l'électricité et les services publics.

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

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Same vote? Same vote.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 38.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion carried.

Second reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Pursuant to the order of the House dated November 6, 2025, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on the Interior.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): We have a deferred vote on the motion for closure on government order number 8 regarding report writing proceedings of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on the study on intimate partner violence.

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

Interjection: Same vote.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Same vote? I heard a no.

The division bells rang from 1157 to 1202.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Members, please take your seats.

On November 5, 2025, Ms. Williams moved government notice of motion number 8 regarding report writing proceedings of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on the study on intimate partner violence.

On November 17, 2025, Mr. Leardi moved that the question be now put.

All those in favour of Mr. Leardi's motion will rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Allsopp, Tyler	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Rae, Matthew
Anand, Deepak	Hamid, Zee	Rickford, Greg
Babikian, Aris	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Bailey, Robert	Harris, Mike	Rosenberg, Bill
Bouma, Will	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Bresee, Ric	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Calandra, Paul	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh

Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kerzner, Michael S.	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Cho, Stan	Khanjin, Andrea	Saunderson, Brian
Ciriello, Monica	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Coe, Lorne	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Cooper, Michelle	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Crawford, Stephen	McCarthy, Todd J.	Smith, Laura
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McGregor, Graham	Tangri, Nina
Darouze, George	Mulroney, Caroline	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Denault, Billy	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dixon, Jess	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dowie, Andrew	Piccini, David	Triantafilopoulos, Effie J.
Downey, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Vickers, Paul
Fedeli, Victor	Pinsonneault, Steve	Wai, Daisy
Firin, Mohamed	Pirie, George	Williams, Charmaine A.
Flack, Rob	Quinn, Nolan	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Racinsky, Joseph	

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): All those opposed to Mr. Leardi's motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Bell, Jessica	Gélinas, France	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Gilmour, Alexa	Shamji, Adil
Bourgouin, Guy	Glover, Chris	Shaw, Sandy
Bowman, Stephanie	Gretzky, Lisa	Smyth, Stephanie
Burch, Jeff	Hazell, Andrea	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Cerjanec, Rob	Hsu, Ted	Stiles, Marit
Clancy, Aislinn	Kernaghan, Terence	Tabuns, Peter
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Vaugeois, Lise
Fraser, John	Pasma, Chandra	Watt, Tyler
French, Jennifer K.	Rakocevic, Tom	West, Jamie
Gates, Wayne	Sattler, Peggy	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 70; the nays are 38.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): I declare the motion carried.

I am now required to put the question on the main motion.

Ms. Williams has moved government notice of motion number 8 regarding report writing proceedings of the Standing Committee on Justice Policy on the study on intimate partner violence.

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

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Interjection: On division.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Carried, on division.

Motion agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): There being no further business, this House stands in recess until 1 p.m.

The House recessed from 1206 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Deepak Anand: I'd like to take a moment to recognize Nareshkumar Chavda, the founding president and chair, and current president Kushagr Sharma of the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: I would like to recognize two amazing people from beautiful Beaches-East York: Heidi Singer and her daughter Jane Maguire, who has done extensive research on youth unemployment. They're here for our opposition day motion today. Welcome to your House.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I would like to welcome my friend from London Louise Blakey, who is here today to job shadow me in my role as MPP. She is an extraordinary person, very interested in learning more about politics, and it's great to have her here at Queen's Park.

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: It gives me great pleasure to welcome Suzanne Cardinal, April Ellis and Jaimie Mulder from the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario.

I encourage all members to visit their reception this evening at 5 o'clock in rooms 228 and 230.

MOTIONS

HOUSE SITTINGS

Hon. Steve Clark: I move that, pursuant to standing order 7(c), the House shall continue to meet past the ordinary hour of adjournment until midnight on the following dates: November 17, November 18, November 19, November 20, November 24, November 25, November 26, November 27, December 1, December 2, December 3, December 4, December 8, December 9, December 10 and December 11, 2025.

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): The government House leader has moved government notice of motion number 10 relating to night sittings. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

TENANT PROTECTION

MPP Alexa Gilmour: I want to thank the residents in Parkdale-High Park who are very concerned about the 60% of those residents who rent in Parkdale-High Park and those around the province.

They're concerned about Bill 60, the bill that includes major tenant changes that roll back some of those tenant protections. They're concerned about buildings that were built in 2018 that don't have real tenant protection on them. They've asked in this petition that we stop Bill 60, that the government stops the attack on renters, brings

back real rent control and fixes the backlog at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

I'm very pleased to affix my signature to this and send it in with page Olivia.

HOSPITAL SERVICES

Mr. Jeff Burch: I rise today to table a petition signed by almost 3,000 residents from Port Colborne and Fort Erie, all calling for restoration of 24/7 urgent care services in their communities.

It's now been 866 days since Port Colborne and Fort Erie lost their after-hour services and residents are still waiting for basic answers from this government, including when these essential services will be restored. Additionally, the community is rapidly growing. This petition rightfully calls for access to diagnostic services, including laboratory testing and medical imaging, as well as the retention of complex care beds.

I sign my name to this petition and send it to the Clerk.

FRONT-LINE WORKERS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would like to thank Joanne Mann from Hanmer in my riding for these petitions. They're called "Make PSW a Career."

As you know, Speaker, there has been a shortage of PSWs, personal support workers, in home care and in long-term care for many years. Many people are trained to be a PSW and love doing that work, but they cannot pay the rent and feed their kids with the money that they get working as a PSW.

The lack of PSWs means that there are more missed appointments in home care than there are appointments actually being kept each and every single day. The government just announced more home care being available—a beautiful thing—except that the private-for-profit companies cannot recruit and retain a stable workforce of PSWs. Why? Because PSWs want to be paid a living wage. They want to have holidays, paid holidays. They want to have paid sick days. They want to have benefits. They want to have the dream of a pension plan—

Interruption.

M^{me} France Gélinas:—so they can make a good living working as a PSW, which they love to do.

The petition is to make PSW a career where we would guarantee them permanent full-time employment with good wages, with good benefits, with a pension plan and with statutory as well as sick days.

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

The Speaker (Hon. Donna Skelly): Just a reminder, if you do have your cellphone on your desk, please put it on your chair when you stand to speak.

HEALTH CARE

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: I rise today to introduce a petition for my residents in my community and from people all

across Ontario struggling with craniocervical instability and who cannot access the care that they urgently need. My constituents have taken action, and more than 600 Ontarians have signed this petition. Patients with this condition are unable to obtain proper imaging, diagnosis and treatment in our province. Many are forced to seek costly out-of-country care and are left without guidance or options.

It's seeking to ask the Ministry of Health to improve access to neurosurgical care; fund training for surgeons to be able to treat CCI; create imaging centres of excellence, including upright MRI machines; develop Canadian clinical guidelines; promote medical training and diagnostic codes; and ensure coordinated aftercare for patients.

I'm honoured to present this petition on their behalf. I will affix my name to it and leave it with page Violet.

ONTARIO PLACE

Mr. Chris Glover: I would just like to acknowledge that the page captain today is Ojas Sharma from the wonderful riding of Spadina–Fort York, and his parents, Manish and Yogita, are in the House as well. So welcome, and congratulations, Ojas.

The petition I'm reading today is to celebrate Ontario innovation at Ontario Place. It's talking about how, with the US threat to our economy and our sovereignty, our tax dollars should be being spent supporting Ontario businesses and celebrating Ontario innovators. It's talking about how the government is currently subsidizing an Austrian spa at Ontario Place to the tune of 2.2 billion taxpayer dollars and giving them a 95-year lease on public parkland.

They're saying that the original purpose of Ontario Place was to celebrate Ontario innovation. It gives the example of the IMAX theatre. This was the world's first IMAX theatre. IMAX is an Ontario-built technology. Ontario Place also launched the career of the landscape architect. It was also the home of the world's very first ball pit. That's another Ontario innovation. We should be celebrating Ontario Place and showcasing Ontario innovators at Ontario Place, and that's what this petition is asking to do.

I fully support this petition, will affix my signature and pass it to page Anna to take to the table.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. Anthony Leardi: I have a petition here that was sent by a constituent in my riding named Alexandra Nugent. She's from LaSalle, Ontario, and I want to thank Alexandra Nugent for sending in this petition.

It talks about trade barriers between provinces, and it asks the Legislature of Ontario to consider tearing down those trade barriers and introducing more free trade between the provinces in this Canadian federation. It suggests that, in doing so, this would assist in making sure that Canadian jobs are protected and Ontario jobs are protected, and it would also ensure that the trade benefits

of that relationship continue into, potentially, billions of dollars a year.

I support this petition. I will sign it, and I will give to this very excellent page, Emery, to bring over to the Clerk's table.

TENANT PROTECTION

Ms. Catherine Fife: I don't know what this government has against tenants and tenant rights, but given the fact that we just passed Bill 60 on second reading, I'm still pleased to present the petition called "Stop Ford's Attack on Tenant Rights," as it relates to affordable housing and the Landlord and Tenant Board.

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I just hosted a housing forum yesterday, Sunday. Some 250 people came out to watch *Thinking Beyond the Market* by Dr. Brian Doucet. It speaks about the options and the solutions on housing that exist in this country, and many people in this province, including the not-for-profit sector, want to be part of the solution. They just need a partner. They just need, say, a provincial government to actually come to the table with some operational funding.

It is my pleasure to affix my signature to this petition, and I want to thank ACORN Ontario for collecting 1,000 signatures in support of building truly affordable, attainable housing. We will never stabilize the economy without a strong housing strategy, which the province of Ontario currently does not have.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

MPP Alexa Gilmour: In my hands I have a petition called "Act Now to End Gender-Based Violence." It comes to us from members in my riding of Parkdale-High Park who are concerned with the growing rates of gender-based violence and intimate partner violence. Here, they are asking the government to implement the official opposition's plan, which is coming on November 25, to combat gender-based violence:

- by investing in the social infrastructure, the services that people need at that critical moment when they are faced with trying to flee a dangerous situation;

- to bolster women's economic security by, again, investing in that sector that is 75% made up of women employees; and

- to improve the services that women count on in the community public sector and in the child care sector.

I'm very pleased to be able to sign this and bring this up to the front through page Tristan.

INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE

Mr. Deepak Anand: This is a petition from a worried Ontario resident who is asking the government to stand up—asking Captain Canada to step up and support fighting against trade barriers. Why? Because it's costing Ontario's economy. This petition is also asking to remove the trade barriers.

Madam Speaker, as we all know, Ontario is like a global village, with 150 nationalities and 202 languages. This petition is saying we are a global leader. People are sending their investments into this province.

We need to lead the change to tear down these barriers to unlock Canada's full economic potential, and they're asking, through this petition, that we enable mutual recognition with reciprocating provinces and territories.

I absolutely agree with this petition. We need to work hard as a global village, bring more investments, build our economy and serve our Ontarians.

I'm going to sign this petition and give it to page Manaswini.

MEDICAL ERROR

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that comes from pretty well all over Ontario. It's basically based on the Canadian Institute of Health Information, which tells us that, unfortunately, about 150,000 Canadians suffer from a medical error after they've been admitted into a hospital. But of those, only 1% will receive compensation.

In Ontario, the compensation is paid in huge part by the provincial government, but patients who are harmed—and it doesn't happen often, but it does happen—don't gain access. If you look at New Zealand, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, France, Belgium and the UK, all of those countries have implemented a no-fault system for the exact same thing.

If you look at the people who signed the petition—because they want to promote patient safety and set up an adverse events monitoring system. They want to establish training of health professionals to support the view that errors happen and they must be highlighted. They want to provide a neutral avenue for harmed patients to discuss, evaluate and be reimbursed for their injury. They want Ontario to implement a no-fault system of compensation based on the example recommended in many reports, as well as by countries that have done that before us.

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

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I am very pleased to stand in my place and stand up for local democracy and education. I had the occasion to be a panellist at a local town hall with the broader community, very interested in Bill 33 and its ramifications; concerned about the \$6.35 billion that has been kept back from our education system, which has led to larger class sizes, teacher shortages and concerns about mental health and school violence.

People are adamant that we continue to have democratically elected school board trustees; that parents should be able to have access to an elected group of people, rather than reaching out to this Minister of Education, who's unlikely to check his voice mail on this issue. Rather than giving the Minister of Education unchecked powers, they are very concerned that we should be investing in

education, hiring more qualified educators, reducing class sizes.

This petition, Speaker, petitions the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to repeal Bill 33, to fund public education properly, to respect local democracy and to stop playing political games with the well-being of our children. I wholeheartedly support this. I will affix my signature and send it to the table with Ithaca.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Chris Glover: While I'm up, I just want to welcome to the House John McClelland from McClelland Insurance Brokers. He's here with the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario. Welcome to your House, John.

The petition I have today is particularly relevant in light of the passage of this government's Bill 60, which will make it easier and faster to evict tenants who are actually paying their rent.

This petition is entitled "Rent Control for All Tenants," and it talks about how this Conservative government cancelled rent control on all units built after November 2018. The cost of renting a home has gone up by 45% under this government, the cost of buying a home has gone up by 45% under this government and they are refusing to build affordable housing in the province.

It talks about the need to pass the Rent Control for All Tenants Act, 2022, which was introduced by the Ontario NDP, to bring back rent control because some tenants—two tenants in my riding were faced with a \$6,000-a-month rent increase. It was clear the landlord just wanted to evict them, and because this government has eliminated rent control, it was actually legal for the landlord to say, "Hey, you know what? I'm going to increase your rent by \$6,000. You can pay it or you can move out." He used that to evict those tenants. It was a nasty, nasty thing to do. It's the kind of thing that is pushing people into homelessness and making people, even with full-time jobs, have to stay in shelters because they can't afford housing in this province.

So the one minor step that this petition is asking the government to take is to just bring back rent control on all units, so those kinds of egregious oversteps don't happen, and so more people don't end up being evicted from their homes. I fully support this petition. I will affix my signature and pass it to page Luke to take to the table.

OPPOSITION DAY

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT EMPLOI DES JEUNES

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: I move that whereas in September of 2025, youth unemployment was at 17.8%, the highest in Canada, and approached levels as high as during the COVID-19 pandemic, previously not seen for 33 years; and

Whereas the average wait for a young person to find a job has grown to three and a half months, the highest in 29 years; and

Whereas Ontario businesses, particularly small businesses, are struggling with the impact of US tariffs, and need support to weather trade uncertainties; and

Whereas despite generationally low job opportunities, the Premier has recently made comments blaming over 220,000 young workers for not being able to find a job, telling them to look harder; and

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Whereas wage subsidy programs like Canada Summer Jobs have resulted in hundreds of thousands of job opportunities, helping local businesses and opening careers to young Ontarians;

Therefore, in the opinion of the House, the government of Ontario should establish a youth wage subsidy program to create jobs in Ontario, helping young Ontarians start their career, create networks and develop lifelong skills while providing Ontario businesses with well-educated young workers.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I recognize the member from Don Valley West.

Ms. Stephanie Bowman: It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to our Ontario Liberal motion because it comes at a time when the young generation coming into the workforce today is under immense pressure. They're losing hope, Speaker, and they're finding no relief from this government.

I recently spoke with a young person in my riding of Don Valley West who is looking for work, preferably in their field. But at this point, they would take anything. They have been sending out résumés, showing up in person—in other words, looking very hard, but no job offers. This, sadly, is the norm for hundreds of thousands of young people in our province.

And make no mistake, this isn't just about US tariffs. Unemployment has been rising under this government for the past nine quarters, and unemployment for youth has almost doubled since this government took office. When they took office, it was 9.9%. It reached 18% before settling down a point or two recently.

This is really about the government's inability to create the right conditions to have a strong economy where people who need a job can get one and young people have a promising opportunity for their future—this from a government that in 2019 promised 300,000 manufacturing jobs. Speaker, sadly, the reality is that they've only created 26,000 since taking office in 2018. So they're 91% short of their goal, kind of like their plan to build houses.

But that's not the only broken promise, Speaker. It used to be that if you were a young person and you studied hard, you got a good education, you could expect to start your career here in Ontario. But that promise has been broken. Youth unemployment was 16.3% in October. Again, it did come down a little bit, but that was only because of part-time jobs. We'll get more data eventually, but it probably was the Blue Jays bounce. Most of those jobs were here in Ontario. They were in the retail and hospitality sectors.

Ontario used to be the economic engine of this country. We are still the worst of the largest provinces in Canada for youth unemployment. We are worse than Alberta. We are worse than BC. We are worse than Quebec.

So let's look at the government's response. The first government solution was plain nonsense, frankly, and was just wrong. The Premier called it the "look harder plan." During a recent speech to the Toronto Region Board of Trade, a visibly frustrated Premier claimed young people just had to look harder for that job. He claimed that the responsibility wasn't on him, that it was on the young people; they weren't doing enough.

But let's look at the numbers, Speaker. Ontario has the lowest youth employment rate in the country and the lowest rate our province has had in 50 years—50 years, Speaker.

A group of students from Beaches–East York—Jane is here today, which is great; thank you to my colleague Mary-Margaret McMahon from Beaches–East York for inviting her—created a survey and talked to some of their fellow students and classmates to understand what was going on for young people.

Here is one statement from the report. When the person was asked, "Do you want a job?" "Yes, I want one. I've applied to 100-plus positions on Indeed as well as walked into places with résumés and references and asked for applications or to speak about employment opportunities. It's always either a no—or no answer at all. I never get callbacks. Even people my parents know who are hiring don't want to hire teens."

So the government can claim all they want, Speaker, that the problem lies with young people having no initiative, but that's just not the truth. The government is failing to create the job opportunities and the conditions for that that young people need to start their careers.

Let's look at another one of this government's solutions: Get some training; get some skills development. Well, I agree in principle, Speaker, but their implementation of this plan has been an abject failure. We have a highly trained workforce. The idea goes that we'll attract better and higher-paying jobs from specialized industries. Obviously, you would do this by augmenting the existing post-secondary education sector, right? But not if you're from this PC government. Instead of investing in Ontario's post-secondary sector, which will be receiving less support year over year through 2027-28, according to this year's budget, they're going with something that's called the Skills Development Fund, or the special donors' fund, or the slush fund—a few different names floating around.

In theory, here's what the fund was supposed to do: It was supposed to train workers to be able to upskill and earn bigger paycheques. But in reality, here's what happened with just the training stream, the \$1.3-billion training stream of the SDF: 54% of the applications, 549 selected by the minister's office and approved for funding, were ranked as poor, low or medium—basically F grades, D grades, maybe a C. These applications received about \$742 million, or 56% of the funding. That's a failing grade if I ever heard one, Speaker.

There were 670 applicants that ranked high that were passed over by the minister for funding. The whole process, we know, of course, the Auditor General found to be not fair, not transparent, not accountable, and there was little rationale to explain why those high-ranked applicants were not chosen.

Speaker, putting money into the SDF doesn't appear to be making a dent in the nearly one in six youth in Ontario who can't find a job, but we don't know because the government isn't even tracking the results of their SDF. So where will help come from?

After all, we have to remember, we went to an early, unnecessary election because the government said they needed a mandate to spend billions of dollars to protect us from tariffs. Let's look at that plan: \$9 billion in liquidity relief through tax deferrals, but people had to pay that back, so we're back to net zero. Some \$4 billion of the Protect Ontario fund to help businesses affected by tariffs is actually sitting unused in a bank account—no decision, no direction as to what will happen with it. In fact, it's just not working, and the job numbers tell us that, especially for young people.

This government has taken swing after swing, but they have struck out. So today I want to put forward a new, different solution with my Ontario Liberal colleagues that will make a material difference for young workers struggling in Ontario, with the added benefit of supporting the backbone of our economy: small businesses. We call it the youth career fund. The idea is to put youth back to work through a wage subsidy similar to Canada Summer Jobs. We would propose using \$450 million of the Protect Ontario account to create between 47,000 and 75,000 jobs for young people in Ontario right now.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, those with up to 500 employees, could apply to subsidize a job for a young Ontario resident aged 15 to 30. Why are we focusing on that sector, Speaker? Because we know that that sector is also struggling. The government has no plan to help them. They've defeated my proposal to cut small business taxes a couple of times, and we know that more businesses are exiting the marketplace, about 90,000 in 2024, compared to those starting up a new business, about 79,000.

The small business sector used to contribute two thirds of private sector jobs; it's down to about 61%. So they need support, and today I'm giving this government another chance to help them.

What would that look like for eligible businesses? Businesses would apply under a general stream providing a wage subsidy of \$6,000 or under a high-demand stream providing \$9,500 for businesses who either need highly skilled workers, are part of strategic industries or are hit hard by US tariffs. Qualifying job postings would be full-time jobs lasting about 20 weeks, and that subsidy would cover 49% of 10 35-hour weeks at minimum wage; \$9,500 would be about \$27 a week.

We know that this government can't help themselves when it comes to rewarding their insider friends, so we're proposing a simple solution to the administration of this program: Applications would be managed by the non-

partisan public servants under the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade—no politics, no helping insider friends, just results for young workers, as it should be.

In the spirit of collaboration and urgency to address the crisis in youth unemployment in Ontario today, I urge this government to set aside their partisanship, forgo rewarding their insider friends and forge ahead and do what's right: Bring back hope for young workers in Ontario.

1330

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Sheref Sabawy: I appreciate the opportunity to speak about how our government is helping Ontario youth prepare for the workforce and addressing labour market needs across the province.

The motion before us calls for a youth wage subsidy program. While I respect the intent, a stand-alone wage subsidy is a short-term tool. Young people deserve pathways that lead to credentials, completion and careers. It doesn't give youth what they really need: good jobs that pay well, are meaningful and help them build a future. It also doesn't create the kind of economy where young people can truly succeed.

Our government is focused on building pathways to long-lasting careers through training, apprenticeships and hands-on experience. Our government is making record investments in building Ontario infrastructure—building hospitals, Highway 413 and the Bradford Bypass. We are investing in programs that prepare youth for the jobs of tomorrow and strengthen Ontario's workforce for the future.

Ontario's labour market is constantly evolving, and our approach must reflect that. Approximately one third of skilled workers in Ontario are nearing retirement, meaning filling jobs in the skilled trades and emerging industries is essential to securing Ontario's future. These are the workers we need to build Ontario, build our homes and build our infrastructure and highways to keep our people and goods moving.

To tackle this problem, our government has an unwavering commitment to invest in training to ensure we have the skilled workforce we need to fill vacancies. Critical to that investment are our young people. Rather than a band-aid solution, we are investing in training and programs to ensure all of Ontario's youth have the opportunity to enter a meaningful career.

Young people are an important focus of our provincial program to fill gaps in the labour market and contribute to Ontario's economy. Our plan is to provide accessible training to youth in Ontario to provide a skilled trades pipeline to secure our province's future and drive our economic success long term.

The Skills Development Fund is fundamental to our long-term plan. Since it launched in 2021, Ontario has invested \$1.5 billion through this fund to support more than 1,000 training projects across the province. These projects have trained over 700,000 workers preparing for in-demand careers in sectors like construction, manufacturing, health care and technology.

In this year's budget, this government committed an additional \$1-billion investment over three years. Our goal is simple: better training for better jobs with bigger paycheques.

Of course, youth are an essential part of this program. Through the SDF funding, we have supported hundreds of programs to train thousands of young Ontarians for meaningful careers. In fact, through the fifth round of SDF, over 50 projects are being delivered in partnership with colleges and other youth-focused organizations across Ontario, totalling about \$120 million in funding.

The SDF is also helping to build and modernize training centres through its capital stream. Ontario has committed over \$370 million to renovate and expand facilities or construct new, state-of-the-art training spaces. These facilities will allow students and apprentices to have access to hands-on learning environments that support their training and prepare them for in-demand careers.

Madam Speaker, Ontario's young people don't want a one-off subsidy. They want a clear path to a good job, one that pays the bills today and builds a career tomorrow. That's exactly what our plan delivers.

Through the Skills Development Fund, apprenticeship pathways like OYAP, FAST and pre-apprenticeship and hands-on exposure at Level Up!, we are investing at a record scale to give youth the skills employers need and the credentials that lift wages without relying on permanent subsidies.

Through the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, we have invested over \$22 million to give students, as early as grade 11, hands-on apprenticeship training while they complete their high school education. The new, Focused Apprenticeship Skills Training—FAST—stream was launched this September to allow students in grades 11 and 12 to earn additional co-op credits, making apprenticeship experience more accessible.

The Ontario Pre-apprenticeship Training Program helps people facing barriers by providing wraparound supports, including youth, to gain the work experience and training needed to be job-ready at no cost while addressing skilled trades shortages in high-demand trades.

Eligible organizations, such as colleges or community agencies, are selected to deliver pre-apprenticeship training through an annual call for proposals. And to help employers support career growth in the trades, our Achievement Incentive Program aims to ensure and to encourage employers to train apprentices towards trade program progression, completion and certification through milestone payments. The achievement incentive also provides enhanced financial incentives for employers to hire and train apprentices under the age of 25, as well as apprentices from equity-deserving and underrepresented groups.

Finally, Ontario Job Creation Partnerships provide funding to employers for projects that create meaningful work experience for job seekers, including youth.

Level Up! career fairs: The ministry also hosts Level Up! skilled trades career fairs, providing hands-on experience with the trades to students and inspire them to

consider rewarding, in-demand careers. First launched in 2022, Level Up! is an impressive program that travels across Ontario to demonstrate the pride and possibilities that come with joining the skilled trades and provides immersive experience with the skilled trades.

Last year, nearly 45,000 students, parents and teachers from more than 700 schools participated in these events. Students had the chance to step into the skilled trades first-hand, connect directly with employers and learn about employment pathways from classroom to career. So far this year, Level Up! open houses have seen over 27,000 students across 403 schools across Ontario. These events are opening doors to rewarding careers and empowering youth to explore new possibilities by providing hands-on experiences and real-world connections. We are helping to break the stigma by highlighting that careers in the skilled trades are a great first option, not a backup plan.

1340

We are seeing the impact: Interest in the skilled trades is growing, and apprenticeship registrations are increasing. In 2024-25, Ontario recorded over 16,000 new youth apprenticeship registrations, the highest in a decade, and a 13.6% year-over-year increase. Over 21,000 students are expected to participate in OYAP this year. In October, 18,800 youth jobs were added, the youth unemployment rates declined and the youth participation rate in the labour market increased.

Ontario also provided programs for individuals who need to retrain for new careers, and that includes young people as well. Through Better Jobs Ontario, eligible individuals can receive up to \$35,000 for training and living costs to prepare for in-demand occupations. This program helps job seekers, including youth and those facing barriers, gain the skills they need for stable employment. The province also offers job placement opportunities for youth, helping them gain hands-on experience and build meaningful careers in public service.

Through our integrated employment services, we are providing locally responsive employment services to our youth, helping unemployed youth find work in the sectors driving this province forward.

Madam Speaker, these programs are part of a comprehensive approach to workforce development. They are designed to create pathways for youth, newcomers and others facing barriers to employment. They also help employers recruit the skilled workers they need to grow and succeed.

While Ontario does not have a youth wage subsidy program, the province continues to focus on long-term strategies that address skills gaps and prepare young people for sustainable careers. A temporary wage top-up can help for a season, but training plus apprenticeship helps for a lifetime, with completion bonuses, employer incentives and Red Seal pathways that grow wages without ongoing subsidies.

Our message to every young person is simple: Your first job can be your first step to a career. We'll keep funding the training, placements and apprenticeship supports that get you there.

I invite all members to support scaling what works. These efforts are about more than just jobs; they are about helping young people realize their potential, contribute to their communities and shape the future of our province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'm pleased to rise today to speak on behalf of the official opposition during this debate on opposition day motion 2, which calls on the government to do something—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Anything.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, do anything—about the jobs crisis that we have right now in this province.

We know that this Premier and this government have the distinction of being a full-fledged jobs disaster for the people of Ontario. The motion that we have before us today has some alarming statistics, Speaker, that should be a wake-up call for everybody in this Legislature and particularly on the government side.

The motion notes that youth unemployment in Ontario now stands at almost 18% overall, which is higher in Ontario than in any other province in Canada. In fact, it's the highest it's been in in three decades in this province, with the exception of the pandemic. That is very alarming, Speaker, because there are long-term consequences when young people cannot get into the labour market. I'll talk more about that in a moment.

These high, frightening rates of unemployment among young people are happening across all age levels and all levels of educational attainment. We see in particular that unemployment is just shooting through the roof for teens in this province, with young people aged 15 to 19—close to one quarter of those young people now find themselves unemployed in this province. That is a significant increase from 2019, just after this government took office. Similarly, among young people aged 20 to 24, the rate went up from just under 10% in 2019 to now more than 13% in 2025. Even among older youth, those aged 25 to 29, rates of unemployment are still increasing from 6.2% when this government took office to 8.7% today.

This government is failing young people in this province.

Interjection.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes. We see young people who are already struggling with escalating costs of rent. Just earlier this morning, the government rammed through new measures to make it easier to evict good tenants, make it easier for unethical landlords to evict tenants who have done everything right. Many of those tenants, as we know, are young people—if they have had the financial ability to get out of their parents' homes and find an apartment. Now they are very, very worried about what the government's changes are going to be for their ability to pay the rent.

We also know that young people, and in particular students, school-age young people, are really struggling to pay for their groceries. Almost one quarter of our post-secondary students in this province rely on food banks. Something like a third of post-secondary students have said they have skipped meals through the week while they

are in their studies because they can't afford to buy food. Clearly, enabling more young people to get into the labour market and enabling young people to generate some income would be particularly helpful as young people, along with everybody else in this province, are grappling with the increasing costs of living.

I wanted to move on to some of the concerns related to when young people don't get into the labour market. What happens to their career prospects in the long term? This is a phenomenon that has been described as labour market scarring. Those young people are scarred for many years because of their inability to get that leg up into the labour market with a first job or a job while they are studying. They see lower lifetime earnings, which of course has an impact on our tax base in this province. They see delayed career progression. They see a loss of confidence within themselves, which has a direct impact on their mental health.

We see longer periods of persistent unemployment and underemployment among young people who haven't been able to find that critically important first job. There are delays in owning a home, as I said, saving for retirement and many other consequences that we are seeing because of this government's lack of action.

Now, we did hear the Premier offer a solution a couple of months ago when he told the young people of Ontario that all they had to do was just work harder—work harder.

1350

Speaker, we on this side of the House do not believe that that is an appropriate solution for the government to offer. It is, in fact, a completely unacceptable position for this government to take, to point the finger at those job seekers who are desperate to find employment and to say that they are the problem, that they just simply have not worked hard enough. So today, the Liberals have come to this Legislature and have suggested to the government that what they should be doing to address this chronic youth unemployment is to establish a youth wage subsidy program.

Now, wage subsidies have their place as a tool to help prospective employees get that critical, first-hand job experience that they need to be able to move forward in their careers. So a youth wage subsidy program can be a good thing, and it is something that New Democrats would support. But we do want to flag some of the problems that can occur with a wage subsidy program that is not well designed.

Some of the common drawbacks that are associated with wage subsidy programs include employers accessing the funds to pay for a hiree who they would have hired anyway. They already had the budget; they heard that there's this wage subsidy, so they're going to use the subsidy to hire that person that they would have hired anyway. There's no net benefit. We're not increasing the net number of people who are employed. We're just seeing employers use the public dollars rather than the money that they were already thinking of allocating.

We also can see workers who are attached to a subsidy getting employment and comparable workers with

comparable job prospects don't get employment because they don't have access to a subsidy. So there are definite problems with wage subsidy programs that are not well defined.

But one of the best practices in wage subsidy programs—and I make this suggestion to the Liberal caucus, because it's something that they should definitely be looking at. They cite the Canada Summer Jobs Program in this motion, which, I agree: That is a very effective program. I've heard from countless non-profits in London West who can't wait to file that application to get the wage subsidy for Canada Summer Jobs so they can hire a young person during the summer.

The problem is that I don't think a single one of those non-profits can make that position into permanent employment after the subsidy ends, and that is a real concern, both for those non-profits that are relying on the wage subsidy but also for that young person. It does provide that valuable short-term experience that can be helpful getting into the labour market, but it does not often transition into full-time employment.

But one of the ways that we definitely can transition young people into full-time employment using a wage subsidy is through paid work-integrated learning. And there is another federal program—it's called the Student Work Placement Program—that offers financial support for employers to provide work-integrated learning opportunities, which are co-ops or internships or other forms of work placements, through the young person's educational institution.

The partnering employer gets a wage subsidy to provide employment that aligns with the student's educational program, it aligns with the student's career interest and, often, it results in permanent employment for the young person who is engaged in the work-integrated learning that is assisted with a federal wage subsidy.

There was a recent evaluation of the Student Work Placement Program, and I think one of the most promising results of that evaluation was that almost half—48%—of the employers that had hired a student through the Student Work Placement Program ended up keeping that student and transitioning that employment into full-time work. That really is the goal that we want to achieve with anything—any kind of programs or financial supports that the government puts in place. We don't want to solve or address the unemployment crisis that we're experiencing here by just creating a couple of months' part-time, temporary employment for a young person; we want to create a real opportunity, a meaningful opportunity, that is going to move that young person into full-time work.

Now, there are well-established benefits of work-integrated learning that go even far beyond, in fact, the ability for the student who's engaged in WIL—work-integrated learning—to move into full-time employment. Some of the other benefits associated with participation in WIL programs, like, as I said, co-ops and internships and others, include improved job matching, higher incomes, higher likelihood of being employed in a permanent or full-time position, and there is also significant research

that shows that there are more benefits associated with co-op participation, because co-ops are a form of work-integrated learning that includes a payment, so the student is paid for the work that they do while they are engaged in work-integrated learning.

Now, I want to give a shout-out to the students at Humber Polytechnic and University of Guelph-Humber. Their student union is called Ignite, and they have done significant research among their student body to talk about students' experience with work-integrated learning and, in particular, with paid work-integrated learning, like co-ops. They recently released a research report that found that in the last academic year only 20% of University of Guelph-Humber students were compensated for their work-integrated learning placements. Of course, that means 80%—four out of five—students who participated in a work-integrated learning program had to give their labour for free.

Speaker, I think that you can immediately understand some of the issues that are associated with asking students to do unpaid work-integrated learning. I talked about the financial pressures that are facing young people in this province. Students have to work part-time in order to go to post-secondary; many, many students have to work part-time in order to be able to afford housing and groceries and books and other costs associated with getting an education. They can't just simply leave a part-time position in order to participate in an unpaid work-integrated learning experience. They may have families, especially at the college level. Many college students are older. They have families and they are geographically limited in the kinds of work-integrated learning opportunities they can participate in. So to have these unpaid opportunities—while it's better than no opportunity, it really creates barriers for many people. And of course, the biggest barrier is faced by students who don't have access to family support or savings that they have earned over the years. They simply cannot take any kind of advantage of a work-integrated learning program when it is unpaid.

1400

So there is a real opportunity, Speaker, before us today to carry forward this Liberal motion, establish a youth wage subsidy program, but look really, really carefully at what can be achieved in this province for young people when we invest in paid work-integrated learning programs for students, provide those subsidies for employers to create those opportunities—and not just in STEM, not just in science, technology, engineering and math. We need those hands-on experiences for young people while they are in a program of study so that they can learn those practical job skills that are going to enable them to enter the labour market more quickly and more easily.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Rob Cerjanec: It's a pleasure to talk about our opposition day motion today. We really do have a youth unemployment crisis here in Ontario. Youth unemployment is about 17.8%, the highest in Canada and the worst here since the early 1990s, outside of the pandemic. There's a lot that we need to do on this.

Young people now need almost four months to find a job, the longest wait in nearly 30 years, and it's a structural failure. It's a failure that harms families and, really, our long-term economic outlook if young people aren't able to find a job today. Yet the Premier says young people simply need to look harder. Well, I wish it was that simple. If that was true, would the Premier believe the thousands of people that waited hours in line at the CNE for jobs that were still out of reach for so many—were those young people unmotivated? I don't think so, Speaker. Those lines show that those jobs are disappearing. It's not a reflection on the ambition of our youths.

When young adults can't find work, Ontario loses out on productivity, innovation and future talent—accepting, maybe, that they're not going to be able to go in the career that they really would like to do. Early unemployment leads to long-term consequences, including lower earnings and lost skills development. The cuts that we're seeing in the college sector of important programs in folks' communities are now impacting those employers, and it's impacting those students.

Small businesses struggling with US tariffs—well, they need support. They'd benefit from hiring youths, if those opportunities existed. And if we ignore this problem in Ontario and just say, "Oh, maybe it will get better," which seems to be the approach of the government right now, we risk a generation-wide productivity gap that will further weaken Ontario's economy for decades.

Traditional entry-level roles, we're seeing, are rapidly disappearing. We see that automation in AI does replace early jobs in retail, administration, customer service and seasonal work. You know, the nature of work is changing. That's why it's so important that as a province we've got a youth jobs plan, but then that we've got a plan around AI, that we have a plan around innovation. How do we create new jobs and new opportunities in every single corner of Ontario?

We're seeing now that employers are increasingly expecting AI literacy, which makes sense. Yet many youths have never had access to the necessary training. So without action, we'll expect skills from young people that they'll never have been given the chance to learn in the first place.

We know countries like Singapore and Estonia are already teaching AI literacy in elementary school. Ontario is really far behind. Our public education system, our universities, our colleges need to give students exposure to new technologies so that they can compete in an AI-driven economy. It doesn't have to limit opportunity. It can actually create more opportunity and enhance our productivity in the way we do things here in Ontario. With proper training and real entry-level roles, it can expand opportunity and really help youth succeed.

The federal Canada Summer Jobs program has created hundreds of thousands of opportunities that help both youth and small businesses. Ontario doesn't have a similar program, despite having the worst youth labour market in the country. A provincial wage subsidy will reduce hiring costs. It will create thousands of entry-level jobs and give

youth the experience that they need in order to build careers here. Supporting this motion, I would say, Speaker, is practical, it's effective and it's long overdue.

Early jobs teach much more than just workplace tasks. They build money management, time responsibility, communication skills and independence. My own first job was at McDonald's. I was 14, turning 15 years old. Do you know what it did for me? It gave me freedom, it gave me responsibility and it gave me some more money in my pocket, too, so that I could go out on my own and do things.

Today, folks in my community—I've heard it from families, I've heard it from young people, that their kids cannot find these same opportunities, even when they try everywhere, dropping off résumé after résumé after résumé at places. We are in a youth jobs crisis. For many young people, especially from low-income or racialized backgrounds, a job is a lifeline, and sometimes it is a matter of survival to help those families succeed. Those foundational experiences help shape the workforce that we need here in Ontario.

I'll just say, Speaker, Ontario's youth are not the problem. They are the solution. We need a government here at Queen's Park that is going to be respecting young people and creating more jobs and opportunities for them. We can either blame youth for structural issues or we can take action to fix those issues. Supporting this motion means investing in our future workforce, our communities and the long-term prosperity of our province. I strongly urge those members to support this motion.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further debate?

Mr. Stephen Blais: Mr. Speaker, Ontario is facing a youth employment crisis, one that cannot be ignored. Today in Ontario more than 200,000 young people are out of work. The youth unemployment rate is over 16%, and it was recently at 17.8%, the highest in Canada. Think about it, Mr. Speaker: One in six young Ontarians can't find a job. They're doing everything right. They're finishing school. They're sending out résumés. They're trying to build a future, and yet the doors just aren't opening. It's so bad that youth unemployment under this Conservative government is at rates not seen since the New Democrats were in power. When your government has economic comparables to the only NDP government in history, you know you have a problem. In fact, even the New Democratic whip called it "alarming" in her remarks today.

The average wait for a young person to find a job is now three and a half months, the longest in 29 years. That's almost an entire summer gone before a single callback. And while young workers wait, Ontario businesses—especially small businesses—are struggling too. Many are being squeezed by rising costs and US tariffs. They want to hire, but they can't afford to take the risk.

So what does this government do? Instead of helping, the Premier blames young people, telling over 200,000 young unemployed Ontarians to "look harder." Speaker, that is not leadership. If the Premier took even a fraction of the time he spends defending insiders and friends and

instead listened to the next generation of Ontario workers, maybe they wouldn't be in this position.

We are proposing a real, practical solution: the youth career fund. We would invest \$450 million—money that already exists, that is sitting idle in the Protecting Ontario Account—to create tens of thousands of jobs for young people right now.

1410

Small and medium-sized businesses with under 500 employees could apply for a wage subsidy to hire Ontarians between the ages of 15 and 30. That means real work experience, real paycheques and real hope—all without new taxes or new bureaucracy.

Nous proposons une solution concrète et pratique : le fonds pour l'emploi des jeunes. Nous proposons d'investir 450 millions de dollars—des fonds qui existent déjà et qui dorment dans le compte Protéger l'Ontario—afin de créer entre 47 000 et 75 000 emplois pour les jeunes aujourd'hui.

We know that this model works. We've seen it with the Canada Summer Jobs program, a proven model that has created hundreds of thousands of opportunities for students and small businesses across the country. Programs like this give young people a start—a chance to develop skills, build networks and gain confidence. They also give small businesses the talent they need to grow and to compete.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't charity; it's an investment in Ontario's future workforce—an investment that pays off for everyone. Coupled with our proposed 50% cut to small business taxes, Ontario Liberals are proposing concrete measures to help Ontario small businesses and the entrepreneurs that run them.

The choice before us is simple: Like the Premier, we can keep telling young Ontarians to look harder, or we can help them to climb higher. We can keep hoarding billions of dollars in government slush funds, or we can put that money to work, literally, by giving thousands of young people a job, a paycheque and a reason to stay here in Ontario. Every generation deserves a fair shot at success, so let's give them that chance.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further debate?

Mr. Adil Shamji: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to rise on an issue that is impacting far too many of my constituents in Don Valley East and Ontarians across this entire province. That specific issue is the rampant unemployment on the background of unprecedented unaffordability in Ontario.

We face an affordability crisis at a time that this government is posting a record deficit, at the same time that that record deficit sits against record spending with little to show for it and, of course, record unemployment. As you've heard from my colleagues already, Ontario faces unprecedented unemployment and, in fact, the highest youth unemployment in the entire country. That unemployment is as bad as it was during COVID-19 and, prior to that, worse than the last three decades of progress in addressing unemployment. Laughably, that record of unemployment that we face right now—this record un-

employment—sits on the background of a government that marches behind the banner that they will protect Ontario. Protect Ontario for who?

No doubt this government is doing a lot of work to protect the Minister of Labour who, in turn, is doing a lot of work to protect some of his friends and donors. This is a government that has no problem coming up with billions for booze, billions for buddies and billions for burrowing under the 401. But when it actually comes down to the work that needs to happen in order to fight for real jobs here in this province, there's no action.

We can see at this time that there's a major problem with home building in Ontario, and we've heard time and time again that this government is going to stand up against authoritarian leaders down south and they're going to protect us from tariffs. Yet as we face a rampant loss of construction jobs and as we face a stalled home-building sector, when they have the opportunity to kick-start that home-building sector by building more homes through, for example, eliminating the HST for all homebuyers on new primary residences, they won't do it and therefore miss out on a valuable opportunity to resuscitate and support our steel and timber sectors. Okay. Well, that was one option that we provided to this government that could have helped bring back jobs, that could help kick-start our economy.

Here's another one: My fabulous colleague from Don Valley West has gone forward and said, "Look, let's create a youth wage subsidy"—something that can create something up to 75,000 jobs in the first iteration alone. You know, every time I go back to my constituency office, every Friday, there is a lineup—not actually a lineup, but a series of individuals, a series of complaints from my constituents who are struggling to find work. Of course, that's across the board, but particularly for young people who are trying to find work.

For people who are unemployed, unfortunately, not only has this government had nothing to offer them, it has not even been able to offer them even a moment of hope. This is the same Premier who said to unemployed people that all you have to do is get off your A-S-S and find work.

Our youth unemployment rate is something like 18%. The people who come to my office and who ask my constituency staff for help have been trying to find work, and they can't find it. Even the employment agencies that they're turning to for help are overwhelmed. In fact, some of them that I've been in contact with are so overwhelmed they're asking for help themselves, but their Skills Development Fund applications are getting rejected so that this government can instead send their money over to nightclubs and strip clubs. So let's get serious.

The exceptional member from Don Valley West has put forward an amazing solution, one that would cost something on the order of about \$450 million and deliver up to 75,000 jobs. I'm keenly aware \$450 million is a lot of money, but it is about 10% of the Protect Ontario fund, which has been largely untouched. So we have an option here: Provide money to nightclubs and adult entertainment establishments, or let's get our young people back to work.

I say, Don Valley East says and the Ontario Liberal caucus says: Let's get young people to work.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ric Bresee): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to join the debate on really a very fundamental issue that should concern all of us in the province of Ontario, and this is the state of youth unemployment right now. My colleague from London West really outlined a number of options that are available to the government. The third party has presented a motion today for your consideration.

I do remember—it wasn't that long ago that we all were, "We're all in this together. There's no such thing as a bad idea." We should be throwing everything at the wall right now to address youth unemployment and certainly the housing crisis, which obviously is connected to that, and also the chronic and systemic underfunding of our post-secondary institutions.

What we see is a very different rhetoric from the government of the day. They are buckling down; they've got their own little slush fund thing happening here with the Skills Development Fund. I can't believe a member of the House would actually stand in his place and brag about the Skills Development Fund when the OPP is now investigating that fund for anti-racketeering, when we're actually following the money through the Skills Development Fund, which is supposed to be part of the solution to address youth and chronic unemployment. What we've learned when you do follow the money is that you have to pay to play in this Legislature.

I've said many times, on many occasions now, that many of us feel like we're actually fighting for our very democracy in this place because you are silencing the people that were elected to serve; you are undermining the democratic process; you are silencing people at committee and not letting us have our due diligence as legislators in this place, to ensure that legislation meets the needs of the people of this province. And you're acting like this is business as usual. The arrogance and the hubris are astounding to me right now.

1420

Yet here we are. You have an opportunity. It's a reach across the aisle. It's an option for your consideration to address that one in four people in the province of Ontario—for youth—are unemployed. Those are only the people that we know who are looking for work. So many more people have given up. They are underemployed; they've said, "No, Ontario is not working for me."

And then you'll see the out-migration numbers. We are losing talent and skills like we have never before. Ontario is unaffordable. You have a government mired in scandal. You have a Premier who barely understands that he's not running a sticker business. The rental and the housing market in Ontario are untenable. And all of us know this, Mr. Speaker.

The skilled trades are such a core part of building Ontario up, right? When people reach their potential, our province will reach our potential. We hear a lot from this minister about skilled trades, and I just want to raise a new

voice on this issue, because skilled trades is an honourable, integrity-filled career and profession.

My own son is an electrician. He's already making more money than I am. He still can't afford a house in Ontario, but I'm so proud of him. I'm so proud that he followed his dream and became an electrician. He does really good work. There's honour and dignity in that field. His wife is a nurse—still can't get a full-time job in a hospital even though there's a nursing shortage. Can you imagine that? Something is going on in the province of Ontario, and it's not above board, I can tell you that much.

I want to just talk to you about Tyler. Tyler is pursuing an apprenticeship as a truck and coach mechanic. He has gone through the skilled trades pipeline, if you will. And you'll remember, Madam Speaker—because you were here when the Ontario College of Trades was dismantled and then they brought in Skilled Trades Ontario. Well, we've got some issues with Skilled Trades Ontario, which will interrupt the pathway for skilled trades professions.

I did write the Minister of Labour. He was a little busy, you know, handing out money to his friends and family. This letter is dated August 21—still have not received a response. But I did send this letter to him in the spirit of genuine “let's correct this issue.”

Tyler has shared his experience with my office. He wants to be employed. He wants to reach his professional—*Interjection.*

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's not this Tyler. No, that Tyler in the corner pays attention. I can't say that about all of you, I can tell you that much.

Anyway, he wrote to me, and he's asked me to bring this issue to the floor of Ontario's Legislature, and I do that because it's an honour to do so. But since Skilled Trades Ontario has taken over the apprenticeship registration, completions and exam services—and this is the key part: Since these changes have taken place, we have been inundated with how weak this program is.

Some of these experiences from apprentices that they're sharing with us:

- there's one to two hours of wait time on the phone;
- there are 140 people waiting in line to book an exam;
- they are being kicked out of the exam platform multiple times while in the middle of writing and then being sent home;
- they can't log on to this account;
- they have limited locations for writing;
- they have poor customer service at the exam writing locations;
- there are crammed, narrow waiting rooms with not a lot of space;
- no access to washrooms during the exam;
- waiting more than a month to receive test results;
- a two-month wait-list to schedule a retest;
- exam sites are overcrowded and not conducive to focus and concentration; and
- inconsistent access to accommodations for apprentices with learning needs or test anxiety.

These exams play a pivotal role in shaping the future careers of tradespeople across the province of Ontario. The

listed examples cause unnecessary stress and can prevent otherwise highly skilled and capable apprentices from successfully completing the certification process.

At a time when Ontario is facing a critical labour shortage in the skilled trades, it's more important than ever that our systems support apprentices in achieving their full potential.

We've asked the Minister of Labour—who has responsibility for the skilled trades in Ontario—to ensure that apprentices are provided with exam sites which are quiet and distraction-free, not too much to ask; consistent exam administration across all locations, not too much to ask; access to basic needs during exams, like water and washroom breaks; an environment where staff are trained to create a respectful and supportive, non-intimidating environment.

I want to tell you, I think Tyler has written this test five or six times. The pass rate, I believe, is 70%. He's gotten 68%, 69%, 68%, 69%. There's no assistance for him to get to 70%. It's 1%—1%, Madam Speaker.

Now, I know the 1% that this government works for. I'm very concerned about the 1% that is preventing a skilled tradesperson from finding employment and reaching their potential so our province can reach its potential. Tyler deserves better, and every apprentice in the province of Ontario deserves better. Skills Ontario needs to do better, and I think we can all agree, on this side of the House, we need a much better Minister of Labour.

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

So here we are. My colleague went through the stats; they're pretty dire. They're pretty scary, actually. And the reason why we need to get youth employment right: so we don't lose the talent that the province needs. But these are future workers in health care, in education, in the construction sector. We cannot afford for them to lose hope.

In fact, this should be a unifying call for every lawmaker in this place. You should put partisanship aside. Let's do one thing right. It's going to take a long time to undo all the damage that you have done, but we can do this one thing together. We can create some supports for businesses out there who are looking for employees but can't afford them. What about that? That's quite a concept.

I want to say that wage subsidies obviously have their place in an economy, especially during what is now almost an official recession in Ontario. And all I see from the government members is this—you know, I always think of a Monty Python sketch: Always Look on the Bright Side of Life. Everyone is hanging there, but you're not seeing what's actually happening. You need to acknowledge that youth in Ontario are hurting right now, and they deserve leadership that meets the needs of their potential.

There are other jurisdictions that are doing a really, really good job. The Saskatchewan Youth Internship Program, for instance—this is actually for high school students. It gives youth paid work experience, mentoring and even high school credits, all while building towards potential apprenticeship hours. Why can't you do something like this instead of, really, creating chaos in our

economy, which undermines investment in our economy, which also goes full circle to job creation?

I wish this government was serious about the oath that we took when we became lawmakers here. We are supposed to come to this place to work for the people, not to work for your friends and family, not for the special interests. You need to actually do a better job.

Interjections.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I appreciate the humour from the other side. I would be hiding my face too if I was a member of this government.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Ms. Lee Fairclough: It's my pleasure to rise today to speak to the issue of unemployment among young people. The rising rates of unemployment in Ontario should have everybody in this chamber feeling concerned and shocked.

The Premier said that young people just need to try harder to find employment, and it shows how out of touch he is with the real lives of young people today. Not everyone is lucky enough to be born into a family with their own business.

Let's look at some of the facts: 17.8% youth unemployment in September; young people are facing much higher housing costs and the struggle to start their lives, pay off student debt and a devastating employment market; nearly three in five Canadians worry about losing their homes or rental because of financial issues; and food bank use and rent affordability—this concern is especially pronounced among young Canadians.

1430

The Daily Bread Food Bank, an organization in my riding of Etobicoke–Lakeshore, found that last year nearly a quarter—23% of its clients—were students. And this past summer, I heard from many young people as they struggled to find the typical jobs that all of us would be accustomed to. Jobs like lifeguarding or being a camp counsellor or working in a coffee shop were very limited. And what is even more striking is that as people graduate from college, university or programs they've pursued, it's just as difficult to find the work. Some students come forward and they're offering to volunteer their time in our offices, but this really should not be what is needed.

Speaker, too many are struggling after graduation. Do you know that 57% of those using food banks have university and college degrees? It should be that you work hard, you get an education, you have a strong work ethic and there is work for you, especially in this province.

What we are proposing in this program would allow young people an opportunity. It would also allow small- and medium-sized businesses in our communities to have a chance to hire bright young people at the start of their careers, especially right now with the precarity that we're seeing with the economy. It would really start to jump start their careers.

As a mom of two teenage boys, I look at the world ahead of them and what they will need to work for to build their lives, and I see them and their friends—they're committed to their activities, their extracurriculars, they're

doing everything they can to be ready when it's time for them to enter the workforce. It is up to us. It's up to governments to create the conditions to allow young people to thrive, and we need this program now to support our young people. That is why we put forward this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Ms. Mary-Margaret McMahon: It is an honour to rise in this chamber, always, to represent the beautiful people of beautiful Beaches–East York, and I have two in the chamber, as I mentioned today. I have Heidi and Jane. Jane is a grade 12 student, and I'm going to talk to you about an amazing thing that she's done. But first of all, I want to—I'm proud of this opposition day motion that my colleague has brought forward—we've all brought forward—to deal with youth unemployment. It is a drastic state of affairs out there, if you remember, back in my day—back in your day—how easy it was to get a job, actually.

I first started working at 13 years of age. I was a chambermaid at the Rainbow Motel in Collingwood. And that was a lesson—for many reasons for me—in making my bed. Then I was a cashier at Loblaws. I worked in an ice cream parlour. I was a lifeguard. I was a Red Cross homemaker. I was a waitress at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, and I was a waitress at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. I was not a very good waitress, which explains why my name was never on the schedule again. And I just want to apologize to the customer whom I spilled soup on, back a hundred years ago. But all that to say, I could get a job. Any of us could get a job back in the day. It was easy; it was fun. All your friends were getting those jobs. Even if you didn't get hired again as a waitress, you could still get a job in an ice cream parlour.

Jobs were plentiful and, boy, did that lead to great confidence. You learned things, you made mistakes, and the best way to learn is by making mistakes. You earned an income, so you didn't have to mooch off your parents or your friends, you got vital skills for life, and you met friends and you met people you maybe never would want to work with again. But it was a learning experience, for sure, and our youth are robbed of that right now.

So Jane Maguire, a grade 12 student at Monarch Park Collegiate Institute, came and met with my team in the spring. I don't know what you were doing in grade 12; I sure as heck wasn't whipping up a presentation, interviewing shopkeepers, interviewing students and meeting with an elected official, a local politician. I wasn't doing that. Were any of you doing that? But she's hell-bent and bound on doing it to help others get jobs and to force us into action, to actually do something, like this amazing opposition day motion.

And so Jane went around; she's interviewing her friends. One said, "I do want a job, mainly for the extra income for my family. I mainly haven't been able to find work because many places are hiring or require a bachelor's or other degrees. I'm also disabled, so accessibility is an issue, and I can't do any job, which really bars me from a lot of opportunities. It also contributes to potential employers' perception of my capabilities."

She's interviewed other people, asking them if not having a job causes anxiety. It sure does. She's done a tremendous job. She's here in the House today if you want to talk to her.

We need to support this and get these kids back to work, like we were.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

MPP Andrea Hazell: Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about our opposition day motion. This is very emotional and means a lot to me today, speaking about the young people and small businesses.

We are in a crisis when it comes for youth employment and no support from this government for small businesses. We're not just talking about statistics but a reality of countless young Ontarians and the small businesses that serve our communities. They're not getting by. And I know a lot of my colleagues here give stats and talk about it, but I think, to this government, we've got to say it a thousand times, and I know they're still not going to get it. So I am going to be repeating the same thing today, because I'll tell you who I am representing: all those 30 people, young people and small business, that have come from Scarborough, Toronto central to Etobicoke, to listen, to hear this government on why they're not supporting young people and they're not supporting small businesses.

I want to reference September numbers because I know they want to talk and give kudos about their October numbers, but we know that those are not real numbers. So let's see what the November numbers are going to look like. This is not merely a number, as I said; it represents real lives, real struggles and a generation that is being left behind by this government. Madam Speaker, I want to put this on record: The average wait for young people to find a job stretches to three and a half months. Do you know what that tells me? Some of these young people that can't find those jobs are going to end up living on the streets. And we hear that. In our riding, we see it and we hear it.

We've heard small businesses across this great province, businesses that currently employ 61.7% of Ontario's private sector workforce—and this is a sharp drop from the 66% they accounted for not too long ago. Madam Speaker, in plain English terms right now, we have small businesses closing faster than they're opening. These enterprises are the backbone of our economy, sustaining families and providing students with the critical foothold they need to be in the labour market. By ignoring their needs, this government is failing both our job creators and the young people who rely on them.

The Canada Summer Jobs program has proven that wage subsidies can create hundreds of thousands of jobs, opportunities for our youth. It is time for this government to step up and establish a youth wage subsidy program. This program would not only help young Ontarians kick-start their careers but would also provide small businesses with the support that they desperately need to thrive.

Madam Speaker, it gets worse. Over the next four months, twice as many small businesses expect to reduce staff than those expecting to hire, which means they are

not hiring the young people anymore. There are no resources for them. There are so many businesses across Ontario that are now closing their shops.

Our immigrants came to this country with a dream to get a better life. I am one of those. And I could proudly say in this House that when I came to this country, there were opportunities and there was fairness across the board. I purchased my first home at the age of 23. I'm telling you right now, this is not the Ontario that even my kids are going to be successful in. Our young people can't afford to buy a house. Our young people are leaving school with more than \$20,000 in debts. Our young people's dreams in Ontario are at a zero state right now. And don't talk about the mental crisis that they're going through.

When I look at all the seats over there on this important motion for young people and small businesses—and I'm talking to the young people and businesses in the gallery—we have less than maybe 10 or 12 in the House sitting out of 170 seats. But I want to tell you that you are important to the people on this side of the House. We're going to continue to fight for you. We're going to continue to stand up for you. We want you to have a brighter future in Ontario than you're having right now.

And I cannot thank you enough for coming out and coming down to Queen's Park to see what democracy is all about—because this is not democracy. This is not why I came into politics. We are moving through and we are experiencing a dictatorship experience in this House, where we've got a government that is silencing young people, silencing the people that vote for them in this House, silencing small businesses. But we're not going to let them get away with it. We're going to keep on fighting. We're going to keep on striving. We're going to keep putting you on our shoulders, and we're not going to stop fighting until we see fairness for all of you sitting in that gallery.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: I'm not going to go over all the facts and figures. The reality is, we all represent young people— young people who can't get jobs. There are too many of them, 200,000. And here's the thing: The government has no plan. And that's why we have the youth career plan.

What the government has been doing is shovelling millions and millions of dollars out with no strings attached to friends and insiders and consultants and lobbyists. But they have no plan for young people—lots of plans for the people on the inside, no plan for young people. I urge my colleagues to support this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

Ms. Bowman has moved opposition day motion number 2. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

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

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

Call in the members. There will be a 10-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1444 to 1454.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):
Ms. Bowman moved opposition day motion number 2.

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

Ayes

Bell, Jessica	Gilmour, Alexa	Schreiner, Mike
Blais, Stephen	Glover, Chris	Shamji, Adil
Bowman, Stephanie	Hazell, Andrea	Shaw, Sandy
Cerjanec, Rob	Hsu, Ted	Smyth, Stephanie
Clancy, Aislinn	Kernaghan, Terence	Stevens, Jennifer (Jennie)
Collard, Lucille	McCrimmon, Karen	Tsao, Jonathan
Fairclough, Lee	McKenney, Catherine	Vanthof, John
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Mary-Margaret	Vaugeois, Lise
Fraser, John	Rakocevic, Tom	Watt, Tyler
French, Jennifer K.	Sattler, Peggy	

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):
All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Allsopp, Tyler	Grewal, Hardeep Singh	Racinsky, Joseph
Anand, Deepak	Gualtieri, Silvia	Rae, Matthew
Babikian, Aris	Hamid, Zee	Rickford, Greg
Bailey, Robert	Hardeman, Ernie	Riddell, Brian
Bethlenfalvy, Peter	Harris, Mike	Rosenberg, Bill
Bressee, Ric	Holland, Kevin	Sabawy, Sheref
Calandra, Paul	Jordan, John	Sandhu, Amarjot
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Kanapathi, Logan	Sarkaria, Prabmeet Singh
Cho, Stan	Kerzner, Michael S.	Sarrazin, Stéphane
Ciriello, Monica	Khanjin, Andrea	Saunderson, Brian
Clark, Steve	Kusendova-Bashta, Natalia	Scott, Laurie
Coe, Lorne	Leardi, Anthony	Smith, Dave
Cooper, Michelle	Lecce, Stephen	Smith, David
Crawford, Stephen	Lumsden, Neil	Smith, Graydon
Cuzzetto, Rudy	McCarthy, Todd J.	Tangri, Nina
Darouze, George	McGregor, Graham	Thanigasalam, Vijay
Denault, Billy	Pang, Billy	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dixon, Jess	Parsa, Michael	Tibollo, Michael A.
Dowie, Andrew	Piccini, David	Vickers, Paul
Downey, Doug	Pierre, Natalie	Wai, Daisy
Firin, Mohamed	Pinsonneault, Steve	Williams, Charmaine A.
Flack, Rob	Pirie, George	
Gallagher Murphy, Dawn	Quinn, Nolan	

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Trevor Day): The ayes are 29; the nays are 67.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):
I declare the motion lost.

Motion negatived.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PROTECT ONTARIO BY CUTTING RED TAPE ACT, 2025 LOI DE 2025 POUR PROTÉGER L'ONTARIO EN RÉDUISANT LES FORMALITÉS ADMINISTRATIVES

Ms. Khanjin moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 46, An Act to amend various Acts / Projet de loi 46, Loi modifiant diverses lois.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):
I recognize the Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

1500

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: Thank you, Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. It is a true privilege to rise in this House today to lead off debate for the Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025. This bill represents our government's continued and unwavering commitment to protect Ontario by cutting costly, unnecessary and outdated red tape so we can fortify Ontario's economy and secure future prosperity for generations to come.

Today I will be sharing my time with my hard-working parliamentary assistants, the member for Wellington—Halton Hills as well as the member for Markham—Thornhill. Before I speak, though, about the details in this bill, I want to acknowledge the hard work and collaboration of all my colleagues across government, including the MPP for Kitchener—Conestoga, our Minister of Natural Resources, who also worked very hard on this particular bill with his whole team. I want to thank the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction—my whole team—as well as our deputy minister, Maud Murray, and her team for their excellent work in putting this together.

This bill reflects a contribution of over 20 ministries, Speaker. These efforts are a testament to the kind of teamwork that Premier Ford has championed since day one. When we work together across ministries, we deliver better outcomes for the people of Ontario. That is exactly what we're doing here today. I stand here proud to introduce our government's 16th red tape reduction package and our 15th red tape reduction bill since taking office in 2018. These aren't just numbers. This is proof that our government's relentless focus on putting people before paperwork is true.

Since 2008, we have saved the people and businesses of this province nearly \$1.2 billion and 1.8 million hours. With this bill we are adding another \$5.8 million in annual savings and eliminating over 256,000 hours in unnecessary paperwork, another example of how we're putting the hard-working men and women, the people of this province, ahead of paperwork.

When I talk about 256,000 hours saved, this represents 30 years in time savings. That's shaving 30 years off of burdensome paperwork and bureaucracy, bringing common sense back to Ontario. These are hours that can be redirected to building homes, hiring workers, serving customers and innovating for the future. For when we give people back time, it gives them time to think, time to be with their families, time to innovate and time to run their business and do what they do best.

Every minute we save for small businesses is a minute that they could spend growing their Ontario footprint or improving their services or giving back to their communities. I just think of this last weekend: Our great Barrie Chamber of Commerce had their Santa Claus parade, where the Attorney General, the member for Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte, attended in full Christmas

attire. That shows you that when we give these small businesses time and money in their pockets, they invest it back into the community. It means they have time to do these Santa Claus parades, they're not mired in paperwork, and they have time to contribute to charitable causes. Speaker, this year's parade was unlike any other.

This speaks to a greater example: every dollar, every minute, we don't just save people and businesses so that they can put back in their community, but it's also time and money we save for those families. It's a dollar they can spend on their groceries, on housing and on their children. This is what red tape reduction really means in real life. It's practical. It touches the lives of so many people. It means time and money back in people's pockets, and it means more room for businesses to grow, hire and compete. It means stronger families and stronger communities.

We do this work while maintaining the highest standards of health, safety and environmental protection.

We are cutting red tape, not cutting corners. We are getting rid of what doesn't make sense. That's why we evaluate every measure through the lens of our seven principles of regulatory modernization, which include:

- respecting international standards;
- avoiding duplication;
- focusing on performance over prescription; and
- ensuring clear, streamlined reporting that doesn't waste people's time.

These principles are laid out in the Modernizing Ontario for People and Businesses Act. They guide every policy that we do when it comes to red tape reduction and every policy in this bill and, quite frankly, across government.

We are living in a time of extraordinary global pressure, and we are responding in real time to that global pressure. We face high inflation, rising costs, supply chain inefficiencies, rapid technological change and recurring tariff threats from the US. Cutting red tape has never been more crucial. We must be leaner, more agile if we are to protect Ontario from these new challenges.

But our government is not just reacting to the new realities; we are building the foundation to thrive despite them. That's why cutting red tape is not a side project for this government. It's a primary strategy. We know the risk of doing nothing. Every delay in permitting, every unnecessary regulation, every duplication is a barrier to investment, to jobs and to our future.

This government was elected on a clear mandate to protect Ontario, and we believe regulations should serve the people, not delay their progress. We are focused on outcomes, not just paperwork, which is why we are standing in this House today with a historic third majority. Why is that, Madam Speaker? Well, it's because we are a government that gets things done and that makes life easier for Ontarians, makes life more affordable for people and businesses in Ontario. I can't say that was the case in Ontario before our government was here in 2018. In fact, when the Liberals were in power, propped up by the NDP, Ontario was the red tape capital of Canada. That was

shameful. In fact, under their watch, Ontario received a C grade for red tape reduction from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

Let's not forget their failed policies of over-regulation that made it impossible to open up a business in Ontario. They drove over 300,000 good-paying manufacturing jobs out of this province and left families to fend for themselves. But when we formed government in 2018, Premier Ford brought hope. He brought a clear message: Ontario is open for business. I'm happy to announce that with this government's efforts, thanks to leadership from Premier Ford and our team, Ontario was now given a grade of A for reducing red tape from this year's CFIB. That continues the momentum of the grade of A that this government has been receiving since Premier Ford first formed government.

To put it in perspective, when we talk about putting people over paperwork, there's no better example than the hard work that our Minister of Health has done when she puts patients above paperwork, transforming the health care system we have here in Ontario. It's no wonder that she was awarded the Golden Scissors Award by the very same Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I want to congratulate her for that award a year or so ago.

But now, thanks to the changes that our government has been hard at work at, Ontario is now one of the two top destinations and is one of the two best places for cutting red tape in Canada. Now we have the lowest regulatory burden per capita in the nation. To put it in perspective, we have about 90 regulations per 10,000 people. Next to us would be Alberta, with about 146, and after that, British Columbia. So you see, Speaker, it is a very competitive environment, but we need to be able to tell businesses not only do we have their back, but we're creating the right framework, the right economic conditions for them to thrive here in Ontario and to do business.

Our efforts have been working, and we will continue to make life more easy and affordable for the people of Ontario. That's why this bill is so important.

Now, let me walk you through some of the concrete actions we're taking in this package, the actions that make a real difference in the lives of real people here in Ontario.

1510

First, we are addressing a long-standing concern raised by those living with disabilities. Through the great work our Minister of Children, Community and Social Services has done, and through the work that he's done working with the advocates in the sector, listening first-hand to their challenges and responding in real time, what you'll see in this bill is, through regulatory changes that come into effect over the summer, this bill will ensure the new Canada Disability Benefit, a federal program, will not be counted as income under the Ontario Disability Support Program—ODSP—or Ontario Works. It will not be treated as income for not only just Ontario Works and ODSP but as well for the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities Program, ACSO. Speaker, this is real, meaningful action for those individuals. It shows that we're listening and we're acting in real time, that we're

helping everyone in Ontario make sure that they have the best outcomes and the best abilities here in Ontario and that every person is being listened to by this government. This means that those individuals receiving those provincial supports will not see their benefits clawed back.

This is the right thing to do. This could amount to, to put it in perspective, up to \$200 more per month in the pockets of some of Ontario's most vulnerable people—money that can go towards housing, food, mobility and health expenses. And we're doing this in response to what we heard, from the advocates to the stakeholders to those with lived experience. They asked us to make this exception and exemption, and our government is proud to say that we are listening, we are acting and we hear you. And this is red tape reduction at its absolute best. It improves lives. It makes the system simpler and fairer, and it protects those that rely on it.

Second, we are taking action to protect public safety while supporting our propane industry. This past summer, I was able to address the propane association of Ontario on these very changes that are proposed in this bill. The new safety standards require that certain propane tanks be purged by qualified workers before being used. That might seem very straightforward to you, Speaker, but under the previous rules, only one specific class of worker could actually do this work. This was red tape. The industry told us that there weren't enough of those workers to meet the deadline, and they were right. Without action, this bottleneck could have put safety and compliance at risk. So our government took action. We stepped in, allowing other appropriately trained certified propane workers to carry out this work. The result? Broader access to skilled labour, faster compliance with safety rules, all while respecting a lot of safety standards. This is exactly the kind of pragmatic fixes that government should be delivering on, and under Premier Ford, we are.

Speaker, let me continue by highlighting more of the practical and forward-looking measures we are introducing through this bill and the broader red tape reduction package. We are expanding and enhancing the strong-mayor powers framework to more municipalities across Ontario. Today, we saw many mayors around the halls here at the Legislature, continuing the great work they do. In fact, I had the opportunity to speak with the mayor of Ottawa, who is also following suit with what this government is doing when it comes to red tape reduction and has his own red tape reduction committee, where they're looking not only for efficiencies but ways to improve the way they do work at that council. This speaks to setting a high standard. This government is leading by example, often asking others to bring forward many more ideas—ideas that we will always listen to and try to implement. And so I was pleased to hear from the mayor of Ottawa that he's doing the very same thing.

But back to the bill at hand: As of May 1, 2025, when we talk about strong-mayor powers, this framework will now apply to 216 more municipalities, covering most of Ontario's population. We are strengthening this framework to give mayors the tools they need to deliver on

shared provincial-municipal priorities: building homes, expanding transit and delivering the infrastructure that we all depend on. These changes respond directly to the feedback we heard from municipalities. Again, we listened, and we're acting.

Local leaders have told us they want more flexibility to deliver results without being buried in outdated processes or paralyzed by procedural gridlock. This legislation helps municipalities do just that. Whether it's streamlining council procedures, accelerating approvals or cutting local red tape, these powers help elected officials to move quickly, efficiently and transparently, something that Ontarians need now more than ever.

We trust our local leaders, and we're giving them the tools that they need to act. At a time where Ontario is facing a housing crisis, speed and clarity in decision-making is not an option; it's essential. The people of this province expect governments at all levels to work together and get results, and that is what this expansion of strong-mayor powers delivers.

Fourth, we are proposing thoughtful, measured updates to the Liquor Licence and Control Act to modernize alcohol consumption rules in Ontario's provincial parks. This is treating adults like adults, Speaker. It's also utilizing our great Ontario parks infrastructure.

Under the current rules, alcohol can only be consumed on individual campsites or with a specific event permit from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. But park superintendents and visitors alike have long called for more flexibility to allow for responsible alcohol consumption in our parks in designated areas such as beaches, picnic sites or open, grassy areas. This legislation proposes exactly that. With clear regulation and proper oversight, superintendents will be allowed to designate specific, public areas for alcohol consumption. This brings Ontario parks in alignment with so many of the national parks south of the border now, as we're trying to reshore more of our investments here in Ontario, but also tourism.

In fact, there was a survey done not that long ago that actually shows that Ontarians are acting with their pocket-book by supporting more tourism here in Ontario. More and more people are exploring what's in their own backyards, and in many people's backyards, there is their own local provincial park. So we're asking Ontarians not only to enjoy our provincial parks, but now they can also do it responsibly and, again, with clear oversight when it comes to being able to enjoy an alcoholic beverage at their provincial park.

This reflection is modern and balanced. It aligns us with how people are responsible and enjoy our beautiful provincial parks now, and also will include strong safeguards for safety, enforcement and public order. More importantly, though, it creates a better visitor experience and brings Ontario rules in line with other jurisdictions across Canada. We are treating people like adults, and we are empowering public servants to make local decisions that reflect the needs of their communities.

The other thing I'd like to talk about that's in this bill, the fifth item: We're tackling the challenge that we have

been hearing is frustrating when it comes to tenants and landlords alike, and that is delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board. We've all heard countless stories, and every summer I hear these countless stories in my office.

In fact, this past week, when we were all in our constituency offices, as I was coming to my office early in the morning to open up the door, I noticed that someone had slipped a letter in the crease of the door of my constituency office. So when I pulled out this letter and I came into my office, I opened it up, and little did I know, but this letter was about the Landlord and Tenant Board. A frustrated individual who has been a landlord his whole life—who's been trying to give people the ability to have housing, as he states in his letter—was really taken advantage of, and has yet to receive years of pay from his particular tenant. Lots of this is because of delays at the Landlord and Tenant Board.

So he was utterly frustrated, and his plea of last resort was to write me a handwritten letter and insert it into my door. He left it off with his phone number, so naturally I called him right away. He was pleased to hear of the changes that the Attorney General and MPP for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte is making to the Landlord and Tenant Board to respond to many of his concerns, but to be equal and fair in the process. These are one of the many stories that I've heard most recently in my office, but I know over the summer months lots of people expressed frustrations.

One extra individual who comes to mind is a teacher. Not only does he teach at a high school in Barrie, he also waits tables at The Keg, and he has one unit that he rents out so that he can help someone achieve, again, housing in Barrie, because for a very long time it was hard to find rentals in Barrie. And so his heart went out to those individuals. He thought, "Okay, well, I will provide a rental for those individuals." But this teacher, who also worked at The Keg waiting tables, was out lots of money, again, because he was taken advantage of, all because his heart was in the right place, but the individual was taking advantage of him. Again, we're bringing that equilibrium to the system so that that individual can yet again be made whole for what he has brought onto the market. So, Speaker, the stories we've heard, the cases that take months and sometimes over a year—we can now breathe a sigh of some hope and relief that those delays can be resolved.

1520

It's not acceptable for tenants that are seeking stability, and it's not workable for housing providers facing uncertainty and risk, like the individuals that I spoke about. They're not in it for a profit; they went in it with good intentions and as a result there was a system that wasn't set up for their good intentions. Now that equilibrium is brought back to balance.

Through this package, we're exploring legislative changes to the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Our goal is simple: to reduce delays, cut administrative burdens and

ensure that disputes are resolved quickly, fairly and consistently.

With tenants and landlords, no one wants to be stuck in limbo. It impacts the entire housing system. Someone who is looking for a home doesn't have access to one, someone looking to pay their mortgage is unable to, and the entire ecosystem is unbalanced as a result of delays. So that is why reducing delays isn't just about process; it's about restoring confidence in a critical system, encouraging more investment in rental housing across the province.

We want to encourage people to be landlords. We want to encourage people to rent, to help others who are seeking a place to call home. But oftentimes, the system and delays discourage people from doing that. The status quo is not working for this government, and we're working to change it.

The sixth change, Speaker, is that we're also accelerating timelines for critical mineral development in Ontario, a key strategic advantage in our global economy. We know that Ontario has the resources the world needs: lithium, nickel, cobalt and other minerals essential to batteries, making electric vehicles and the use of clean technology. But having minerals is not enough. We must have a permitting and regulatory system that moves at the speed of the market.

And so through the new "one project, one process" model, we are coordinating permits across the Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery. This is truly a team approach that seizes the huge potential that our economy has to use the natural resources that we have been blessed with in this province; using high labour standards; using Ontarian, world-class mining practices, above none; and creating those local jobs here in our own economy, here in Ontario, and an import and export we can all be proud of.

This approach ensures that mining companies don't face duplication and they don't face multiple steps, conflicting requirements, or long delays in securing the rights to proceed with early works. For if we delay them from these early works, Speaker, that's delaying them from hiring employees; that's delaying the next person from getting a high-paying job—a job with benefits, a job that helps their family, a job that helps their children—and these delays are unacceptable.

And in fact, what we're doing, Speaker, is we're already streamlining some of the processes, reducing what would take up to 30 days down to just five business days. Speaker, that's shaving 30 days down, and we're going further. In cases where land tenure isn't finalized, we're enabling the issuance of temporary land use permits so projects can begin their preliminary work without being held back.

Our message is clear: Ontario is open for business. We need to hit the ground running, and we have the ethical labour and the great practices here in Ontario to do that. This helps Ontario remain a global leader in the secure and sustainable supply of critical minerals and supports advanced manufacturing, EV production and energy innova-

tion across this province. We are building a modern regulatory system for a modern economy, and this package is helping lead the way.

Madam Speaker, all these actions—from the disability benefit exemption to propane workforce reforms to municipal empowerment to mining approvals—have one thing in common: They are about making government work better for workers, for families, for businesses and for communities. We are looking at every policy, every form, every process and asking, “How does this protect Ontario?” Does this make sense in 2025? Does it serve the people of Ontario? Does it add value, or is it just adding delay?” And if it no longer makes sense, it’s gone.

This is how we build a province that is resilient, responsive and ready for the future. This is how we protect Ontario’s economy from external shocks, by ensuring that our internal systems are efficient and effective. This is how we make Ontario the most competitive jurisdiction in the G7 to work, live and grow a business. Speaker, we are doing all this in the bill because it is essential.

Red tape is often invisible, until you’re the one stuck in it. Whether it’s a small business applying for a licence, a municipality trying to build a road, a not-for-profit navigating program eligibility or a citizen seeking a timely decision, the frustration, the wait and the wasted effort is real. Too often, people feel like government is not on their side.

That’s what we’re changing with this legislation, Speaker: We are proving that government can be responsive, that it can be smart and that it can move fast and still do things right. That is how we’ve been approaching red tape reduction since 2018: not as a box-ticking exercise, but as a sustained, people-focused mission.

We’ve backed it up with measurable results: nearly \$1.2 billion and \$1.8 million in savings delivered; 16 red tape reduction packages; 15 separate bills, each one targeted at improving efficiency; and now, another \$5.8 million in annual savings and 256,000 hours eliminated through this bill alone. These aren’t abstract policy wins. These are measurable improvements on how we are making government work better for people and smarter for business.

For a landlord trying to resolve a case; for a person with disabilities trying to access benefits; for a propane distributor trying to comply with new safety rules; for a mayor trying to speed up housing; for a family visiting a park—these are the people we are thinking about when it comes to this legislation. We’re showing them that government doesn’t have to be slow, confusing or adversarial. It can, and must, be a partner in their success. This is the spirit behind the Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025.

Speaker, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders who contributed to the spring 2025 red tape reduction consultations. This legislation reflects their input, their ideas and their lived experience. I want to thank my team at red tape reduction for all their work.

Finally, I want to thank Premier Ford, because without his vision and political will, red tape reduction would have

remained what it was under the previous Liberal government: a talking point. Instead, it’s now a pillar of Ontario’s economic strategy and a proven driver of investment, job creation, affordability and service improvement. We’re not just talking about efficiency; we’re delivering it. We’re not just cutting costs; we’re protecting opportunity. And we’re not just reducing red tape; we’re building a province that is stronger, more modern and more responsive than ever before.

To the people of Ontario, let me say this: This legislation is for you. You deserve a government that says yes. You deserve a government that doesn’t get in your way but clears the way. That is what we’re doing with this bill because when we reduce red tape, we create opportunities and we increase opportunities. When we cut costs, we boost affordability. When we modernize systems, we improve lives. When we act decisively, pragmatically and with purpose, we protect Ontario’s progress and build towards its future.

This is another step in that journey, and I look forward to continuing that journey with the members of this House.

Thank you, Speaker. I now cede the remainder of my time to my great parliamentary assistants.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: It is an honour to rise in the Legislature today. I join my colleagues in presenting Ontario’s spring 2025 red tape reduction package. I want to begin by acknowledging the honourable Minister of Red Tape Reduction for her leadership and for outlining her bold vision behind this bill.

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Building on those important points, I want to focus today on what red tape reduction looks like in practice and how the steps we’re taking are protecting families, small businesses and workers in my beautiful riding of Markham–Thornhill and across Ontario.

While regulatory reform can sometimes sound abstract, its effects are anything but. Every time we simplify a form, digitize a process or align requirements across the ministries, we are removing red tape. We’re returning time or saving money. We are making our province more competitive and more responsive. As we have heard, reducing red tape is a central to our government’s mission to protect Ontario by making our province stronger and more competitive.

The points my colleague raised are vital to understand the context in which we find ourselves. People are facing undeniable pressures, higher costs of living, rising interest rates and the ongoing uncertainty in the global economy. For many businesses, adapting to these changes means navigating a landscape that is becoming more challenging by the day. In this environment, it is understandable that people are looking for their government for leadership, asking us to act quickly and decisively to help them adapt to these new realities, and that is exactly what we are doing.

Ontario cannot afford to fall behind. Global competition is fierce. Regulatory clarity and efficiency have

become deciding factors for investment, and for small businesses in particular who don't have teams of lawyers or consultants, every extra form, every unclear rule and every delay makes a difference. As we make these changes, we are doing so responsibly by protecting public health, safety and the environment while reducing the barrier to success.

But while the pressures are real, so too are the opportunities that lie ahead. We are working smarter, coordinating across many ministries—our minister has coordinated so many ministries—listening to the sector partners almost every day and measuring our progress.

Ontario is a province that has always bounced back time and time again. Our people are resilient, innovative and full of ambition. The question we face now is not about whether we can overcome these challenges; it is about how we do it. Ontario has long been a place where big ideas, bold businesses and dynamic communities come together. To truly lead in today's economy, we need to ensure that our government works with purpose and efficiency—that we are a partner in progress, not an obstacle. That's why red tape reduction has been and will remain one of our government's top priorities.

The path forward may not be simple, but with the rich and right approach, we can build a future that ensures we are not only surviving in these times but thriving in them. And for that, we need a government that is agile—one that focuses on getting out of the way, not standing in the way. We need a government that listens to the people, understands their struggle and works to create a system that is simpler, more responsive and better suited to the modern world. That is exactly why we are here today.

Reducing red tape is not just about cutting unnecessary paperwork or eliminating bureaucratic barriers. When we talk about reducing red tape, we are not just talking about paperwork. We are talking about people's time, people's livelihoods and the systems that support them. It is about providing people—whether they are small business owners, in rural communities or innovators in the urban centres—with the tools they need to succeed. It is about ensuring the government serves people, not the other way around. It is about ensuring the government is serving the people each and every day.

This government is focused on clearing the way for progress, not creating more obstacles. That means removing duplicative processes, simplifying regulations and embracing more modern approaches that reflect the reality of how people live, work and do business in this wonderful province. This is not just about government efficiency. It is about giving everyone the time and resources they need to do what they do best: building, innovating and contributing to Ontario's economic success.

The importance of this work can't be overstated. With rising costs and uncertain global conditions, people are looking to the government to act with urgency and purpose. In response, we are working hard to ensure that every aspect of our government is focused on one goal: protecting Ontario. As my colleague mentioned, since 2018, our government has made significant progress,

taking over 650 actions to reduce red tape. These efforts have resulted in a 6% decrease in regulatory compliance requirements, creating nearly \$1.2 billion and 1.8 million hours in savings for people and businesses.

But the impact goes even further: freeing up time and resources for individuals, not-for-profit organizations, municipalities, universities, colleges, school boards and hospitals—the list goes on, Madam Speaker, across Ontario. The proposed Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025, and the broader spring 2025 red tape reduction package represent the next chapter in this ongoing work. They reflect what we have consistently heard from the people of Ontario: They want a government that is efficient, transparent and responsive to the moment.

Speaker, none of this work happens in isolation. It takes collaboration between ministries, with municipalities and alongside the many business and sector leaders who continue to raise their voices and share their insights.

The proposed Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025, and the spring 2025 red tape reduction package is a coordinated cross-government effort of over 50 proposed initiatives to modernize legislation, regulations and policies that are outdated, inefficient or unnecessarily complex for businesses, front-line workers and the public. These initiatives span multiple sectors and aim to remove unnecessary barriers that hinder growth and prosperity. They also build on lessons learned across ministries about what's working and what can be streamlined. They are practical, achievable steps that will help keep Ontario on the path to a brighter, more competitive future.

It is through that kind of engagement that we have identified pain points, uncovered redundancies and found ways to modernize how government serves the people. As we move forward, that engagement will remain critical, because regulatory modernization is not a one-time event; it is a continuous process of listening, improving and adapting to a changing world.

Whether it's clearing up legal bottlenecks, digitizing outdated forms or helping local governments access better tools, this package is about delivering smarter government without compromising safety, fairness or public value. Speaker, across ministries, we are delivering on that promise.

Let me now walk you through a few of the specific initiatives in this package that speak to our continued commitment to service excellence and regulatory modernization across government. When it comes to providing better service for people, Speaker, I would like to highlight the proposed changes to the Children's Law Reform Act. I would like to thank the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for working with our Ministry of Red Tape Reduction for these changes.

The changes would clarify the Ontario Court of Justice's authority to determine parentage in matters before it—for example, whether a person has child support obligations—and provide the power to order blood or DNA tests to support these determinations. This would improve the efficiency of family law proceedings by empowering the Ontario Court of Justice to make parentage

determinations directly on matters before it. Currently, only the Superior Court of Justice can order such a test, requiring families to initiate separate proceedings to determine parentage, resulting in delays, increased cost and added complexity.

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Allowing the Ontario Court of Justice to handle both family law matters and the necessary parentage testing would streamline the process, reduce burdens on families and enhance access to timely justice. These changes support government priorities to simplify the justice system, reduce court backlogs and make services more accessible, especially for families navigating sensitive legal issues.

For the people of Ontario, this means reduced delays and uncertainty. This means faster decisions on child support and decision-making responsibility, less legal cost and a more accessible justice system for families who need it most. The proposal helps ensure that children receive timely support and stability, particularly in cases where parentage impacts decision-making responsibility, parenting time or financial responsibilities. Madam Speaker, we are talking about the vulnerable children in our province.

The Ministry of Long-Term Care, as another example, is also delivering on smarter processes that benefit Ontarians directly. The front-line workers in health care know first-hand how burdensome outdated forms can be. Physicians have long told us that the health assessment form for long-term-care admissions is overly complicated, causing delays and repeated follow-ups. I hear that from my wife, Dr. Logan, almost every day.

Madam Speaker, together with Ontario Health and other key partners, they are launching an updated health assessment form used in the admission process to determine applicant eligibility for medical and health care needs for long-term care. The form has long been cited by physicians as a one of the more burdensome and high-volume documents they encounter. By modernizing this form and moving towards digital integration, we are removing barriers that slow down access to care. The ministry is easing administrative pressures and helping people access care faster. This is not just a win for the physicians or doctors; it is a lifeline for seniors and their families waiting for the support they deserve.

The updated paper form is expected to be followed with digitization and integration into electronic medical records. This is another good example of how we are reducing friction in critical public services and responding to front-line feedback and front-line workers. This is keeping costs down for clinicians and support staff, and it is better services for you, for the families and seniors.

With respect to environmental stewardship—another ministry, Madam Speaker; we are talking about how to cut red tape—at the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, we are strengthening the framework that holds producers accountable under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act. The proposed change will help strengthen government oversight and communication with producers, enabling a more responsive and effective producer responsibility framework. This supports a circular

economy that works better for business and the environment. With clearer reporting, improved enforcement and a better ability to assess performance, we are ensuring the regulatory framework is working the way people expect it to, efficiently and with accountability. This is a critical step towards a sustainable future where economic growth and environmental care go hand in hand.

As part of our continued commitment to build Ontario and support local infrastructure, we are proposing an amendment to Infrastructure Ontario's Loan Program to allow district social service administration boards to apply for affordable loans through Infrastructure Ontario's Loan Program. This could help district social service administration boards build more critical infrastructure in northern municipalities, including affordable housing and community infrastructure such as fire halls and child care centres. It is practical, it is cost-effective and it reflects the value we place on partnerships with local governments. It is about empowering modern communities to build resilience and thrive, not just survive. The proposal supports Ontario's ambitious capital plan of more than \$200 billion over the next 10 years to build more highways, transit, hospitals, schools, housing and other vital infrastructure.

District social services administration boards are responsible for delivering essential services and maintaining infrastructure in northern Ontario, including housing and child care centres. District social services administration boards have faced difficulties securing financing due to the high interest rate and the housing crisis. Currently, these boards are not eligible for Infrastructure Ontario's Loan Program, even though they have similar characteristics to other eligible organizations, such as being not-for-profit and benefiting the public.

This change allows the local service provider to have access to affordable loans and short-term financing to build the infrastructure that communities rely on, from housing to shelters to community centres. These examples make clear that red tape reduction is not about cutting corners; it is about cutting delays, cutting costs and cutting confusion. It is about modernizing how government works so that it serves people better, faster and with greater fairness.

When we remove unnecessary barriers, we unlock opportunity. When we streamline the process, we return precious time to Ontarians: time that can be spent growing businesses, caring for loved ones or building a stronger community. This package is a testament to our government's ongoing commitment to not only reducing red tape but to delivering real, meaningful change for the people of Ontario.

Madam Speaker, one thing is clear: Reducing red tape is not about removing safeguards; it is about removing obstacles. Every hour we return to small businesses, every barrier we remove for a front-line worker and every step we take to modernize how government serves the people: It all adds up. It is about making it easier for people to do the right thing faster. Whether it is supporting sustainable forestry, modernizing assistive device programs, digitizing service delivery, centralizing government real estate or

improving consumer protections, these are practical changes with tangible benefits.

When taken together, they tell a much larger story. They tell the story of a government that understands its responsibility to be a partner, not a barrier; a government that is serious about unleashing Ontario's full economic potential, because every day we cut red tape, we create space for innovation to grow, for business to thrive and for services to reach the people who need them most. That is how Ontario remains competitive not just in Canada, but across global markets that are constantly evolving.

But competitiveness alone is not the end goal. It is the means to a greater purpose: to protect Ontario; to protect the livelihood of our workers, the resilience of our communities, the strength of our public services and the trust that Ontarians place in their institutions.

By making government work better—by making it clearer, faster and more responsive—we protect the things that matter most. We build a province that is easier to do business in and better to live in, a province that is ready for today and prepared for tomorrow. Because at its heart, red tape reduction is about people. It is about making life easier and ensuring that government is a partner, not a roadblock. With this package, we are reaffirming that commitment, Madam Speaker.

At this time, I am proud to support this wonderful bill. I now look forward to hearing from my colleague from Wellington–Halton Hills, who will speak further about what these changes mean for our people of Ontario.

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The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):

I recognize the member for Wellington–Halton Hills.

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: It's always a privilege to rise in this House to speak on behalf of the fantastic residents of Wellington–Halton Hills. I'm happy to support Bill 46.

Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Honourable Minister Khanjin for her remarks and her leadership in advancing this government's vision for a modern, efficient and responsive Ontario, one that protects Ontario's interests and puts people at the centre of everything we do. The minister has clearly laid out how Bill 46, Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, strengthens our province's competitiveness and prosperity in this global economic moment. I'd also like to thank my colleague the honourable member for Markham–Thornhill for offering a thoughtful and compelling overview of the real impacts red tape reduction is having across the province. His remarks make it clear: This work is about delivering real value to real people. It's my privilege to expand on what is in this bill and to speak in greater detail on the proposed act.

When we talk about red tape, we're really talking about the quiet burdens that weigh down Ontario's economic engine, especially in times of global uncertainty. Across Ontario, we're hearing the same things from farmers and agricultural workers in my riding, to business owners and entrepreneurs, service providers and skilled workers and families: Inflation has made everyday essentials more expensive. From rising tariffs to declining business and

consumer confidence, families and businesses are feeling the squeeze. Supply chains are tighter, and the cost of doing just about anything, from getting goods to market to accessing public services—everything has gone up.

While the challenges are real, so are the opportunities. That's what sets Ontario apart. Ontario has the talent, the tools and the tenacity to lead. And that leadership starts with government making it easier to get things done. We don't just respond to these pressures; we find new opportunities. We move obstacles off the road so that businesses, job creators and everyday Ontarians can keep moving forward. That's what red tape reduction is all about, and that's what this bill continues to deliver. It's about ensuring Ontario remains the best place to build a business, raise a family and pursue opportunity, and it's why this government has made cutting red tape a priority from day one.

Over the past several years, our government has made significant progress in reducing barriers and streamlining services. The spring 2025 red tape reduction package aims to continue this progress as it introduces a number of new initiatives that align with the government's key priorities: better services for you, streamlining services and protecting Ontario's economy.

Madam Speaker, this is more than a collection of regulatory changes. It's a coordinated cross-government effort to make services work better and faster, especially when people need them most. It builds on the momentum of the past packages and legislation and advances the very theme that red tape reduction does best: unlocking new opportunity.

People are looking for government to work with them, not against them. They want systems they can count on, and they want to spend less time navigating government and more time doing the work that keeps this province strong. This package delivers on that vision. When we reduce red tape, we make it easier to open a business, expand service or access the programs people count on. We give back something that's in short supply for many of us: time.

The proposed Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025, and broader spring 2025 red tape reduction package build momentum by outlining 51 new initiatives, each designed to make a meaningful impact. If approved, the proposed initiatives are expected to result in approximately \$5.8 million in net annualized compliance cost savings and over 256,000 hours for regulated entities. That time and money now will flow back into communities, into local businesses, families and future investments.

It reflects a broader commitment, one that is the heart of this government's agenda, protecting Ontario by unleashing its full economic potential. Madam Speaker, that isn't just a phrase, that's a clear priority. It means protecting our future by ensuring we have a strong foundation for job creation and community development, and it means protecting the public's trust by making sure our rules and systems are fair, transparent and focused on outcomes. It's why the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction is working hand in hand with partner ministries to build a

culture of continuous improvement across government, because red tape reduction is not just about paperwork. It's not something that gets dealt with on the sidelines or once the real work is done. It is the real work, and it touches everything we do from housing and health care to transit, training and trade.

Red tape reduction is a strategic priority. That's the driving force behind the proposed Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025. It's not just legislation; it's part of a broader plan to make Ontario stronger, more responsive and more prepared for the future. We need to do the work that ensures Ontario is the most competitive economy in the G7.

We are cutting the red tape that slows progress, reduces opportunities and complicates what should be straightforward paths for people and organizations alike.

Each of these proposals is about more than just process improvement. They are about building a stronger Ontario, a more efficient Ontario, and an Ontario that protects what matters most while laying the foundation for future prosperity. Because when the government gets out of the way, individuals are able to take initiative and succeed.

Madam Speaker, this is the future we are building: a more efficient, productive and prosperous Ontario that delivers for all its people. The examples that have been discussed today highlight the broad scope of this package, from education to justice, to creating safe and sustainable trails to consumer protection—each reform is designed to make government work better for people and smarter for business. That is what red tape reduction means in practice: cutting unnecessary barriers, improving clarity, and helping people and businesses succeed without compromising safety or fairness.

By taking these steps, we are protecting Ontario's economy, its communities and its people. Each of these initiatives is designed to deliver real, measurable benefits for everyone. Whether it's helping businesses stay competitive, improving the accessibility of services, or fostering economic growth across the province, red tape reduction is at the heart of everything we're doing. This government is about taking action to ensure that Ontario remains an affordable, accessible and competitive place to live, work and do business.

Madam Speaker, I was able to go to one of my chambers of commerce for their business excellence awards, and I spoke to a number of the businesses that were receiving awards there about the need for red tape reduction. They were heartened and excited by that discussion that they had with me. I made it very clear that red tape reduction is not about cutting corners; it's about modernizing and taking a second look at things because government is always adding, adding, and adding, but not this government. We're going to take a look and continue to cut red tape.

As we move forward, we are more committed than ever to continuing this work. Reducing red tape isn't just about cutting regulations, it's about improving how government works. It's about ensuring that everyone, from all walks of life, has the opportunity to thrive. These changes reflect

the government's deep understanding that a prosperous and dynamic Ontario depends on an efficient and responsive regulatory system, one that supports people, businesses and communities, rather than slowing them down.

The message is clear: When we eliminate unnecessary barriers, we unlock capacity. The spring 2025 red tape reduction package puts people before process. It strengthens our public services, it supports workers, it helps our economy grow, it protects Ontario and it reflects what good governance should be: practical, collaborative and focused on outcomes that matter. A government that understands what regular people are experiencing and finding ways to reduce that burden that the government puts in place year over year over year—but not this government.

By modernizing how we govern and by removing outdated obstacles, we're building a province that works better for everyone. We're freeing up time and resources that can be reinvested in our communities, in innovation and in the services we rely on every day. We're delivering a government that works the way it should—responsive, transparent and focused on results.

It all reflects a clear priority to build a smarter, faster, more modern public service and an economy built for the future. Young people don't need a subsidy, Madam Speaker; they need an opportunity. By cutting red tape, we can create those opportunities.

In this bill, we have practical, targeted changes grounded in real feedback from across the province. Ontario has been a national leader in reducing red tape, demonstrating how efficient governance can drive meaningful results. The proposed Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025, and the broader spring 2025 red tape reduction package are about making Ontario work better, smarter, faster and more fairly for everyone. That's our commitment and that's the future we're building together.

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The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

MPP Catherine McKenney: I do note that in schedule 20, Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, it would allow the ministry to collect additional information about the effectiveness and cost of the Blue Box Program. I guess I don't have to remind you that municipalities have been waiting for your government to make producers responsible for the waste that they produce today.

I guess my question is: How will this change to reduce red tape also ensure that the weakening of the recycling targets for the Blue Box Program that you made through regulations are not further compromised by this schedule?

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): The Minister of Red Tape Reduction.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: I want to thank the member for that question. This actually builds on the momentum our government has been doing when it comes to enhancing the Blue Box Program. The member may note, when the changes were first launched to save municipalities money so that they're not on the hook for the cost of the Blue Box

Program—we shifted it to producers—what we heard both from producers and municipalities was the need for enhanced transparency. This is clarifying that enhanced transparency, but the outcome for Ontarians is they can continue to bring their recycling products to the curb, and, in fact, we're harmonizing the standards across the province so we can maximize recycling in this province, but doing it all in a responsible and transparent manner.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question? I recognize the member from Hastings–Lennox and Addington.

Mr. Ric Bresee: Thank you very much, Speaker. I really appreciate being recognized today. My question is for the member from Markham–Thornhill.

With everything going on in the global economy today, with everything going on with our friends to the south, the economic situation is challenging and it's more crucial than ever that we continue to cut unnecessary red tape that has burdened individuals and businesses across the province. Previous governments have layered on regulation and red tape and stifled growth, and our government is taking bold, decisive action to foster business growth and save people and businesses both time and money.

Would the member please outline how our government's red tape reduction efforts are delivering results, saving money for people and businesses across Ontario?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to my hard-working colleague from Hastings–Lennox and Addington. Thank you for your wonderful work and for the question.

After years of mismanagement by the former Liberal and NDP government, we are rebuilding the Ontario economy by cutting red tape and keeping taxes low. These actions are lowering the cost of doing business and attracting new investment and jobs. By reducing red tape alone, we are saving people and businesses—as the minister alluded to before—\$1.2 billion and 1.8 million hours. This means more money stays in the pockets of hard-working individuals, allowing them to manage daily expenses, save and reinvest in the economy. Businesses can use these savings to expand, innovate and create more jobs.

These are the things we are doing through this red tape reduction package.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

MPP Wayne Gates: It's always a pleasure to stand. I don't get the opportunity to do that very often, but I am today.

Interjection.

MPP Wayne Gates: I should.

In Ontario, we have a number of red tape bills—a number of them—and what it's supposed to do is help businesses, make it more competitive and more people are going to get jobs. But in Ontario, we have 800,000 currently on unemployment. What's really concerning to me, because I have young family—not that young, but young—young people are at 20% unemployment in the province of Ontario—20%.

You have so many red tape bills, almost like the labour bills that you guys do. But what I'd like the minister to commit to is publicly reporting, quarter by quarter, the number requirements eliminated and the hours saved, so people can see where this bill is going to help them not only keep their job, but maybe get a job, not just for big corporations.

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: While it's not necessarily exactly from this bill or this schedule, I am happy to let the member know that, many months ago, we have tabled our burden reduction report. It's an annual report that we do publish, and I encourage him to read it. I know many of my colleagues here have read it, and in there it builds on the fact that we've saved Ontario businesses and people \$1.2 billion and 1.8 million hours.

If that member is so keen on saving people time and money so we can raise employment and raise opportunities in this province, I encourage him to vote for this bill that's going to save people 256,000 hours and red tape reduction burdens. If he really wanted to protect more jobs, he would support all the great infrastructure projects that we're funding through this government and the health care jobs we're funding through this government.

We just came off the fall economic statement, but I do know the member opposite voted against it, unfortunately. So if he's truly supportive of more employment, I hope he reconsiders and supports this red tape reduction bill.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

Mr. Deepak Anand: Madam Speaker, under the leadership of our Premier, our government doesn't just listen; we act. We are committed to making life easier for the people in this province, and we're going to continue to take steps to cut red tape and reduce regulatory burden—and no one knows better the regulatory burden than the people and the businesses that experience it on a day-to-day basis.

My question is to the member from Wellington–Halton Hills. In 2065, when you're going to write your book “40 Years as MPP,” I want to ask you: What are you going to say in the book about how the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction gathered input from a wide range of stakeholders and how they acted on the ideas submitted to the government in the 44th Parliament?

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the member for that fantastic question. I'm very proud of the record of this government over the past seven years, as was outlined by the minister. I continue to be proud of the great work that we're doing.

But to the question: The Ministry of Red Tape Reduction invites individuals and businesses to submit red tape reduction ideas through the red tape portal on Ontario.ca. We review all submissions and work with the appropriate ministry partners to address the issues that are raised.

By creating a direct channel, we ensure that businesses and individuals can share their experience and concerns with us. We actively take action to improve the regulatory environment, and that's why in this package you see over 50 items being proposed. It's just a fantastic testament to

the work that we do with our stakeholders to make life easier for businesses, individuals and families in the province of Ontario.

These ideas are not just heard; they're acted upon and ensure that we have a more efficient and supportive system for everyone in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Mr. Terence Kernaghan: I'd like to thank the Minister of Red Tape Production for the presentation and mentioning how this government will not claw back any monies from the Canada Disability Benefit. It is something that is heartening.

However, I'm sure the minister is aware that Ontario Disability Support Program recipients have their funding clawed back based on whom they love. I don't think the province has any business or any oversight into whom you live with, or certainly not whom you share your bedroom with, but yet, your disability support is based upon your partner's income.

It seems rather strange that the province would engage in this sort of removal of supports from someone who is disabled. This clawback has been brought to the government time and time again. My question to the Minister of Red Tape Reduction: Why is this government still allowing that red tape to persist? Why are they removing supports from people who are living with disabilities?

Hon. Andrea Khanjin: What this bill does is it actually builds on the work our government has done. Through the great leadership of our minister of community services and children—I've definitely mis-said the ministry name there, but you know what I mean, Speaker. It's always making funds of the government more accessible to people.

You look at the 20% increase that has been done in ODSP over the last three years. Never has ODSP seen that large of an increase. It's thanks to the leadership of Premier Ford and this Minister of community, child and social services.

To put that in perspective, Speaker, we talked about the earnings adjustment as well, the fact that there was an increase there from \$200 to \$1,000.

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This government is meaning what we say, which is: We want to make sure we bring costs down for Ontarians, whether it's lowering the price at the pumps, whether it's getting rid of the licence plate sticker—it's all about affordability. It's putting people at the heart of everything we do, Speaker. This bill builds just on that, by recognizing the advocates in the disability community.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It's always a pleasure to rise and speak on behalf of the constituents from Mushkegowuk—James Bay, and speak on Bill 46, the Protecting Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act.

Comme je disais en anglais, ça fait toujours plaisir de me lever puis parler de la part de mes concitoyens de

Mushkegowuk—Baie James sur le projet de loi 46, protégeant la réduction des formalités administratives.

This omnibus bill contains changes that will stop long-standing protection for our crown forest. This act hands the cabinet new regulatory authority that can let companies cut trees without allowing enforcement of industry sustainability rules. That is not reform; it is deregulation that will harm northern communities, Indigenous rights and the long-term health of our forest.

Bill 46 creates an authorizing regulation mechanism under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, allowing persons who hold approvals under other acts—the Mining Act, aggregate resources, public land, environmental assessment—to remove forestry resources without needing a permit under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. In other words, the government is carving out a bypass around Ontario's forest management systems.

That means the detailed forest management plan, sustainability conditions, the community consultations—all of the safeguards that forestry companies must follow—are no longer required for other industries that happen to cut trees while doing something else. If you are a forest company in Hearst or Kapuskasing, you would still have to meet every CFSA standard. But if you're not—if you are a mining or aggregate company sharing the same trees—you don't. That is not red tape reduction; that is selective deregulation.

Dans l'annexe 8, Loi de 1994 sur la durabilité des forêts de la Couronne : « L'annexe modifie la partie III.1 de la Loi de 1994 sur la durabilité des forêts de la Couronne, qui traite du retrait des ressources forestières qui se trouvent dans une forêt de la Couronne en vue de permettre l'exercice, sur la terre, d'une activité qui n'est pas une opération forestière et qui exige le retrait de ces ressources. Ce retrait n'est pas assujéti à l'exigence de prévoir la durabilité de la forêt de la Couronne, mais il doit être effectué conformément à un permis d'activité délivré »—

Interjection.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: —okay, I will be sharing my time with the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane—« permis d'activité délivré en vertu de la partie III.1. Cette partie est modifiée afin de prévoir que les règlements ... pris en vertu de la loi peuvent énoncer des circonstances dans lesquelles serait autorisé le retrait de ressources forestières sans permis d'activité, conformément à ces règlements. L'article 69 est modifié afin de donner des pouvoirs réglementaires à ce sujet au lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil.

« L'annexe apporte également des modifications corrélatives à diverses dispositions de la loi afin d'y » accorder « des règlements habilitants et les mesures qu'ils autorisent, notamment les articles suivants... » Puis là ils nomment, ils passent à travers plusieurs articles.

Ni plus ni moins, qu'est-ce que ça veut dire pour les personnes qui nous écoutent?

Les industries forestières vont être sur un règlement et puis tout le reste ne s'applique pas pourtant, même si elles font les mêmes activités. À cause que tu es une minière,

ou si tu ne l'es pas—s'ils vont engager une compagnie qui est en dessous des minières, bien ils n'auront pas besoin d'un permis, d'une licence forestière pour aller. Ils n'auront pas besoin de prendre soin de protéger la martre, protéger les orignaux, protéger les caribous des bois, protéger l'eau. Tout ça va être enrayé. Mais pourtant, par exemple, quand ça vient à l'industrie forestière, eux vont rester sur leur certification. Parce que l'industrie forestière est obligée de suivre une certification pour être capable de vendre leur bois pour être capable d'être certifiée à travers le monde. Fait que, le bois qui va être coupé par ces minières-là ou ces compagnies de—comment pourrais-je dire ça, ceux qui vont faire des « pit », et ceux qui vont avoir du gravier, tous les « aggregates », si on peut dire en anglais. Eux autres, le bois, ils vont l'envoyer à cette compagnie-là. Mais ça, est-ce que ça veut dire que, tout d'un coup, le bois ne sera pas assujéti au règlement? Et est-ce que ça peut nuire à la certification de l'industrie forestière, qu'elle peut être pénalisée, que ça va nuire maintenant à notre industrie? Et puis, la question se pose : pourquoi? Pourquoi ne pas suivre les règlements?

Une des choses dont on est fier en Ontario—et au Canada, honnêtement—c'est que nos forêts sont les plus protégées et mieux gérées au monde, et pourtant, le gouvernement maintenant veut jouer avec cette certification-là. Ils veulent commencer à mettre en danger ces certifications-là. C'est un manque de jugement, madame la Présidente. Ils devraient rester, protéger et continuer à maintenir ce que la forêt fait, ce que l'industrie forestière fait, et que, s'il faut qu'elle opère, qu'elle coupe, qu'elle soit sur la même certification.

Protéger les espèces en danger, protéger notre environnement, protéger nos eaux—parce que, vous le savez, l'industrie forestière, quand elle arrive près d'un cours d'eau, elle ne peut pas aller bûcher trop près. Il y a une ligne de démarcation qui oblige de suivre, que tu ne peux pas t'approcher, ou tu ne peux pas juste traverser n'importe quelle crique de n'importe quelle façon. C'est très réglementé pour des raisons, parce que, encore, il peut y avoir de la truite mouchetée, il peut y avoir toutes sortes d'espèces de poissons, et puis des poissons peut-être en danger ou encore d'autres espèces.

C'est pour ça qu'on a ces réglementations-là. Ces réglementations-là ne sont pas venues du jour au lendemain. Elles sont venues pour des occasions spécifiques où elles ont créé des réglementations pour protéger des espèces en danger, avec les Premières Nations, avec les communautés, avec tout ce que notre industrie forestière fait. Puis je reconnais que l'industrie forestière fait un bon travail. Au contraire, je discutais—s'il y a de quoi qu'on fasse bien en Ontario, c'est l'industrie forestière qui fait un travail exemplaire à travers le monde : comment on administre nos forêts.

Et puis là, aujourd'hui, on vient jouer avec ça. On vient enlever des réglementations que nous on prend pour—qu'on est fier de dire que ce que l'industrie forestière fait. Mais là, pour une raison quelconque, on va juste enlever toutes ces réglementations-là. Ça va être un « free for all ». Ils vont « clear-cutter », ils vont tout faire ça sans

considération. Et puis, il y a les chemins; il faut se rendre-là, aussi. Si c'est une mine, il faut qu'elle se rende où est la mine. Il faut qu'elle traverse des cours d'eau, il faut qu'elle traverse toutes ces mêmes forêts-là que notre industrie forestière, par exemple, n'a pas les mêmes règlements. Il va y avoir deux « sets » de règlements : un pour l'industrie forestière et un pour le reste. Ça, c'est un manque de jugement. C'est un manque, je pense, comme gouvernement, d'une obligation de protéger notre environnement et de protéger l'impact sur nos ressources.

Parce que, moi, j'ai travaillé dans l'industrie forestière toute ma vie, à part quand j'ai été syndicaliste, mais je représentais des travailleurs du bois. Et depuis que je suis devenu député, c'est sûr que je représente encore le même monde.

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Mais je suis fier. Je viens d'une communauté, Dubreuilville, qui a été faite par des forestiers. Dans ma famille, ils ont été forestiers. J'ai encore beaucoup de famille qui travaille dans l'industrie forestière. Puis je suis fier de dire qu'il y a bien des réglementations—on n'a pas peur de dire qu'on a géré les forêts comme il faut. Souvent, l'industrie forestière se fait critiquer par les environnementalistes, mais je n'ai pas peur, moi, de montrer notre industrie et ce qu'elle fait, comparé à d'autres pays dans le monde.

Mais là, tout d'un coup, ce gouvernement-là veut jouer avec ça, veut jouer avec ces enjeux-là, mettre des espèces qui ont besoin d'être protégées en danger?

Quand on parle de la, comme ils disent en anglais, Crown Forest Sustainability Act—puis en français, c'est, je l'ai ici, « la durabilité des forêts de la Couronne »—je pense qu'on a une obligation. We have an obligation to make sure that continues. Doesn't matter if you're mining company. Ça n'a pas d'importance si tu es un « aggregate ». Si tu vas faire des opérations et que tu es obligé d'engager une industrie forestière, tu vas devoir prendre une licence pour l'industrie forestière pour continuer à utiliser les mêmes règlements que l'industrie forestière, parce qu'on va avoir de meilleurs résultats, puis on va respecter les Premières Nations, mais aussi les règlements qu'on a mis en province qu'on devrait soutenir.

In northern Ontario, forestry isn't just an industry, it is a way of life—comme je disais en français—a cultural history shared by francophones, Metis and Indigenous communities, laying the foundation of the establishment of towns like Kapuskasing and many small towns across Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

Our local mills, contractors, Indigenous owners and forestry businesses already operate under a strict CFSA licence that regulates harvest levels, renewable obligations and long-term sustainability. You know, the forest industry has to have a five-year, 10-year, 20-year plan under this certification to demonstrate replanting and how we are going to regenerate our forests and how we're going to—they even harvest using ways so that we can eliminate forest fires, or not eliminate, but slow down forest fires. That is all done by the forest industry. But other industries won't have to follow that? Shameful that we are going to do that but impose other, stricter rules.

Forestry is not asking for—they want to keep these rules because they need their certification so when we sell our fibres right across the world, they have the seal—it's called an FSC seal—saying that it is sustainable, it is protected; we respond to global markets and also criteria. It's one of the highest seals you can get. We're proud of that. I remember when I worked in the forest industry, worked in a sawmill, this was important that we had this seal. Now we're going to play with that, put that in danger, put the industry in danger?

This bill risks to undermine all the work by letting other industries like mining or energy clear those same forests without being part of the same accountability system. And by the way, it used to be that way. Now we're going back? Mining used to be able to do what they want, they used to clear-cut without having—and we said, “No, no, you can't do that. You need to follow the same rules as forestry.”

So now we're reverting back to this, when we know it's not right, when we know it's not sustainable, when we know it's not the right thing to do when we harvest in the industry? This is all good. Let's move on. We need to go fast; we need to plow through—plow through.

But putting at risk our certifications, putting at risk our forest industry, putting at risk the sustainability of our forests, that's shameful. Shameful for somebody—for me, who comes from industry, who understands forestry: Why are we doing this? We could do so much better.

It means untracked forest loss. It means competing land use without coordination. And it means more instability for forestry workers already struggling under mounting US softwood tariffs and mill closures.

Ce que je veux dire, on a une industrie forestière comme c'est là, elle en a assez de misère avec tous les tarifs sans avoir à traiter, peut-être, qu'on joue avec leur certification ou qu'on joue, peut-être, à l'impact de donner encore plus aux États-Unis pour dire que : « Non, vous prenez du bois maintenant qui n'est même plus certifié, qui n'est même plus rien, que vous n'avez rien qu'à prendre ce bois-là ou que ça va vous affecter, votre certification »—peut-être mettre en péril leur certification.

Je pense qu'on a une obligation comme gouvernement de faire certain qu'on protège, puis il y a aussi des espèces en danger. C'est comme si les espèces en danger ne veulent plus rien dire pour ce gouvernement-là. On avait un projet de loi, là—ils ont enlevé les espèces en danger. Ils ont enlevé les échéances environnementales. Ça ne compte plus, ça. C'est comment vite qu'on peut bâtir, puis comment vite qu'on peut produire un produit, puis comment vite qu'on peut le délivrer, puis comment vite—mais au détriment de tout.

Plus de consultation : vous l'avez fait avec les consultations des Premières Nations. Vous dites que vous en faites. Puis vous mettez en péril aussi les relations que les minières ont avec les Premières Nations. Vous mettez en péril ceux qui font les chemins, les « pit » et tout ça, quand qu'ils vont—vous mettez en péril la consultation parce qu'il n'y aura plus de consultation.

L'industrie forestière a des bonnes relations avec les Premières Nations. L'industrie forestière travaille, fait du

bon travail, avec les Premières Nations. Vous avez dit : « On ne touche pas l'industrie forestière. » Vous jouez avec leurs certifications. Vous venez de changer les données. On s'est battu pour que ces mêmes industries-là soient sur la même certification. Parce que—veux, veux pas—ils vont bûcher ces arbres-là. Ils ne les arracheront pas pour les planter ailleurs, là. Ils vont les couper.

Les rivières que vous allez traverser, ou les criques, pour vous rendre, que ça soit au « pit » que ça voudra, ou que ça va être à la mine que ça voudra, il va falloir que vous fassiez des chemins, il va falloir que vous traversiez tous ces cours d'eau-là, ces espèces en danger : les martres, les orignaux, les caribous de bois. Mais ça, ça n'a plus d'importance, ça n'a plus d'importance. On met ça de côté. L'industrie forestière, vous autres, vous allez avoir des standards, puis pour le reste, vous n'en avez pas.

C'est un « free for all ». « Let's go », on coupe. On coupe, on défriche. On s'en fout. S'il y a une espèce, que ça soit un crapaud ou—je ne sais pas, moi—une autre espèce en danger, ça n'a pas d'importance. Ce qui est important c'est qu'on fasse un « pit » ou qu'on fasse une autre mine.

Je pense que comme ministère des ressources naturelles ou comme—on doit avoir un peu de justification, là. Ce n'est pas juste une question de faire à tout prix pour juste enlever du « red tape », enlever des réglementations. On l'impose à une industrie qui va le faire à la même place, puis l'autre à côté ne le fera pas. Je trouve que c'est un manque de vision. C'est un gros manque de vision, puis aussi, ça mettra en danger certaines choses.

Another critical issue is the impact on Indigenous consultation. The government will claim that the Mining Act already has requirements for engagement, but what it has is an administrative duty of care, not a constitutional duty to consult. Under the Mining Act, the true duty to consult is ascribed to the crown, but much of that engagement is delegated to private exploration companies. It is inconsistent, under-resourced and discretionary.

Communities like Attawapiskat, Moose Cree and Taykwa Tagamou Nation have been clear: These delegated processes do not meet the crown's constitutional obligations.

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Fait que, comme j'ai dit en anglais, ce sont les droits de consultation avec les Premières Nations. Ils vont mettre ça en péril, parce qu'il n'y aura pas de consultation. On sait que dans le projet de loi, ils disent qu'il n'y en aura pas. Puis ils disent qu'ils ne feront pas ce que—puis les Premières Nations sont très claires là-dessus. Ça prend « free and informed consent ». L'information, le consentement doit être primordial avant que vous embarquiez sur les territoires ancestraux, que ce soit pour une mine, que ce soit pour un « pit », que ce soit pour n'importe quoi d'autre. L'industrie forestière—il y a des relations qui sont bâties. Vous mettez en péril ces relations-là avec les Premières Nations.

Je pense que, des fois, on veut aller tellement vite qu'on oublie les bonnes choses qu'on fait. On oublie pourquoi on s'est rendu là. Pourquoi ces minières et ceux qui sont obligés d'avoir des « pit » sont-ils assujettis à la loi sur la

Couronne, comme l'industrie forestière? Il y a une raison pourquoi on s'est rendu là. Pourquoi? Parce que ce n'était pas respecté, les espèces en danger n'étaient pas respectées, la consultation n'était pas respectée et tout le reste.

Quoi que la loi dise que, non, on devrait—mais non, on retourne en arrière. On recule. On part à reculons à la place d'avancer dans cette province. Mais c'est une réalité qui se passe. Puis je dis au ministère : « Prenez le temps de réfléchir à ce que vous proposez. »

C'est beau de vouloir aller vite. C'est beau d'essayer d'aller le plus vite possible. Mais, écoute, on a vu qu'il y a des développements qui vont se faire avec Canada Nickel. Il y a d'autres minières qui sont prêtes—vous parlez du « Ring of Fire, Ring of Fire, Ring of Fire », mais il y a tellement d'autres minières et de produits, d'autres minerais critiques qui sont prêts à être développés, sans parler du « Ring of Fire ». Ça a créé tout ce problème-là qu'on voit constamment.

I want to talk to you about a case study. The Mining Act has failed in Attawapiskat. I want to bring forward a concrete example in my riding, Attawapiskat and Juno exploration. In 2020, exploration permits were granted on lands within Attawapiskat traditional territories. Attawapiskat First Nation raised concerns, asked for studies, challenged the consultation process, requested accommodation but received incomplete responses and tight time frames. The ministry delegated part of the consultation to the company. Delegated responsibilities were unclear, leaving the government and the company unclear on who is responsible, delaying communication and consultation. The court found Ontario had breached its duty to consult, but the permits were not rescinded and the project didn't stop.

That case illustrates how weak and discretionary the consultation regime under the Mining Act is. Under Bill 46, forest removals governed under the act unrelated to forestry will occur with less obligation to consult and less regulatory oversight. Letting removals happen under other acts without CFSA oversight will exacerbate these issues. As more projects will claim they don't need CFSA permits, more duty-to-consult issues will lead to more legal claims where First Nations communities are burdened to pay high upfront court costs, and X-few mechanisms to access restorative justice.

Fait que, en d'autres mots, j'ai parlé d'Attawapiskat, de la mine, et comment les deux règlements, minier et foresterie—celui de foresterie est beaucoup plus rigide, beaucoup plus structuré que celui des minières. Puis en cour—parce que ce qui arrive c'est le ministère avec les mines a donné leurs obligations envers la mine, et la mine n'a pas fait son travail comme le ministère pourrait le faire.

C'est pour ça qu'on dit que c'est important que ça reste à travers de la Crown Forest Sustainability Act, que ça reste avec l'industrie forestière et que, oui, ils peuvent opérer, ils peuvent couper les arbres comme on le faisait, comme on le fait maintenant, et ne pas être obligés de tout enrayer ça puis de le mettre dans un autre statut, dans un autre statut de la loi pour être capable de garder les mines ou d'aller plus vite dans certains projets puis mettre tout le reste—ce que je vous dis depuis tout à l'heure—de côté.

By contrast, the Crown Forest Sustainability Act has a much more established and collaborative model for consultation: Indigenous communities are directly involved in management planning through local citizens' committees; consultations occur at each formal stage of a 10-year forest management plan; traditional knowledge and land use mapping are built into harvest schedules and renewal plans. That is what true engagement looks like. By bypassing the CFSA, this bill weakens the process and risks further alienating the very communities the crown is supposed to work with in partnership.

I want to elaborate on this, because when we talk about traditional knowledge, lands, mapping and consultation, people don't realize but there's a lot of people trapping still. A lot of First Nations are still trapping, and you're crossing on their trap lines. They want to continue trapping, they want to continue their traditions, and that's what Treaty 9 covers and that's what the consultation is all about, but if you change that—it's not the same in mining. Forestry is the one that covers it. It's more rigid. There is more planning. That's why our forestry planning is so—people don't realize, that's why I talk about a 10-year plan, a 20-year plan. It keeps evolving. It has to change, and if you want amendments, it goes to public consultation. There's a lot of consultation happening with First Nations, with community members on fishing, trapping, road use, because people use these roads, yet we just want to change all of this to expedite a process. First Nations will have a problem with that because even though these regulations are rigid, sometimes we omit doing it. If you water it down, it won't get better. It will get worse.

Forestry is doing a great job. I know they work with trappers because I've witnessed it first-hand. They work with First Nations. First Nations own companies. They develop companies and they work with forestry, tree planting and the list goes on. But just to take this section and say, "Nope, you're mining, you're aggregate"—what are the other ones—"resource, public land, environmental assessment," I think is a mistake and not respecting the agreements we have and the respect we have for First Nations in this province.

Tu sais, quand je parlais en anglais, je disais que très souvent, ce qu'on voit—comme je disais en français, quand l'industrie forestière fait des 10 ans et des 20 ans, elle consulte avec les Premières Nations et aussi les trappeurs, parce que, veux, veux pas, dans la mesure que l'industrie s'en va, là, ou que ce soit une nouvelle mine qui se développe—mais ils veulent enlever ça, comme je vous ai expliqué. Mais quand l'industrie forestière fait des plans de 10 ans à 20 ans, elle va consulter avec les Premières Nations et les trappeurs parce que, veux, veux pas, tu te ramasses sur leur territoire, puis eux autres, ils vivent du trappage puis ça peut affecter gravement une « trapline ». Si jamais c'est une mine, je peux vous dire que ça prend de la place. C'est grand, là. Ils vont déchiffrer grand, là. Surtout si c'est un « open pit », c'est encore plus grand.

Puis que les Premières Nations ne seront pas consultées ou qu'elles ne seront—elles vont être affectées. Parce que si moi je suis un trappeur puis c'est sur mon territoire

ancestral, je vais dire, « Oh, j'ai un problème, moi, là. Ça fait des décennies que je trappe ici, que ma famille trappe ici. Ça fait des décennies que ma famille a tout le temps trappé sur nos territoires ancestraux, puis là vous ne voulez pas me consulter? Vous ne voulez pas que ça avance; vous ne voulez pas m'impliquer? » Je pense que c'est une erreur qu'on fait.

What's especially troubling is that this bill does not treat everyone equally. This bill does not cut red tape for everyone. It keeps forestry companies—those already working under strict CFSA rules—bound by sustainability and renewable requirements, but it gives mining, aggregate and energy companies shortcuts. They'll be able to cut down the same trees without having to follow the same rules. In other words, the government is not levelling the playing field; it's tilting it on one side.

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Forest companies continue paying stumpage fees, meeting renewal targets and being subject to audits. Meanwhile, mining operations can remove timber incidentally, without reporting, replanting or being accountable for the cumulative loss. That's deregulation for one sector and double standards for another.

Let's not forget the broad context: US softwood tariffs have now hit 45%. The last thing our industry needs is government policy that weakens resource governance and makes Ontario forestry less competitive. By allowing unregulated removals by non-forestry industries, this government is undercutting the very workers and companies who play by the rules.

Comme j'ai dit, c'est ça qui nous fait peur un peu avec tout ce qu'ils proposent de réduire puis d'enlever des réglementations pour d'autres industries, mais que l'industrie forestière va être assujettie encore à la loi. Je pense qu'on fait une grosse erreur, parce que s'il y a de quoi où l'industrie forestière passe des temps difficiles, c'est maintenant. C'est maintenant. Ils ont besoin d'aide dans l'industrie forestière. Si vous voulez aider vraiment, aidez l'industrie forestière. Oui, on a besoin d'aide. C'est certain que, comme c'est là, vous offrez des « loan guarantee » puis tout ça. Je sais que vous avez donné de l'argent pour la construction de chemins. Ce sont toutes des bonnes choses, ou bien donc, les 10 millions qu'ils ont mis aussi pour le « chip », pour être capable d'aller porter leur « chip » plus loin.

Mais l'industrie forestière a besoin de sécurité. On oublie que les « owner-operators » qui bûchent—j'en ai parlé souvent en Chambre de tout ça. Dans l'industrie forestière, on a des particuliers qui obtiennent des pièces d'équipement. Ces pièces d'équipement-là, il y en a qui valent un million et plus. Pourtant, le gouvernement n'a rien fait pour eux autres. Si vous voulez enlever quelque chose, enlevez les taxes sur le « fuel » pour leur donner un coup de main. Ce sont des individus, parce que les compagnies forestières ont tout donné—bien, pas donné; ils ont vendu leurs pièces d'équipement. Ils ont dit : « On n'est pas dans l'industrie de fournir. Nous, on a le bois et on va vous donner des contrats. » C'était gagnant-gagnant parce que, veux, veux pas, il y a des particuliers qui ont fait du bon argent, là.

Mais là, comme c'est là, ils souffrent beaucoup. Puis s'ils perdent des pièces d'équipement, vous allez voir que l'industrie forestière va tomber, parce que l'industrie forestière, c'est une chaîne. Chaque anneau compte. Si tu enlèves ceux qui vont bûcher ou tu enlèves les bûcherons, tu enlèves toute la mécanique qui est rattachée à l'industrie forestière, qui va chercher les arbres dans le bois, qui connaissent les règlements. Enlever cette particularité, cette équation-là, à l'industrie forestière—le bois ne se rend pas à un coût qui est abordable pour une compagnie.

Tout le monde est gagnant, mais là, comme c'est là, l'industrie forestière souffre, souffre beaucoup. On va donner de l'aide aux autres, mais on ne va pas donner de l'aide à un autre? Pourquoi est-ce que c'est tout le temps l'industrie forestière qui n'a pas l'aide nécessaire? Pourquoi est-ce que c'est tout le temps l'industrie forestière qui a à payer le gros prix? Ce n'est pas que vous autres qui l'avez fait; le gouvernement précédent l'a fait aussi.

Pourquoi l'industrie forestière en C.-B. est numéro un, ou au Québec, en troisième, puis que nous autres, on n'est même pas dans le top-10, quand on devrait, au moins, être top-cinq ou six? Puis l'industrie forestière n'arrête pas de nous amener des réglementations.

On a dans l'industrie forestière de nouveaux produits qu'on devrait produire. Si vous voulez mettre du « red tape », aidez-les donc de cette façon-là : « biocoal », « biodiesel », « biofuel », des « pellets » que les moulins à papier usent pour se chauffer. Les « co-gens »—donnez-leur, ceux qui en ont, des contrats plus longs, ou bien donc, donnez-leur des « power-purchase agreements ». C'est quoi le problème avec ça?

Il nous reste encore 25 minutes?

Une voix.

M. Guy Bourgoin: Oui. Mon chum me dit : « Continue, jusqu'à tant que tu peux. »

Une voix.

M. Guy Bourgoin: OK. Je vais t'arrêter ça. Ça ne sera pas long, John. J'achève.

Il y a des solutions à trouver qui peuvent aider l'industrie forestière.

The government can fix this, but it must listen. Here's what must be done:

(1) Narrow the scope: Limit authorizing regulations to only apply to small, incidental forest removals, not large-scale clearing.

(2) Sustainability conditions: Require that any authorizing regulation still comply with CFSA regulations and renewal standards.

(3) Indigenous consultation: Include enforceable consultation requirements—formal notice, funded participation and the ability for communities to request plan changes.

(4) Independent oversight: Mandate third-party audits within three years to assess whether sustainability or consultation obligations are being met.

(5) Cumulative impact tracking: Establish a public registry to track incidental removals across all acts, so we

know the full picture of forest disturbance in each management unit.

In closing, Speaker—

Mr. John Vanthof: He's sharing his time.

You're sharing your time, right?

Mr. Guy Bourgoin: Yes. I told I was sharing with you.

Speaker, this bill is not about cutting red tape, it's about cutting corners. It weakens oversight, it divides industry, it undermines Indigenous rights, and it jeopardizes the long-term sustainability of our northern forests.

Our communities depend on these forests for jobs, for culture and for the land itself. If this government wants to protect Ontario, it should start by protecting the people and the industries who have cared for these forests for generations.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos):

I recognize the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House, and today to discuss Bill 46—and the title is stunning—An Act to amend various Acts. It's quite the bill.

If you're wondering why we're struggling a little bit, the government has decided not to give advance notice of what bills are discussed. On your side, you know what you're going to talk about; on our side, we don't. That doesn't actually help the system—it doesn't really help anything—but we have learned to live with it.

There's a saying, Speaker: when something doesn't quite fit—it's from soup to nuts, right? Because you can't really figure out what the bill's about or you can figure it out, but it just seems so wide. Well, this one ranges from funeral services to snowmobiles, all in the same bill—funeral services to snowmobiles and with a bit of liquor licensing in the middle.

My colleague from Mushkegowuk—James Bay focused on forestry, and I'm going to touch on a bit of forestry too. It's a pretty big part of this bill. But I'm going to start with the snowmobile one because we just talked, a few days ago, about Ontario one trail. We all supported that, right?

This bill amends the Motorized Snow Vehicles Act to provide that additional classes of vehicles may be prescribed as motorized snow vehicles. That seems pretty innocuous, but I know that some motorized vehicles make a mess of snowmobile trails. They don't add to snowmobile trails. Actually, some motorized vehicles—as a farmer with trails on my farm, some of those vehicles I don't want on my farm. I think we need a bit more—and that's just an example.

Is that enough to be opposed to a bill? Absolutely not, but it is something that—“really?”

1650

There's part in this bill about recycling, the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act. From what I can understand, it's actually permitting businesses or municipalities to still use the Blue Box Program. I could be wrong. We are in favour of producers being responsible for what they produce. We're in favour of that. But small businesses can't use circular recycling program, and that's

a huge problem. If this is fixing it, maybe it's a good thing. Like I said, those are two things I've talked about, and even a broken clock is right twice a day—if you're used to the old clocks.

Definitely anything that fixes this—like, there are ads now. This government loves ads, just loves ads. And there are all kinds of ads now about the new recycling program.

Mr. Stéphane Sarrazin: Got the idea from the Liberals.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes, the Conservative government gets their advertising ideas from the Liberal government, and they make them new and improved and twice as expensive. They're also getting their scandal ideas from the former Liberal government. Although the scandals aren't improved, they certainly seem to be following on the same line. Because I can remember when I was sitting in question period, when the Liberal government was going through their scandals, and it's almost—like, play-by-play—exactly the same. It's sad. It's sad.

But anyway, if this act is letting small businesses once again participate in recycling, if that's what you're doing, it's a good thing. I don't understand how you could put forward recycling legislation, which you've done, that excludes a whole segment of the economy, because that's what the circular recycling thing does. I had all kinds of complaints in my riding that small businesses couldn't use the recycling program. It's only for residential.

Well, it's typical of this government, Speaker: half-baked legislation put through too quickly and then, “Oh, we've got to fix something.” No legislation is perfect, and I get that. But the role of this Legislature is to take the time to actually get it right. I think it's pretty obvious with this government, the Progressive Conservative government, that they often don't take that time.

I would also like to focus a little bit on forestry, because forestry is very important in my riding as well. And it's very important to the province. Forestry is going through a tough time right now: 50% tariffs—tough, tough time. But I question, Speaker, whether this government actually understands how forestry works.

I have an example. A few weeks ago in estimates, the Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth—I asked him a question, because he knows mining. The Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth knows mining. I fully appreciate that. I'm not sure he knows forestry. I'm not sure. Because we were having a discussion—and a good discussion, a respectful discussion. He knows I'm a farmer. He knows I'm from northern Ontario. We were discussing the opportunity of agriculture in northern Ontario, and there is a big opportunity. And he said that there are 10 million acres available in the Greater Clay Belt for agriculture—not disputing that number. My question to him was: Most of those 10 million acres is crown land, and that crown land is managed and harvested by forestry companies. So, Minister, do you think there might be a conflict between agricultural development and forestry because that crown land is being used? Forestry and agriculture are actually very similar; it's just that the harvest cycle for forestry is much longer,

right? They harvest and might not re-harvest for 50 to 75 years. Our wood goes slow, and that's why our wood, our fibre, is of such high quality. There's a reason why Canadian lumber, Canadian forest products are known around the world: because our wood grows slower, and the fibre is stronger.

So I asked him, will there be a conflict? Because 10 million acres is quite a bit. And I'm paraphrasing, but I will—I think I will—I sent the member the video; I'll post a video. And he said, "Absolutely not, no conflict at all. The forestry companies can go farther north, north of the Clay Belt, or they can go south in the Precambrian Shield." But that wood is already spoken for, and the farther north you go, the wood gets smaller and smaller.

When I asked my local forestry managers whether there would be a conflict with that 10 million acres, I got a much different answer: There will be a conflict and not just with forestry companies but with First Nations. It's not just that simple. And I'm not sure this is part of this, but schedule 8 exempts other uses of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act from the measures that forest companies have to comply with, and other uses don't have to go through the same hoops.

Now, the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay made very good points about Indigenous consultation. I'm not going to repeat them, but they're very significant.

I can see it for one specific power projector, but I hope that the government isn't thinking that they can just shut the forestry companies out of a main part of the stands that they have managed—because in my riding, I've got one; it's an oriented strand board plant. It's owned by Georgia-Pacific. It just announced a big, big expansion, because oriented strand board doesn't have tariffs and has a big market in the United States. They get a lot of their fibre from that 10 million acres.

If the government is going to say, as the Minister of Northern Development said, "Well, they can just go farther north," (a) they have to displace someone else's timber rights, and (b) their costs have just gone exponentially higher.

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: It's not the same trees.

Mr. John Vanthof: And the member from Mushkegowuk—James Bay, who knows a lot more about forestry than me, says that it's not the same trees. The best trees for oriented strand board—they use others, as well, but the best are poplar. Poplar grows best—guess what? In clay. And guess where this plant is situated? In the middle of the Clay Belt.

Don't get me wrong; there is lots of potential for further agricultural development in northern Ontario. But from our point of view, what you need to do is sit down with all the players and see how you can work together to make it so that you don't lose any jobs, so that there's an actual net increase of jobs and a net increase of sustainability. I don't see that from what the minister said. I don't see that in this act where it regards crown forest sustainability. There's a difference, Speaker, between—regulations are put in for a purpose, and sometimes we are overregulated, and we need to make sure that we're not overregulated. But

regulations have a purpose, and I think this government sometimes forgets that.

1700

Years ago, I had to speak to the Professional Engineers Ontario. They were having a meeting in North Bay. I think it was in February. It was 35 below that morning. And for those who haven't experienced 35 below, how you know it's below 30 without even a temperature gauge is—cars start pretty well, but for the first 10 kilometres, your radial tires are frozen, so your car feels like Fred Flintstone—duh-duh-duh-duh. It takes about 10 kilometres for your tires to warm up. I remember that because for my first 10 kilometres to North Bay it was like that. And I got there—and it was in this government's first term, so it was quite a few years ago. The member from Nipissing spoke first, and, as we all know, he was very competent; he's a very good speaker. And he talked about how, for this government, their goal was to—Ontario had 400,000 regulations, and you wanted to eliminate a quarter of them in your first term. I don't know if you got that far or not, but that's what you wanted to do. So then it was my turn to speak, and I don't remember exactly how I said it, but please give me a few minutes, Speaker, and I will say it how I said it: "It's great to be here. Now, before I was a politician, I was a farmer. And there's three types of people that farmers"—I said the word "hate," and I'll back up—"really, strongly dislike. The first: Farmers dislike politicians, because they yell at each other and bark at each other."

And I looked at Mr. Fedeli and I said, "That's actually not the case, because although we disagree on things philosophically, where we can, we work together. Despite our differences, we try to work together. We always say we're—anyway, we do try. We all have the same goal. We want Ontarians to be better; we want the province to be stronger.

"The second type of people that farmers dislike are lawyers." I'm looking at—

Laughter.

Hon. Doug Downey: I was a farmer.

Mr. John Vanthof: And then I said, "You know what? To dislike lawyers, you don't even really need a reason." And I had to back up a little bit and said, "I have a daughter who's a lawyer.

"And the third type of people farmers dislike are engineers." And the minister from Nipissing—the member from Nipissing—said, "John, do you know where you are?" I said, "Hold it a second; let me finish. On a morning like this—it's 35 below, and you don't even need to know the machine. It's a silo unloader, and it's sitting up there, and it's designed by an engineer to run economically, efficiently for 10 years with optimal maintenance. Mine has been hanging up there for 15 years under my suboptimal maintenance. It's 35 below. I push the button and the frame cracks, and I blame the engineer because you always blame the engineer."

I said, "What your job is as engineers, and why you have that ring on your finger, is to make sure that things are safe and that they're affordable. Because you could

build my silo unloader to last 100 years, but I'll never be able to afford it, so I'll be unloading with a fork. So that's your job. And despite our complaints, we appreciate you for it.

"But the member for Nipissing"—I can't remember what ministry he was part of then—"just said that his government is going to get rid of 100,000 regulations. Some of those regulations were put in for good reason: for safety, for sustainability or for protection of the environment. It's going to be incumbent on you as engineers—when a regulation is removed that actually hurts Ontarians, either it's the economy, the people or the environment—that you let the member from Nipissing know, let me know or anyone. That is our job."

Now, I think some of the regulations in this bill fit in that.

The Crown Forest Sustainability Act: You want to talk about an act that has lasted a long time? Do you know which government put in the Crown Forest Sustainability Act? Bob Rae's NDP government. That's a long, long time. It's still there. It lasted a lot longer than Bill 124. It's still there for a reason.

If you're going to make changes exempting things, you have to make sure that the collateral damage isn't worse than what you're trying to fix.

I'll go back to the Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth who knows more about mining probably than anybody in this House. But when he said there's no conflict between agriculture and forestry, he's wrong. There's also a conflict between the environment and forestry and agriculture, because forestry—sustainable forestry—actually protects wildlife. It actually protects the environment. I say that as a farmer. Forestry protects the environment as much—probably more, in many cases—than agriculture does.

So if you're going to make big exemptions in the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, you have to make sure that things are protected. I'm not sure that you're really taking the time to actually do that.

I'm focusing on forestry because I really don't know with some of these changes. I am not qualified to talk about them. I really don't know what difference they make. I'm not a lawyer. I think people have figured that out by now. Actually, we had a case a little while ago, in estimates, where a government member kind of insinuated that you need to be a lawyer to do this job. That is 100% false.

I respect people who practise law. One of the proudest moments of my life was when my daughter passed the bar, and she's now a corporate lawyer—one of the proudest moments in my life.

But you don't need to be a lawyer to be a good parliamentarian. Do lawyers make great parliamentarians? Absolutely. Do farmers, welders, tree cutters, military people—do they make great parliamentarians? Definitely. That's why you have a Parliament.

The fact that, in this last little session, you've shortened the session to have Parliament speaking less, you have time-allocated very important bills—I keep looking over

at the member; I just like picking on them—you've time-allocated so many bills, you're making Parliament weaker. You're making our system weaker.

This bill is the same thing. By not actually giving us a heads-up and saying, "You know what, here"—and you would probably like it better too if you actually had a schedule so you knew what you were going to debate. Then I wouldn't be telling stories. We would actually have good debates. But that is part of the issue.

I've been here a while, and, believe it or not, as much as I disliked the Liberal government, we actually knew weeks in advance what we were going to debate—weeks. We actually adjusted the schedule to make it work for everyone, so that you had, out of the pipe, better legislation.

1710

Now, did I agree with all the Liberal legislation? One hundred per cent not, just like I don't agree with your philosophy on many issues. You won a majority; you have the right to put your agenda forward. But you do not have the right to purposely put forward bad legislation. And by shutting down the Legislature so often, by having the session so short and by only listening to your own side, to your own supporters, you're making bad legislation, legislation that won't last, and that is unfortunate for all Ontarians.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Ms. Chandra Pasma: Thank you to my colleagues from Timiskaming-Cochrane and Mushkegowuk—James Bay for those very enlightening comments on this bill.

To the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane: You talked about how this bill is soup to nuts, snowmobiles to funerals, with the city of Toronto thrown in in the middle. We've seen this government now refuse to allow piece of legislation after piece of legislation to actually go to committee for the public to have their input on this bill. Do you think, when we're talking about 22 different issues that are touching very distinct areas, this bill should absolutely go to committee for the people of Ontario to be able to examine it in depth and share what their perspectives are on what changes this bill will make?

Mr. John Vanthof: Thank you very much for that question. Just for the record, we think all bills should go to committee—all of them. And there should be a way, and there used to be, where the House leaders would get together and say, okay, this bill we kind of all agree with, so we can expedite this bill. We'll all agree. But this bill, this is problematic for us, so we're going to—but they should all go to committee. This one, too, because in the end, it helps you, too. It helps the government because you make stronger legislation.

Why did the Crown Forest Sustainability Act live so long? Because they consulted widely. They weren't a popular government back then, but they consulted widely, and the bill survives. That's a mark not so much of the government but of the consultation process. So yes, it should go to committee; it should be consulted upon.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Mr. Joseph Racinsky: Thank you to the members for their comments this afternoon.

Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government remains committed to making life easier and more affordable for the people and businesses of Ontario. We want people to keep more of their money in their pocket and for businesses to spend money and time where it really matters, reinvesting into their businesses and creating more jobs and good livings for people in Ontario. By taking these actions in this bill, we are building stronger and more resilient communities. Can the people and businesses in your riding rely on you to help us continue to make life easier and more affordable for them?

Mr. John Vanthof: I think we have to question whether the actions of the Ford government have made things more affordable and more sustainable for the people of Ontario. Unemployment is up; food banks, exploding; homeless encampments, exploding—they're also people in this province. They're also people. When I got elected, I didn't know what a homeless encampment was.

The trickle-down effect that the people at the top—the greenbelt legislation, did that make things more affordable for the people of Ontario? None; nothing. Did the Skills Development Fund—yes, there are some very good people who get money, but there are some very bad ones—very bad ones—and they put a cloud over the whole program. Is that, overall, making things better for the people of Ontario? Absolutely not. And you ask anyone in Ontario if a tunnel under the 401 makes sense—will it make things more sustainable for the people of Ontario? Only the Premier thinks that.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Question?

MPP Catherine McKenney: Thank you to my colleagues. My question is for my colleague from Mushkegowuk—James Bay.

I also, actually, come from a long line of foresters and forestry workers, and I know exactly what they contribute to the economy, and I know exactly what that means when we have good forestry jobs, but I also know what it means when it's sustainable.

I'm guessing that this will be time-allocated and we will likely skip consultation. We won't go out, even though another member asked you what your folks thought—but we're not likely going to go out and ask people what they think about each part of this bill. So I'd like to ask you what you think. If the forestry sector was consulted, if we actually went out and said to them, "Just tell us what are your concerns," what do you think their main concern would be with the change to the act?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: Thank you for the question. They would probably say it would be unfair for them: "Why do we have to follow all these rules, yet right beside us, they will be able to do anything they want and not respect the same"—and trust me, they want to respect the regulations, because they know how it made our forestry world-renowned. They have a certification that's world-renowned. So of course, they want the other people beside them to follow their same rules, because they don't want

to lose that certification. Trust me also; they would love to be able to speak on the bill that would be travelling, because they have so much to ask this government. We need to diversify our industry.

I've talked about innovating stuff. People don't realize the quality of fibre we see in glasses now, in TV screens, pulp—in TV screens and then glasses. That's one example of innovation. Bio coal—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Response?

Mr. Guy Bourgouin: We have all the products we need. We could develop and diversify our forest industry, yet we're not even top 10 in Ontario—shameful.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Questions?

Mr. Logan Kanapathi: Thank you to the member opposite for your presentation. I enjoyed your presentation.

Madam Speaker, since our government was elected in 2018, we have taken decisive steps—unnecessary red tape—while preserving essential rules that protect health, safety and environment. These efforts have saved people and businesses nearly \$1.2 billion annually in compliance costs—real savings that translate into more time, more money, less frustration for families and business alike.

The member talked about forestry. I understand, but this bill covers so many ministries and brings efficiency and effectiveness to the Ontario economy and the people.

Does the member opposite agree that our efforts to reduce red tape are helping people and businesses save time and money, allowing them to grow and spend more time with their families? And if so, will they support this bill and stand with us to continue to deliver results for the people of Ontario? This is an ongoing process.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): The member for Timiskaming—Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: Thank you very much for the question.

I'm not sure that all Ontarians would agree that this government has been very effective at having people spend more time with their families. The people who are fully employed and have to go to food banks because they can't afford their rent or can't afford to eat without a food bank—I don't think that they are that impressed with the government. The highest unemployment rate that we've had in a long time—I don't think that's that great either.

Again, there are a lot of things in this bill that—I'm not sure that increasing the class of snowmobiles makes things that much better. Again, I think this government has to learn to govern for all the people, not just the people who support you.

1720

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): We have time for one very quick question and answer. Questions?

MPP Lisa Gretzky: With the little time, I'll make it really quick: My riding, my community, has the highest unemployment rate in the entire country. A report just had come out recently that banks are actually choosing not to provide loans to businesses, to developers because of the

uncertainty in this province. As my colleagues pointed out, we have a record-high number of people using food banks and experiencing homelessness. There are some similarities between ridings, but I'm wondering if one of my northern colleagues can talk about some of the barriers that they're facing in northern Ontario that we may not be facing in higher-density or higher-population areas like the city I live in.

Mr. John Vanthof: That's a great question.

We're very fortunate; in my riding, we've got gold, and gold mining is great. So for—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): Further debate?

Mr. Ted Hsu: It's a privilege to be able to speak to this bill, Bill 46. I'm going to just discuss two schedules, and I'm going to be sharing my time with the member for Ottawa South and the member for Kanata–Carleton.

I'm going to talk about schedule 9 and schedule 8. Schedule 9 is an unusual schedule, something we don't encounter that often, but it's a schedule of a government bill that specifically deals with two parties. One is a rather well-known gold company, Iamgold, and another one is a corporation that currently is defunct called Superior Corporate Services. What I wanted to do, Speaker, was just point out some of the facts of this case and just question why something like this has to be in a government bill, and maybe we can find out if this bill goes to committee, like it should.

So there was a company called Superior Corporate Services. It is a company that was basically a single-person company, somebody named Bruce Malcolm Young. So it was a single-person company, and unfortunately, Mr. Young developed terminal cancer. During that time, this one-person company went defunct because it wasn't paying taxes that were due. Now, Superior Corporate Services owned a stream of mining royalties. Of course, this was forfeited when the company went defunct, and the royalty was purchased by a gold company, namely Iamgold. This corporation, Superior Corporate Services, was dissolved under the Business Corporations Act quite a while ago, January 31, 1989, for failure to comply with the Corporations Tax Act. The facts around this dissolution were that this person, the owner of the company, was dying of cancer and was not able to pay taxes and the corporation had to be dissolved.

Now, the executor of the estate of Mr. Young is his widow, Mary Kathleen Young. Ms. Young has applied in the past for special legislation to revive Superior Corporate Services Limited—the company. The reason for that is that the executor for the estate, the widow, feels that she has some claim to this stream of royalties. She has—let's call it a potential claim because it has to be settled in court. But the court has also said that she doesn't have a chance to make her arguments unless the corporation is revived, and so she brought this to the Legislature, and in 2022 and 2023, my colleague the member for Ottawa South introduced a private bill to revive this company, Superior Corporate Services. Reviving that company would have simply allowed Ms. Young to have her day in court, to make her arguments before the court.

Unfortunately, this private bill was defeated by the government in committee. The final status of these private bills is that the report of the committee—the procedure and house affairs committee—recommended that this private bill not be reported back to the Legislature in order to proceed in this Legislature. So these bills never passed, and Superior Corporate Services was never revived.

Now, in Bill 46, what happens in schedule 9 of this bill is that the government appears to be protecting Iamgold, the large gold company, from even the chance of further litigation; from having to face Ms. Young, the widow, in court.

So this bill amends the Escheats Act to confirm that that act and the Forfeited Corporate Property Act, 2015, do not affect the validity or effectiveness of a deal between the government and Iamgold, because Iamgold has purchased this royalty that was forfeited when the corporation had to be dissolved.

What's strange is that schedule 9 gives a particular corporation a special shield against judicial review; against the court case that this widow might bring up regarding a potential claim on a stream of royalties.

Regardless of the merits of the case, it is strange that the bill does something for a single company. And so what I would call on the government to do is to simply allow this bill to go to committee so that we can learn some more about the reasons why schedule 9 exists. Hopefully, in committee, we'll shed some light on this issue of why the government put schedule 9 in the bill to protect Iamgold from a judicial review. We could also ask why it stopped the private bills to revive Superior Corporate Services, so that Ms. Young—the widow, the executor of the estate—could have her day in court.

The other schedule I want to talk to is schedule 8. Schedule 8 covers forestry, and it proposes to modify legislation regarding forestry. I would say that on the face of it, many of the provisions in schedule 8 appear to be benign. For example, it appears that it would allow the removal of forestry materials, not for the purposes of the lumber industry and mass cutting of timber, but for things like the construction of roads, mines or other infrastructure within a forest that don't affect the overall long-term sustainability or viability of a forest but may be needed in order to potentially provide infrastructure for other non-forestry activities.

It's also potentially for self-use. For example, there may be no particular need to have complicated rules around removing dead wood for personal use—a limited amount of wood, for personal use from a crown forest.

It appears to be benign on the face of it, but if you try to read schedule 8 and go back and reference the legislation that it amends, and if you go and read the Environmental Registry of Ontario listing—which I'll just put down for the record, 025-1134—which is about natural resources regulatory and permit reform and forest management policy, it's not easy to read.

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So what I would say is just to be careful. I'm going to be a little bit partisan here: Schedule 8 appears to be

benign if you look at it, but with this government, we just need to be a little careful about regulatory capture—which is a thing, Speaker; it is something that we have to be careful about with any government. So what I would call on this government to do is just take this bill and allow it to go to committee, unlike the 15 or so government bills in 2025 that have skipped the committee phase. Let it go to committee so that we can sort through some of these rather complicated—to understand changes to legislation that governs the management of our crown forests.

Let me just give you a couple of examples. If you look at the ERO, the environmental registry, it talks a lot about Indigenous communities having unique rights and interests—which they do—and it talks about the duty to consult. Well, why not do it in the Legislature, which has for its purpose to hear from different groups, so that the representatives of all groups, the representatives of all the people of Ontario, have a chance to try to understand what this legislation does before we vote for or against it at third reading and before we report back to the Legislature after committee stage?

There is also this idea of creating an easier process to provide permits to remove materials from crown lands for non-forestry purposes. That seems to be a benign thing, but there are a lot of things to consider, and these are even listed in the ERO posting. For example, if you're going to say that you can remove certain materials from crown forests without having to have a fancy permit, then maybe it should not be some large-scale removal of material that might affect the sustainability of the forest.

Also, if you look in the ERO, there is an intention to look at manufacturing-in-Canada exemptions. This is coming down the road, and the idea here is that the Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994—that's the act that schedule 8 of Bill 46 will be amending. Currently, there's a condition that all trees harvested shall be manufactured, in Canada, into lumber, pulp or other products. You can understand why something like this would be in the Crown Forest Sustainability Act. The idea is to encourage the processing of things that we harvest in Canada, where we add value in Canada. We have jobs in Canada where people are working on forest products and creating value-added products. That's something that's really important for Canada's economy, for our long-term productivity.

Now, the government is proposing to make it easier to get an exemption from that in the case where, for example, there isn't enough capacity at Canadian mills to process the lumber, the trees that have been harvested. I'm a little bit worried about that, and I'd like to see the government talk about this in committee, or perhaps in the debate here in the chamber.

I'm a little bit worried because we're actually seeing Canadian mills close, so the processing capacity that we have in Canada is decreasing. Now, there may be a reason for that—tariffs imposed by the United States, competition from other pulp mills or sawmills—but that doesn't mean that we should be then giving up and allowing the processing of Canadian trees outside of Canada. Maybe we should be slowing down the cutting of trees. There are

different considerations, but let's have a longer conversation. I'd like the elected representatives of people in Ontario to understand the implications of manufacturing-in-Canada exemptions that are referred to in the Environmental Registry of Ontario entry that corresponds to Bill 46.

So the final thing I'll say, Speaker, is just to kind of summarize what I want to say about schedule 8 in Bill 46 regarding forestry: We need to bring it to committee because it is a little bit complicated to understand, and, as elected representatives, we really should be trying to understand these things in detail before we vote at third reading.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I recognize the member from Ottawa South.

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure—well, I don't know if it's a pleasure, but it's a responsibility to stand up and rise and speak to this bill.

It's interesting: We don't know when things are coming so we have to wait for the lottery or whatever bingo ball the House leader pulls out of the spinning thing to tell us what bill we're going to be doing that day. I don't think that's a good way of doing business, but that's the way that the government House leader wants to do business.

So I want to talk about something very specific in this bill, which is schedule 9. And it has to do with a government indemnifying itself, along with a company called Iamgold, because of a mining claim that the government took away from a company that was defunct and didn't tell the heirs and successors of the person who died—and then this company, because this person died, became defunct.

It's really an interesting thing. I was involved in this because I brought forward a private members' public business bill—and it was actually on behalf of a member from Kingston who wasn't putting it forward in the other party here. So I put it forward, because people will come with a Pr bill, and I think we have a responsibility to bring it forward. They are trying to change something they think is wrong or unjust or they want to open up a company that they closed down because they've got a cheque that's supposed to go into it. It's not a political thing. It's trying to uncomplicate some business people's lives or some people's lives or an organization's governance challenges. It's not our regular private members' business where we try to push forward an idea that may be political or require legislation. This is just simply saying, in this case, "We need to revive this company."

This may take a bit and it may not be terribly exciting, but it's terribly interesting why the government is going, in a government bill, to indemnify itself from any court proceeding because of a right and a royalty that they sold to a company, without the knowledge of the heir to the person who owned that company, who happened to be an 88-year-old widow. So I'm going to read you the submission. I couldn't find my reading glasses, so if I'm a bit slow—but we have lots of time and I can tell you're all intently listening.

This is the submission: "The applicant is Mary Kathleen Young. She is an 88-year-old widow. Her now deceased

husband owned a valuable royalty through his company Superior Corporate Services Ltd.”—Superior is what we’ll refer to it as, through this document. “This is the company she seeks to revive. She has worked hard for eight months to satisfy all the conditions and requirements established by this committee’s standing orders”—this is their second submission because what happened is the government members voted and pushed it away in the first submission—“including paying all tax arrears and obtaining the Ministry of Finance’s approval to have the company revived.

“There is no legitimate reason to refuse Mary’s proposed bill to revive Superior, and certainly not on the basis of submissions and arguments made by Iamgold Corp., a self-interested party. Iamgold’s only goal is to protect its own interest, including its acquisition of the royalty pursuant to a transaction that it has entered into without proper statutory authority.

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“And, more importantly, the royalty was sold by the government to Iamgold in circumstances where publicly available documents expressly acknowledge that the royalty is owned by the Young family. Yet no advance notice was given to the Young family about Iamgold’s transaction with the government. In Mary’s words, Iamgold is responsible for ‘grabbing [the royalty] from me and claiming it as a prize.’ In doing so, it led the government to believe that it had the appropriate statutory authority to sell the royalty, which it did not.

“The positions and arguments Iamgold advances are only in furtherance of its own goal and have nothing to do with public interest or procedural fairness. They have no place before this committee, whose mandate is to review whether Mary has satisfied the expressly defined pre-conditions for the proposed bill to revive Superior.”

It’s something we do regularly; we revive companies all the time here. Most of us have done that at some point.

“The sole purpose of Iamgold’s submissions to the committee is to defeat Mary’s legitimate and important interest in accessing the courts to have her family’s legal and moral rights to the royalty determined. Those rights can only be determined through Superior, once revived. It is not within the committee’s scope of review to determine or assess Iamgold’s arguments for the purpose of revival of the application.” That’s true. “Iamgold’s arguments should be left to the courts for determination. And, in fact, there is already a court proceeding that has been commenced by Mary to protect the royalty pending Superior’s revival.

“Iamgold’s attempt to derail Mary’s proposed bill is contrary to the interests of justice. It defeats the important public policy goal of ensuring the public’s access to the court system. Iamgold’s attempt to engage in this form of legislative gating should not be condoned by this committee or the Legislative Assembly, which is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that hard-working people like Mary have an opportunity to be heard by the court and have their rights determined.

“At the end of the day, all Mary asks for is an opportunity to have her claim heard by the courts. Refusing the revival of this application will defeat Mary’s claim before it even starts. That is what Iamgold, a private corporation with endless resources, wants. But Mary deserves to have her day in court. And this committee should not allow Iamgold to use the legislative process to block Mary’s access to justice.”

I mean, that’s what they did. We’ll know that by the end of this.

“Superior’s revival will not prejudice Iamgold in any way. Iamgold will still have available to it all of the arguments it advances in its submissions to this committee, and those arguments can be assessed and determined by the court. By contrast, Mary will be severely prejudiced if she is not able to revive the company. She will lose her day in court and her family’s legal and moral rights will never be determined. This, in Mary’s respectful submission, cannot be the outcome of a fair and reasonable review process by the committee.”

So here’s the background: “Mary is an 88-year-old woman. As a beneficiary and co-trustee of her husband’s estate, Mary has a legal and moral claim to a mining royalty in respect of patented mining claims near Chester township in Sudbury, Ontario.

“Mary’s family has a long and deep history with the mining claims and the royalty. The company sought to be revived on this application, Superior, was previously owned and controlled by her husband Bruce, who died in 2003. Superior was the original owner of the royalty at issue. It held the royalty until its administrative dissolution in 1989.

“The Young family’s history with the mining claims.

“Mary’s father-in-law, Cyril Young, spent his entire life exploring and developing mining claims in Chester township. Cyril was one of the prospectors who first discovered what will become Canada’s largest gold mine, known as the Côté Gold project.

“In 1932, Cyril incorporated a company called Young-Shannon Gold Mines Ltd. (‘Young-Shannon’) to hold and develop 11 patented mining claims in Chester township, Ontario. Cyril’s activities continued for many years. Unfortunately, he would never see the fruits of his labour as he passed away in 1962.

“After Cyril passed, Bruce Young, Cyril’s son and Mary’s husband, took over his father’s life’s work in the mining industry. Bruce became the owner and controlling mind of Young-Shannon, spending significant time managing the mining claims. Under Bruce’s leadership, Young-Shannon invested over \$1 million on exploring and developing the mining claims.

“Mary often visited the mining property with Bruce. They would camp out on the property and explore the area together. Mary assisted Bruce in his mining activities on their trips, including by helping him transport equipment onto the property and capping mines as required by government regulations. The Young family were among the early prospectors of the gold mine that Iamgold now benefits from.

“Unfortunately, by 1989, Bruce’s health was deteriorating. He suffered from diabetes and was eventually diagnosed with blood cancer. Mary took early retirement from her position as a special education teacher at the North York Board of Education to assist her husband. Notwithstanding Bruce’s illness, he remained deeply involved in Young-Shannon.

“Sadly, like his father, Bruce did not see the fruits of his labour or his father’s labour during his lifetime. He passed away in 2003. He did not leave behind a large estate, except for Superior which owned the royalty as described below.

“The mining royalty and Superior’s dissolution.

“In 1965, Bruce incorporated Superior to assist Young-Shannon with exploring and managing the mining claims. Bruce was a director and officer of Superior, and its sole shareholder at the time of its dissolution.

“In 1987, in return for Bruce’s work, Young-Shannon granted Superior a 3% royalty in the mining claims. Bruce, through Superior, subsequently assigned half of this royalty to others who assisted with managing the claims. Superior retained its remaining half of the royalty until its dissolution.

“In 1989, unbeknownst to Mary, Superior was administratively dissolved for non-compliance with corporate tax legislation. Publicly available documents suggest that the royalty remained Superior’s asset at the time of its dissolution, and it therefore forfeited to the crown. It is unclear why Superior retained the royalty upon dissolution. However, Mary has explained that in the last years of Bruce’s life, he did not maintain good records due to his illness and deteriorating condition.

“As a result, at the time Bruce passed away, Mary did not know about the royalty, nor did she know that Superior had been dissolved in 1989. However, she knows that Bruce would not have intended for the royalty to forfeit to the crown (for nothing) as a result of an administrative dissolution. The mining claims and the royalty were Bruce’s life work and he intended for the fruits of his labour to be passed on to his family, and not to Iamgold.

“Mary learns of the royalty transfer.

“In 2021, Iamgold registered a publicly available notice on title to the mining claims, indicating it had purchased the royalty from the Public Guardian and Trustee. It was as a result of this registration that Mary learned about the royalty’s sale to Iamgold.

“Mary took immediate steps to confirm the royalty’s history, learn the applicable legal framework, and respond to the sale. This included retaining corporate and litigation counsel, applying for Superior’s revival to pursue recovery of the royalty, and applying for a preservation order over the royalty pending Superior’s revival. The court application was required because Iamgold unreasonably refused to preserve the royalty until a determination of the issue by the courts—yet another attempt by Iamgold to defeat Mary’s legitimate interest in having her family’s rights determined.”

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Remember, we’re talking about an 88-year-old widow. I just want to remind everybody about that.

So here’s the response to Iamgold’s submissions: “Mary does not contest that Iamgold invested resources and time into the Côté Gold project. However, Iamgold ignores that Mary’s family was integral to the discovery and the development of what is now known as the Côté Gold project. And, Iamgold’s description of the negative policy implication of Superior’s revival are factually and legally inaccurate.”

Here are Mary’s responses to IAMGOLD. They are as follows: “No undermining of the legal framework for corporate taxes” by granting the opening up of this company again; we’re not going to undermine our tax system: “Granting Superior’s revival in no way undermines the legal regime concerning corporate taxes. The corporations tax branch of the Ministry of Finance offered no objection to this bill....”

That’s when we used to do that. The Ministry of Finance didn’t say, “Stop what you’re doing, committee. Don’t do this bill.” They didn’t say that. They said nothing. That’s the Ministry of Finance.

“The Minister of Finance confirmed Superior’s payment of all outstanding taxes payable under the Corporations Tax Act. In these circumstances, there can be no argument that reviving Superior undermines the corporate tax regime.”

So we’re not going against our own interests as a government. Reviving the company is not going to affect our tax system. That’s what the proponents are saying.

The other thing that Iamgold said in their submission was that Superior’s revival created commercial uncertainty for corporate property. Here’s the response: “Contrary to Iamgold’s submission, all Mary hopes to obtain through Superior’s revival is an opportunity to have her story heard and her claim to the royalty assessed by a court.” I repeat that: “assessed by a court”—an 88-year-old widow. “A decision by the courts will ensure that parties follow proper procedure when purchasing forfeited corporate property.” The government is in the middle of this.

The other thing that this company said was Mary did “wait and see” whether the royalty became valuable, so she wasn’t looking for them. Well, her husband died. Over a period of time, he kept all the records. She cared for him while he was dying.

Here is the response to that: “Mary did not take a ‘wait and see’ approach to determine whether the royalty would become valuable before taking steps to recover it. As soon as Mary learned about the purported sale to Iamgold in June 2021, she took immediate steps to (i) notify Iamgold of her intended claim, (ii) apply for Superior’s revival, and (iii) commence a court application to obtain a preservation order over the royalty, given Iamgold’s unreasonable refusal to preserve the asset pending the company’s revival.”

The other thing about the company’s representation to the committee was that the widow’s intention is really not immaterial, and this is how they respond. This is the company saying, “What are her plans?” It’s not the point.

“In a final effort to convince this committee to prevent Mary from reviving Superior, Iamgold speculates what it believes Mary will do with the royalty if she is ultimately

successful in her court application. Iamgold does so in an attempt to impugn Mary's motivations and taint the committee's view of her. Mary's plans for the royalty have no relevance to this committee's review and this committee should afford them no weight.

"In the result, none of Iamgold's arguments, even if considered by the committee, provide a legitimate basis to refuse Mary's proposed bill. The committee should do what is right for the public interest: providing vulnerable people access to our courts, not making it difficult for them. The court will decide between this widow and the gold-mining company. All Mary wants is a level playing field."

I've just given you a very long story, but I'm going to simplify it: An 88-year-old widow went with a legitimate claim to be able to revive a company, which we do literally every day here. We do it dozens and dozens and dozens of times a year. Legitimately, she paid all her taxes. She paid her taxes, then this bill came before committee twice and that side shut her down. They shut her down.

Interjection.

Mr. John Fraser: Well, I think if you're 88 and somebody has done a number on you and you get shut down—you know, I understand the government members on the committee are operating under orders. I watched the whole thing go on. I watched them saying, "Look at these lawyers that she's got. They're just taking advantage of her." Come on—she just wants a day in court. It doesn't matter who she's retained, why she's retained them or what the circumstances are in terms of their compensation. An 88-year-old widow was looking for her day in court, and government members shut it down.

And to make it so much worse is this government, in schedule 9, saying, "We're going to pass a law so we won't get in trouble for doing this, and the company won't get in trouble for doing this," because shafting an 88-year-old widow out of what is rightfully hers—which is a day in court—is not a pretty thing to look at. That's why I'm being maybe a little bit expressive right now about what has happened here: because nobody really thinks about this story or remembers this story or knows this story.

So while an 88-year-old widow is never going to get her day in court, the government is never going to go to court for the thing that they did, and the company will never go to court for the thing that they did, and they're protected—while all this is happening, and we're putting another bill forward to do this, the government is shovelling millions and millions and millions of dollars out the door in the \$2.5-billion Skills Development Fund—whatever you want to call it—fund, or piggy bank. Look at those two things: money for strip club owners, bar owners, nightclub owners—an 88-year-old widow can't have her day in court.

I rest my case.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Effie J. Triantafilopoulos): I recognize the member from Kanata–Carleton.

Mrs. Karen McCrimmon: I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 46, the Protect Ontario by Cutting Red Tape Act, 2025. While the title suggests efficiency and

streamlining, I think it's important that we look closely at what this legislation truly means for the people of Ontario. Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy is one thing, but we must ensure that in the name of cutting red tape, we do not compromise the safety, the well-being or the rights of everyday Ontarians. Legislation that affects communities, businesses and public services requires careful scrutiny, and it's my responsibility to ensure that any changes balance efficiency with fairness and accountability.

Speaker, this is an important bill. It takes measures that are needed and addresses some issues that deserve attention in Ontario. Yet despite these positive intentions, the omnibus nature of Bill 46 presents real problems that we cannot simply ignore. By packaging so many changes into a single piece of legislation, the government creates a situation where the strengths of the bill are overshadowed by its flaws, making it harder to properly examine the impact of each measure.

Omnibus bills, by their very design, carry inherent and undemocratic flaws. When multiple provisions with differing purposes are introduced at once, it undermines the democratic process. Each change deserves individual scrutiny, and when they are bundled together, it diminishes accountability and makes it difficult for both the public and legislators to understand what is truly being enacted.

Firstly, the public interest suffers when there is a lack of transparency. When measures are lumped together in a single bill, it becomes confusing and complex, leaving ordinary Ontarians unsure about what the government is actually doing. Transparency is a cornerstone of democracy, and any legislation that clouds clarity is concerning.

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Secondly, the government's approach drastically reduces debate time. The six and a half hours allocated for discussion of this bill is simply inadequate. Each of these measures, if considered individually, would warrant far more thorough scrutiny. Rushing through debate compromises the quality of legislation and shortchanges both the public and their representatives.

And don't get me started on time allocation and skipping committee. Even attempting to debate all these measures at once is inherently undemocratic. Committees exist to allow detailed review, input from experts—science, data, statistics—and thoughtful consideration, lived experience. But by circumventing that process, this government undermines the very principles of responsible governance.

Lastly, omnibus bills make it difficult for legislators to support them. While there are schedules in Bill 46 that could earn support, when they are packaged alongside measures that are problematic or harmful, it becomes impossible to back the bill as a whole. Democracy should empower us to support what is right and oppose what is wrong, but this omnibus structure forces compromise in a way that diminishes principled decision-making.

Speaker, it's important to acknowledge that some of the schedules in this bill are reasonable and could be supported. Not every measure is objectionable, and there are

parts of Bill 46 that have merits and reflect practical improvements for the people of Ontario.

For example, schedule 3 allows information about sex offenders to be used more efficiently. This is a measure that strengthens community safety, ensuring that the right information reaches the right people at the right time—but it must be done correctly.

Schedule 21 proposes changes to the governance of the Royal Ontario Museum. If the government wishes to appoint fewer members to the board, this is a decision that might be acceptable. It's a modest adjustment, and one that does not necessarily compromise the public interest, but it could. I don't know. I'd need to talk to experts to actually understand why this change is needed.

Even schedule 15, which would allow liquor in certain areas of provincial parks, is something I could support. Responsible changes that enhance the enjoyment of our public spaces, without harming safety or accessibility, are sensible and reflect a practical approach to policy.

However, the core problem with Bill 46 is not these schedules themselves, but the way they are bundled together with other schedules that is deeply concerning. It is this packaging that prevents meaningful support. By forcing all these measures into one omnibus bill, the government makes it impossible to separate the good from the problematic. Is this intentional?

Speaker, there are two schedules in this bill that I have some serious questions about: schedules 9 and 16. These are not minor concerns. They are blatantly problematic, and I believe the government should remove them from Bill 46 entirely. These measures cross a line that goes beyond efficiency or streamlining; they threaten public trust and undermine the fairness that Ontarians expect from their government.

Schedule 16, for example, represents a clear breach of privacy. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has explicitly stated that this provision should be removed. Ignoring such advice is reckless and undermines the very safeguards meant to protect the personal information of Ontarians. Privacy is not negotiable, and this schedule puts the government on the wrong side of responsible government.

Schedule 16 gives the Ministry of Red Tape Reduction an alarming and generalized authority to collect, use and disclose personal information for broadly stated consultation purposes. This is not a minor detail. The Information and Privacy Commissioner has raised a major red flag about this power.

In a public letter to the government, the commissioner stated, "Public consultations by governments typically involve individuals and others sharing their personal or professional opinions, including opinions that oppose the government of the day, on matters that may be sensitive or controversial."

This broad power allowing the government to collect and disclose information in any way that they see fit directly undermines the confidence that Ontarians place in their government when they share their views.

I want to be very clear: The protections around data disclosure are not only about privacy. They exist so that

people can feel confident their information is safe with the government, so they can give honest feedback, and so that government decision-making is informed by the very best information available.

This reckless approach to handling personal data does more than harm Ontarians; it undermines the government itself. It erodes trust, diminishes the quality of feedback in consultations and risks alienating the very people the government claims it wants to hear from.

This is exactly why we created the Information and Privacy Commissioner in the first place. The commissioner serves the public and the government, providing guidance to ensure we govern responsibly. Their recommendations are there to help us make better decisions, and ignoring them is simply not acceptable.

I ask the government: When the IPC has recommended that this entire section be removed, why are they not listening?

At the very least, will they allow this bill to go to committee, so that it can be examined schedule by schedule and so that when one of Ontario's independent commissioners raises a red flag, the public has a meaningful opportunity to comment before the government imposes such sweeping powers?

My colleague from Ottawa South explained the problem with schedule 9, and it has to do with the deal with Iamgold, which operates the gold mine close to Sudbury. Essentially, what it comes down to is this schedule protects the mining company from a legal claim brought by the family of the former miner, whose defunct company may have had a claim to the mining royalty.

Now, let me be clear: There's a completely legal reason why this mining royalty was taken from a defunct company, and the government may argue that Iamgold has acted within the law. But every person and every company in Ontario deserves their day in court. No one should be placed above the law, and no law should be selectively applied to favour a politically connected corporation.

By specifically exempting Iamgold from the Escheats Act and the Forfeited Corporate Property Act, 2015, this government is sending a shocking message. This is the behaviour of a banana republic, turning Ontario's laws into a playground for corporations rather than ensuring equal protection under the law for all.

1810

The fact that Iamgold would receive special legal protection is a direct affront to fairness. It does not matter how important the gold mine is; it is unacceptable that one company should be insulated from the law while everyone else should try to abide by it. If the government wanted to update these acts for everyone in Ontario, that would be one thing. But to shield a single company is unthinkable and beneath the principles of our democracy.

Speaker, while there are aspects of Bill 46 that could be supported, the omnibus nature of this legislation makes it deeply problematic. By bundling together measures that range from reasonable to reckless, the government has created a bill that is difficult for the public to understand,

difficult for legislators to support and dangerous for the democratic process itself. True governance demands transparency, careful debate and respect for the institutions that protect Ontarians—standards that this bill, in its current form, fails to meet.

Schedules 16 and 9 illustrate why this bill cannot proceed without serious amendment. Schedule 16 grants sweeping authority to collect and disclose personal information, directly contradicting the advice of the Information and Privacy Commissioner and undermining public trust. Schedule 9 goes even further, offering special protection to a single gold mining company, placing it above the law and striking at the fairness that is fundamental to our justice system. These are not just minor technicalities. They are breaches of principle that strike at the very heart of responsible government.

Speaker, if the government truly believes in good governance, it will take these identified concerns seriously. It must allow this bill to go to committee so that each schedule can be examined on its own merits, with input from the public and the experts whose advice is designed to protect all Ontarians. Ontarians deserve laws that are fair, transparent and accountable. They deserve a government that respects the democratic process, rather than rushing through an omnibus bill that mixes the good with the deeply concerning.

It is my hope and my call that the government will send this bill to committee, will listen, will amend the bill, and ensure that Ontario's laws reflect the fairness, transparency and respect for the people they are meant to serve. Thank you, Speaker.

Report continues in volume B.

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Collard, Lucille (LIB)	Ottawa—Vanier	Third Party House Leader / Leader parlementaire de parti reconnu
Cooper, Michelle (PC)	Eglinton—Lawrence	
Crawford, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	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	
Downey, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	Barrie—Springwater—Oro-Medonte	Attorney General / Procureur général
Dunlop, Hon. / L'hon. Jill (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Minister of 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
Fedeli, Hon. / L'hon. Victor (PC)	Nipissing	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade / Ministre du Développement économique, de la Création d'emplois et du Commerce
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Waterloo	
Firin, Mohamed (PC)	York South—Weston / York-Sud— Weston	
Flack, Hon. / L'hon. Rob (PC)	Elgin—Middlesex—London	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Ford, Hon. / L'hon. Doug (PC)	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
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	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	
Hamid, Hon. / L'hon. Zee (PC)	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, Hon. / L'hon. Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Mike (PC)	Kitchener—Conestoga	Minister of Natural Resources / Ministre des Richesses naturelles
Hazell, Andrea (LIB)	Scarborough—Guildwood	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième Vice-Présidente du Comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Holland, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin (PC)	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	
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin—Caledon	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Health / Ministre de la Santé
Jones, Hon. / L'hon. Trevor (PC)	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	
Kerzner, Hon. / L'hon. Michael S. (PC)	York Centre / York-Centre	Solicitor General / Solliciteur général
Khanjin, Hon. / L'hon. Andrea (PC)	Barrie—Innisfil	Minister of Red Tape Reduction / Ministre de la Réduction des formalités administratives
Kusendova-Bashta, Hon. / L'hon. Natalia (PC)	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
Lecce, Hon. / L'hon. Stephen (PC)	King—Vaughan	Minister of Energy and Mines / Ministre de l'Énergie et des Mines
Lennox, Robin (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
Lumsden, Hon. / L'hon. Neil (PC)	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
McCarthy, Hon. / L'hon. Todd J. (PC)	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
McGregor, Hon. / L'hon. Graham (PC)	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	
Mulroney, Hon. / L'hon. Caroline (PC)	York—Simcoe	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Oosterhoff, Hon. / L'hon. Sam (PC)	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	
Parsa, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (PC)	Aurora—Oak Ridges—Richmond Hill	Minister of Children, Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et des Services sociaux et communautaires
Pasma, Chandra (NDP)	Ottawa West—Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest—Nepean	Deputy House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Piccini, Hon. / L'hon. David (PC)	Northumberland—Peterborough South / Northumberland—Peterborough-Sud	Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development / Ministre du Travail, de l'Immigration, de la Formation et du Développement des compétences
Pierre, Natalie (PC)	Burlington	
Pinsonneault, Steve (PC)	Lambton—Kent—Middlesex	
Pirie, Hon. / L'hon. George (PC)	Timmins	Minister of Northern Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement et de la croissance économique du Nord
Quinn, Hon. / L'hon. Nolan (PC)	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	
Rickford, Hon. / L'hon. Greg (PC)	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	
Sarkaria, Hon. / L'hon. Prabmeet Singh (PC)	Brampton South / Brampton-Sud	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Sarrazin, Stéphane (PC)	Glengarry—Prescott—Russell	
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Saunderson, Brian (PC)	Simcoe—Grey	
Schreiner, Mike (GRN)	Guelph	
Scott, Chris (IND)	Sault Ste. Marie	
Scott, Hon. / L'hon. Laurie (PC)	Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock	
Shamji, Adil (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	
Shaw, Sandy (NDP)	Hamilton West—Ancaster—Dundas / Hamilton-Ouest—Ancaster—Dundas	
Skelly, Hon. / L'hon. Donna (PC)	Flamborough—Glanbrook	Speaker / Présidente de l'Assemblée législative
Smith, Dave (PC)	Peterborough—Kawartha	
Smith, David (PC)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	
Smith, Hon. / L'hon. Graydon (PC)	Parry Sound—Muskoka	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
Surma, Hon. / L'hon. Kinga (PC)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto—Danforth	
Tangri, Hon. / L'hon. Nina (PC)	Mississauga—Streetsville	Associate Minister of Small Business / Ministre associée des Petites Entreprises

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Thanigasalam, Hon. / L'hon. Vijay (PC)	Scarborough—Rouge Park	Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions / Ministre associé délégué à la Santé mentale et à la Lutte contre les dépendances
Thompson, Hon. / L'hon. Lisa M. (PC)	Huron—Bruce	Minister of Rural Affairs / Ministre des Affaires rurales
Tibollo, Hon. / L'hon. Michael A. (PC)	Vaughan—Woodbridge	Associate Attorney General / Procureur général associé
Triantafilopoulos, Effie J. (PC)	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	
Williams, Hon. / L'hon. Charmaine A. (PC)	Brampton Centre / Brampton-Centre	Associate Minister of Women's Social and Economic Opportunity / Ministre associée des Perspectives sociales et économiques pour les femmes
Wong-Tam, Kristyn (NDP)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	